

Seeing Men Differently

Message on 2 Corinthians 5:16-21
8-9-15

Introduction:

Opening Salvo Across the Bow: C.S. Lewis - "Christianity, if false, is of no importance, and, if true, of infinite importance. The one thing it cannot be is moderately important."

A Biblical Perspective - which is why we center our Sunday worship on expository preaching - which we are endeavoring to mine out the truth - or the meaning of the author...is so we can get a Biblical perspective on all of life. Jesus never claimed to be an "add on" a "side benefit" or any side issue.

A Plaque on the wall...slide....Colossians 1:18

And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.

- all of the OT points to Christ - the Messiah as the endpoint and the central point of history - and since we know that Jesus was the agent of the Father in Creation He is the genesis point too.

- what is the ministry of God the Holy Spirit that lives in you - to glorify Christ.
- what is marriage about...to point to = to be an illustration of Christ and his headship of the Body = the bride
- what is the church about? to disciples the nations - what as our disciples? No - disciples of Jesus
- whose coming again to rule and reign? the Lord Jesus Christ - this time in all of His glory.

That in all things He might have the preeminence!!!!!!!!!!!!

Such sweetness accompanies making Jesus our supreme and abiding priority....

But where do you go from there - if all you do is live on a mountaintop = in worship and adoration...have you really made in preeminent in "all things?" James says - do it!!!!

In order to "do it" we must let His Word change us! That changes comes as we renew our minds Romans 12:2 - daily - and that is what Paul is doing - the Holy Spirit is doing here...

When we look into the scriptures in Corinthians we want to tweak our outlook - and then our behavior will follow - according to the Bible....so He gets first place - preeminence!!!

Biblically - Christianity is of infinite importance.

so it is imperative that we see things Biblically - so we can properly give Christ first place - preeminence!

Review:

From last week:

1. the love of Christ controls us - it and it alone is everything -
 2. that love changes our understanding of human nature and the nature of believers
 - a. 1. **DEAD** - all men dead vs. 14 For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, **therefore all have died**;
 - b. Jesus died for all - He is good - that is the epitome of love - "greater love has no man than this that He
down His life for His friends" John 15:13
 - c. "therefore all have died" - men are dead in their trespasses and sins yes - but believers in view here in
have been "crucified with Christ"
 1. so we see dead people - either dead = alienated from the life of God = Ephesians
 2. believers who are dead and their life is hid with Christ
-All because the love of Christ controls us...

Question: how can we love non-believers who are by definition enemies of the cross?
by realizing that they have no possibility of real life - no life with God - unless we take the gospel to them
and they hear it and believe and are saved.

Question: if we don't allow the Spirit of God to keep driving home the love of Christ for us - we will become what in our outlook towards humanity?
cynical or exploitive....we will have apathy or we will use people - False teachers in 2 Peter 2 exploit you - or emporiumize!!!!

A **Third** Problem - we become gullible....what if we see people doing good things - and they do - they can still do good things - we might conclude - they must be saved - or maybe Bhudism is acceptable - no....unless you confess Christ as Lord...your best deeds are never enough to balance out the sinful ones...even the best is tainted with the old nature...

A **Fourth** Problem - if we don't understand and have a Biblical Perspective towards others... we will get our feelings hurt...we will get our feelings out on our shirt sleeve.

This really has to do with having a Battle Hardened Mentality - that we are in a shooting war. otherwise why would we need so many defensive weapons.? In Ephesians 6

This really drove it home for me recently -

Picture a warrior - a vet in a foxhole = in WWII - in the Ardennes Forest - the Nazi's are pouring troops
the battle of the Buldge - a last massive assault on the Allies to protect their Germany...

You crawl up on the edge of the foxhole with your rifle - and bam you get hit in the arm...

The last thing you expect that soldier to do would be to stand up - and say...."did I say something wrong? " Did I hurt your feelings by shooting at you? That really hurt!!!! OUCH!!!!!! (lots of wailing)

No - a proper perspective is this - men who are dying get desperate - and do all sorts of crazy things...

Even Christians - who don't remember for a minute who they are in Christ will do lots of silly and dumb a

yes - even destructive things -

A Biblical Basis for a Renewed Mind Leading to Obedience

Colossians 1:9 And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, **10 so as** to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. **11** May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, **12** giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

What is the right perspective?

vs. 16 1. Don't look at anyone in a Sarx way...

ESV - **16** From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer.

Homan's 16 From now on, then, we do not know anyone in a purely human way. Even if we have known Christ in a purely human way, yet now we no longer know Him in this way.

Sarx - is after the human nature - the natural - why? because it is dead to God...not a vital connection....

