

AMBASSADORS OF CHRIST

All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling^[c] the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ Therefore, *we are ambassadors for Christ*, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

Brethren, it is worth examining the concept of our ambassadorship in the light of the passage above, and others. For this ambassadorship constitutes another dimension and example of our manifestation, and another way of looking at our relationship to our Head, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now firstly, it must be said that in order to be an ambassador from a place, one usually must begin by being a citizen. We therefore turn to Paul's letter to the saints at Philippi to read him bearing witness of the same:

For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: ¹⁹ whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things. ²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven*, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ (Philippians 3:18-20)

And why is our citizenship from heaven? Because we have been born into this same kingdom:

Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ (John 3:5-7)

So then, we are born into the kingdom of God, obtain our citizenship from heaven, and ultimately become ambassadors for Christ. But lest we think of this in earthly terms, let us go on to ponder what this means as far as spiritual realities. What is the kingdom that we are born into? It is the ever increasing kingdom of Jesus Christ, expanding and advancing by His Spirit. What is citizenship of heaven? It is our regenerated beings in subjection to the King Himself, who dwells within all subjects and all citizens. And what does it mean to be His ambassadors? It means that we have become the visual representation of the living Christ, who works powerfully in all of His ambassadors to manifest His light.

Now what can we learn about being an ambassador from its earthly type? Much in every way. I grew up in England, and moved to America in my early twenties. Over the course of the succeeding years I noticed that Americans were always interested by my accent, which in turn led them to ask many questions about England itself. These experiences led me to a greater realization of ambassadorship – you see, I had become the embodiment of England to those around me that had no other immediate way of experiencing that land. My speech marked me out as different, and this led to me being given opportunities to speak about the place I had come from. In a very real way, I was experiencing what it is like to be an ambassador.

In this same way, as sons of God our speech should mark us out as different spiritually, and cause those around us to see us as the embodiment of the kingdom which we represent:

Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one. (Colossians 4:6)

But sanctify the Lord God^[a] in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; (1 Peter 3:15)

A VISUAL REPRESENTATION

Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own *authority*; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. ¹¹ Believe Me that I *am* in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. (John 14:9-11)

This ambassadorship is one who is sent to show a true representation of the one sending him. In the same way Jesus came as a visual manifestation and perfect representation of the Father and related this truth in the passage above, so we are becoming, corporately, the visual manifestation of Christ in the earth as our Lord brings us from one degree of glory to another. This is a high and holy calling, to be part of this wonderful revealing that is going to take place. You see, the world desperately needs to see Jesus Christ, and through Him the Father of all, and one of the biggest problems the world has had spiritually in the past two thousand years, is that the display of Christ in His body has been mixed with so much of the world and the flesh. It is vital that there is ultimately a powerful corporate manifestation of Jesus to the world.

But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰ who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. (1 Peter 2:9-10)

SPIRITUAL AND EARTHLY AFFAIRS

Now then, another mark of an ambassador is that his focus is on representing the one sending him rather than meddling in the affairs of the place he is sent to.

No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of *this* life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. (2 Timothy 2:4)

Can you imagine if an ambassador came to the United States from another country, and demanded the right to vote, and lobby, and defend their rights, and change laws, and generally expend their energy in such a manner? Would Americans not be right in saying that such an ambassador is more concerned with meddling in our business than minding their own? In the

same way, we are seated in the heavenlies with Christ, and are sent into the world to manifest that spiritual kingdom, not to obsess about who rules over these earthly kingdoms which are temporal and must pass away to the everlasting rule of God.

Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. (John 13:16)

Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. (1 John 4:17)

Can you imagine the Lord Jesus Christ, who has ascended far above all things and has been given the rule of all things by the Father, casting a vote for a carnal man in an earthly election? Can you imagine this Lord of all, attended by countless legions of glorious angels and men, defending His earthly boundaries with carnal weapons such as guns and knives? Of course not! So then, should we as His very body, be found doing these things? The world is looking to us for a demonstration of this spiritual kingdom, which is built not by human hands – should we then live in the same way that every other man lives? On the contrary, my dear brethren:

Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme,¹⁴ or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and *for the praise of those who do good.*¹⁵ For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—¹⁶ as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God.¹⁷ Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king. (1 Peter 2:13-17)

We are called to show forth honor and reverence to all, without partiality, demonstrating the good grace and peace of the One who redeemed us.

THE REALITY OF LOVE AND FORGIVENESS

We are called to be a conduit for all the truth of Jesus Christ, His Spirit shining forth through us as pure light through the different diamonds He is shaping. In everything that we say or do, we are in effect proclaiming the nature of the One we claim to follow. Now then, this is a very serious matter as it pertains to all things, but especially so when it comes to His love and forgiveness. You see, for centuries, those who name the name of Christ have testified, both in their words and actions, that His love goes only so far, that his forgiveness only extends so far, and that His blood only covers so many sins. Unwittingly, the church has so often been found testifying of what our beautiful Lord *lacks* in love, forgiveness, and triumph – what a terrible thing! We have envisioned a God who is like the servant in Matthew 18:

“But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took *him* by the throat, saying, ‘Pay me what you owe!’ (Matthew 18:28)

And what did the Lord of that servant say?

Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?’ (Matthew 18:33)

Unforgiveness is such a serious matter, because when we do not forgive others, we are testifying that Christ’s blood has not been found sufficient for their forgiveness. But when we forgive all freely, we do so in agreement with the great truth, that the price for sin has indeed been paid, and that our Father is a merciful, forgiving Father.

In the light of all this, the concept of ambassadorship is very useful for reminding us of our place as bearers of the light of Christ and ministers of His grace. We are not called to curse the darkness, but to let the light shine forth. We have become children of light and life, and when we have been perfectly conformed to that light within, we shall become perfect ambassadors and embodiments of that light. Then the world shall see a true corporate witness of Jesus Christ, and the prophecy shall be fulfilled:

Arise, shine;

For your light has come!

And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you.

² For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth,

And deep darkness the people;

But the LORD will arise over you,

And His glory will be seen upon you.

³ The Gentiles shall come to your light,

And kings to the brightness of your rising. (Isaiah 60:1-3)