

THREE GLORIOUS THEMES

2 CORINTHIANS 5:18 • TV118B

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By

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2 Corinthians 5:18

“And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.”

I’m real excited about the message that I feel God has given me to preach to you today. I’m going to be speaking from the book of **2 Corinthians chapter 5:18**. I wish you would turn in your Bible to this verse of Scripture and prepare to look carefully at every word with me; will you do that?

The title of this message is: **“THREE GLORIOUS THEMES,”** all in one verse!

The Scripture is found in **2 Corinthians 5:18**; listen to it: *“And all things are of God who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.”*

Now, our text begins with a mighty theme. As I said; there are three glorious themes and our text begins with a glorious theme: *“All things are of God.”* Have you learned this? I rejoice that it is so.

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I suppose that's the reason I am excited about the message because God has been pleased by His grace and through the power of His Spirit to bring me to appreciate and to love the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

And I'm glad God is God. I rejoice in God Himself: *"All things are of God. All things in the creation of this world are of God. The Scripture says: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."*

"The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork." It says in **John 1**, *"All things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made."* Let everyone of us go on record as declaring with the Holy Scriptures *"all things are of God;"* that is, all things in the creation of this world are of God. He made it. He made it for his glory. He made it for his eternal praise, God created all things.

And you know the writers of Scripture saw God in everything. David talked about the stars and the moon and the sun and the heavens declaring God's wisdom, God's glory and God's might.

Then David said: *"I will lift mine eyes up to the hills from which cometh my help."* Then he says: *"The Lord is my shepherd. He leads me by still waters. He leads me in green pastures."* And our Lord Jesus Christ talked about the lily of the field, *"it toiled not, neither does it spin and yet Solomon in all his glory was never arrayed like one of these."*

Then our Lord talked about the sparrow. Think how small a sparrow is. When you think of the vast universe and they tell us that this universe is billions, and billions of miles wide and stars and planets and all of these things and how small the earth is compared to the vast infinite space of the universe, and think how small a sparrow is and yet, Christ said, *"not one of them falls to the ground without your heavenly Father."*

God made all things; *"all things are of God."* Even the hairs of your head are numbered, the hairs of your head. God knows men's thoughts; *"all things are of God."*

Then, all things in the creation of man are of God. This is what the Scripture is saying. This is a grand and glorious theme: *"All things are of God"* (all things). *Without him was not anything made that was made."*

All things in the creation of man are of God. He said: *"Let us make man in our own image, let us make man in our likeness."* *"God created man, male and female, created he them."* And David said: *"It is the Lord who hath made us and not we ourselves."*

I know there are some folks out there listening right now who say: "Well, I don't believe that Genesis account of creation." Don't call it the Genesis account of creation, call it; "God's account of creation." That's what it is, it's God's account.

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I know that we try to soften our rebellion and our unbelief by calling it the “Genesis account” but that’s in God’s Word. And our Lord Jesus Christ talked about making the world. The apostle Paul talked about God making the world. So, it’s not a Genesis account at all; it’s the Bible’s account of creation and God’s account of creation.

I will tell you this and I don’t mean to offend you but if truth offends it will just have to offend. No man can believe in evolution and believe the Bible. You just can’t do it because the Bible sets several reasons why:

First of all: The Bible says: “God created man!”

It says that plain and simple. It doesn’t say this in one place, but in many places: *“God who spoke the light out of darkness, who created the worlds, all things were made by him and for him and by him all things are held together.”*

This is all the way through the Bible. So, you can’t believe in evolution and believe the Word of God. You just cannot do it.

Secondly: The Bible says: *“God created man in his image!”*

And God is not a monkey and He’s not a tadpole and He’s not a frog and He’s not a one-cell animal. He’s not an amoeba.

God is the eternal living God, all wise, infinite, righteous and holy. He made man in His image. He said, *“Let us make man in our own image.”*

Thirdly: The Bible says God created man high and he fell!

Evolution says he was low and he’s climbing gradually up. That’s the opposite. That’s not saying the same thing at all.

Fourthly: The Bible says that man needs a Saviour to lift him!

The evolutionist says: “Well, leave him alone; he’s making good progress. He’ll come out all right in the end. He’s evolving into something better all the time.” There’s nothing better in this day. There’s nothing new under the sun: *“Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.”*

Men are just as evil today as they ever were. Where are your David’s and your Moses’ and your Abraham’s and your Ruth’s and your Matthew’s and your apostle Paul’s? Where are they today?

Where are your statesmen? Where are your leaders? Man is the same sinful creature that he always has been. He fell; that’s what happened. He’s not evolving and he’s not getting better. He’s just the same as he was after the fall of Adam.

