

Biblical Wokeness, Part 2

The Doctrine of the Church

By Rusty Grant

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Bible Text: Ephesians 2:14-16
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Grace Covenant Baptist Church

700 Trenton St.
West Monroe, LA 71291

Website: www.gbcwcm.com
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/gbcwcm

Okay. Alright, as we're getting ourselves kind of lined up here and going in the right direction, we come back to the text that we were considering last week, Ephesians 2. We're actually going to be looking at verses 14, 15 and 16 tonight under the heading "Biblical Wokeness, Part 2." Now you remember last time we were together, we were talking about being woke and what wokeness means and I'm sure that many of us still struggle to kind of get our minds around what all of that entails, but the thought that we introduced last time and that we'll continue on in tonight is that there is a biblical wokeness, there is a biblical awareness of the reality that we live in. And we saw last time we were together that the reality that all people live in is that all people are in need of the same thing, and that is reconciliation with God. All people are in need of that and we're going to come to a thought tonight as we look at verses 14, 15 and 16, that the doctrine of the church and the church being God's called people, that doctrine requires that all people regardless of ethnicity be reconciled to God through the sacrifice of Christ which brings the unity of a new nature to all believers.

There's an awful lot in that statement and we're going to unpack it tonight as we look at this, but here's the basic gist, that unity, the unity brought about in the gospel is not a legislative unity. It's not an external unity. It's not that God said, "You shall be nice." Yeah, what does Voddie call that? The 11th Commandment, "Thou shalt be nice." And you know, the first 10 don't matter.

[unintelligible]

Huh?

[unintelligible]

Voddie does say that.

[unintelligible]

Well, yeah, God said be nice, right, in a sense.

[unintelligible]

Right. It's not that God said be nice, it's not that God said y'all get along, right? What parent has not been on a vacation and threatened the kids in the backseat that if the kids don't behave and get along, that the vacation is going to get cut really short? You know, it may, it doesn't matter, you may have just driven 18 hours to the wilds of Wyoming but that vacation is going to get cut short because you're going to drive 18 hours back if it kills you if the kids don't straighten up. It's not that God does that. God doesn't force unity. He doesn't force us being nice to one another. The reality, as we'll see in our text tonight, is that our natures change, that we take on the new nature, right? 2 Corinthians 5:17, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation, the old things have passed and the new things have come." And so it's not an external legislative unity, it's actually the unity of heart and mind that comes about in the regeneration of the believer.

I'm going to start at chapter 2, verse 13. We finished with verse 13 last time we were together but it's a great launch point and the connecting tissue, if you will, between last time and this time. Ephesians 2, starting at verse 13, focusing on verses 14, 15 and 16.

13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility 15 by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, 16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.

Father, again we thank you for all that you've give to us tonight. We praise you for your continued grace and mercy and goodness to us. And Father, as we look upon your text, I pray, Father, that you would give us eyes to see and ears to hear and hearts that are open to receive all that you have for us, and that we might see that only in Christ there is peace. There is no peace anywhere else other than in the Lord Jesus Christ because he is the one who has killed the hostility between people and the hostility between people and our Father, God the Father. And so, Lord, we just ask tonight that you would help us to see all that we need to see, that we might be salt and light in this world, of the realities of the gospel that you have poured out in our lives. We love you, Father. We praise you. We thank you and, as always, ask these things in your name. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit we ask. Amen.

The first thing that we're going to talk about tonight is this: outside of Christ there is no peace. No peace between men and God and no peace between men and men. Now in the current political and social environment we live in right now, this is why I am coming to the opinion pretty quickly that those who are adamant about this social justice intersectionality, critical race theory, all wokeness, all that stuff that's floating around in our world today, folks that will not repent of that are outside of Christ. And I hate saying that. Again, for the third week in a row, I hate saying that because there are some pretty noteworthy people on that list currently. But as you look at the agendas of the social

justice movement, it is not about peace, it is not about reconciling people with one another, and it's certainly not about reconciling people with God. It is about grievance. It is about entitlement. It is about recompense. It is about giving me something for something or giving somebody something for something I never did. And it's not about unity and it's not about bringing people together, it's actually if you look at the core of it, it's about dividing people. It's about us and them, you against me, and there's no reconciliation in it.

So my opening statement tonight that outside of Christ there is no peace. If you're existing in a world and if you're promoting a doctrine or a dogma that doesn't have peace in it, then you're outside of Christ. It is a gospel that is outside of Christ. It is a gospel of division and based upon what Paul told the church at Galatia, if anybody brings another gospel, let them be accursed. They are not preaching the gospel of Christ, okay? So it's serious. I hate to say it and I wish I didn't have to say it but I think it needs to be said that the only place that we find peace is in Christ.

