

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – August 22, 2020

The Lord be with you.

I'm gonna get right to it.

I wanna read a verse of scripture and then tell a story, and it all has to do with how God sees you as a follower of Jesus. First the scripture, Colossians 1:22. Christ has now reconciled you in his fleshly body through death, so as to present you holy, blameless and irreproachable before him. And that's how God looks at you as a follower of Jesus. Christ has reconciled you to God.

Now, a story... My first experience of reconciliation happened when I was a young man and I opened my first checking account. Now, just keep in mind that this would have been long before online banking. When at the end of the month, I receive my bank statement in the mail, and I'm eagerly anxiously tearing open the envelope and there is my balance, there it is, how much money the bank says, I have... Now, I have to set about reconciling my check book to the bank's balance, so I add up all my outstanding checks that have not yet cleared the bank. I add in the fees and I come up with my balance, but there's a problem in that what I have is my balance... Well, it doesn't seem to agree with the bank balance. And this is the first time I'm doing and I'm sure that the bank has to be wrong. Well, it's the bank that is obviously made the mistake, and so what I do is I go back, I again, add up the outstanding checks I add in the fees, I recheck my numbers, and what I am doing is I am reconciling my checkbook. That is, I am bringing my checkbook into agreement, into harmony with what the bank says, my balance is... We call this reconciling.

Okay, now let's just suppose to our moment, let's suppose that rather than reconciling my checkbook, let's suppose that I take that monthly bank statement and I throw it in the trash and I just keep on writing checks, Hey, I can't be out of money, I still got checks. And then did the bank start sending me letters telling me that I am over-drawn and I just keep throwing the letters into the circular file, I'm bouncing checks all over the place. And then one day I get a phone call from the bank and it's the bank president... What sounds like a nice man, and he says, Mr. Smith, it's been brought to my attention that you're having a problem out there, that you are seriously over-drawn and you have been for some time, but I wanna help you. I want to reconcile. I want to reconcile our accounts, and I see that you have a lot of over-drawn checks, a lot of charges that keep piling up and... Well, I want you to know that I have a son and my son, well, he has a lot of money. I mean he has a lot of money in this bank. And my son wants to help you, and if you will let my son help you, my son will settle all of your account, he will pay all the overdrawn checks, he will pay all the charges due you... And what that means is that you won't be getting anymore overdraft letters, you won't be getting any more late charges, so that as far as we're concerned, you are reconciled to the bank. That you are in harmony with us, we are at peace with you. My son will do all of that for you. Okay, now Mr. Smith, will you receive what my son has done for you?

I tell that fanciful story because, well, it helps me and I do hope it helps you to understand what today's Scripture is about, when it says that Christ has reconciled you in his fleshly body through death, so as to present you holy, blameless and irreproachable before him. Christ has done it all. Christ has paid all of the charges against you and me, all the debts due to us, so that he has a reconciled you, so as to present you holy, blameless, and irreproachable before God. Holy, that is

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your set apart and special to God, blameless. It doesn't mean that we're on deserving of blame, but it does mean that because of what Christ has done, God sees you and me as blameless, and it says irreproachable. That we are free of all accusation, no one can accuse us of sin, no one can bring any charge before us, not even our conscience can accuse us, because Jesus has settled the account. Jesus has reconciled us to God. And that's all because of what Jesus did for you and me on the cross, reconciling us to God, holy, blameless, irreproachable before him.

Now, you know, that's a gift that you just can't walk away from. And if you have never before received that gift that is wrapped up in Jesus... Why not do it right now? We receive that all in Jesus Christ. And what's the best thing we can do when receiving a gift?

Well, we can say thank you. So thank You, Heavenly Father, for all that you have done for us in Jesus Christ. Reconciling us to yourself. holy, blameless. irreproachable, loved and accepted as Jesus is loved and accepted by you. That's how you see us God, and help us by your Holy Spirit now to become more and more the people that you see us to be.

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler on the pilgrim way.

Thanks for listening until next time.

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