



Connecting to Colonial's Covenant – 13
October 4, 2015

Pastor Phelps
II Cor. 5:18-21

A COMMITMENT TO RECONCILIATION

The next to the last paragraph in the Covenant of Colonial Hills Baptist Church focuses on interpersonal relationships. Those who connect to Colonial's Covenant promise to care for one another. Specifically, our Covenant says, *"We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take _____ but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of the Savior, to secure it without delay."*

Reconciliation means the restoration of a good relationship between _____. It is a "change of personal relations . . . a state of enmity and estrangement is replaced by one of peace and fellowship" (Baker's Dictionary of Theology). Real reconciliation allows those who were once enemies to embrace!

Our world knows much of separation and little of reconciliation! Sin separates us from God and drives us from one another (Gen. 3:8-10; 4:8-12). Skirmishes, battles, and relational break-ups prove that our hearts are selfish and sinful (James 4:1; Prov. 13:10). If we "walk in the spirit," we do "not fulfill the lusts of the flesh" (Ga. 5:16).

Our Covenant Commitment to reconciliation is maintained as we consider:

A PHILOSOPHY OF RECONCILIATION

Our philosophy of reconciliation must begin with our understanding of the heart of God. The Bible contains God's message of reconciliation to man. In the pages of the Word of God, we discover God's plan to restore a relationship broken by mankind's sin.

GOD THE FATHER IS THE _____ OF RECONCILIATION (v. 18). We do not reconcile God to ourselves for He has done nothing wrong (James 1:13). We do not reconcile ourselves to God for we are without power (Titus 3:5). He reconciles us to Himself (Rom. 5:6-10).

GOD THE SON IS THE _____ OF RECONCILIATION (v. 18-19)

1. The scope of His reconciling work is _____ (v. 19).
2. The sacrifice of his reconciling work is _____ (v. 19).
3. The standing of His reconciling work is _____ (v. 21).

CHRISTIANS ARE TO BE THE _____ OF HIS WORK OF RECONCILIATION (v. 20).

1. Consider your _____ - "God . . . hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation (v. 19).
2. Consider your _____ - "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ (v. 20).
3. Consider your _____ - "Receive not the grace of God in vain" (II Cor. 6:1).
4. Consider your _____ - "Now is the accepted time" (II Cor. 6:2).

We cannot overstate the importance of fulfilling our covenantal responsibility to practice reconciliation toward others. Reconciliation is the pulse of God's heartbeat which presses us to practice forgiveness (Eph. 4:32).

A PRIORITY OF RECONCILIATION

There are those who understand the theology of reconciliation but are unwilling to put feet to their theology. Our Covenant says that we will "secure reconciliation without delay." Let's see why reconciliation is a priority:

WITHOUT RECONCILIATION YOU LIVE WITH _____ (Matt. 5:23-26).

1. You risk ineffective _____ (v. 23; I Cor. 3:11-15).
2. You risk unexpected _____ (v. 25-26).
3. You risk unavoidable _____ (Eph. 4:27; Heb. 12:15).

WITHOUT RECONCILIATION YOU LIVE IN _____ (I Thes. 4:9; I Jn. 3:23). You should not be waiting for someone else to "make the first move!" It's up to you to make every possible attempt to be a minister of reconciliation (James 4:17).

A PURPOSE FOR RECONCILIATION

When the local church body in general, and the members in particular, are practicing biblical reconciliation, an amazing purpose is fulfilled.

THERE IS A WITNESS OF YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO OUR _____ (John 13:35). When Christians walk in Spirit-wrought harmony there is Spirit-given _____!

THERE IS A WITNESS OF YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO OUR _____ (I John 1:7; 4:7-10).



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