

'DOWN TO EARTH LOVE, FROM ABOVE'
(Fullness of Joy through Biblical Fellowship in Christ)
A Study of Philemon

'Wreck-conciliation'

A few days ago I was reminded again that we live in a broken world where everything is in some state of degeneration or disrepair. While winding up an outside water hose, the water pipe coming up out of the ground to the faucet snapped off causing a mini-geyser next to the house. In futility I tried to fix the situation, but nothing I attempted could even impede the fountain of water soaking the house, yard, and me. Rather than waste any more time (and water) with my terribly inept attempts to fix the problem, I did the sensible thing, called Guam Water Authority to help by turning off the water at the street. Then I called our property manager to contact a plumber to fix the pipe. Discounting my foolish waste of time trying to fix it, the whole mess was *reconciled* in a couple of hours. *Damage-control* was accomplished and the day, rather than be wrecked by the incident, was fixed and completely wreck-conciled (until next time).

In these last days before Christ returns to lift the *Edenic curse (Genesis 3)* and restore the world to its pristine *pre-fall* condition, escalating sin is making this world *a wreck looking for a place to happen*. This includes people, their lives, choices and relationships (*Romans 8:20-23, 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7, 2 Timothy 4:12-13, etc.*). In this age before the Lord comes to fix everything with His awesome supernatural power, He has left the ministry of wreck-conciliation to all of us who are true followers of the Lord Jesus Christ: ***"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he or she is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things are of God, Who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the Word of reconciliation..." (2 Corinthians 5:17-21).*** It would seem then that a main purpose the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross for us, arose from the dead and sends His Spirit into us when we repent and turn to Him, is that He can continue to do what He did when He was here in the flesh and what He will do again when He returns – *fix broken things*; people, their relationships and situations through US – ***wreck-conciliation***.

Oh, we do other things too like worship, serving and sharing our faith, but these are the things He uses to train and equip and empower us to *wreck-concile* the broken things He brings into contact with us for fixing. Spirit-filled Christians are whom He uses to reconcile people with God as we tell and teach the gospel, and to reconcile people with each other as we counsel His Word about their issues. The Bible is our repair manual about everything under heaven that needs fixing. The Holy Spirit is the Master Craftsman Whom we assist in fixing broken things. A Bible-teaching church is where we receive training in *wreck-conciliation*. And in this *sin-wrecked* world where God places us to live and work are the crash scenes where He places us to do the ministry of reconciliation.

Once upon a time even we Christians were a *wreck (spiritually, morally and physically)* but Jesus came to us, connected us to the cross, took us to Himself, and reconciled us to God. By His love and grace He took all our brokenness upon Himself and has been putting us back together ever since, hasn't He? Now, the Savior wants you, in His strength, to do the same with all those broken people He brings into your life.

As we leave church today and get back to where He has called you, look around and start to notice the broken lives and relationships that desperately need biblical ***wreck-conciliation***. Pray about it first, and then as God directs, find some way to let the Lord begin reconciling them to Himself through you (perhaps some other Christian friend, if more appropriate (*girls with girls; guys with guys*)). This is why Christ has saved you, is fixing you, and has planned for you to live in this broken world a while longer before you go home to heaven, where nothing ever needs fixing. But for now, we are here with His purpose and assignment – we, the *reconciled* have the ministry of ***wreck-conciliation*** *'til He comes.* **PtL**

Fixing God's Flock
(Our Ministry of Reconciliation)
Reconciliation 'Sandwich' #3

A Slice of Whole-Grace Greeting

(Agape love & faith)

"Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon our beloved friend and fellow laborer, to beloved Apphia, Archippus our fellow soldier and to the church in your house. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." Vs. 1-3

I thank my God, making mention of you always in my prayers, hearing of your love and faith you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints, that the sharing of your faith may become effective by the acknowledgment of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus. For we have great joy and consolation in your love because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother." Vs. 4-7

'Food for Thought to Chew On'

(Agape love & truth)

"Therefore, though I might be very bold in Christ to command you what is fitting, yet for love's sake I rather appeal to you – being such a one as Paul, the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ – I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten while in my chains, who once was unprofitable to you but now is profitable to you and to me." Vs. 8-11

I am sending him back. You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart, whom I wished to keep with me that on your behalf he might minister to me in my chains for the gospel. But without your consent I wanted to do nothing, that your good deed might not be by compulsion, as it were but voluntary." Vs. 12-14

For perhaps he departed for a while for this purpose that you might receive him forever, no longer as a slave – but more than a slave - a beloved brother, especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord." Vs. 15-16

A Slice of Whole-Grace Blessing

(Agape love & hope)

"If then you count me as a partner, receive him as you would me. But if he has wronged you, or owes anything, put that on my account. I, Paul, am writing with my own hand. I will repay – not to mention to you that you owe me even your own self besides. Yes, brother, let me have joy from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in the Lord." Vs. 17-20

Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say. But, meanwhile, also prepare a guest room for me, for I trust that through your prayers I shall be granted to you." Vs. 21-22

Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow laborers. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen." Vs. 23-25