So as we begin to look at this first point, outside of Christ there is no peace either between men and God or men and men, we begin in verse 14, "For he," Christ, "himself is our peace." You see, the reality is there is no need looking for peace anywhere else other than Christ, okay, because it just isn't there. You're not going to find peace in environmental ideas, you know, the environmental people like to say they are promoting peace, peace with the environment. Well, we're not at war with the environment. As a matter of fact, the environment has been subjugated in the fall of Adam just like us, and so we're both fighting the same battle. We're not at war with Mother Earth so there's no need to reconcile and bring peace with Mother Earth. So there's no real peace there. There's no real peace in politics. There's no real peace in social justice. There's no real peace in any of the other stuff that I just through mentioning. There's just no peace because the only place we find peace is in Christ, and the reason why we can only find peace in Christ is because he is himself our peace, right? That's what Paul says, "For he himself is our peace."

So we might take away from this the idea that there's no peace in us apart from Christ, even within the church; that if it were not for Christ, I would not be a man of peace. I wouldn't be a person of peace. I would be lost in my sin. I would still be pursuing the things that I want and I would still be doing all the stuff I did in my lost condition. But in Christ now that I'm in Christ or that the believer is in Christ, I no longer live the way that I used to, I live according to the mandates of Christ because it's Christ who lives in me and I see life differently. I have a different perspective on things. I begin to see worldly things with sharper relief. I see and understand worldliness a lot more than I used to. I used to live in a fog and I just kind of was participating in worldliness, never saw it, but now in Christ, the peace that he brings I see worldliness for what it is. I see all of this worldly wisdom and in particular this social justices stuff, I see it for what it is, that there's no peace there because Christ is not in the center of that. Christ is not being exalted. Christ is not at the center of their doctrine or their dogma and so if Christ is not there, there's no peace there.

It really is interesting to me in Luke 2:14, a verse that we all know and we hear it a lot at Christmas, Luke 2 really adds, I think, to this particular idea. In verse 14, this is what the angels declared when they announced Christ's birth. They said, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom God is pleased!" And so the angels from the very beginning of Christ's advent in that they were announcing his birth, the first thing the angels declared was glory to God.

Now I want to just ask this question. We have a good friend of ours a number of years ago said this, she said anything that doesn't bring glory to God is an idol. And I agree with her. I think she was exactly right. Anything that does not bring glory to God is an idol. Now it puts the glory somewhere else. We glory in ourselves. We glory in sports stars or political figures or entertainment figures of some kind, and I believe that for a lot of the folks in our current social frameworks that we're fighting against, social justice, intersectionality, those kinds of things, that really the glory is not God. Well, I know the glory is not God. We can look at it and see the glory is not God. We can see that the glory is them and so that's an idol. That's idolatry. They are engaged if nothing else in idolatry. They are worshiping Baal and they're not worshiping God.

So we see here in Luke 2:14 the first criteria that we might use to determine is Christ at the center or not is this to the glory of God, okay? And if it's not to the glory of God, it's outside of Christ, and if it's outside of Christ, there's no peace. But it goes on to say, "and on earth peace among those with whom God is pleased." And so the glory of God is just not this ethereal celestial thing that exists, you know, out, you know, in heaven never to intersect life. You want to talk about intersectionality, let's talk about the intersection of the glory of God in the lives of fallen people. There's an intersectionality for you. Maybe I'll preach a series on biblical intersectionality now that I think about it. But God through the man Jesus Christ condescended from heaven, he did not consider equality with God a thing to be grasped Paul tells us in Philippians 2, but he humbled himself and took on the form of a servant, a bondservant, and was obedient even to the point of death. You see, the glory of God, the majesty of God, the sovereignty of God, the omnipotence and the omniscience and the omnipresence of God doesn't just remain in heaven never to intersect or have any interaction with human beings at all. God has intervened, there is an intersectionality between God and man through the man Jesus Christ.

So in Luke 2, very clearly the angels declare, "and on earth. Glory to God in the highest," that's where God is, but on earth in the lives of people, we have this interaction between God and man. And look at how the angels describe it, that intersectionality between God and man is peace. Do you see that? "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace." Now the angels go on to qualify where that peace is and among whom that peace resides. It's not just peace universal on the face of the earth. We know that to not be true, right? "I heard the bells on Christmas day, their old familiar carols play. Loud and sweet, the song repeat, Peace on earth, good will towards men." But Longfellow goes on to say that, "Hate was strong and mocked the song of peace on earth, good will towards men." That in the world as he saw it, there was not peace even though the angels declared peace.

Why is it that the angels declared peace at the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ? "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth," the intersectionality of God and man, "peace." It's because it's peace with a certain group of people. Look at the last part of verse 14, "peace among those with whom he is pleased!" Now I know many versions don't word it that way but the ESV does and there's a particular reason why the ESV words it that way, because Christ came to bring peace among those who were reconciled to a holy God through his sacrifice, and if you're not reconciled to a holy God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, you have no peace with God. And if you have no peace with God, you don't have peace with anybody else and that's exactly what's going on in the world today. We've got a bunch of people, some of them dressed up in religious habits, religious robes, who really have no peace with God and because they have no peace with God, they don't have any peace with anybody else, okay?

