

# Reconciliation!

## Overview

Amen. Turn to somebody and say, he's risen. It's wonderful to think that so many of our folks are able to gallivant and go, go and come and enjoy, and to think that Bill and Annette made that journey. It's a two-day journey to get up from the coast. And so while you're here, the Cukes are down in Florida and visiting with Dean and Melanie, who April and I know very, very well. Dean and Melanie Cuke were on our staff when we pastored in Montreal. They're wonderful people, so Cukes are down there. And something that Peter and Doreen wouldn't tell you, unless somehow a question was posed, but their daughter is in the ministry up in London.

The church that I started back in the early 70s has ballooned up to in the thousands. And the Cukes' daughter is over the worship. She is an amazing, an amazing musician. So the Cukes are a blessed family. And so they're down there with Dean and Melanie just now. And Doug and Joan, who usually sit up here, he's really still struggling. He's in therapy, and we're hoping that with therapy and with our prayers, something is gonna wonderfully happen. Now, we have another report.

Forgive me, it's just running on here, but Jane, please announce to these people that story that you told us. It was in our prayer requests, and somehow or other you became aware of a wonderful answer. You better stand so they can hear you. Doris has got to hear you at the far corner there. So for those of you who are tuning in by the internet, you probably just heard murmurs, and so I'm not gonna repeat it for you. We don't have microphones everywhere. But that's a story about a little child who was not expected to live, and we went to prayer, and as others did, I'm sure, and the word came back. She's wonderfully, wonderfully healed.

God's done something special. So it's good for us to be aware of the Lord answering prayer. Can you say amen? I'm entitling my message this morning Reconciliation. Reconciliation, and it's made possible only by the resurrection of Christ. It wasn't enough that he would take our sin. It wasn't enough that he paid the price. It was only enough when he rose again from the dead to be our mediator.

There's no person in the world who's able, who's called upon to mediate between us and God. There's no priest. There's no intercessor. Only Jesus, he ever lives, the word of God says, to intercede on our behalf, and he can do so because he's alive. Can you say amen? But first of all, we start off with some very rough news out of the book of Colossians chapter one, verses 21 to 23. Listen closely. This is first of all in the new King James. And you who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now he has reconciled in the body of his flesh through death to present you holy and blameless and above reproach in his sight.

If indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven of which I became a minister. So the first few words are, we have been reconciled only after we acknowledge our alienation. We have to confess our sin before him because we were alienated and alienated and we were wicked in our ways and in our thoughts. And it was proven out by our actions. But now we have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. So I wanna mention to you that we were alienated not by our actions. We're not known before the Lord God of heaven in our original state before we came to know Christ.

We were not known as sinners because we acted like sinners. There are lots of people in this world who act normal, who act nice. They may be your neighbors. Are they sinners? For all of sin to come short of the glory of God. And it's not obvious to us. So we're not known as enemies of God. We're not known as wicked in the heart because of our deeds.

We're known as alienated from God because that is the heart. The whole heart is sick with sin. And our actions are the follow through of what we have done. So we're not sinners because of our actions, but we're sinners known as sinners because of the condition of our heart. Surely you've heard this. Surely you've heard this. Why does a person have to submit to Christ and follow him when in fact that person's a good person? How many times I've heard, I'm a good person.

I've never done anything bad. I give to this and I give to that. Would you like to add a dollar or two? You're asked at the grocery store. Do you wanna add something to us to help other people? And many of us say, well, yeah, you can put another couple of dollars on my bill or whatever because I wanna be helpful. And so that makes us feel good. And so we say, I'm a good person.

And how many times I've heard, well, he's not a bad person. He's the nicest guy. He's very benevolent. He's this, he's this, he's this. But in God's sight, he's wicked. And we don't like to hear that. But you see, we're wicked in our heart. And then we act out our wickedness.

