

May, 2020

GLOBAL TRAINING
NETWORK

In His Grip



The Good News of Reconciliation

Recently, I was asked to explain in one of our newsletters a demonstration we use to help students understand the doctrine of reconciliation. This doctrine teaches us about all that God did to overcome sin and bring us back into a solid relationship with Him. It shows us His magnificent grace. It also has implications for our human relationships. So this month is the perfect time to offer it to you for your encouragement.

In class, I ask for three volunteers. To one, I give the overwhelming responsibility of portraying God the Father. To the second, I give good news and bad news. The good news is that he/she gets to portray Jesus Christ. The bad news is that he/she is going to be crucified. I explain that I will portray the Holy Spirit in this demonstration. To the third volunteer I apologetically assign the role of sinful mankind.



I ask the volunteers portraying God the Father and sinful man to stand back to back with their arms folded. This demonstrates the natural state of alienation between God and mankind because of sin. We are, by nature, enemies of God (Col. 1:21). I explain that God has turned away from mankind because of our sin (Isaiah 59:2) and, further, that God in His perfect justice requires that sin be duly punished. He is also filled with eternal wrath against all sin (Rom. 1:18). Now, mankind, for his part, has no interest in God either (Romans 3:11). His sin has blinded him to his own spiritual need and peril.

However, while sin has made us enemies of the Father, God has never stopped loving us (John 3:16). So He sent His Son, Jesus, to the Earth. Jesus came to give His life to pay the penalty God's justice demanded for our sin (1 Peter 3:18).

At this point in the demonstration, I turn to the volunteer representing Jesus and point out that God the Son, who was infinite in every way, contained Himself in human flesh and died as a unique being, 100% man, yet also 100% God. I have the volunteer extend his/her arms as though being crucified.

Now I begin to describe what His death did for us. Turning to the volunteer portraying the Father, I explain that His just demand that sin be punished is fully met by the cross. As a consequence, His great wrath against sin is appeased (Romans 3:24-26). This means that God can now actively seek reconciliation between Himself and



man *without violating* His own justice. I ask the volunteer to turn and reach out his/her arms toward sinful man. Now, sinful man is still not interested. He/she thinks they are fine. I explain how God by His Holy spirit (whom I portray) begins to work in this person's heart convincing and convicting him/her of their own sin and need. He works in such a way as to draw this person to repent and believe (Romans 2:4). When this occurs, the man is reconciled to God. I ask him/her to turn and reach out to God the Father. I have them embrace. *This is reconciliation.*



Thanking the volunteers, I ask them all to be seated and then ask the class two important questions: "Who caused us to be enemies with God?" The answer, of course, is "We did!" Then I ask, "Who did ALL of the work to bring about reconciliation?" The answer comes a bit more thoughtfully, "God did."

This leads to three incredibly important lessons for our students and for YOU! With these we conclude. First, we should MARVEL at the grace of God. We are not the authors of our salvation in any way! We deserved to die, yet Jesus died instead. We could never do this for ourselves (Romans 5:6-11). Our relationship with God is a work of God and God alone! Second, if you have a broken relationship in your life, who should seek reconciliation: the one who has been wronged or the one who IS wrong? The answer is, "YES!" Whoever can do so, should. This is the NATURE of grace. It is reconciliation that

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Where in the House Is Bob This Month?

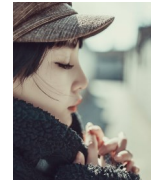
Eileen and I are facing the same trial as all of you. We are at home and unable to do a lot of what we do. So what are we doing about it? Well, actually there is more than you might think to keep us busy. During April and May, I have been unable to travel to the Philippines, Malawi, and Rwanda as I had intended. Instead, I have used much of the time to get caught up on home projects including adding shelves to three closets, doing a big maintenance project on the family car, and digging a large (285 ft) French drain for our yard. Eileen and I are also working together to strengthen our marriage by reading and discussing the book "How We Love," by Milan and Kay Yerkovich. We have been in touch personally with many of our partners here in the U.S. and will continue to make calls throughout May. It has been a blessing to chat with many of you.

The month of May promises to be busy with training. First, I will be working with one of my GTN colleagues, tutoring him through the Timothy curriculum which I use extensively. Our aim is to certify him as an advanced trainer. In this way my own efforts will be multiplied. I hope to teach a group of Filipino students an online course on Christian Marriage as well. They have been locked down in Manila now for almost six weeks, so the course will be timely. This class was slated for late April, but had to be postponed.

The exact date is not yet set. I have also launched an online class in our church dealing with Christian Stewardship. We do hope to visit one of our partner churches IN PERSON this month as circumstances permit. What a blessing that we can be isolated yet still connect and train for God's people for His glory.



Our Praises and Prayer Requests



- Praise God our regular giving has remained fairly good in spite of COVID-19.
- Praise God our Matching Fund has grown to \$19,100.
- Praise God for some wonderful ministry opportunities in May.
- Please pray for churches and students around the world.
- Please pray for one another as we all grow restless during this pandemic.
- Please pray that our Matching Fund grows to \$25,000 by the end of May.

The Good News of Reconciliation (Cont'd)

matters. It is the need to restore the relationship that pricks our bubble of self-righteous indignation. This often means that it is the one who is more "in the right" who, never-the-less, must make the most intense effort and pay the high price to reconcile. That's what God did for us. Third, if God paid THIS price to reconcile us to Himself, what price are YOU willing to pay to communicate this good news and enable people in your life (and around the world) to be reconciled to God?



Matching Challenge: Home Stretch

The Edmondson Matching Challenge had a slow month in April due to the coronavirus pandemic; however, May is starting out stronger. Our total now stands at \$19,100. Our goal is to raise \$25,000 by the end of May to offset the costs of training events through the rest of 2020. We need a big finish to make our goal. If you would like to help with an extra gift to the Edmondson Matching Fund, instructions are below. Our students will thank God for it and for you, especially now.

Ministry Partnership

Your financial partnership is essential as we carry out our God given ministry. Please follow the instructions below or on the enclosed response card (US mail version).

"Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account... And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:17, 19)

You may give online at:

www.globaltrainingnetwork.org

Just click on "Give," then scroll down until you can click on our picture. You can fill in the form (for regular support) or scroll down and select "Matching Fund" (for training expenses).



Support also accepted at:

Global Training Network
PO Box 6507
Peoria, AZ 85385

(Please include a note indicating that your gift is preferred for the **Edmondson Matching Fund #43502**, or #435 for regular support.)

Please call GTN at 623-217-3867 if you need any assistance.

Our Itinerary

- May 17:** First Baptist Church, Duncan, AZ
- Aug 2:** Mesa Baptist Church
- Aug 9:** Calvary Crossroads, Wenatchee, WA
- Aug 16:** East Wenatchee First Baptist Church, WA
- Aug 30:** First Baptist Church, Quartzsite, AZ
- Sept 13:** Sandy Ridge Community Church, UT
- Oct 8-17:** Malawi (tentative)
- Oct 18-24:** Rwanda (tentative)