

# **5th September 2004: Rev Rowland Jide Macaulay**

## **Theme: Called to reconciliation**

I could not have been much happier to be in church today, I want to do something different today, I want to push boundaries, I want you to feel very much part of this sermon.

I was happy when my friend said to me, let us go to the house of the lord. I was indeed very happy when my friend said to me, let us go to Metropolitan Community Church, the house of the lord.

I marveled and said this must be a miracle when I was asked to preach again this Sunday, it confirmed the work of the holy spirit, as I prayed with my heart exposed to God. In the past few weeks, months and years we have had to be confronted with issues of reconciliation and how it relates to the subject. Called to reconciliation.

Let us pray. Dear God, we thank You for this moment, we thank You for creation, as we share in your words of wisdom and truth, help us to identify the significant essence of reconciliation, it takes the power of God to understand the issues of forgiveness, at the end of the day help us to be able to recall any situation in our lives to reconciliation. I pray that the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts will be acceptable to God. Amen.

I am going to ask you to do things, today, I hope you will feel free and moved by the holy spirit to join me, in the passionate moment of this sermon.

Please Repeat after me, I am happy, I am very happy, I am very happy to be in church today, I am very happy to be a servant, and service in this ministry, I am very happy to be here amongst people, that I love and respect. If you believe that now say Amen. If you really believe that now say a BIGGER Amen.

Another thing, when I say alleluia, please respond by saying alleluia or Amen.

We have a responsibility to build a ministry that is more meaningful than just calling in week to week, I want us to be more relevant to each other beyond the roll call at the Blackcap or the gathering at tea and coffee, I pray for a ministry that will grow in love and passion.

Alleluia, somebody.

Thinking about reconciliation, reconciliation for LGBT comes or starts from within LGBT, as a gay or lesbian person, a transvestite, or transgender person, it takes a lifetime of coming to terms with the understanding of God's love, the reconciliation of the mind and the soul, the reconciliation of the body and the mind, the reconciliation of the body and the soul, which sometimes may seem complicated, for God loved us some much he gave us a sexuality that the world turns against. The world see anything that is not heterosexual as a sin, it is not surprising in John 9v1-3, now as Jesus passed by, he saw a man who was blind from birth, and his disciples asked him, saying Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? (Let me take that again, in the context of our understanding), who sinned, this person or their parents, that they were born gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, transvestite? Who sinned? Jesus continue with

an amazing answer, please hear me, alleluia, ?neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him? LGBT today is the work of God being revealed to the world today, that is why we have to face prejudice, in our society, in our culture, alleluia, and you shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free. Sexuality is non-negotiable, it is the perfect and most beautiful gift from God, and we need to learn to love it and trust God.

Alleluia. At creation, a lot of things happened, God made all things, and the bible tells us in Genesis 1v31 “then God saw everything that was made and indeed it was very good” and that includes you and I, when Jesus Christ started his ministry, he declared to the people that gathered, these people, are people with terrible history and pain, people and descendants of those who have been tortured, they were unimportant and in agony. Jesus said, “those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance” Matthew 9v12-13.

Alleluia, to reconcile is to no longer oppose, to become friendly with a person or situation after a time of estrangement, or to re establish friendly relationships between two or more people. By virtue of being gay or lesbian, there has been a broken relationship between LGBT and the world, families, churches, nations and cultures. When Jesus said “those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance” Matthew 9v12- 13, he was not referring to you and I as sick, and it doesn’t make us any less a sinner than other sexuality, but now we are called to reconcile with the world, our families, our culture. Jesus said what good is it to love those who love you, love your enemies, in order words reconcile with them. This is our call to reconciliation.

Alleluia. It was only in 1973 that the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from the list of mental illness. Unanimously agreed that gay and lesbian people are just as capable to hold down a job as a straight person, does this come to you as a surprise that in 2004 we are still dealing with issues of reconciliation, this will be a lifetime experience for the LGBT community.

From the bible reading today, 2 Cor5v16-21, “From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view”

Alleluia. Please note the keyword from now on; Paul the apostle’s message for the people of Corinth in his second letter, from now on, from this present moment, show regards for all people, a regard of equality, a regard of love, a regard for goodness, a regard for longsuffering, a regard for faithfulness, regard of joy, a regard for peace, a regard for gentleness, the bible tells us in Paul’s letter to the Galatians that these are the fruit of the spirit and that was what Jesus came to preach and teach, he didn’t come for the gay man that was well and in a safe loving same sex relationship, he didn’t ask for the repentance of the loving lesbian couple. He asked the society to repent and the churches to confess their sins.

Alleluia. Jesus spoke a lot about the kingdom of God and I wondered what a beautiful place it will be, there is no wonder that many seek to go to this place, a place where there is no pain, no heartache, no fear, Jesus spoke of the parable of the pearl, Matthew 13v44 “ the kingdom of God is like a treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid, and for joy over it, he goes and sell all that he has and buys that field”.