So many people feel quite content because they say, well, I'm not a bad person. So I don't need the cross. I don't need any of that. It was rather interesting. I know that I've told you this before, but I was invited to go and meet with and listen to a Jewish rabbi. This was in, I think it was in Montreal. And I sat and listened to this man, a very nice fellow, very well-spoken, very intelligent, very knowledgeable. And he presented to us his position on some theological point.

Then they opened it up to caution and answer. There weren't very many people who were asking questions. But of course, David just had to ask his question. So I stood and he acknowledged me. And I said, I'm asking this with humility. And I said, you know, I'm not trying to confuse anybody or mess this place up, sir. I'm not taking you on. I said, I need to know a question.

I said, throughout the Old Testament, I said constantly the people were reminded of their sins. And I said everything from the death of a turtle dove to on the day of atonement, special lambs were prepared for the day of atonement. And so I said, the people were constantly reminded of their sins. But I said, the temple was destroyed.

And that was the only place that the priest could offer a sacrifice for the sins of all of Israel. I said, that thing's been gone for centuries. I said, how does the Jewish person, and you're the rabbi, you're the teacher. If somebody comes and says, how can I get ready for eternity?

How can I deal with my sin? Sir, your way is through the sacrifice of a lamb, but you can't do it and you don't do it. So what is the answer, sir? Well, the man stood there, if looks could kill, I would have gone cold quite quickly. He did not like the question. And this is a question that the Jewish community does not answer because they have no answer. But you know, they're bent out of shape trying to get the temple back. They wanna get that temple raised.

But of course, there's another group of people who are not allowed to name out loud anymore because they're under special protection. But there's another group of people who say, you even step up on that mountain with the idea of doing anything and there's gonna be war and there would be. So they can't build their temple. They need the mosque to disappear so that they can rebuild their temple. So I said to him, what would you do about, what do you do about your sin? He said, we don't have a problem with sin. And that was his answer. But here's the word of God.

Here's the word of God. Listen to Isaiah chapter one. The vision of Isaiah, the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, king of Judah. Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord has spoken. I have nourished and brought up children and they have rebelled against me. The ox knows his owner and the ass his master's crib. But Israel does not know. My people do not consider.

Ah, sinful nation. A people burdened down with iniquity. A seed of evildoers. Children that are corruptors. They have forsaken the Lord. They have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger. They're gone away backward. I pause here to dare to say this.

If you ever watched the Muppets, and they had this little porky gal on there. She was cute as all get out. And when the frog would say something about her that was awkward or negative, she'd say, who, moi? Like, you're surely not referencing me. Here's the Lord saying, sinful nation. People laden with iniquity. And the average person in Israel would not know how to deal with this terminology. What?

I'm a good person. I gave to the Red Cross. I give bread to the poor. I do this and I do that. But you see, they had forsaken the Sabbath. That is the Lord's upset heart with them. I'm gonna come back to that in a moment. Verse five, why should you be stricken anymore?

You will revolt more and more. The whole head is sick and the whole heart is faint. From the sole of the foot, even to the head, there is no soundness, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores. They have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with oil. This was allegations by the Lord toward the chosen people, the people who were chosen after his heart. This is the descendants of Abraham. They were given all kinds of festivals, special days of laying aside, watching the clock on the day toward the Sabbath, being careful not to even go for five minutes into the Sabbath to honor it, to honor it. But that was a ritual that they had attuned to.

So instead of having a heart after God, they lived their lives by the ritual. These are the rules, these are the rules. But there was no heart that was pursuing after God. And the Lord is saying, you've forsaken me. Remember how Moses went to Pharaoh and said, I'm here on behalf of these people, these Jewish people, and I'm here representing their Lord God. And here's what their God says. Let me pause here and just fill in some blanks. Egypt's work week was considered seven days, 10 days rather.

