

**RECONCILIATION HEALS.**

<sup>21</sup> “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ <sup>22</sup> But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire. <sup>23</sup> So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, <sup>24</sup> leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. <sup>25</sup> Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. <sup>26</sup> Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

D. Martin Lloyd-Jones, “So if you and I regard the ethical teaching of the New Testament as something that cramps us, if we think of it as something narrow and restrictive, it means we have never understood it. The whole purpose of the gospel is to bring us into ‘the glorious liberty of the children of God.’”

Unity, grudges, & reconciliation:

- Anger & grudges obstruct & **smother** worship – 5:21-23

“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ <sup>22</sup> But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire. <sup>23</sup> So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you,

Proverbs 15:8a

*The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord.*

Proverbs 21:27

*The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination; how much more when he brings it with evil intent.*

Isaiah 1:11

*What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says the LORD; I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of well-fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats.*

Jeremiah 6:20

*What use to me is frankincense that comes from Sheba, or sweet cane from a distant land? Your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices pleasing to me.*

- Reconciliation enables the **freedom** to worship – 5:24; 6:15

<sup>24</sup> leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift... <sup>15</sup> but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

- **Procrastinating** on reconciliation escalates conflict – 5:25  
*Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison.*

- **Freedom** from grudges only comes via reconciliation – 5:26;  
2 Corinthians 5:17-21

<sup>26</sup> Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. <sup>18</sup> All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; <sup>19</sup> that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. <sup>20</sup> Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup> For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Probing questions:

- Are we acting as agents of reconciliation or **division**?
- Are we using our words to build up or tear down?

How do we reconcile?

- Initiate in humility.
  - ‘Look, I’ve been avoiding something I should have done a while ago.’
  - ‘First off, I need to ask your forgiveness for not coming to you sooner with this.’
- Interact with focus on the Gospel.
  - ‘I need to obey God’s Word.’
  - ‘I need your help in helping me obey God’s Word.’
- Emphasize the glory of God as the goal rather than personal vindication.
  - ‘Out of all this I want God glorified, not me being thought of as being right.’