So we see, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" Those who believe in the gospel. So the reality is there is no need looking for peace anywhere else because you're not going to find it which brings me to the second little subpoint under number 1. Remember we're talking about outside of Christ there is no peace, there is no peace either between men and God or men and men. So this peace that Christ brings is not a legislative peace, it's an ontological peace, alright? So back to Ephesians 2:14, "he himself," Christ, "is our peace, who has made us both one." Well, what in the world is Paul talking about when he says he's made us both one? Well, in this section of scripture what Paul is talking about is he's using the contrast between the Jews and the Gentiles to illustrate that at one time before the reconciling work of Christ, there were the Jews and there were the Gentiles and the two never intermingled, the two never met.

Now look, I realize somebody is going to say really quickly, "What about the Samaritans? You know, because they were half-Jew, they were half-Assyrian. Okay, the Assyrians obviously were Gentiles so your statement, Rusty, that the Jews and the Gentiles never mixed is not exactly right." Okay, alright, with the Samaritans, got you, but what I mean when I say that the Jews and the Gentiles never mixed is that the Jews, the good proper Jew would not interact with the Gentiles. As a matter of fact, because some Jews in the exile married into the Assyrian culture and had children, the Samaritans, they were not thought well of by the Jews, okay? They were shunned and despised by the Jews, right? Remember the parable of the Good Samaritan, right? Jesus paints the picture that the scribe and the Levite didn't help the man who was injured and he was Jewish, the injured man was Jewish, it was a Samaritan who helped the injured man and went out of his way to take care of him to answer the question who is my neighbor, right? This lawyer, scribe came to Jesus and said, "Teacher, what is the greatest commandment?" What does it read to you? Love God with all your heart, soul, might and love your neighbor as yourself. Jesus said, "You do well. You're almost there." And then wanting to justify himself, the lawyer said, "Oh, by the way, who's my neighbor?" And Jesus in Luke tells the story of the Good Samaritan. The Samaritans were not thought well of. Gentiles were not thought well of. There was a dividing wall that Paul's going to talk about here in just a minute between the Jews and the Gentiles and they never crossed

that dividing wall ever. The Gentiles could not become Jewish and the Jews certainly didn't want to be Gentiles. There was a division.

Now what am I saying here? There was this scenario between Jews and Gentiles that we have today. We have people dividing themselves based upon their ideologies, upon their religious beliefs. Now what I mean by that is not a Christian religious belief but a social justice religious belief. Social justice and intersectionality is nothing but another religion. It has faith. It has a priesthood. It has a canon, I mean a scripture that it follows. It is another religion and so it is dividing people just like the Jews used to divide themselves from the Gentiles and when Christ came, Christ didn't come and issue a new law that said, "Hey, y'all ought to get along." Right? No, Christ didn't have to issue a new law. He actually changed the hearts of people who were living under the law and people who were living outside the law, and he changed the hearts of both of them so that they became one in his gospel in belief and trust in the gospel. And it's an inward change. It's a heart change, not a legislative change. There is not a new law. There is not a new rule that says that we have to love people but when Christ enters our heart and we become Christian, the love that Christ has poured out in our lives we then begin to exhibit in the lives of other people. We are pouring love out into them.

We are not, as Christians we're not dividing, we're actually trying to unite all people under the banner of Christ. We're not trying to tell people that you're not good enough and you owe me reparations and your forefathers did this. No, we're saying, yeah, okay, I don't know whether my forefathers did that or not but in Christ we can all be one. There's forgiveness of anything that I may have done to you or forgiveness of what you may have done to me. That stuff doesn't matter to us as Christians. What matters to us is that people come to the knowledge of Christ, they ask for forgiveness of their sins, they're reconciled to God through the blood of Christ, and we welcome them as brothers and sisters in Christ regardless of where they come from or their ethnicity or their cultural background. It doesn't matter, right? We are actually striving to unite people, not divide people. Why? Because this peace is not a legislative peace. It's not a law that was written down by Christ telling us we have to do this. It is an ontological peace that comes when we receive the new heart and the new mind and the new spirit living inside of us. Does that make sense?

So Colossians 2, starting at verse 10, Colossians 2:10. I'll be reading down to verse 14. If y'all want to turn over there for a second, you can. Colossians 2:10. Paul says to the church at Colossae, "you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority." Now what Paul is saying is that you have, the church at Colossae has received everything they need. Everything that was necessary or required of them, they have received through Christ who is the head of all rule, and he's the head of all authority. It's Christ that has done this, right?

