

# K-441 True Reconciliation (2 of 2)

by Art Katz

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*The sermon explores the necessity of mercy and humility in achieving true reconciliation within the Church and the world.*

**Duration:** 29:29

**Scripture:** Exodus 25:40, 2 Samuel 23:5, Matthew 6:33, 1 Corinthians 2:9, 2 Corinthians 10:1, Ephesians 3:20, Ephesians 4:2

**Topics:** "Reconciliation"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of humility and patience in discerning and addressing issues within the church and the world. He criticizes the spirit of pride that often prevails and leads to destructive actions. The speaker also highlights the positive and patient personality of President Reagan, who was able to bring about a solution to the Cold War through his approach. The sermon concludes with a call to prayer and repentance, recognizing that the church needs to demonstrate these qualities in order to be a viable and impactful force in the world.

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## Transcript

That there's something about the nature of our faith that would lend itself to a certain confidence that would make us more susceptible to being offended and looking upon the offender as a real threat and for whom the only answer is to be burned at the stake. That was Luther's attitude toward the Jew that led him to write a book called *The Lives of the Jews* that fueled the Nazis four centuries later because he looked upon Jewish presence not only as being contrary but a threat to the Protestant Reformation itself and therefore the only answer was to extirpate and to remove the threat by burning their synagogues, burning their Talmud and casting them out, burning them because he had not a trust and a faith and a confidence that God was able to bring a reconciliation with that which was opposite. And that in fact, if I'm not taking too great a liberty God is the author of that opposition that Jews represent in their Judaism for the benefit of the Church.

They are the enemies of the Gospel for our sake.

There's a benefit that accrues to us from that distinct opposition that Jews represent as the enemy of the Gospel more formidable than any other opposer of the faith but instead of receiving the benefit of their opposition we have allowed it to fuel us so as to see them as the threat that can only be answered by their extirpation, their removal and if we will not do it ourselves the enemy will raise up a regime that will and the

remarkable irony is that Luther was a professor of Old Testament and was himself fluent in Hebrew and knew the very text that we're discussing today but did not receive its benefit needing to remember that we wrestle not against flesh and blood but the principalities and the powers of the air, the rules of this world's darkness because the temptation is always to

see man or the brother as the enemy and as the threat and Luther had that adversarial mentality not only against Jews but those who differed with him theologically and doctrinally that adversarial, they are the enemy and the diatribes and the pamphlets that men wrote in those days were filled with such ugly vitriol like you're suckling from a pig's behind the insult and language that today would be an embarrassment so actually what he wrote of Jews was milder than the kind of invective that he poured out against other Christians in that adversarial mentality that sees the brother as the enemy and as if you're free because you're so correct in your rightness your rectitude that you could afford to demolish them with words to kill with words rather than this diffidence that even when I'm

right I'm wrong would to God that that were the spirit of the article about the book that was being reviewed but the spirit of that article was worse than the thing being criticized that if I had to choose between fellowship between the one and the other I would far choose to be part of that church movement purpose driven than to be in the camp of the man who gave the critique so diffidence is the name of the game if we're going to succeed in our own resolution reconciliation with the differences that are here not by accident but by the design of God who has provided the gold it will be with the spirit of diffidence and never insisting upon our rectitude but that we know that we're frail and that we're wrong even when we're right and that if we knew that one thing more it would change

everything in the way we perceive the brother or the thing that we think is the enemy that we must see the righteous requirement of God through the place of mercy or we don't see and we'll see in a distorted way emphasizing the right requirement but it will become deathly in our judgmentalness because we've not seen it through the place of mercy and not to see it through the place of mercy is not to see it God never intended it should be seen independently as an abstract requirement of righteousness and justice except through that place the rod of Aaron having to do with the chosenness and the election of God and the tablets of the law, the righteous requirement of God the pot of manna, the merciful provision of God constitutes a statement of myself as God but you cannot contemplate that,

you'll act in error if you try to focus on that independent of seeing it through the place of mercy there's nothing more deadly than righteous requirement if it is not tempered by mercy righteousness without mercy becomes legalism and bondage and judgmentalism so either one separate from the other leads to terrible error this is grievous to contemplate sentimental condescension in the name of mercy that does not require righteousness as it is to insist on righteousness without mercy this is a paralyzingly deep formula and statement given right at the inception of Israel as a nation for this tabernacle was the centerpiece of Israel's whole identity as the people of God and the holiest place of all has in it this piece of furniture called the mercy seat the ark of God where only the high

