



Ambassadors Not Antagonists

APPETIZER: Living in an Anger Culture

Perhaps the only thing we can agree on at this painfully divisive moment in our history is that all this anger and derision in which we are marinating isn't healthy. Not for us, not for our kids and certainly not for the country. But...we can't seem to quit. We're so primed to be mad about something every morning, it's almost disappointing when there isn't an infuriating tweet to share or a bit of our moral turf to defend waiting on our phones. ~ S. Schrobsdorff

DINE IN: Third Way vs. My Way or The Highway

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors...

Reconcile (reconciliation) – *katallage*

- Removal of animosity
- Healing of broken relationships
- Radical change from inside out

What does reconciliation look like?

To be ambassador rather than an antagonist...

1. I need to be honest about who I am.

2 Corinthians 5:11,14; 1 Timothy 1:12-15; Luke 7:36-50

2. I need to view others clearly.

2 Corinthians 5:16-17; Genesis 1:26-27; Galatians 3:26-28

TAKE OUT: Ambassador's Duties 101

1. Keep things in perspective.

For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him (Jesus), and through him to reconcile to himself all things. Colossians 1:19-20

2. Build bridges.

Peacemaking doesn't mean passivity. It's the act of interrupting injustice without mirroring injustice, the act of disarming evil without destroying the evil doer, the act of finding a third way that is neither fight nor flight but the careful, arduous pursuit of reconciliation and justice. ~ Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals

3. THINK before you communicate (speak, tweet, post).

T: Is it true
H: Is it helpful?
I: Is it inspiring?
N: Is it necessary?
K: Is it kind?

4. Pray!

God gives us discernment in the lives of others to call us to intercession for them, never so that we may find fault in them. ~ Oswald Chambers

NEXT WEEK: Home Brewed with Jimmy Rushton

Home Church Questions

HANGOUT [Warming Up to the Topic – in one Large Group]

1. Talk about what you remember being most interesting, encouraging, or challenging in Sunday's message.
2. Do you sense we are experiencing an increase of anger and polarization in our culture? If so, what do you think are the factors contributing to this?
3. Social media seems to cultivate a lot of angry interaction. Why? Do you find it hard to stay positive, especially on social media?

HEAR [Listening to God through Scripture – in Discussion Groups]

4. **Read 2 Corinthians 5:11-21.** Remember to use these questions more like a menu to choose from than a list to be fully completed.
 - a. What jumps out at you when you first read through this passage?
 - b. Paul points to Jesus' love and his death in v. 14-15 as he leads up to his focus on reconciliation. Why is this so important?
 - c. Paul challenges us to not see others from a "worldly" point of view. Consider Paul's own life, as well as our situation today: What difference does it make how we view or consider people?
 - d. In v. 17 Paul celebrates the fact that in Christ the new creation has come. Discuss the difference this truth should make in the way we live our lives, approach our "anger culture" or interact with others.
 - e. Consider the various ways God can make his appeal through us to a broken world (v. 20).

HUDDLE [Making It Personal and Praying Together – in Huddles]

5. What are you encouraged about in your work as an ambassador of reconciliation? What would you welcome prayer for regarding anything that may need to change?
6. Are there places of anger or perhaps relationships that are broken where you'd welcome prayer support?

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