



### Intro: The "Socks" of Christmas

Most of us remember a Christmas where we received something we *needed* (like socks or a coat) when what we really *wanted* was the latest gadget or toy. We spent our childhoods shouting "Watch me!" and our adulthoods posting for "likes," all chasing a fleeting sense of approval. This week, we look at the gift God put at the top of His list for us—one we rarely ask for but desperately need: **Reconciliation**.

## Scripture & Discussion

### I. The Performance Trap: The "Watch Me" Culture

- **Context:** From toddlers jumping off couches to seniors sharing travel photos, we are wired to seek external approval. It is an exhausting cycle of "Perform. Post. Prove. Repeat."
- **Question:** Looking at the "real-life snapshots" from the teaching (Preschool to Senior years), which stage of life are you in, and where do you see the "Approval-Seeking" script playing out most in your world?
- **Question:** Why is seeking approval from people described as "suffocating" compared to the "quiet pride" of internal confidence?

### II. The Starting Point: Romans 5:10-11

- **Context:** Paul uses the word "enemies" to describe our relationship with God before Christ. Reconciliation isn't just making a "bad" relationship "better"; it's a total change in standing.
- **Question:** Verse 10 says we were reconciled through the *death* of His Son. Why does reconciliation require a cost? What happens to our "ego" when we realize we couldn't pay for this gift ourselves?
- **Question:** The text says we now "boast in God." How does boasting in what God did change the way you talk about your own achievements or failures?

### III. The Mediator: 1 Timothy 2:5-6

- **Context:** Jesus is described as the "one mediator." He had to be fully God to satisfy justice and fully man to represent us.
- **Question:** Jesus lived to please the Father rather than the crowds (John 4:34). How would your stress levels change this week if your primary goal was to please God instead of people?

## Closing Challenge

Take a moment to reflect on the phrase: *"You don't need another like. You need to hear the Father say, 'This is My beloved child, with whom I am well pleased.'"*