priest was allowed once in the year to sprinkle the blood of sacrifice on that lid which Jesus himself performed as both the high priest and the sacrifice to the corresponding tabernacle in heaven this is, I don't know, sine qua non without which there's no Israel there's no church there's no statement of God this is God's prescription not only for the church but through the church to the world for its own reconciliation in its differences but if the church will not exhibit this divine reality what hope for any resolution, reconciliation in the world not only between black men and white men but between black and black so everything comes

back this is given for the world through the church, through Israel as an answer to those things that would inevitably ensue in conflict by the very

things that God has given he's given both the Maori the native population of New Zealand and he's given the white sufferers but their differences are irreconcilable if each insists on its own rectitude and is unwilling to see that even when it's right it's wrong unwilling to be diffident because who is the model of diffidence but the Lord himself that's something like confess your faults one to another that you might pray one to another and be healed and Bonhoeffer in that remarkable statement of life together says to whom shall we confess? are we going to go to some censorious brother who's going to have grounds to condemn us if we let him know our weakness and our need he says the only one that you can go to to whom it is safe to confess is that one who himself lives at the shadow of

the cross and has required the hearing of his shortcomings by another he himself has a veil himself of confession and therefore you're safe to bring your confession to him but if you're superior and righteous and look askance upon the brother who will convey to you his weakness then you'll censor him you'll bring condemnation rather than the bearing of his sin that negates your ability to pray for his healing we have been the victim in Ben Israel of self-appointed sent ones who are going to correct us and they're here two weeks and in two weeks time or less they've already assessed the terrible deficits and the intrinsic problems here and they're going to bring the solution so convinced are they of their own rectitude and do awful damage so that I've almost come to the place to say

there's a moratorium on defining and assessing Ben Israel's problems and bringing a solution you're not at liberty in the first two weeks to assess anything this has had a thirty year history and has gone through much respect that and keep your mouth shut and let the Lord govern your observation and after you're here six months and you have something to say and you've seen that deserves we're willing to hear but in the first two weeks you're not in a place to assess or to speak here's a guy that has come who's not even resident and within maybe the first hours he's already discerning that there's a certain spirit of pride that prevails here and the way it's going to be met is through repentance in a certain form that religiously appeals to him and that we'll find it if we join him on our

faces in prayer my Lord spare us from those who are going to save us the greatest threat that this ministry and community has ever born in its entire history are self-appointed saviors who are going to correct Ben Israel where is the diffidence that I might be wrong in what I think I'm sensing and I've not been here long enough to absorb and to move into this reality that's had such a history that I think that I'm so correct in what I have identified in my superior spirituality and unless you bend to it it's doom that's going to bring doom the doom is you brother and what you're bringing and you're so great confidence that you have rightly assessed the problem and know its solution so may we be diffident and always have suspicion about our own rectitude Jesus knew what was in man and

would not commit himself to man we need to be as suspicious of our own humanity and our own spirituality or else we will be the agents of much harm to the purposes of God in the church those that come with their own vision for community or plan bring the seeds of destruction with them why does he say that? because community is an organic undertaking of very God and you come with some human determination of how it should be performed in your well meaning intention you bring the seeds of destruction with you what's the answer then? you just come but don't come with a plan don't come with a design because God will affect what he will and perhaps for every constellation of saints called community he has a particular expression unique to that configuration that you cannot know let alone

prescribe what its right formula is so there you have to come with a tempered soul and wait on God for what he will unfold and express rather than think that we have the answer the insistence on bringing a null solution or else we face doom is the failure to recognize that this is made out of gold this is not only a malleable metal different from all others but it's indestructible even though we suffer the inconvenience of the problem the troubling thing remaining if it's gold it will not dissipate and God will bring his solution because he's more jealous for the glory for which he waits out of those differences than you are impatient for what you think is the needful solution a failure to reckon on God's glory here's a note that needs to be made has got to eclipse our concern for