"In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ." Now there were some Jews at Colossae but there were also Gentiles in the Colossian church, and so the Gentiles, this whole idea of circumcision was completely foreign to them. They had no idea what that

was about and the Jews did and the Jews kind of looked upon their circumcision as making them a little better than everybody else, but as we saw last week and in some other places, that they were subscribing to a circumcision that was made by hands. It was circumcision of the physical flesh, not the heart. And so their boast was in a work, what they had done, not in the grace and the mercy that Christ had brought into their life.

So Paul is saying to the church at Colossae, "In Christ you were circumcised with a circumcision that wasn't a circumcision of the flesh, it's actually a circumcision of the heart." Well, how do you get your heart circumcised? How do I do that? I mean, do they open up my chest and cut something off and close me back up? No, it is an ontological circumcision. It's not a literal circumcision. Biblically what it means is that you've got a renewed heart. You have been regenerated by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. You're a new person with new thoughts and new ideas and new perspectives and new desires. I mean, everything is changed.

Verse 12, "having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead." So he's telling the church at Colossae that as Christ was raised from the dead by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit or the Spirit of Christ, okay, let's just get this straight before I move forward. The body of Christ was in the tomb, right? He was crucified, he died on the cross. The Romans said he was dead. The Pharisees said he was dead. The people that were there said he was dead. Why did they say he was dead? Because he was dead, alright, okay? And I promise you the Romans knew what a dead body looked like. They wouldn't have mistaken it. So Christ is dead, they put him in the tomb. He's there for parts of three days, alright, Friday, Saturday and came back to life on Sunday morning. And so how did Christ, how did the dead body of Christ come back to life in the tomb? The Spirit entered him. His Spirit. Christ's Spirit or we call it the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of Christ entered into that dead body and that body came back to life, right? Alright, and so that is pictured in baptism. The believer is baptized, immersed in water, to signify dying to the old way, dying to self, being raised to the newness of life by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit that raised Christ from the dead will raise our mortal bodies from the dead if the Spirit of Christ resides within us Paul tells the church in Galatia, I believe it is, okay? So that's what Paul is saying here in Colossae. Having been buried with him in baptism in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God who raised him from the dead. So as we're baptized, that's signifying that the new life, the old man is dead, the new man has come about because of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 13, "And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross." So there is a legal requirement in the gospel in that our sins have to be paid for, right? Our transgressions had to be paid for, but we don't pay for those. Christ paid for those. Christ in our forgiveness, we receive forgiveness not because God just said, "It's okay. Don't worry about it." That would violate God's justice. But we receive forgiveness of sins because God said, "I'm taking your sin and I'm putting them

on my Son." That's what Christ paid for on the cross. So there's a forensic or a legal component of that, that is true, but our new nature and the change that comes about in our lives is not a legal or a legislative change. It's not that we are obeying a law, we are actually changed from the inside out and we have received a new nature, right? And because we have received a new nature, we have received the nature of peace. Follow that? Okay.

Third little subpoint under number 1. I'm still on number 1, alright, so y'all bear with me. This reconciliation is not ethnic, it is spiritual, alright? Listen to verse 14, back to Ephesians 2:14, "For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility." Again, Paul is making reference to that division between Jews and Gentiles. Jews who were the covenant people of God, they considered themselves to be in covenant with God, they had received all the covenant blessings. And then the Gentiles who were outside of God, were not part of the covenant, were far off if you'd look back to the beginning of Ephesians 2, you would see those of you who are far off have now been brought near, those kinds of terminology.

So what's the point here? It's ethnicity. Paul is saying that in the biblical economy, Jews and Gentiles, which that's really the only two ethnic groups that the Bible recognizes, Jews and non-Jews, they are at enmity with each other, they are in hostility, they're fighting against each other, and if you don't believe me that they're fighting each other, just watch the news because the Jews and the Palestinians are still going at it. That's Jews and Gentiles. That Paul is highlighting this, that in Christ the reconciliation, the breaking down the dividing wall is the breaking down of ethnic division. Ethnic division. That's an important point in our world today. The gospel breaks down the dividing wall of ethnic division, okay? Ethnic division. That's why in a couple places Paul says there's neither Jew nor Greek, male or female, bond or free, Scythian, Roman, barbarian. All of that is gone and we'll look at those cross-references here in just a second because in the gospel ethnicity is a secondary issue, and ethnicity is not something that we separate over in the gospel. Ethnicity is not something that makes certain people a favored class within the church. You don't get more credit, your opinion is not more authoritative and we don't somehow give you more credence because you can check off five or six intersectionality boxes. All of that is secondary.