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He's not getting any worse. He's just the same as he was; he's a sinner. He's alienated from God. He's without God, without hope, without Christ in this world. *"There's none that doeth good, no not one."*

God, back in the days of the flood, looked down upon the children of men and He said: *"every imagination of their heart is evil continually."* That's so in 1980 as well as it was 6,000 years ago; man is the same.

God created man high and he fell. He didn't make us like we are. We retain some evidence of His creation. We retain some of His image but all in all and basically, man is a fallen, spiritually dead creature.

"All things are of God." Isn't that a glorious theme? You can stay on that all morning: *"All things are of God."* All things in providence are of God. Listen to the Scripture: *"In him we live and move and have our being."* That's providence. In God we live, we move.

I raise this hand; I do it by the will of God. I do it as God enables me. I couldn't raise my finger without God and you couldn't either. *"God is light, in him I live and I move and I have my being and by him all things are held together."*

The sun came up this morning according to the will of God and it set this evening according to the will of God. And everything is on precise schedule according to the will of God who said, *"He worketh all things after the council of his own will."* That's what the Scripture says.

"God ruleth in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of this earth and he giveth it to whomsoever he will." **1 Samuel 2:7** says: *"The Lord maketh poor and the Lord maketh rich. The Lord bringeth low and the Lord lifteth up."*

And He's given this promise to every believer: *"And we know that all things work together, all things; all things are of God."* *We know that all things work together for good to them who love God who are the called according to his purpose. All things are of God."* We need to camp there don't we? *"All things are of God."*

All things in life and death are of God too. **1 Samuel 2:6** says: *"The Lord killeth and the Lord maketh alive. The Lord bringeth down to the grave and the Lord lifted up."* That's God's Word.

In **Job Chapter 14** it says: *"Seeing man's days are determined;"* who determined man's days? *"All things are of God."* *"The numbers of his months are with thee,"* with who, with God, *"all things are of God."*

"Thou hast appointed his bounds. He cannot pass. All things are of God," all things in life, all things in death. That's the reason we can rest and have peace. That's the reason we can walk through the deepest sea and over the rockiest road and under the greatest cloud and through the most fearsome tempest knowing that our God controls all these things.

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I will not fear; God is my refuge. *“I will not fear what man can do to me.”* Our Lord said, *“Fear not them which kill the body (after that they can do no more). Fear him who hath power to cast your body and soul into hell.”*

He has that power because *“all things are of God.”* All things in salvation are of God. Here is my favorite theme: All things in salvation are of God. David wrote: *“The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord.”*

David wrote: *“To him belongeth salvation.”* Jonah cried: *“Salvation (deliverance) is of the Lord.”* Paul wrote in **Romans 8:29**: *“For whom he foreknew, (that is, foreordained), he also predestinated to be conformed to the image of his son that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, he called. And whom he called he justified. And whom he justified, he glorified. What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? All things are of God.”*

What shall we say to these things? The same thing we say to all things; they are of God. *“Salvation is of the Lord.”* Deliverance is of the Lord. Man doesn't save himself, God saves him. From Alpha to Omega, from beginning to end, from eternity past to eternity future; *“salvation is of the Lord.”* It's a gift of God. He bestows it upon whom He will!

Salvation is of the Lord in its planning; it's not man but God who fashioned the covenant of grace. The covenant of grace was not born out of a religious synod or an ecclesiastical meeting; it was born out of a council in eternity composed of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Before the foundations of the world were ever laid, before the morning stars sang together; *“God from the beginning hath chosen you to salvation.”* If words can mean anything, my friend, it is very clear when God chose His people.

He chose them before the world began. He chose them in Christ. He chose them to salvation: *“Salvation is of the Lord”* in its planning and salvation is of the Lord in its execution. The Scripture says: *“God so loved the world that he gave his Son.”*

Man didn't have anything to do with Christ's coming; God sent Him. Christ said, *“As my Father sent me, so send I you.”* The Scripture tells us plainly: *“I have given you the blood upon the altar.”* God said. *“I gave it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your soul. It's the blood that maketh atonement for the soul.”*

Again it said: *“It pleased the Lord to bruise him.”* I know wicked men with wicked hearts crucified the Son of God and nailed Him to that rugged tree *“but they did what God determined before to be done.”* Isn't that what the Bible says?

They did what God determined before to be done. They carried out the determinate will of God almighty. The Scripture says: *“Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Jews, the Gentiles, (somebody said, “the whole shooting match”) was gathered against the Lord and against his anointed to do whatsoever thy hand (His will, His purpose) determined before to be done.”*

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“Salvation is of the Lord.” All things are of God, especially salvation. That’s His crowning glory. Salvation is of the Lord not only in its execution but in its application.

