

Rejoice! God and Sinners Can be Reconciled

Message 03 in the series “The Weary World Rejoices”

1. The bad news: We’re all filthy, rotten sinners who have offended God.

“When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam’s sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned.” Romans 5:12 (NLT)

“...No one is righteous—not even one. No one is truly wise; no one is seeking God. All have turned away; all have become useless. No one does good, not a single one.” Romans 3:10-12 (NLT) (Psalm 14:2-3)

“...you who were once far away from God. You were his enemies, separated from him by your evil thoughts and actions.” Colossians 1:21 (NLT)

2. The good news: Jesus became one of us in order to reconcile us with God.

“That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord’s glory surrounded them. They were terrified, but the angel reassured them. ‘Don’t be afraid!’ he said. ‘I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger.’ Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased.’”

Luke 2:8-14 (NLT)

Rejoice! God loves us and wants a relationship with us even though we’re filthy, rotten sinners.

“...’A man had two sons. The younger son told his father, ‘I want my share of your estate now before you die.’ So his father agreed to divide his wealth between his sons. A few days later this younger son packed all his belongings and moved to a distant land, and there he wasted all his money in wild living. About the time his money ran out, a great famine swept over the land, and he began to starve. He persuaded a local farmer to hire him, and the man sent him into his fields to feed the pigs. The young man became so hungry that even the pods he was feeding the pigs looked good to him. But no one gave him anything. When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, ‘At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger! I will go home to my father and say, ‘Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant.’” So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him. His son said to him, “Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son.” But his father said to the servants, “Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him. Get a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet. And kill the calf we have been fattening. We must celebrate with a feast, for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found.” So the party began.” Luke 15:11-24 (NLT)

Rejoice! Jesus came to take our sins upon himself so we could be made right with God.

“He was despised and rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care. Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God’s paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all.”

Isaiah 53:3-6 (NLT)

“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV)

Note: In all other religions, sinful people perform good deeds and engage in religious activities in order to win or regain the favor of the god whom they have offended. In Christianity, Holy God, whom we offended, came seeking us while we were still sinners and paid the penalty for our sins because we could never pay it.

“Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.” 1 Timothy 1:15 (NIV)

“God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.”

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NLT)

Rejoice! We now get to help others be reconciled with God.

“God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people’s sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. So we are Christ’s ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, ‘Come back to God!’” 2 Corinthians 5:18b-20 (NLT)

“When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, ‘Let’s go to Bethlehem! Let’s see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.’ They hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger. After seeing him, the shepherds told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to them about this child.” Luke 2:15-17 (NLT)

John Schmidt • 12-20-20 • john@centeringlives.com