Your intersectionality boxes are you're a sinner. And some of those intersectionality boxes are clearly sinful, right? Gay, lesbian, transgender, sexual identity that goes outside of the biblical norm, those are sinful behaviors. And so you're claiming and this will light you on fire, just realized this, you're actually declaring to the world, "I'm a wanton sinner and I like it." Intersectionality, right? Human intersectionality. But we've already seen that God intersects human beings in the gospel, in Jesus Christ, and when God brings his form of intersectionality, all of those ethnic divisions, black, white, yellow, people of color, people not of color which is an oxymoron, we're all people of color, some of us just got a little more color than others, right? We've all got color. I don't know anybody who's pasty white, do you? No. No. No. No. Yeah, you're dead. If you're pasty white, you're dead, you're not breathing. We've all got a little bit of color but that doesn't matter. It is as Voddie Baucham says, it is not a matter of how much melanin is in your skin. That's

not the issue. Did I say it wrong? Melanin, whatever. At least I didn't say melamine, right? The issue is a spiritual issue, not an ethnic issue.

John 10:14, "I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me." That is Jesus talking. What in the world is he talking about? Is he talking about raising sheep? No, he's talking about people who follow him, believers. Now how is it that Jesus could say, "I know my sheep and my sheep know me"? Well, I would point us back to the Old Testament prophets in Ezekiel and Jeremiah where God says, "I will enact a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I enacted with their fathers when I took them by the hand and led them out of Egypt, but I will enact a new covenant." Right, y'all remember that one? "And there will be no need for each of them to say to one another, 'Know your God,' because they will know me from the greatest of them to the least of them." That's what Jesus is saying. Because of the new covenant as pictured for us in the Old Testament, the believer, the one who has the Spirit of Christ living in them knows Christ. They know who Christ is. How do we know who Christ is? Because we have his Spirit living inside of us, right?

So he says, "I am the good shepherd. I know my sheep and my sheep know me, my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd." What in the world is Jesus talking about? Well, he's talking about the Gentiles. That's exactly what he's talking about. He's not talking about pockets of Jews that are in the dispersion, there's this group of Jews here and that group of Jews there. No, the Jews, to a certain degree, are already in the flock. The believing Jews are already in the flock, they're already the sheep that know Jesus, but there is another flock, right? What does he say? "I have other sheep that are not of this fold." That's the Gentiles.

So Jesus is making the point that Jewishness and Gentileness doesn't matter. There are Jewish believers. There are Gentile believers. Ethnicity doesn't matter. What is the main thing? Belief and knowing Christ, right? Being a sheep, whether you're a black sheep or a white sheep doesn't matter. Be a sheep. Don't be a goat, right? Goats are bad. Sheep are good. Be a sheep. Ethnicity is not the issue, it's a spiritual issue, okay? So outside of Christ, not having the spiritual condition, not having the ontological condition but making it about race and ethnicity or making it about some sort of legislative action or rule that you have to follow or a forced repentance or a forced compensation, okay, those are outside of Christ, there's no peace. Why is there no peace? Because Christ is not in the middle of it. If there's no Christ, there's no peace. Outside of Christ there is no peace between God and man and there's no peace between men and men, alright?

Number 2 tonight: Christ's reconciliation doesn't just remove hostility between people, it makes believers all new people, okay? I think sometimes we believe that the gospel just removes hostility. No, it doesn't just remove hostility, it actually makes people new, and because they're new, the hostility goes away, right? This is what I mean. Verse 15, he "has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in

place of the two, so making peace." Alright, in this, in verse 15, we have a little bit of a Greek structure here that I want to just enlighten you on quickly so that you'll understand why I'm giving the three propositions under head number 2 that I do.

The word "abolish." Okay, the ESV uses the word "abolish" and I agree with the writers of the NET, the New English Translation that "abolish" is probably not the best word because what the word that Paul uses here doesn't mean to do away with completely, it means to render ineffective, okay? To render ineffective, and so just as an example, we might say in verse 15 by "rendering ineffective the law of commandments expressed in ordinances," okay? Jesus said, "I didn't come to do away with the law, I came to fulfill the law." Well, what did Jesus mean when he said, "I've come to fulfill the law"? Well, he came to die as an atoning sacrifice so that the mandates, the requirements of the law, might be fulfilled in him, and that that fulfillment of the requirements of the law and the righteousness that flows out of it might then be given to those people who believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ. We can't fulfill the law because we're sinners. We have transgressed the law and so any penalty that might be paid out to us is due recompense for our breaking the law, right? We've broken the law, we have to pay the fine, okay? So we can't be the recompense that Christ can because Christ was perfect. Christ never sinned. He never transgressed the law. There was no punishment needed to be dealt out to him for transgression. He was perfect. So he died on the cross not to pay for his sins, he died on the cross to pay for your sin and my sin, right?