Who made thee to call on God? *“Who made thee to differ?”* Paul said, *“God who separated me from my mother’s womb.”* He didn’t live like a man separated to God for the first 40 years did he? He lived like a man separated to the devil and to self and to hate but *“God had separated him from his mother’s womb and God was pleased to call him by his grace.”*

We love Him because He first loved us. We seek Him because He sought us. We call on Him because He called us. *“Salvation is of the Lord”* in its calling, in its application, and I will tell you this; it is of the Lord in its sustaining power. *“We are kept by the power of God,”* not apart from faith. *“We are kept by the power of God through faith.”* Jude said in that great doxology, *“now unto him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory,”* (His exceeding great glory and His gracious and wonderful presence). *“Now unto him be glory both now and forever, amen.”*

In **John 10:28** our Lord said: *“My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me and I give them eternal life and they will never perish, (I will keep them).”*

He said: *“They will never leave me and I will never leave them.”* They will persevere and they will be preserved, they will be kept by his power.”

Then, salvation is of the Lord in its ultimate perfection!

Let me ask you a question, who’s going to raise your body? When you are dead and buried and gone back to the dust or eaten by the worms or a fish, when your body is cremated and scattered to the winds, who’s going to bring that body back together and raise it from the dead?

Are you going to have anything to do with it? Is your will going to have anything to do with it? Is your pastor going to have anything to do with it? Is your church going to have anything to do with it?

Somebody said: *“The church is going to stand for me.”* Well, the church is going to have to get you out of the grave first. It says: *“Unto him who has the power, which is able to raise our vile bodies.”* Christ is going to have to bring them forth.

Who’s going to make you into the image of Christ, who’s going to conform you to the image of Christ? My friend; all things are of God, all things in eternity past, all things in this whatever you call it, present, and all things in eternity future; *“all things are of God.”*

I’m not fatalistic at all. I believe that God uses means. I call on men to repent, I call on men to believe the Gospel, I call on men to seek the Lord, I call on men to cast themselves at the feet of Christ and I call upon men to ask God for mercy, for healing, or for whatever God gives.

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But, I do know this; *“Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.”* God gets the glory. If I love Him it’s not because I’m any different from anybody else but He showed mercy to my soul and he was gracious.

He said: *“I will be merciful to whom I will. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious. So then, it’s not of him that willeth, it’s not of him that runneth. It’s of God that showeth mercy. Salvation is of the Lord. All things are of God.”*

Now, that’s the God of the Bible. That’s the true and living God. That’s the God of whom David spoke when he said: *“As the thirsty deer panteth for the water brook, so panteth my soul for thee, the true and living God.”*

My friend, it’s not enough just to know a god. We’ve got to know the living God. Christ said, *“This is eternal life that they might know thee the true and living God.”* It’s not enough just to have religion. We are going to have to know Christ. God is one God.

All right, what’s this next glorious theme; we’ve got to move along; *“All things are of God. By him were all things created that are in heaven and earth. All things were created by him and for him. He is before all things and by him all things are held together.”* That’s **Colossians 1:16 and 17.**

Secondly: *“All things are of God who hath reconciled us to himself.”*

To be reconciled is to be forgiven! To be reconciled is to be pardoned and justified from all sin. Think of it! *“Blessed (happy) is the man to whom God will not charge sin.”*

Think of your past, think of your present, think of your sins, think of your evil thoughts and imagination, attitude, spirit, words and all of these sins against God. To be reconciled is to be pardoned from all of these sins, to be forgiven and to be justified.

To be reconciled is to have all enmity removed. God is not angry anymore. God’s judgment and wrath is removed in a holy fashion and a just fashion consistent with His character. The enmity is removed, enmity is removed and we are reconciled.

To be reconciled is to be a child of the living God. To be reconciled is to have peace, peace with God. My friend, in sin men don’t have peace with God. *“God’s angry with the wicked. He that believeth not on the Son, the wrath of God abideth on him.”*

Outside of Christ, just like outside of that ark of Noah, there is judgment and condemnation and destruction. But to be reconciled is to have peace with God and the peace of God in our hearts, to have God’s peace upon us and God’s peace in us.

“God hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ.” Now there are three persons mentioned here: God, us, and Christ. And in these four verses in **2 Corinthians 5:18, 19, 20, and 21**, those three persons are mentioned every time in those four verses.

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Listen to them, in this one: *“God hath reconciled us, (God the holy God has reconciled us the sinful creature) to himself by Jesus Christ.”* That’s how he did it, not by the law, not by religion, not by ordinances, ceremonies and morality but rather by Christ.

