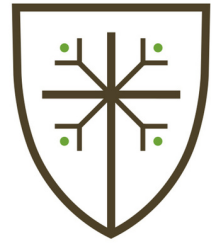


SERMON NOTES



New Creations

An Eastertide Sermon Series

artwork by Ty Nathan Clark

April 14, 2024

SERMON INFO

TITLE

"Reconciliation"

PREACHER

Rev. Josh Keller

TEXTS

Isaiah 30:18-22

2 Corinthians 2:1-11

Matthew 11:25-30

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does Christ's incarnation embody the idea of weakness being flipped on its head?
2. What things might our culture, like the Corinthians, see as weaknesses that are marks of the Christian life?

SERMON IN SUMMARY

This week, Josh continued our Eastertide series on 2 Corinthians with a look at reconciliation. Paul had experienced a break with the church at Corinth that caused pain and division amongst the members of the church and between the church and Paul.

Paul's Problem

The church at Corinth was disunited and had a particular problem with boasting. Overall, they were addicted to things that look good, fame, reputation, strength. In 1 Corinthians, Paul attempts to address these things but is rebuffed and ridiculed. Paul didn't live up to the expectations of what an Apostle should look like. He didn't boast and wasn't impressive by Corinthian standards. So in this letter, Paul boasts. But he flips boasting on its head. Paul boasts in the things that makes him weak. Because what feels like weakness is actually humility. The Gospel reverses our strengths and weaknesses. Christ comes to us in weakness and humility and yet in the strength and power to destroy death.

Double Weakness

Both parties must become weak in order for reconciliation to happen – both the offender and the victim. For the party in the wrong, it feels weak to admit your wrongs. But in that weakness, in that humility, comes a spiritual strength. Paul's accuser in Corinth resisted this weakness, to the point that the church had to call him up for discipline.

There is also a weakness of forgiveness. The church is called to forgive and comfort this man. In forgiveness, you are forced to let go of the power you have over the person who has wronged you, to let go of justice. Even if both parties come together in weakness, it doesn't go away in one effort. It creates a pattern of reconciling, repenting and forgiving that marks the Christian community.

Reconciled People

As the Church, reconciliation is always spilling out from us to other people. The devil tries to create disunion and Paul says in his letter that we cannot allow Satan to divide God's people. Christians are a reconciled people. Christ set aside everything, in ultimate humility and weakness in order to be united to us. In your weakness, Christ strengthens you. The way up is always the way down.