1Thess #7

The responsibility of witnessing

We will open up in Ephesians chapter two today and we will remain there looking at the doctrine of reconciliation.

Let me first recap some important points related to the Bels calling to evangelize. Which points to both your words and lifestyle.

/All Believers are witnessing about who they are in Christ with their words and actions. Witnessing is the responsibility of every ambassador, Bel priest and royal family member. The power of the HS is working within the Bel and around the Unbel and therefore is an intricate part of the call to evangelize.\

The witness of your life is found throughout scripture such as - 2Cor 3:3, 2Cor 6:3, The life of men like David and Moses, or women like Sarah and Bathsheba.

The life of the Apostles is a powerful witness.

/The Believer must understand Christology (person & work of Christ) and basic concepts of soteriology (doctrine of salvation). Doctrines under soteriology - reconciliation, redemption, propitiation, imputation, justification, and atonement. They need not be well versed but they must understand basic concepts under these doctrines.\

If the Bel understands the person and work of TLJC these salvation principles will be at least familiar language and they will have a grasp on simplistic definitions or explanations for witnessing.

The doctrine of reconciliation, becomes a greater value for witnessing after the Bel understands the person and work of TLJC.

Correct and accurate information is always powerful and enlightening.

At this point in the church of Ephesus, the Apostle Paul is teaching these Bels that God’s grace is boundless.

Even if the religious Jews would not accept them. They are given the grace of GOD like everyone else who believed upon Christ.

/ Eph 2:8 **For by grace you have been saved through faith**; and this *is* not of yourselves, *it is* **the gift of God**; 9 **not a result of works**, so that no one may boast.

Not through circumcision, Jewish bloodline, water baptism, tongues or ritual is anyone saved! \

That is the point the Apostle Paul is reassuring these Gentile Bels about.

Jump down to verse 13;

/Eph 2:13 But **now in Christ Jesus** you who previously were far away have been **brought near by the blood of Christ.**

Positional truth, written in a present tense – once saved always saved.\

Your position is in Christ after salvation.

That one shot decision of faith alone in Christ alone set your position in heaven forever.

The blood of Christ is part of the representative analogy between the physical death of animals in the Old Testament and the spiritual death of Christ on the cross bearing our sins.

Blood was the symbolic sacrifice in the OT, because the blood represented the life of the animal.

REPEAT

The physical death of Christ on the cross occurred not by bleeding but by an act of His own volition.

The Apostle Paul is bringing together what the Bels of the OT had and pointing these new Gentile Bels to the work of Christ on the cross.

That is what unites all Bels.

/[Eph 2:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/2/14/s_1099014) For **He Himself is our peace**, who made both *groups into* one and **broke down the barrier** of the dividing wall,

The dual meaning here was the wall of the Jewish temple and the wall of sin that blocks us from fellowship with God.\

This points directly to reconciliation.

The Jews built a huge wall around the temple.

Remember also, the veil in the temple which was about 18 inches thick and 60 feet high, that was torn when Christ gave up HIS spirit on that cross.

All very symbolic.

/The physical temple in Jerusalem had walls and security measures. Gentiles could be around the outer court but never past the middle wall. The middle wall was an entrance which the Jews could go but not the Gentiles. The penalty for any Gentile going past the middle wall was death. But Jesus Christ broke it down. \

Even within the temple, in the Holy of holies was the large veil which only a high priest could enter.

When you accept Christ as savior, the baptism of the Spirit immediately enters you into a permanent position, in union with Christ.

At that moment in principle the walls and barriers are ripped down. The middle wall is broken down. The walls and barriers point to separation from GOD, the OSN is a barrier for every person.

REPEAT

The Apostle Paul is reassuring these Gentile Bels there is nothing between you and GOD. This is an intimate relationship that you entered into at the moment if salvation.

It's not related to religion, rituals or bloodlines.

The distinction between Jew and Gentile was a huge issue for religious Jews and it is eliminated in the Church Age. Circumcision has no spiritual advantage over uncircumcision, water baptism or rituals have no advantage, blood ties have no advantage.