Look at **verse 19**: *“God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.”* God did it in Christ and He reconciled us. Look at **verse 20**: *“In Christ’s stead I pray you; be you reconciled to God, (in Christ’s stead, for Christ’s sake, because of Christ’s substitutionary work). “I beseech you, (us) to be reconciled to God.”*

In **verse 21**: *“God hath made Christ to be sin for us who knew no sin.”* Christ didn’t have any sin or know any sin, *“that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”*

Do you see how God hath reconciled, forgiven, pardoned, put away our sin, made us whole, and given us peace, *“us”* who don’t deserve anything but His judgment, to Himself by Jesus Christ. It’s always by Jesus Christ; everything we have is by Christ.

“All fullness dwelleth in Christ.” God’s vested everything in Christ. If you have anything from God, it is because of your relationship with Christ, being married to Christ.

My friends; we have good news for sinful men and sinful women. The good news is that God will be merciful, that God will forgive, that God will reconcile and He will do it in a way, (this is important and I wish you would make a study of this for your own good and for the good of those to whom you preach or teach) God will reconcile us to Himself in a way consistent with His character, consistent with His justice, and consistent with His righteousness and holiness.

You don’t have any Gospel if it doesn’t honor God’s law. You don’t have any Gospel if it doesn’t justify God in His holiness and in His judgment against sin. You don’t have any Gospel if it doesn’t satisfy His justice. It’s got to be consistent.

God’s got to be just and justifier. He can’t just be the justifier; He can’t just forgive sin without a sacrifice: *“The soul that sinneth shall die.”* Somebody has got to die.

God said, *“I will not clear the guilty.”* There’s one God. In Christ there’s one Mediator. God was in Christ. *“There’s one God and one mediator between God and men and that’s the man Christ Jesus.”*

Now, I am going to make a statement here and I want you to listen to it carefully; I can understand men who have never seen a Bible and never heard the Bible read and never heard the Gospel preached. I can understand men who have never heard the Scriptures and never seen the Bible and never heard the Gospel. I can understand them looking to themselves or looking to other means for acceptance with God and for righteousness; I can understand that.

But, to save my life, I cannot understand a man who has read the Bible, who has heard it preached, who thinks there is any other way to God except Christ. Now, I can’t understand that.

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I am racking my brain trying to figure that out because this Bible plainly says, “*No man cometh to the Father but by me.*” This Bible clearly says and Christ says, “*I am the door. By me if any man enter in he shall be saved.*” That’s just as clear as words can state something!

“*The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin.*” It never says anything about water putting away sin or church membership putting away sin or the law putting away sin. It says plainly: “*No man is justified by the works of the flesh or the works of the law in the sight of God.*” That’s clear! “*Not by works of righteousness which we’ve done but according to his mercy hath he saved us.*”

I can understand some heathen out in the wilds of the jungle who have never seen a Bible or heard a message believing he can be justified or saved by sitting on a rock all day and staring out into space or bathing his body in some water or sacrificing his children to some kind of fire or walking so many miles on nails or broken glass or burning candles or crossing himself, counting beads or doing all these things.

I can understand a heathen believing that but I can’t understand a man who has a Bible in his hand, a Bible which says: “*There’s one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.*”

“*Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, Christ the Lord. There’s none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.*” Paul said: “*There’s only one gospel and if an angel from heaven preaches any other gospel let him be (judged) and accursed.*”

And it says: “*This is the record; God hath given us eternal life and this life is in his Son. He that hath the son of God hath life.*” How do men get anything else out of that? It’s beyond me.

We’ve got ten thousand different denominations and ten thousand different ways of salvation, why, because men are doing it their way. We’ve got a song: “*I’m Going to Do it My Way*” and my ways are not God’s ways.

“*And there’s a way that seemeth right unto men and the end is death and destruction.*” So, my friend; let me warn you; you do it your way and you will miss God.

Thirdly: “*He hath given to us this ministry of reconciliation.*”

Now, angels aren’t going to preach the Gospel and nature isn’t going to preach the Gospel. Do you know who’s going to preach the Gospel, men? “*He hath given to us this ministry of reconciliation.*”

Christ said, “*Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel.*” That’s what I have been trying to preach this morning, the Gospel of God, the Gospel of His grace, the Gospel of His glory, the Gospel concerning His Son, the Gospel of substitution, the Gospel of the death on the cross, the Gospel of Christ.

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“And he that believeth and is baptized, (confessing Christ), shall be saved. He that believeth not shall be damned.”

What must I do to be saved? *“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved!”*