And the 11th day was not a day of rest. I don't know the significance of the 10 days, except maybe that was just their method for watching the calendar. But they never had six days and the seventh day is rest. They never honored, never compelled their people to rest for a day. In fact, the Egyptian way of life for the Israelites, and this is born in records written in stone. Not all Christians are intrigued or interested in archeology, but I'm gonna tell you what, archeology is a valuable, valuable thing right now. We, not we, but they who are doing the digs over there are finding remarkable, remarkable things that attest to the veracity of the word of God and to the historicity of that, which we know of the Jewish people. So it's all proven there that the Jewish people who were slaves in Egypt worked seven days a week and every day was a long day.

Seven days, they worked 10 days a week because that was the Egyptian calendar. So they never had a day where they could set aside and worship the Lord. What is the Sabbath? Well, we know from the book of Genesis, my friends down in Montreal would call it the book of Genesis. We know from the record there that the Lord labored for six days, creating. And then the word of God says, on the seventh day, the Lord rested. Was it because he run out of energy? Why does it say the Lord rested on the seventh day?

Well, I'm glad you asked because I haven't read this anywhere, but this is my conclusion. The seventh day was a message for all time in eternity. When God finished at, let's say, six o'clock on Saturday evening, the work of creation was done and there was nothing left for man to do. And so the following day, the day of rest was established as a day when the children of Israel and calling upon the world, take this day to honor God and say, he did a good thing and we're here to honor him and to bless him. The seventh day was to be a day of rest. From what? From labor. Was it a day of rest from not occupying ourselves with the Lord?

Do we forsake going to the church? Because, well, that's kind of laborious. Having to get up and even go to church. No, no, it's talking about ceasing your labors so that you can take a day and reflect on the things of God. Now, as I was a youngster, Sabbath day was a pretty important thing. Stores were not open on Sundays because this country was honoring the Sabbath. And for me, my parents were over the top with this. On a Sunday, it was a day of rest, total rest. I didn't want to rest. Here I am five years, six years, seven years, I'm full of oatmeal. I'm ready to go. Why, why can't? Because, David, this is Sunday. We don't do anything on Sunday. Well, am I allowed to go outside? Yes, you are.

But my feet, I could sit on the steps. My feet could not touch the sidewalk. My feet could only be on the bottom step. And you're saying, David, that is so crazy. No, you know, give this kid an inch and he'll take a mile. You know, your feet cannot touch the ground because the moment you touch the ground, you're gonna be just a little bit more, just a little bit more.

And so we were not allowed to do anything. We had to be quiet. It was supposed to be a day to honor God. And when Moses went and said, I'm here to represent the Jewish people, and there our God says, let my people go. I'm gonna put it into my terminology. Let my people go so they can honor the Sabbath, so they can come out from among the Jewish oppression, forsake the Jewish gods, come out in the wilderness, and honor me and worship me. But here's the Lord saying to all of Israel, you have forsaken me. I did all these things for you. And why have you done these? You don't feel like you're ugly.

You don't feel like you're sinful. You're wondering why God is upset. Because you're not honoring the Sabbath. Well, I am honoring the Sabbath. I cease my labors. I'm watching the clock. When it's five minutes before the Sabbath begins, I put away my shovel. We had a couple in our church in Red Deer, Alberta.

She did her cooking of Sunday on Saturday night. She day drank cold tea on Sunday. She would not boil water on Sunday. Pastor, this is a Sabbath. And she was troubled that we were serving coffee after the service on Sunday morning to welcome the many, many, many visitors that came to our church on Sundays. We gave them a muffin and a hot cup of coffee because we were welcoming them. She would be out the door. She could not stand the idea.

Somebody worked to put that pot of water on. Now, the seventh day is just like any other day of the week. You can go and do anything, visit anywhere you wanna go, and that's all been forsaken because Canada was a Christian righteous nation, and we're the very opposite. Everything's turned upside down and inside out. The Lord said, let my people go so that they can worship me. So Sunday was not just about forsaking work. It was about forsake work and focus on the Lord. So the Lord is saying, you stopped your work, but you did not honor me.