/Reconciliation is a legal standard that something was paid. A penalty was removed because it was processed through legal qualifications. Both Jews and Gentiles have the same position if they believed upon Christ. The legal process was removed because of the person and work of Christ were brought through the divine legal system for us! \

There was a death sentence for everyone because everyone was born totally depraved – born into sin.

TLJC faced that penalty for us – HE reconciled that judicial penalty with HIS own body.

/[Eph 2:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/2/14/s_1099014) For **He Himself is our peace** (*eirēnē*),

Harmony, safety, tranquility of mind and body – a rest from war or wrath.\

I-RAINY, means a perfect harmony where there once was a declaration of war. To bring calm and prosperity to two parties who were at odds with one another.

As if two kingdoms were on the verge of bloody war and now there is a peaceful harmony that ensures safety forever.

Jesus Christ brought peace or harmony. A harmony that removes the wall between Jew and Gentile, a harmony that destroys the wall between mankind and God.

The strategic victory of Jesus Christ removes any barrier or wrath that was scheduled to come. Reconciliation removes real barriers between God and man, as well as false barriers between man and man.

There is no reason for prejudice.

Reconciliation points us to two races in all of humanity – Bel or Unbel. You either have a relationship with TLJC or you are on the outside of that barrier.

Black, white or brown skin tones are all man-made barriers. GOD does not even recognize that – HE recognizes Bel or Unbel.

[Eph 2:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/2/15/s_1099015) by abolishing in His flesh the hostility, *which is* the Law *composed* of commandments *expressed* in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two one new person, *in this way* establishing peace;

This tells us the humanity of Christ paid the penalty for all of mankind.

No other human being could pay the price needed, no other human being could walk through the justice system of God and break down the barrier between God and man.

It was the Hypostatic Union of Christ that was unique and only HIS humanity as the 2nd Adam that could break the curse of the 1st Adam.

/Eph 2:15 – the hostility of the LAW –

Points to the fact that mankind can not live in sinless perfection.

Commandments & ordinances –

Points to every aspect of commands and laws given throughout history from God to mankind there has been sin present.\

TLJC abolished and did away with all of that, it is all fulfilled in the person and work of TLJC therefore if you are in union with Him it is no longer a barrier.

/Eph 2:15 - so that **in Himself He might make the two one new person**, *in this way* establishing peace;

The work of Christ is offered to create a new creature – so that WE MIGHT be brought into harmony with God.

(2Cor 5:17)\

2Cor 5:17- *“if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation”*

You are born again at salvation.

The Unbel remains the same, an enemy of God. Even though Jesus Christ went to the cross for the whole world there still is a need for free will to play a role in the equation.

/[Eph 2:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/2/16/s_1099016) and that **He might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross**, by it having put to death **the hostility** (*echthra*).

The original language uses the term enmity in many of the scriptures pointing to hostility between God and man. This means enemy / foe.\

ECK-THRAH, this is a very strong noun that points to warfare or hate.

God loves the whole world so the combat or ferocity of hate and enmity is because the human race refuses to accept the reconciliation.

The Amplified Bible has it written like this;

/Eph 2:16 (amp) And (HE designed) to reconcile to God both (Jew & Gentile, untied) in a single body by means of His cross; there by killing the mutual enmity and bringing the feud to an end.\

We are hostile toward GOD because of the OSN and God can not have any kind of harmony with sin and evil.

HE loves the Unbel but the sin barrier is actually hostile to the justice and righteousness of God, that is the issue.

Fallen mankind and divine Deity cannot intermingle – it is oil and water.

God in eternity past made sure there was a grace plan for the sin issue. When the Unbel refuses, that is the true combative problem. Jesus came to present the harmony for all mankind;

[Eph 2:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/2/17/s_1099017) And He came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near;

[Eph 2:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/2/18/s_1099018) for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.

TLJC is the only mediator, the only one who could reconcile fallen mankind.