Alleluia, One thing I know and understand is that heaven is not partial, because heaven is a state of the homogeneous. That reminds me of the story of Jesus about the woman who had married seven brothers, the Sadducees explained that the woman had been married each time to seven brother, who died one after the other and left no child, she also eventually died, the question for

Jesus was “therefore, in resurrection, when they rise, whose wife will she be? For all seven had her as wife” Alleluia. Jesus answered and said, “Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the scriptures nor the power of God? For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven” Mark 12v18-25 (23-25).

Alleluia. My point for raising this issues is to understand the bigotry of the society we live in, who continue to misunderstand and mistake the gift and pleasure of sexuality without the understanding sexuality or gender and that sexuality and gender has no meaning in heaven, if homosexuality has no meaning in heaven, the same applies to heterosexuality, who in heaven will be father gay or mother lesbian or daddy straight, I think not. We need to be able to reconcile the facts with the teachings of the bible.

Alleluia. “From now on, the bible tell of a particular time onward, that the way we look at these matter is never from a human point of view; living in a world, a society, within a culture that least recognised LGBT community as humans but looking at us as aliens, it is the same the world that knew Christ from a human point of view, and now know him no longer in that way? So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see everything has become new! This is where we begin to understand reconciliation.

Alleluia, we trade our failures for success, our pain for healing, our sadness for joy, Sorrow for happiness, mourning for celebration.

When we give our lives to Jesus, we don’t change sexuality, we become more normal, we have comfort at the feet of Jesus, we are able to go to the throne of God and make demands, when we confess that Jesus is Lord and we bow, when we recite and sing the prayer that Jesus taught us, we hallow the name of Jesus, we praise God and give all glory and honour to God, our common good will come, the blessing of a happy relationship, riches and wealth, joy and happiness will come, we do on earth as it is in heaven, our daily bread is keeping with the teaching of the bible, our mission in life is to be friendly and sympathetic, I have not yet heard of heterophobic behaviour, or heterophobia, we are a generation with the ability to forgive the past and allow all things to be new, So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see everything has become new!

Alleluia, the temptation we face is higher and we pray often to God to deliver us from all the evil, we are worried to walk down the alleyways, or travel on a late train, walk down a lonely road, for fear of persecution, and unnecessary attacks.

Alleluia, we are indeed grateful to God, who reconciled us to Godself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; as Jesus came to reconcile the world to Godself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. Let us call to reconciliation, so we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making Christ’s appeal through us; Paul is entreating us on behalf of Christ, to reconciled to God. For our sake God made Christ to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Christ we might become the righteousness of God.

We ought to call to reconciliation;  
Those who have judged and persecuted us.  
Those who have discriminated against us on the grounds of sexual orientation.  
The governmental system that should have protected us.  
The culture that could have embraced us.  
The family that could have loved us.

The churches that kept us in the cold because we are different.  
The cultures that made us an outcast because we fail to conform to the societal norm.

I will like to end with a poem I wrote in 2001 called Changing Changes:

Looking to the lead, Looking at the rear  
What is written? Cannot be changed  
We Cannot change, the colour of our skin  
We Can change, the sensation about it  
We Cannot change, the anguish of the past  
We Can make, an influence on the future  
We have the power, to rewrite the expectations  
We Cannot change, how or what others feel about us  
We Can change, the outer shell from  
Within the deepness of our soul.  
Looking to the lead, Looking at the rear  
What is written? Cannot be changed

In my closing and prayer this afternoon? can I have some music in the background please? thank you, thank you very much.

Let us all bow our head as we pray, there may be people here hurting from the breakdown of a loving family relationship, I can feel your pain, it happened to Jesus, if you have been discriminated at work or in your neighbourhood because of your sexuality, it happened to me and many others and may be troubled about reconciling. If you have fled your home country or county or you find yourself running farther away because of sexuality, it is time to reconcile. As Jesus hung on the cross, he bellowed out loud, father forgive them for they know not what they have done, Paul said that if they knew Jesus was the messiah they would not have crucified him, but Jesus had the ability to forgive and reconcile. Think about the best Jesus offered us, it is better to love than to hate, I beg you all today that may be hurting in a small or big way, am hurting too, to please let us give it all to Jesus. Think about one or two situation you wish to reconcile and let the spirit of God lead you this week to bring reconciliation to the issue. In the world we live in there will always be a call for reconciliation, the wars and the atrocities, the fighting and political agendas, family strife.

Today, I want to pray for the people of Russia in a town called Belsan, for the loss of lives.

I want to pray for President Bill Clinton.

I want to pray for America

I want to pray for MCC and its leaders

MCC north London, 2pm and 7pm will continue to increase and be relevant

Pray for everyone present here today

Sunday school will emerge with great success

Leaders and members of MCCNL abroad and on holiday, we miss them

Pray for the growth of MCCNL, all ministries

The conference in October and all other activities

Let us take a moment to pray for ourselves.

Loving God, we are grateful for your love, for the message of hope and joy, we shall leave this place today knowing that we have the ability to forgive and reconcile with all the differences that has kept us from happiness and fulfilment of many dreams, help us to reach a moment of peace from within our soul and the enrichment of our spirit, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord I pray, and every one says a Big Amen.