With your heart, you didn't follow me. You just kept the regimen. Quote the verse, sing the chorus. But the Lord had a plan, and the Greek word for reconciliation, I just know you'll love it when I give you the Greek. It's catallage, doesn't matter how it's spelled, but it translates to this, reconciliation, adjustment of a difference, to adjust something to make a difference. That is reconciliation. We needed an adjustment in the heart, not in our activity. So many people get in their idea, if I'm gonna be a churchman, I gotta change my ways.

You can't change your ways because according to the word of God in our minds, we are not capable of following after righteousness. We were conceived in sinful ways. And so we're born with a nature that leans against God. Paul the apostle said, speaking of his nature and his lifestyle before he met the master on the Damascus road, I knew what I needed to do, but I couldn't bring myself to do it. In other words, he was undisciplined. I wanted to do what was right, but I struggled with my nature. I knew what was wrong, but I found myself doing it. I couldn't do the right, I could only do the wrong because my nature was messed up royally.

And when that's not dealt with, we're messed up truly. And so we become enemies of God and rebellion is a normal way of life. But God has provided a restoration for us. We read it to begin with. And you who were once alienated and enemies, and it was proven by your actions, yet now he has reconciled, he's made the adjustment through what he endured on the cross.

He made that adjustment. He who knew no sin literally became sin for us. It wasn't just that he drank a little bit of poison of sin, but his whole nature became putrefied as his whole nature was surrendered to sin, our sin, not his, not his.

He paid the incredible price. In Hebrew, the word reconciliation is translated to cover over, to cover over, to reconcile, to eliminate. So there are two declarations in the same writing of the writer to the Colossians. And I love this and I just sit and I meditate on this over and over again. Colossians two and verse nine. And there's an important word here. For in him, Jesus, in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily or bodily, completely. So in him dwells the fullness, the absolute essence of God, the essence of he is, oh, my brain just gone to sleep.

He knows all, that's the word I'm looking for, omniscient. Jesus, totally omniscient. Within him was total knowledge, omnipotent, all power, omnipresent, all present. Speaking of Jesus in eternity past. You know that when it says for God so loved the world, he gave his only begotten son. Don't think for a moment that Jesus became the son in a little barn somewhere in Bethlehem. No, the son was the son for eternity past. You know that.

For unto us a child is born, unto you is a son given. So in him, all the essence of God resides. And this word in him is absolutely essential for our understanding of our reconciliation in him. In him dwells the fullness of divine essence, all of his attributes. Next verse, watch this. And you, you are complete. So here we go again. Forgive me.

In him dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Don't picture a physical body. Think about completeness. In him dwells the fullness of God completely. And then the next verse, and you are complete. It's the same word. And now you are complete. In him dwelt all the fullness of God completely.

And now that you surrender your life to Christ, you are reconciled completely. Now you are the sons of God. And it doesn't yet appear. To us, it does not appear. To us, we can't see it. We can't visualize it. We can't comprehend it. Now you're the sons of God, but it has not occurred to us what we shall be because we can't conceive of it.

We can't see it because God is so grand, so glorious, so far above our comprehension. And to think that we have been added to him as sons and daughters of the Lord, second only to Jesus himself. Now are we, now are we the sons. When do we become the sons of God? When you gave your life to Christ not so long ago, Arthur. On that day, Judy, on the day you raised your hand. On that day, Judy, you became a daughter of God. And in Jesus' name, you are now complete.

Are you ready for heaven? You're complete. But we read a little warning a little bit ago where the apostle said, let me go back, Colossians 121 to 23. And you who were at one time alienated and you were enemies in your mind, and therefore it was acted out through your actions. He's now reconciled you through his flesh, through his death to present you holy, to present you blameless and above reproach, above reproach in his sight. We experience the reproach of the world. Like they're passing laws now in Ottawa because we are a reproach to this world.