So when Jesus said, "I've come to fulfill the law," what he meant was is that he came to pay the price that we couldn't pay, alright? So when Jesus pays the price that we can't pay, he renders the law ineffective against us. Why are we no longer held accountable to the law? Because Jesus paid the penalty and once the penalty is paid and the transgressor is dealt with in a legal matter, there's nothing else that can be done to him. The debt is paid. Alright, do y'all see where that's going? So when Paul said that he abolished the law, what he meant was is he rendered ineffective the commandments expressed in ordinances because Christ paid the penalty or paid the price for us in his death.

So Christ has rendered the legislative part of this of no effect, that the legislative, the forensic part of this, the legal requirements that God places upon every sinner is made ineffective in Christ. Now if you're not in Christ, the law still bears on you. You don't have anybody paying the penalty for you. You've got to pay it yourself which is judgment and condemnation. But if we're in Christ, if we have come into this reconciliation that Jesus offers through the gospel, then the legislative penalties are made of no effect for us because Christ paid them, alright? That's the basic gist of it.

Hebrews 10:19, "Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water." Now let me ask you a question, you Old Testament scholars. The tabernacle that they used before they built the temple and then after they built the temple, right? The Holy of Holies where the ark of

the covenant resided. Y'all know what I'm talking about? Could you just bust off up in there, whoever wanted to go in there could go in there? What? What would happen if you just busted off up into the Holy of Holies? You'd die. Why would you die?

[unintelligible]

Yeah, before Ichabod, before the Shekinah glory, before God's presence left the temple, by the way, God's presence left the temple prior to the first exile to the Assyrians. When the Assyrians overthrew Israel, they did so because God's presence was removed, not because somehow they were smarter or they were more militarily savvy. No, they took them over because God's presence left. It was judgment, okay? But before God removed his presence from over the ark of the covenant in the Holy of Holies, God's presence hovered there. God resided there in the temple and if you went in in an unworthy way, sinful flesh cannot be in the presence of a holy God and, as y'all said, it wouldn't turn out well. You would die. It was a very serious thing. It's a real thing. It's not myth. It's not folklore. It's not Indiana Jones. It's actually real, okay?

So how is it the writer of Hebrews can say we have confidence to enter into the holy place or places by the blood of Christ, by a new a living way that he's opened for us through the curtain? Those are specific references to the Holy of Holies. How is it that the writer of Hebrews can say, "Yeah, you can go into the Holy of Holies. Don't worry about it. The veil has been opened. You can go right in." How? Through the blood of Christ. Through the blood of Christ. We have been granted access into the presence of God through the blood of Christ which, again, fulfills all the legislative requirements and ceremonial requirements that were necessary prior to Christ's death that gave people entrance into the presence of God as pictured for us in the Holy of Holies, the Shekinah glory, the ark of the covenant and what all the priests had to do to actually go in once a year to offer a sacrifice for the sins of Israel committed in ignorance, right, on Yom Kippur, Day of Atonement. Yeah, so we know from the Old Testament they just couldn't bust off up in there but the writer of Hebrews says in Christ all those requirements have been made of no effect. Why? Because the blood of Christ has been offered in the doctrine of propitiation, the blood of Christ has been offered once to cover the sins of God's people.

Christ has rendered the ethnic part of this of no distinction "by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances that he might create in himself one new man in the place of the two." So when I was saying "no effect," I'm taking that idea, abolishing, and I'm applying it to three separate ideas in verse 15. The first one was the ordinance of commandments expressed in ordinances, the legislative part of it. The second one is the ethnic part of this, that he might create in himself one new man in place of two. You see, what Jesus did as he rendered the commandments ineffective was to take the separation that came between Jew and Gentiles, because the Jews were keeping the commandments expressed in ordinances and the Gentiles were not, since those commandments expressed in ordinances from a legislative perspective are now of no effect, no account in Christ, then I don't have to be born a Jew to be reconciled to God. I don't have to follow the dietary laws to be reconciled to God. I don't have to go to synagogue and offer sacrifices

and do all the feasts and festivals to be reconciled to God. All that is necessary for me to be reconciled to God is to be found in Christ and Christ opens that opportunity to Jews and Gentiles alike.

Every tribe, every nation, every tongue, every kindred, there will be believers from all of those people around the world, Jew and Gentile alike, that are brought into a reconciled state with God. We receive forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ. It doesn't matter black, white, yellow, pink, purple, polka-dotted. It doesn't matter, the ethnicity part is not what is the distinctive. Being found in Christ is the distinctive. There are those that are in Christ and those that are outside of Christ. How do we know they're outside of Christ? They have no peace. How do we know they're inside of Christ? They're full of peace and they're trying to promote peace because Christ is peace. Does that make sense? And so Christ rendered the ethnic part of this of no distinction.