immediate solution that troubles our peace if we'll not be if the jealousy for his glory is not the greater consideration than our satisfaction or the answer to our troubling thing we will miss it it's only the jealousy for his glory that will give us a patience to endure the lack of an immediate answer and to wait upon him for the bringing that only he can out of his presence and out of the commandments that he will give for that situation when he comes above and between see what I mean jealousy for his glory will give us the ability to hold fast and be patient and to wait and not to fear that it's going to bring down the house that the church is going to be ended that the community is going to be destroyed or that our children will be the victim of the doom gold is imperishable this is

made of gold this is not some cheapy flight by night makeshift slapdash jerry-built thing this is gold and it can bear time it will not dissolve and if we're jealous for the glory that will come to him through what seems to us to be an intractable set of differences he will bring that answer but if we set to put our hands upon it in the impatience because of fear for our security and our necessary blessedness and peace we will destroy and that's exactly what has happened there and what is happening in many places and what is characteristic in the world I don't know if you guys were noting the things that were said about Reagan President Reagan whose death brought such a commemoration of his time in office he brought a remarkable personality to the highest place and brought an answer to

the intractable cold war that no previous occupant of the White House was able to do how did he do it? by a personality that was positive and patient and agreeable he actually won the confidence of Gorbachev on the basis of his own personality that was positive and believed that there would be a solution of a kind that would save the world from the destruction of mounting atomic nuclear armaments let's see if I I don't know if I have it here I had saved some of these articles so how shall we pray having considered these things knowing that it's not just the issue of the church it's the issue of the world but the church needs to demonstrate it as viable and we need to demonstrate it here Ben Israel why is this little dot on the map so important this little nothing that we are because God

allows us the privilege of gestating and wrestling through in our own experience the problems that are universal for all the church you shall make this is not going to come to you abstractly and finished, you shall make a mercy seat here's the dimensions but you shall make it you've got to be involved, you've got to pound it out and be pounded out by it and if there's anything that characterizes our 30 year history, we have been pounded and maybe in our own self-righteous rectitude in times past have pounded others I'm embarrassed by that so Lord, precious God on high my God, what you gave Moses, the pattern from the mount what shall we say of it Lord it has not been recognized, understood not taken to heart we've dismissed it, Old Testament as if it has no possible application to our

present what is your profound gift for the present and a world in crisis and a church at war with itself so Lord we're asking mercy mercy from the mercy seat Lord it's not enough to see correctly if that seeing is

not tempered by mercy we're not even seen rightly except we see through that mercy seat so we bless you Lord and you've called us to the ministry of reconciliation and you've even brought into our midst Lord disparate elements of difference that have centuries of history in the making that to find a new kind of resolution that is not just a getting by that we should be able to relate to each other reasonably but that you should be glorified so we're asking a mercy that would put your jealousy deep in our hearts the jealousy for your glory that will enable us to hold still and to

be patient and to wait and to be confident that what is made of gold cannot dissolve thank you my God it's too precious the element is malleable but also enduring thank you my God and what is 30 years for you nothing a vapor and so what if this takes 3, 5 or 7 years or 10 or 12 to find resolution if that resolution will glorify you keep us my God from the worst of all evils acting out of our confident assurance of being right thank you my God for to be right is wrong unless it's tempered thank you my God my diffidence teach us what that word means enable us to walk in it my God thank you Lord gracious God for the so great drama to which we are called and accept that you be in communion with us and give us wisdom and answer for the sons of Israel there shall not be solution so we know your

word is true you're there you'll be there to be unto us and for us what is needed if we will give to you the above and between the millstones out of which the wine and the oil itself is extracted we bless you Lord for your so great wisdom and that you're willing to bear this with us you're willing to be incomplete in heaven waiting for the completion that waits for you in earth in this way so we marvel at such a God as you are what a character what a personality what you are in yourself the humility of God the patient forbearance and waitingness of God forgive us Lord for our impatience our impetuosity our hot shot solutions in two weeks we have both diagnosed the problem and we're going to bring the answer and this is how it's going to be done forgive us my God for impertinence

