

Reconciliation

White Lake Family Camp 2014

Lecture 5/5

1. Scripture: Ephesians 2:13-18
2. Removal of the moral and spiritual barriers which separate people.
 - a. Two tools: *humility* (including *repentance*) and *forgiveness*
3. The need for reconciliation
 - a. Difference is a constant reality, and exclusion is a constant possibility.
 - b. Bad habits: Covenanter, Presbyterian, Protestant (and Catholic)
 - c. Open wounds: in the USA, tribes, Catholic vs. Protestant, denominations, ethnic tensions
 - d. Multiple levels
 - e. Power inequality is *almost always* a factor
4. The basis of reconciliation
 - a. The cross of Christ
 - b. The triumph of Christ
 - c. You cannot change others, but you can respond to their sins rightly and trust Christ.
 - d. The kingship of Christ (Matthew 5:24b-25; John 13:34-35; Galatians 2:20; 3:28)
5. Statements on reconciliation
 - a. Forgiving others for the wrongs they have done is mandatory (whether or not they repent). (Genesis 45:4-5; 50:19-20; Matthew 6:11-15; 18:35; Luke 23:34)
 - b. My enemy's wrongdoing does not mean that I'm right. (Psalm 18:20-30; 26; Proverbs 3:11; Hebrews 12:7-14; James 5:14-16; 2 Corinthians 12:7; Micah 7:8-9)
 - c. Sin must be confessed - at least to God, perhaps to others (it takes wisdom to know to whom, and how, to confess). (Psalm 51:4)
 - d. Psalms of vengeance are the alternative to vengeance. (Psalm 10; 94; 123)
 - e. We have more numerous and dangerous enemies than we generally suppose. (1 Peter 5:8)
 - f. Our faith in the reconciliation we have with God in Christ will be demonstrated by our willingness to reconcile with others.
 - g. Total depravity exists at national and denominational levels, not just individual.
 - h. People who cannot get along with others should never be in positions of leadership in the church. (1 Timothy 3:3)

- i. Churches and pastors must learn to get along with other churches and pastors - better is a neighbor nearby than a brother far away.
 - j. You have opportunities to practice humility, inclusion, and reconciliation every day!
 - k. The Church must figure out new ways to make room for and give pride (humility?) of place to repentance and forgiveness.
 - l. Where there is any history of oppression or wrongdoing, there must be extra humility.
 - m. Humility may look like relinquishing power
 - n. The Reformed churches must recover the practice of fasting
 - o. Public worship is the moment when we are together reconciled to the Lord afresh, and reconciliation begins.
6. How to deal with a problem between you and another Christian:
- a. Pray for humility, clarity, and wisdom.
 - b. See if there is anything that you ought to have said or done differently.
 - c. Express sorrow and ask forgiveness for anything you should.
 - d. Be as forbearant as you can.
 - e. Give the other person space so that the Lord can work proper conviction.
 - f. If you must, gently tell the other person that you were offended (meaning “damaged,” not just emotionally upset), and allow them to apologize.
 - g. Go together to the house of God.
 - h. Repeat as necessary, with everyone, for the rest of your life.