

2 Corinthians 5:10-6:2
(John 14:15-27)
“Be Reconciled to God!”

Introduction

Marianne and I just returned this weekend from attending – along with Piers Van Der Merwe and David and Martha Reynolds – a Redeemer City-to-City Europe Church-Planting conference in Prague two weeks ago, then traveling this past weekend to Berlin to visit and worship with a young German pastor whom you helped plant a center-city church, and then traveling on to Paris this past week to visit with another young pastor who has planted a church in a lovely part of Paris and is preparing young pastors for further Paris church-plants.

It will come as no surprise to any of you who travel to Europe or simply keep up with European political and cultural trends, that Christians in general and evangelicals in particular face huge challenges in gaining a hearing for the gospel, challenges not made easier by the kind of preaching that has come out of the United States in recent years, not only the soul-destroying so-called prosperity gospel, but also the tragic reductionism of so much contemporary evangelical preaching that can best be described in Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s phrase, “cheap grace.”

What is needed, always and everywhere, but needed desperately today by the church in the US and Europe, is a rediscovery of the gospel in its biblical fullness, the gospel that isn’t simply found in a few places, but that fills the New Testament gospels and letters. This particular text in 2 Corinthians has been a matter of personal reflection for me since I read it a few weeks ago in my daily Scripture reading. The verse that struck me at the time with fresh force was 5:16, “From now on, therefore, we regard no according to the flesh...”

But while in Europe, listening to young pastors speak of the challenges they face, it struck me forcibly that on almost every page of the New Testament we find clear and compelling summaries of the gospel, here in these verses cast in terms of the peace that Christ has made between a holy God and rebellious sinners like you and me, and new life that is ours in Christ.

Body

- 1. The need of reconciliation: the fear of the Lord (5:10-13).**
- 2. The basis of reconciliation: the love of Christ (5:14-15).**
- 3. The perspective of reconciliation: the eyes of Christ (5:16-17).**
- 4. The ministry of reconciliation: the ministry of Christ (5:18-20a).**

Conclusion

- 5. The urgency of reconciliation: the appeal of Christ (5:20b-6:2).**

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