Galatians 6:13-17, "For even those who are circumcised do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh" I want to stop right there. All of this social justice stuff and critical race theory and intersectionality, all of this stuff that's going on, they're trying to get you over on their side, okay? They're trying to win you over to their side of the argument. Are you benefited when you come to their side of the argument? Are you somehow made better when you come to their side of the argument? If you become a believer in CRT/I, are you somehow, is your eternal future set? Not at all. None of that. You're not better. You're actually made worse because you're brought into division and hostility. You have no benefit. There's no eternal benefit in it at all. Who's the only one that is benefiting by you converting to CRT/I? The proponents of CRT/I. They're it. They are boasting in what you have done but, look, we've got another one, we've got another evangelical leader to come over to our side of the fence. We've got somebody who ought to know better now espousing CRT/I. They've abandoned their theology and now they're over on our side of the fence. It doesn't benefit that Christian leader at all. It benefits CRT/I. That's the only one that benefits. Does that make sense?

Now having said that, let me read this verse 13, this is Galatians 6:13, let me read verse 13 again. "For even those who believe in CRT/I don't themselves keep the mandates of CRT/I but they desire to have you believe CRT/I that they may boast in your flesh."

[unintelligible]

Your flesh. What you've done. And I don't think substituting circumcision for CRT/I here is a leap. Circumcision made with hands was a work. CRT/I is a work, okay? Y'all follow what I'm saying?

Verse 14, "But far be it from me," Paul says, "to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. And as for all who walk by this rule, peace," catch this, "peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God. From now on let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks

of Jesus." So Paul says these earthly distinctions don't make any difference, right? Circumcised doesn't count for anything. Uncircumcised doesn't count for anything. White doesn't count for anything. Black doesn't count for anything. People of color, people of non-color, people of this group, that group, this intersectionality group, they don't matter. Why do they not matter? Why does the ethnic part of this discussion not matter? Christ has rendered it of no distinction. It's just as simple as that.

Third little point under number 2. I'm coming around curve number 3 headed to the checkered flag. Christ has rendered the division of no substance. Christ has rendered the division of no substance. Verse 15, "by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace." Alright, so did you catch that? That he rendered the commandments and ordinances ineffective. He rendered the ethnicity of no distinction in that he made the two one. And when he fulfilled the ordinances, when he fulfilled, when Christ fulfilled the legislative requirements that were leveled against us for our sin, when he fulfilled that and he opened the door for Jew and Greek, male and female, bond and free, to come into this reconciled, this reconciliation through his blood and those who were called came into that reconciliation through his blood, the result was he made peace between groups of people who otherwise were at hostility one with another, alright?

So he didn't pass a law, he fulfilled the law. He didn't really make a new group of people, he just made new people, right? And because of that ontological change, that spiritual change in the hearts of people, he brought about peace. If we truly love Christ, then we will love his people, right? We'll love his word. We'll love his people. Why do we love his people? Because they have the same Spirit living in them if they're truly Christ's that we have in us if we're truly Christ's. There is a unifying bonding together like family of God's people. Peace is the natural result of the work of the gospel in the hearts and the minds of people. And I'm going to go back to something I said as we started our time tonight. If there's no peace, if that peace has not been made, then I think it is not a very far stretch to say that Christ is not in it. Christ is not in the doctrine. Christ is not in the people. Christ is not in the agenda. Because if Christ were in the doctrine, if Christ were in the people, if Christ was in the agenda, there would be peace not division.

Colossians 3:9 and following, "Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator." Alright, so let me just stop right there. That's verse 9. Paul is talking to the church at Colossae and he's telling some of the people in Colossae, "Quit telling this story. Quit lying to each other. Quit trying to make it something that it's not." You can't call yourself a Christian and hold to CRT/I. Jemar Tisby is wrong. Thabiti Anyabwile is wrong. Matt Chandler is wrong. David Platt is wrong. Mark Devers is wrong. John Piper is wrong. They're wrong. In a sense, they're lying to one another. They're saying you can engage in CRT/I and call yourself Christian. Resolution 9 passed two years ago in the Southern Baptist Convention is wrong. It's just wrong. You can't do that. We have to stop lying to one another. How do we stop lying to one another? Seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices. What is the old

self and its practices? Division. Hatred. Ethnicity. Recompense. Well, it's not reconciliation, it's reparations, thank you. That word had just gone right out of my mind.

It's not being reconciled. It's not being brought together. It's not loving one another. You know, what happens in those whole woke business is charges are leveled and evangelicals who are wanting to be peaceable say, "Well, I don't really believe it and I don't understand it, I don't think that's right, but we're going to try to be peaceable and so we're going to go along with it. Okay, please forgive us for the wrongs that our forebears committed against your forebears." I mean, I saw a video of people kneeling in front of this social justice guy. He was screaming at them that they were wrong, what their forebears did was wrong, and they're kneeling before this guy asking for forgiveness. And did he grant forgiveness? No. He wanted more. That's the thing we need to understand about CRT/I, it's not about reconciliation, it's about division. It continually wants to divide and the practitioners of CRT/I are doing nothing but dividing people.

