

Redemption and Reconciliation

By: Daniel Orona

For those that believe we are reconciled in Christ. We have been brought back into the fold for our original purpose, which is the worship of the Father through Christ. Paul explains this in detail in Colossians 1. While I touched on this in the first article I want to look at this a little deeper than we did before. Verses 19-23 teach that we were once alienated and enemies in our minds by wicked works, yet He has now reconciled us. We were given the opportunity to be shown the love of God through Christ and ultimately believe and accept him and be reconciled to the Father through His work on the cross. However as Christians we sometimes think that some are not worthy of the same redemption and reconciliation that we have found. Often times these are with people who have personally hurt us or wronged us in some way, but this also extends to people that we sometimes believe are beyond redemption such as those that have had an abortion.

I recently read an article in Christianity Today that said the leadership of a large denomination in the United States said that women who have had abortions need to sit in their shame away from the church. I completely disagree. The Scripture is clear that there is only one sin that cannot be redeemed and an abortion is not it. Why do we look at these people as though they are not worthy of the redemption that Christ has offered anyone. If there was a man or a woman who had murdered someone, was saved in prison and came out after doing their time most Christians would accept them given the redemption they have received. I can hear some of you saying now, well they paid the price in prison for their actions and this woman took the life of a child and did not have any consequences to her actions.

There are numerous answers to that. The first is that you don't know the physical, emotional and spiritual toll that the act takes, but I would also say are we any different when God delivers us from the choices that we make outside of His will. Romans 5:8-10 says, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." Who are we to even begin to say who is worthy of the redemption of Christ? While we were sinners Christ died for us. We did not die on the cross for anyone and do not have the right to judge these people or determine if they are worthy enough for redemption. How dare us even begin to think that way. Do we not realize that if we do not forgive and show the grace that God has shown us, He will judge us according to our own works, which none of us should ever want. Jesus shows us what will happen in Matthew 18:22-35.

Understanding this, we must be willing to reach out to those like women who have had an abortion that are often at their lowest point and show them that in spite of their action, there is a God that loves them and offered His Son Jesus Christ for their sins. There will always be people who will have a conscience seared with a hot iron and see nothing wrong with it and those we have to allow the Holy Spirit to deal with. But those that don't fall into that category, we must be as the good Samaritan and help bind the wounds according to the leading of the Spirit.

Even after redemption, reconciliation or acceptance into the fold of the church is just as equally important. I told you in the first article about how my friend and associate pastor treated me when I came back from being out in the world. If we are looking at her with contempt and condemnation and disbelief in what she did, we are retaining her sins when she has been forgiven. In doing this, we will cut off the seed that has been planted before it can even begin to really take root. We should be like my friend and associate pastor and welcome them, not looking at the sin they did previously, but looking at

Redemption and Reconciliation

By: Daniel Orona

the work that Christ is doing in their life to give them the fullness of who He is and His spirit. The book of Philemon is a perfect example of reconciliation after doing wrong. Onesimus had wronged Philemon yet Paul writes to Philemon to ask that he accept Onesimus back into the fold as he was profitable and helped Paul during a difficult time. This is the same type of openness we should have with women, doctors, nurses and the men who have encouraged the woman to have an abortion when they have found salvation in Christ.

When they come into the fold their sins are not remembered. Paul tells us this in Hebrews 10:15-16. If our sins can be forgiven and put under the cross and blood of Jesus Christ so can theirs. We must accept them after their redemption into the body. If it was an alcoholic or a drug addict, we wouldn't think anything differently about it, but because this person took an innocent life we believe there is no redemption or reconciliation. How many lives did the Roman Centurion take? How many innocent people had he killed on behalf of the Roman government when they conquered all the different lands? Yet when he humbled himself before Jesus on behalf of His servant, Christ showed compassion and healed his servant. Why is this any different? It's not. Everyone and I truly mean everyone deserves a path to redemption. It is their choice whether to accept it or not, but they deserve the same opportunity that we have been given to be redeemed by the Father through Christ and to belong to a group of believers that accepts us as brothers and sisters in Christ regardless of our past sins and what we did when we were alienated from Him in our minds.

I beg you when these situations arise and you find women who have had abortions, show them the mercy and grace that you have been shown for your sins. Remember we are to love our neighbors as ourselves and they are our neighbors.