Paul's argument goes like this...

1. don't look at anyone according to their purely human nature -
2. we used to look at Christ that way too - but of course we don't anymore.

His own family in Mark 3 thought Jesus was "out of His mind" and sought to seize him

The Jews didn't believe because they knew Jesus' family and thought that the

Messiah would not have a normal family...

Why did this trip them up - why did it trip up the disciples?

They looked at Jesus from just His human nature - with the external parts so connected

His flesh and outward appearance which were the same - but they hid the true nature of

Jesus - He was divine - His Spirit - His essential nature was divine but
hidden - as He
laid His glory aside....

But that all came to nought - that kind of thinking - the resurrection ruined it
as did
all the miracles...the authoritative teaching...

And the Holy Spirit - which really opened the minds of those disciples -

Yet sadly - some believers forget just who they are dealing with
They look at Jesus as some imagined character according to their own
human nature...

But what about those who are not saved.....

How do we view them?
They have all died...
But not enough....

They need to die to self - die to the very thing that now animates them
- their old
nature!!!!

Now - Huge step - put two and two together...

all men have died -
Jesus died for them -
we don't look at them the same anymore...
EVERYONE NEEDS JESUS SO THEY CAN DIE TO THE OLD - PURELY
NATURAL MAN

To In Christ - is the only hope Obewan Kenobi

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. **18** All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; **19** that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. **20** Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. **21** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Now this makes sense...

We are ambassadors of the truth that man needs a new nature - one that is a nature of life...

we are not ambassadors of good works for good works sake!!!!

How we See Our Selves vs. 17

New CREATIONS! - vs. 17

from Isaiah 66 **22**

“For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make

shall remain before me, says the Lord, so shall your offspring and your name remain.

What Do WE Do? vs. 18-19

- the ministry of reconciliation - to bring peace to men with God...

- how?

By convincing people about Jesus....

Here is how the church in Corinth started...

Paul

ACTS 18 - The Founding of the Church in Corinth

5 When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the word, testifying to the Jews that the **Christ was Jesus.** **6** And when they opposed and reviled him, he shook out his garments and said to them, “Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.” **7** And he left there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. His house was next door to the synagogue. **8** Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized. **9** And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, “Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, **10** for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people.” **11** And he stayed a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

This is the Work of the Holy Spirit = to show people the way to God that is only through Christ!

Others....**Apollos**

24 Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures. **25** He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. **26** He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. **27** And when he wished to cross to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When he arrived, he greatly helped those who through grace had believed, **28** for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the

Scriptures that the Christ was Jesus.

Who are WE = ambassadors - (old man root word)

who are we? Preachers of the gospel of Jesus Christ - Paul so owned he calls it "my gospel"(Rom2:16)

20 Therefore, **we are ambassadors** for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. **21** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

For our sake.....

Huge...because of Christ's love...He can say...for our sake...because He loves us...love alone....no agenda - of course He wants to fix you - but not so you can be some kind of eternal project - always bearing the shame of being defective - no it is a new creation that you are - and some day when you slip out of this tent...get a new tent - the project - the fix will be completed.... He does it because He loves to love you! He cares for you personally!!!!

This is the progression of thought:

1. THE LOVE OF CHRIST CONTROLS US

++2. JESUS DIED FOR ALL

- ++so we conclude ALL HAVE DIED
- ++WE CONCLUDE - those who live might no longer live for

themselves but for Him

++3. From now on (therefore) we regard :

- no one according to the flesh
- especially not Christ

++4. We are - on this basis - ambassadors for Christ

++5. Our new perspective makes Christ preeminent

Applications:

1. **I need to make wise decisions based on this new perspective**

2. **My priorities need to be aligned to Christ's - SNEAK PEAK - 2 COR 11 VS 21-28**

But whatever anyone else dares to boast of—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast of that. **22** Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they offspring of Abraham? So am I. **23** Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. **24** Five

times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. **25** Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; **26** on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; **27** in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. **28** And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches. **29** Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant?

3. My rest is in Christ and being found in "His" agenda - not a fleshly one...that always causes anxiousness

HEBREWS 6:19-20 Jesus has already gone there....He is the penultimate ambassador...He has done the work! He has given us His Spirit and so lives in us by the Spirit

We - look at yourself - don't look at yourself the old way....you are a new Creation in Christ...old things have passed away and behold all things are new!

19 We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, **20** where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

We see men differently now...

This way - God will be glorified - the gospel will be lived and preached - we will be sanctified

and Jesus will be preeminent in all things...

C.S. Lewis was right - Christianity is infinitely important!!!!

Jesus is what it is all about...