



2 Corinthians 5:1-21 - Ambassadors!

Thesis: God has reconciled sinners to himself through his Son's death and resurrection

Aim: God has prepared his people for eternity with him by giving his Spirit as a down payment (5). As they wait to be with him eternally, what they do now with their bodies still matters, so seek to please him (9). Also as they wait, they seek to persuade people (11) as Jesus' ambassadors (20), to be reconciled to God through his Son (20), who died to make us righteous (21)

Tension: Perhaps some Corinthians thought "living as if what they did in their bodies didn't matter because of the resurrection" was ok. Perhaps others thought Paul and those with him were foolish to keep trying to persuade people to be reconciled to God when it made life so difficult for Paul.

Tension for us: We at times may let the promised resurrection into the new creation influence us to not care how we use our bodies now. We also may at times think it's outrageous to share the gospel and try and persuade people to be reconciled to God, because it's hard or we don't see the urgency and necessity for people to be reconciled to God.

Pray

Take 2 minutes to privately reflect on this question: "What comes to mind if I were to say as Christians we should be ambassadors?" Then share your thoughts together as a group.

The purpose of this question is not to take up too much time, but just to get discussion started on the main theme that is in this passage

Read 2 Corinthians 5:1-21

Three themes to try and address in this study:

Longing for our new bodies (1-5)

1 What are the 2 tents/houses that Paul is speaking of here?

One is our earthly fleshly body, the other our heavenly spiritual resurrected body

2 What confidence can we have of which house we will be in?

See v5

3 In pairs discuss with each other, "what do you think it would look like for us to long for our resurrected body?"

Don't try to do group discussion with this question. The point is to help the reflectors and more quiet people to be able to speak up, which normally happens in smaller settings.



But what we do with our current unclothed bodies still matters! (6-15)

4 What is Paul's response as he waits?

See vv6-9

5 Take 2 minutes to privately reflect on: "What do you think v10 trying to say?" Then as a group discuss

We are accountable do what we do even though this life is nothing compared to our future life

(this is another question to give space for the reflectors to speak up)

6 So in light of this, what does Paul seek to do?

Therefore we boldly persuade people (11), to live not for themselves but for the one who died for them and was raised (15)

As reconciled people, we have a ministry of reconciliation (16-21)

7 What is the ministry of reconciliation that Paul speaks about in vv17-19?

8 What is the role of an ambassador for Christ?

See vv20-21

Application questions

9 Take 5 mins and privately reflect: "Where do I need to repent and seek forgiveness for the way in which I have not pleased God with my earthly body?"

Perhaps play some quiet music to give people space to reflect and pray privately & honestly to God

10 What are ways in which we can be unclothed ambassadors in our daily lives? So that people hear the call to 'be reconciled to God'

After having time thinking, sharing and discussing ideas from the group, bring up the 'bring 100 people' cards out and discuss how this can be one way we could do this as individuals, but to encourage, pray and remind each other of those we ask God would be reconciled to himself. Especially as we continue preaching through Mark's gospel this term and also with Easter coming up in the first week of April.

Pray

- That we may focus more on our heavenly dwelling, rather than our earthly one
- That we may honour God with our bodies now
- For the 6 people we each wrote on our cards to invite to church or Introducing God that they may be reconciled to God