We will not, we will not surrender and we will not yield to their wickedness and their twisted way. So now the Bible has been determined to be a criminal book. And I suppose I could get arrested for even saying, you can't even speak the truth without being in trouble with Canada's KGB, watching every word that we say and every movement of our, and in other countries that are following. It's like our future rules are being written in Britain and France and Germany. Now people are being arrested for silently praying on the street. Not allowed, not allowed. And so these things are also coming our way. So righteousness is a blessing to a nation, but ungodliness brings nothing but condemnation. Reconciliation is available to one and all.

And as of now, having given your life to Christ, he has wiped the slate clean. There's now no reproach, no reproach. You are complete in him who is the head of all principality and power. Now we go on to the next words and here it is. So again, going back, in him dwells the completeness of the Godhead, the eternal essence. And now you in him, you have been reconciled. But the writer goes on to explain more about what that reconciliation is comprised of. Watch this, in him, you were circumcised with the circumcision made not with a scalpel, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ.

Watch it, watch it, watch it. The next verse, Colossians 2. 12, buried with him. He died on the cross and when he was hanging on the cross, your sins had been imposed upon him. In essence, you were on that cross in him. And when they buried his body in the ground, you were there in him. And when he rose again on the third day, you were in him. And you're still in him.

These words kind of mess us up. And I've used this very pathetic illustration. I say it's pathetic, I've never heard any preacher describe it this way. But this is Dave and this is where I come from. This is the kind of jeans I wear. So I just got to tell you as I see it. My dad, Reginald Charles Forrest, was living on a farm outside in a town of Hagersville on the first line. There was a war raging.

And a message went out to the Canadian sons. If you care about your country, you better stand up. If we don't defeat them on European soil, they're coming here. And so my dad went to his father, the farmer. All the other sons had gone off, my uncles had gone off to make a life for themselves. And one was ultra successful, ultra, ultra, multi, multimillionaire. My dad was the only one left on the farm. He went to his dad and he said, dad, I have to go.

So my dad went down to the East Coast and he joined the Navy. Watch this. DNA, we don't understand all this stuff. DNA, my DNA, when my daddy got on a train and rode from Toronto to the East Coast, my DNA was in him. My chromosomes or whatever you call all those things, as my dad went to the coast, somehow or other, physically, I was in him. That makes sense. And my dad survived the war. And he came back.

If my dad had not survived, I wouldn't be here. Why? Because in essence, I was there with him in his DNA, in his person. All of the possibilities of David were resident in my father's body, in his person, in his DNA. I have a niece, I've told you this before, who lives up in Ottawa. She talks just like her grandpa Forrest.

This is my niece. And the game we always played with her, we wanted to get her to talk like my dad and like my uncle Reg and my uncle Ernie because they could not pronounce the letter R. It was R. My dad's name was Reg. But my uncle Ernie, with a big soggy sicken out of his mouth, on a little road just outside Brantford, as we walked in, I always salivated for the moment when my uncle Ernie would say, well, hold here, Wedge. Well, my dad was Wedge. Remember that little character? Dwat that wabbit? And my son-in-law refers to my dad, says, I sure miss Fudd. That's my dad.

He says, Dwat that wabbit. You see, here's my dad's niece, granddaughter, living in Ottawa, and I would say to her, she was a little girl, I'd say, who's your favorite cowboy? She'd say, Woywodges. And I'd sit there, I was grinning. Inside, I was having a belly laugh because, you see, somehow or other, I can't explain it, how come that little girl, my daughter's talk, normal, and that little one, she got more chromosomes, I guess, than the rest of them, and she talks just like my dad because, you see, when my dad went to the East Coast, somehow or other, we don't understand the mysteries of our physiology, but we were there in him. When Jesus went to the cross, I was in him. My sin, my wretchedness, my wicked heart was imposed upon him on that cross. When they buried him, I was as good as dead because I was in him, and if he'd not risen again from the dead, Paul says, if he did not rise again and if there's no resurrection, the whole thing is a whitewash.