Okay, that's the old self with the old practices and that is the old self outside of Christ. That's what Paul is saying. In verse 10 he goes on to say, "and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator." It's peace. It's unity. It's not division. It's not me pitting myself against you or highlighting all the things about you I don't like or the things about you that are not like me. It's actually overlooking those things, realizing that we're all made in the image of God, that we're all children of God if the Spirit of Christ lives within us. If we have put off the old self and have put on the new self, then we are growing in our understanding of the knowledge, the image of our creator, of being made more like Christ every day. And so peace is very much a part of that process.

"Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all." You see, all of the distinctions that the world wants to prop up as reasons why we can't get along, Paul just said Christ renders them all of no substance. Is there male and female in the world after the gospel takes root? Are there Christian women and Christian men? Sure there are. Sure there are. Are there black folk who are Christians and white folk that are Christians, and yellow folk, and green folk, and purple folk who are Christians? Yeah, there are. Tall folk, short folk, thin folk, heavy folk, old folk, young folk. But we're still all in Christ, right? We don't look at those distinctions anymore because we look at Christ as Christ, what did he say, Christ is all and in all.

So in verse 12 he says, "Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive." He says that three times: forgiving one another as the Lord has forgiven you, you must forgive. Not seek reparations. Not highlight some supposed offense that one's ancestors did to your ancestors. Oh, by the way, the only person that can receive reparations is the one who was offended, okay? Reparations are not transferable to descendants. They have to be made to the one who was offended and so this idea of my ancestors were offended and so you owe me, your ancestors did

something bad to my ancestors and so therefore reparations are transferable to me from you is a legal fallacy and is just not biblical. It's actually worldly. It's divisive and it's not of Christ. And again, anyone who promotes this is not of Christ because we saw just here, right here, Colossians 3, forgiving each other as the Lord has forgiven you because the Lord didn't have to forgive me, right? Was the Lord obligated to forgive any of us? No. It's out of his love that he forgave us. And because we have been forgiven a debt that we couldn't pay, we must forgive those who owe a debt to us that they can't pay.

"And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony." Did you catch that, binds everything together in perfect harmony? Why is it unified? Why is it in harmony? Why is there peace? Because it's in Christ. And if it's outside of Christ, peace and harmony is just not there.

So because believers have been granted reconciliation with God, they are now at peace with other believers. Verse 16, back to Ephesians 2:16, "and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility." Killing the hostility between us and God and killing the hostility between us and others. As a Christian, I should certainly be bound together in harmony and unity with other Christians. We just saw that in the Colossians passage. Christ has done the work in me, he has done the work in you. If he's done the work in both of us, then there is no excuse for being divided. If there is division between so-called Christians, it's because one or both of them are not in Christ and that's just the reality. Again, there are some very thoughtful men over the years theologically who have bought into this and if they don't repent of it, I think it's evidence they're outside of Christ. I don't care how smooth their words are, I don't care how good their theology may have been in the past, if they are promoting division, they're outside of Christ. That's the biblical testimony, not me.

So if we are in Christ, then the hostility has been killed, okay, and we understand that because if we're reconciled to God, we're at peace with others. We try to be at peace with the lost world. It's hard to do that because there's no peace in them. But we can be messengers of peace, right? We can be the ambassadors of peace. But among those who have come into Christ and they've received peace, there must be unity and peace between believers, and if there's not, then it's probably because Christ is not there.

And so this is biblical wokeness, part 2. We all have a new nature as believers and because we all have a new nature, there is a unity within the body, amen? Amen.

Thoughts or questions before we finish for tonight? We're getting there. I told you we would.

[unintelligible]

Okay, I'm trying to be. Alright, well, let's pray and then we'll be dismissed.

Father, again we thank you for the day that you've given to us and, Lord, we praise you that your word is clear, that your word tells us directly what the truth of the situation is.

And we just ask, Father, that that truth, the biblical truth, would not only permeate all of our conversations but it would go into the world and, Father, I ask that your truth would absolutely eradicate wokeness, that it would absolutely eradicate the philosophical arguments raised by ungodly men, that it would prove the goodness of the gospel and that the opponents would have their mouths shut because they have nothing to say that the gospel cannot answer. Father, we need the light of the gospel in the world and we ask that you would use us to take that light into the world and that, Father, you would begin to save other sons and daughters from their sins, and that we would not be divided any longer but that we would be brought together as one body, with one Spirit, one Lord, one baptism, and that we would rejoice, Father, in what you have done in the lives of all your children, and that we would rejoice that we have been unified and reconciled to you through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Move upon us in these ways and help us to take this message into the world. We love you, Father. We praise you. We thank you and continue to ask these things always in your name. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit we ask. Amen.