



Empowering People to Change the World

God's Operating System

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Road Declaration

Born for War

By choosing to be a wholehearted disciple, I am plugging into God's operating system.

- When we get saved, we get a new operating system. God's operating system...
- Ex. We have all been like Lazarus: dead, lying in the tomb for three days, dead in our trespasses and sins; "But God" then calling us out of this past life: drugs, sex, no hope, abused, selfish. But He called us out of the ways of this world, "children of wrath." But God awakened us! But God poured out this grace upon us.
 - It was all God. His grace did it all. We have nothing to boast about!
 - We are God's poem, God's masterpiece! He took us out of death and gave us life, value, and worth!
 - We are now overcomers! Producers! Visionaries!
 - We have been born into a new family!

Verses 11-12

- "Therefore" (verse 11) because of all of this:
 - You are a Gentile who was separate from God.
 - Aliens to the Bible and aliens to the power of God.
 - Strangers to the promises of God...but now you are changed!

- None of us were born “Christian.” Christianity is only one generation from extinction! Each of us must come to terms with our relationship with God.
- There was great animosity between the Jews and Gentiles.
 - To the Jews, the Gentiles were considered “fuel for the flame of hell.” There was this incredible animosity between the Gentiles and Jews.
 - If a Jew saw you, he would have thought of you as a “Presto Log!”
 - A Jew would get up every morning and thank God that he was not a Gentile.
 - A Jew was not allowed to help a Gentile woman who was in travail having a baby. This would be a sin.
 - A Jew in coming back from a journey would dust his sandals off as he entered the Holy Land, to clear off the dirt of the Gentiles.
 - A Jew would spit out a gnat or mosquito because it might have sucked the blood of a Gentile.
 - Even regarding the Samaritans, who were considered half Jews living in Samaria, living in the Holy Land: the Jews traveling from Galilee in the north would cross over the Jordan River and travel on the other side of Samaria and then recross back over when they got south of Samaria to get to Jerusalem.
- Much of this prejudice exists in our land today:
 - Blacks and Whites

- Catholics and Protestants
 - Conservatives and Liberals
 - Republicans and Democrats
 - Tree huggers and chain sawers
 - Jews and Arabs
- But “in Christ,” these walls have been broken down! Because of love! Love changes everything. Put to death this hatred.

As a wholehearted disciple, you are plugging into God’s operating system of love through the blood of Christ.

- You are a poem, a masterpiece: God says, the evidence is the tearing down of such alienation:
 - Ex. We are prone to prejudice, hatred, and fear; and we’ve seen all the riots this past year...
 - Can you let the Holy Spirit break down any walls of hatred, alienation, and prejudice in your life?
 - What about your marriage? Can you let God break down the walls?
 - “But now in Christ Jesus” everything changes!
 - Yes, we are to be separate morally, but that separation is only for the purpose of being Christ to the world. We are not to be separate from this world, but we are sent into the world.

“Because of the love you have for one another, all men will know that you are My disciples.”

- We must be careful that our love for the sinners of this world does not grow cold! We are tempted to not care.

- Ex. We are not to be isolationists! Every exit should have “Warning, you are now entering your mission field.”
- We are called to be unified within our churches! No walls in this room!

Verse 13

God’s operating system gives us a new intimacy.

- “But now” this is who you are today! Look what the blood of Jesus does...
 - Taking us so far off and drawing us to Himself.
 - All of our prejudices, alienation, and hatred is cast upon Christ. We have been drawn in by the cross.
 - Christ became alienated from His Father for you and me!

Verse 14

- Ex. This is an allusion to the wall that separated the court of the Gentiles and the court of women from the court of Israel. This was about a three-foot wall that warned women and the Gentiles not to cross over. If they did, the penalty was death.
- Christ, by the cross, has broken down this wall. This is for all time for us - that any cultural, linguistic, religious, or political wall that separates believers has been broken down.
- This does not mean we lose our individualism or our traditions, but this hatred is broken down.
- We are free to love! We are free to find peace!

- Jesus ripped the veil down at the cross from top to bottom. We have this access to Christ.
- He is now our peace! World peace will only come as we experience personal peace! Personal peace will only come when we meet the Prince of Peace.

Verse 15

God's operating system is a new peace.

- "Having abolished," meaning "made inoperative" to the believer.
 - You are a new man with a new operating system from Christ. The law doesn't have power over you. The law is for the unbeliever, to show them their sin...
- Freedom for peace! We now have this peace that "surpasses all understanding" because the law and death is inoperative in our lives.

Jesus said, *"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."* **(Matthew 11:28-30)**

- Liz said this last week - and I love it; it's so true: "Spiritual performance for God is a heavy yoke, but spiritual partnership with God is a light yoke."

Verses 16-18

God's operating system involves a new Father.

- No matter what is happening in our lives, we can get up each day and look to heaven and say, “Father...” Now that is good! “Abba, Dad.”
- The longer I go on with Christ, the more I can’t believe it that I get to call God, “Abba, Daddy.” I hope I will never get over this fact...
 - In our relationships with your parents - all of us are ADP’s: “Adults of Dysfunctional Parents.”
- Ex. No matter how dysfunctional your family was growing up, you now have Dad you can really trust! You have a Father who is always available. This Father has given you a relationship that will last forever!
- Verse 14, “both one;” verse 15, “one new man;” verse 16, “one body;” verse 18, “one Spirit.”
- There is now this unity of person, unity of purpose, and unity in power!
- We now have access to the Spirit’s power! A new freedom to experience God’s power in our lives!
- We have a new Father! A faultless Father!
- We have access to God!!! I may not have access to Bronco’s tickets or to the White House, but we have access to the Father!
- We have a Father that never misses our games, never misjudges our intentions, and never screams! We have a Father that sees you as His masterpiece!

Verse 19

God's operating system involves a new family.

- You have joined the Church, an "International Family."
 - I don't think you can be a true believer in Christ if you're not in a local church. It's just not biblical.
 - We are part of a "household." A big family! I love it. We can go through any country of the world and find family.
 - Ex. I go to Okinawa, and I have family; Yokohama...Tokyo...China...Korea...California...

Benefits of the Local Church

- 1. Worship together**
- 2. Growing together**
- 3. Ministry together**
- 4. Weeping together**
- 5. Dreaming together**

Verses 20-22

The foundation of the Church is the prophets (OT) and apostles (NT).

- A new unity! This is the "cornerstone" for everything!
- Foundation of the apostles and prophets - both the Old and New Testament prophets and the New Testament apostles.
- This is the new Temple. This is the formation. The temple was so important to them. In Ephesus, they built the Temple of Artemis to rival the Jewish Temple.

“You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” (1 Peter 2:5)

1. This Temple is “growing,” constantly growing! The Church is growing all over the world.
 2. You are constantly growing as a Christian. If you are growing in Christ, your foundation is growing.
 3. New texts that we are growing into it! The Bible should be coming alive more and more; each year different!
 4. This Temple is growing because each stone fits! Each of you has a contribution to make.
 5. You have a unique contribution to make to the building!
 6. Ex. God wants you to grow next to that stone next to you! Imagine a building in which the stones are just shifting around. We learn more by those stones next to us that we don't like...longsuffering...patience...love one another! That person is from God. As the stones fit together we find ourselves saying, “Who can I love tonight?” “Who looks lonely?”
- A new future...in heaven! A habitation of God's Spirit. This is the function of God in the world.
 - This earthly body is fading away...atrophy...slowing down; but we have this Temple we are building in heaven!
 - Every time we give, serve, and love, we are investing in our heavenly building.
 - New operating system: New intimacy...New peace...New Father...New family!