impetuosity impatience hot shot assurance of our correct discernment that has eluded everybody else but we have got it immediately so superior are we in our spirituality thank you Lord for you've withheld judgment for such such hot shot self assurance and how patient you are to show it to us and that we should be embarrassed rather than be judged we bless you Lord grow us up to be the sons and daughters of such a God as you are and for that we give you the glory the honor that is beyond all expression you've saved us from ourselves our worst selves is our self righteous religious self and we thank you for that salvation thank you my God thank you Lord thank you Lord thank you my God bring forth something out of this place that will affect the church in the earth and the nations through

such a presence is your intention which you will fulfill to your everlasting praise and glory you know what shall the government of God be over this earth when his kingdom comes it's not going to be a hard fisted demand it's going to be this diffident patient working out the forbearance the love the resolution in this spirit this character this is the Davidic kingdom this is the nature of David one of his last statements he talks about the government of God as a dew descending upon the earth soft gentle easy to be entreated and how did Paul exhibit himself in his apostolic calling and nature the same way he entreated I entreat you I don't flaunt my my apostolic credentials and demand I entreat I plead brothers walk worthy of the kingdom the glory to which you are called he exhibited

already the Davidic character of the kingdom in his own apostolic government so we thank you Lord oh precious God thank you my God oh help us Lord proud peacocks that we are who know how and are ready to bring correction thank you Lord who ourselves need to be corrected thank you for your patience with us the very gentle way my God in which you deal with us ought to be the means by which we relate

also to the others we thank you Lord my God what a God you are what a character what a nature what diffidence what beauty of holiness Lord thank you thank you Lord that even before we begin this school you are already tempering our attitude our minds and our hearts that what will be given us will be received and seen and understood in a deeper way and apprehended than it would have been had you

not given us these preliminary considerations so great are you in your wisdom perfect in every way and detail thank you unto you be glory in the church by Christ Jesus world without end throughout all ages how unsearchable are his judgments not only for their rectitude but also their manner and the form by which the judgments come and are given full of mercy that's why they are unsearchable not just because they are correct but because the way in which they are mediated and ministered thank you Lord for the depth of your riches that saves us from our shallowness our presumption our religious pride our certainty our rectitude thank you Lord thank you Lord for the depth of God is the weight of God which is the glory of God and a shallow church and a light church is a contradiction of terms

it is ipso facto not the church except it shares in the depth of God how shall it reflect him thank you Lord you're not just instructing our minds you're forming our character in your very image so let something come into us today by what is pleased you have set before us that will forever change us temper us something has come in thank you Lord it will be reflected in all of our future consideration and we thank you for that your word is spirit and life thank you Lord there's got to be a better answer Lord for mankind than black men hacking each other to pieces with machetes that cannot bear even the sight of another different from themselves seen as adversary give us that cherubic disposition that will look steadfastly at the other not as the enemy but the very provision for the

completion of our humanity and you're calling it so we thank you Lord oh my God what a piece of furniture you appointed in your wisdom to set in the holiest place of all may it be set in our holiest place may it govern us Lord may it temper us always be in our forethought and in our consideration save us from being bumptious upstarts hot shot believers who are ready to bring answer thank you Lord thank you my God teach us that word that is almost archaic in the English language diffident for who knows it who desires it and yet it's the answer for New Zealand it's the answer ultimately for Palestinian and Israeli if they would but know it how can they know it Lord if the church has not demonstrated it for we are that priestly people who are to teach the difference between the profane and

the holy and we ourselves have not known it and we have acted contrary to it so we thank you for your patience with us Lord so merciful so merciful that if you judged us according to our deserving Lord we would have been obliterated how patient and forbearing thank you Lord thank you my God to take an old text with which we thought familiar and to open up such new dimensions in keeping with the hour and our life and experience Lord for your texts are inexhaustible riches my God in depths that need to be plumbed and probed and will only be given corporately this is not private revelation that we should be exalted you only give it in the body, you only give it in the corporate context of your body and people and so we thank you Lord, that's the privilege of what this school is may you

continue my God to grant the spirit of revelation and understanding that every day we would almost cry out we can't take more, we can hardly bear yesterday's measure let alone what today brings or tomorrow, expand us and enlarge us my God to receive what is on time in these days and so imperative seeing that the time is so short and the need so great through your church that is the church that bears your character and your nature thank you Lord thank you my God unfold before us day by day what you will and grant us the capacity to bear it to internalize, to take it in and to walk it out thank you

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