[Eph 2:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/2/19/s_1099019) So then you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household,

/[Eph 2:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/2/20/s_1099020) having been **built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets**, Christ Jesus Himself being **the cornerstone**,

From Genesis into Revelation the men and women of GOD were intricate pieces of the foundation – yet the cornerstone is what everything is built on and holds it together.\

In ancient architecture the cornerstone was everything!

Historically, the cornerstone was the most important part of any building. The total weight of any structure rested on this particular stone, which, if removed, would collapse the whole building.

The cornerstone was also the key to keeping the walls straight. The builders would take survey sightings along the edges of this part of the building.

[Eph 2:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/2/21/s_1099021) in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord,

[Eph 2:22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/2/22/s_1099022) in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

Notice it points to an ongoing journey – we are being built into a divine structure.

/The motivation for witnessing comes from our priesthood and our love for God. The office of ambassadorship calls for it and the Royal Family integrity is a natural witness. The ministry of reconciliation belongs to all three categories of evangelism; 1. personal witnessing (Bel), 2. the office of the evangelist (title or calling), 3. the function of the national missionary calling (client nation unto God).\

The mechanics and knowledge of Reconciliation points us to the other doctrines of soteriology.

That is why in theology you often hear that reconciliation is the first work GOD performed to free mankind for all other aspects of salvation.

/Reconciliation points us to Unlimited Atonement, the work of Christ brought peace and harmony by breaking down the sin barrier for all mankind.

Reconciliation points us to payment of sin which is expiation. Expiation tells us Christ paid the legal penalty for us.\

This also means we have been redeemed from a slave market of sin that all mankind wallows in.

/Reconciliation brings us to a new birth as well. The OSN was the barrier to GOD, our human birth was under the 1st Adam our new birth is under the 2nd Adam. This is the doctrine of Regeneration.

This means you were now Imputed with a new nature of Christ’s righteousness. Imputation of pure righteousness now shines a light of Justification on your new nature, which passes through the Justice System of God.\

/God’s perfect character can now have intimacy with you because of the New Nature which means the justice system was completely satisfied – Propitiation.

All because Christ reconciled the OSN for all mankind upon that cross. All of this is complete and imputed into your soul at the moment of salvation.\

When you start understanding these doctrines you realize there is nothing any human being can add to this or take from it.

This is way beyond anything we can even fathom on our best day!

Remember Christ is the issue of salvation, not making people denounce their sins, not giving up bad habits or rituals.

All of that is salvation by works.

Don’t add to the Gospel - don’t add to the perfect grace plan of God.

/Changing a person’s behaviour, altering their personality, or highlighting certain sins accomplishes nothing toward salvation. Feeling sorry for sins, and being baptized in water are false issues in salvation. Avoid using gimmicks or emotional pleading which confuses the issue of evangelism. The issue is recognition that they need a saviour and Christ is the only ONE! \

Effective witnessing depends on the ministry of God the Holy Spirit in His convicting ministry. When the Unbel has the realization that they are helpless and hopeless, it is then that they turn to Christ like the thief on the cross.

He knew he deserved to be there and he knew he was in a helpless, hopeless situation and he recognition Christ is exactly who HE claimed to be.

/The Holy Spirit brings the presence of the Gospel to the Unbel and makes it understandable, which is Common Grace; the inhale.

Efficacious Grace is the ministry of God the Holy Spirit in making faith in Jesus Christ effectual; the exhale.\

/God the Father had the perfect plan from eternity past, God the Father planned the removal of the barrier — doctrine of divine decrees.

God the Son executed the plan of removal of the barrier; He tore down the wall.

God the Holy Spirit reveals to humanity the truth that reconciliation is complete in Christ.\

So, everything in reconciliation is accomplished by God and man is the beneficiary — “man is reconciled.”

God’s perfect grace plan was that we are born in sin – the free will of mankind ensures we will rebel against a perfect God. Yet also within that grace plan was the payment for sins through the work of TLJC. The same sin nature that made us hostile toward God is the same sin nature that was nailed to the cross. We just need to accept the person and work of Christ.