It's nonsense. We, of all people, are still lost in our sin, but he arose, he arose, he arose. He conquered death, he conquered the grave, and he stomped on the devil's head. He arose again, and now, because he ever lives in heaven, I have already begun to experience my eternal life. When did your eternal life begin? The moment you said yes to Jesus. That's when eternal life starts. It's in you.

You're still with us, Bill, from the East Coast. If you weren't with us today, you'd be more alive than you are in your person. The body starts to break down and withers, but rise, my soul, arise. My soul is in him. Eye has not seen, the apostle said, and ear has not heard, and not one of you can comprehend the things that God has prepared for you because he loves you, and now you love him because he first loved you. We are in him. Here comes a word. This is for you, Nicholas, almost, but not entirely, buried with him in baptism.

Next Sunday, we're gonna put on this platform. Are you ready for this? On this platform next Sunday, it's got nothing to do with you, Nicholas. You're a good guy, but up here is gonna be a cattle trough, but it's gonna be all cleaned up and we're gonna put air freshener around it. It's never been used by the farm. We're borrowing it from our good friend down at the North End Church. That guy, he's my daughter's, my granddaughter's pastor. We've got a wonderful relationship, so I sent the word.

I didn't trouble him. I went through channels, and I said, hey, Mike, we need the trough. He said, it's all yours, so it's gonna be up here next Sunday. Now, listen to me, Nicholas. This is not the baptism. There are many baptisms, okay? There are many baptisms in this scripture. There's a baptism of fire.

There's a baptism of love. There's a baptism into the Lord Jesus Christ, and then there's a water baptism, symbolic of my having been dying to sin, which was placed upon him, so when you go down in the water, that's speaking of your submission to him. When he went down, you went down with him, and when you come back up out of the water, that's saying, and with him, I've risen again in new life, but here, it's saying in verse 12 that we're buried with him in baptism, not water baptism, but when we surrender our lives to Christ, he immerses us. Sorry, I gotta deal with this again. We're not sprinkled. We're immersed. This is not like a Brill Cream commercial. A little pfft will do you.

No, brother, you need to go down, and Nicholas, if it was me baptizing you, you better be glad. Apparently, you want me to do it. How long can you hold your breath, Nicholas? Going down is supposed to be symbolic of your death to the old life. I'm gonna hold you now till I see bubbles. Ha ha ha ha ha. I'm kidding, I'm kidding. We do have a machine out here that if you go, we have a thing where you can say, stand up, bang, bang, bang, and bring you back, so we're ready.

We've been buried with him in baptism in which you were also raised with him. That means in him. Through faith in the working of God who raised him from the dead. And you, having been dead in your trespasses and the circumcision of your flesh, he has made alive together with him. Having forgiven all your trespasses. Do you know why he's coming back for us? This'll bend your theological thoughts. As of today, as long as we're here, he's no longer complete.

Now, of course, of course, of course, we are in him. There's a completeness and incompleteness, but he longs for you to come back with him. When the Jewish young fellow was a part of a family get-together and a marriage was arranged, they were considered bride and groom. And the only thing that could've broken that was an ugly divorce. He went home with his father for a whole year. He would be building on addition to his daddy's house. And that whole time, somebody could say, so what's it like to be married, George? He says, well, I asked for a hand, and that's so far, that's all I've got.

He was longing to have his bride to be with him. Jesus needs us. You say, pastor, that's going too far. No, no, no. He loves us so much that he longs for us. Do you long to be with him? And can you conceive of your longing is greater than his? He who knew no sin became your sin, because that's how much he loves you.

There's an old chorus. And as Linda comes to help me with a hymn, I'm gonna sing a little chorus. ♪ Oh how he loves you and me ♪ ♪ Oh how he loves you and me ♪ ♪ He gave his life, what more could he give? ♪ ♪ Oh how he loves you ♪ ♪ Oh how he loves me ♪ ♪ Oh how he loves you and me ♪ Will you sing it with me? Do you know it?