



## Who Am I?

### “I Am An Ambassador of Reconciliation”

2 Corinthians 5:11-21

Sunday | January 31st, 2016 | Pastor Patrick Bowler

#### CONSULT THE SCRIPTURES

**2 Corinthians 5:11-21** *“Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others. But what we are is known to God, and I hope it is known also to your conscience. We are not commending ourselves to you again but giving you cause to*

*boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast about outward appearance and not about what is in the heart. For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; 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. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”*

(See also Jer. 29:1-14, Lk. 19:11-27, Matt. 6:19-21, Deut. 6:6-9)

#### CONSULT THE SCHOLARS

[Charles Haddon Spurgeon] *“I could not, if I took up my parable for a month, set forth all the mass of joy that is to be seen in a multitude of believers if we only look at what God has done for them, and promised them, and will fulfill in them. But there is yet a wider field of thought, and my mind has been traversing it all this day,—the thought of the capacities of service contained in a numerous band of believers, the possibilities of blessing others which lie within the bosoms of regener-*

*ate persons. We must not think so much of what we already are as to forget what the Lord may accomplish by us for others. Here are the coals of fire, but who shall describe the conflagration which they may cause?*

*We ought to regard the Christian Church, not as a luxurious hostelry where Christian gentlemen may each one dwell at his ease in his own inn, but as a barracks in which soldiers are gathered together to be drilled and trained for war. We should regard the Christian Church, not as an association for mutual admiration and comfort, but as an army with banners, marching to the fray, to achieve victories for Christ, to storm the strongholds of the foe, and to add province after province to the Redeemer’s kingdom.”<sup>1</sup>*

#### DISCUSS

1. Pastor Patrick intentionally followed last week’s topic (“I Am A Citizen of Heaven”) with the sermon, “I Am An Ambassador of Reconciliation.” Why? What error was he trying to guard against?<sup>2</sup>

2. READ Jer. 29:4-14. What similarities did Pastor Patrick make with the Christian life today?
3. Fruitful multiplication is thematically woven throughout Scripture. Can you identify some of the stories and/or passages?
4. READ 2 Cor. 5:11-20a. What is an ambassador? What implications is the Apostle Paul drawing in using this word?
5. What does it mean to be “an ambassador of reconciliation?” Diplomacy requires what?<sup>3</sup>
6. Pastor Patrick quoted Rich Plass and Jim Cofield<sup>4</sup> as saying, “The greatest thing you bring to life and ministry is your transformed and transforming presence.” What does this mean? Discuss.
7. The Apostle Paul says, “The love of Christ controls us” (2 Cor. 5:14). What is Paul getting at here? What should compel us to share the Gospel?
8. What immediate applications can be made in light of this text?

<sup>1</sup> Charles Haddon Surgeon, *The Soul Winner* (BiblioBazaar, 2008), p. 134, 135.

<sup>2</sup> Zack Eswine, *The Imperfect Pastor* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015).

<sup>3</sup> Relationship.

<sup>4</sup> Authors of *The Relational Soul*, and the presenters at a class recently attended by Patrick and Tanner Sheahan and their wives (The Pastor’s School, A29 NW).