
RECONCILIATION

“And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself” - Colossians 1:20



The world's definition of reconciliation is to settle one's differences and make peace. In this framework, people are reconcile when they compromise or change their stand on something. This definition generally aligns with the Greek term *katallasso* (to reconcile) meaning, "to change in a relationship." It is used that way in 1 Corinthians 7:11 where it refers to a woman being reconciled to her husband. *"But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband,"* When people change from being at odds (enemies) with one another to being at peace, they are said to be reconciled.

However, this definition does not give an accurate picture of someone being reconciled with God. The term in Colossians 1:20, 22 is a compound word. It is *apo katallasso* meaning to thoroughly, to completely or to totally be reconciled.

When a man or woman is reconciled to God, He does not change. He does not need to because He is holy. Nor does He need to conform to any new norm. Technically, God does not need to be reconciled to man. Rather, God needs to be propitiated, and the sinner is reconciled. When a man is reconciled to God, his position and standing is totally or completely changed, but God remains the same.

The need for our reconciliation to God is expressed in Colossians 1:21, *“And you, **that were sometime alienated** and enemies in your mind by wicked works . . .”* The means by which we are reconciled to God is conveyed in Colossians 1:21b-22. *“yet now hath He reconciled ²² **In the body of His flesh through death;**”* and finally, the results of genuine reconciliation is revealed in Colossians 1:22, *“to present us **holy and unblameable and unreprouable** in God’s sight”* – Colossians 1:22.

This lesson is designed to examine the important truths behind God’s amazing plan to reconcile **“all things to Himself”** - Colossians 1:20b.

OUR NEED FOR RECONCILIATION

1. What does the phrase “and you that **were sometime**” mean? - Colossians 1:21a; Romans 11:30; Ephesians 2:2-3, 11; Philemon 11.

a. The term “sometime” is often translated “in times past.”

“And you, that were sometime”

1) In **Romans 11:30**

For as ye **in times past** have not believed God yet have now obtain mercy . . .”

2) In **Ephesians 2:2-3** –

“Wherein **in time past** ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among who also we all had our conversation **in times past** in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”

b. It speaks of that time before we gave our lives to Jesus. Our sin separated us from God. We became a people without hope. Therefore, reconciliation is necessary for without it we would be cut off from God forever.

2. What does the term alienated mean? - Colossians 1:21b; Galatians 5:19-21; Romans 8:7-8

Colossians 1:21 “And you, that were sometime **alienated . . .”**

a. Being alienated from God is bad enough, but being enemies is even worse. It speaks of a hostility and hatred toward something or someone. Before the Colossians came to know

Christ, they were enemies or hostile to God in their minds as well as in their behavior — internally hostile and externally rebellious.

- b. Sin begins in the heart (Mt. 5:27-28) and manifests itself in overt deeds (Gal. 5:19).

“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, ²⁰ Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, ²¹ Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

- d. People outwardly oppose God because of their inward hostility. Our intellectual capacities were so distorted that we worked against God’s purposes. What this is saying is that we were strangers to God’s ways of thinking. As a result of that, we led a life of sin. Thus, this hostility manifested itself in outright rebellion against God, including the subtle ways we ignored God in our everyday lives. We used our thinking ability to justify ourselves and our actions. Our natural way of thinking set us against God.

Romans 8:7-8 - “Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. ⁸ So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.”

3. What does the phrase “by wicked works” refer to? - Colossians 1:21c

*“And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind **by wicked works**”*

- a. Everything we do that is in opposition to God’s will is considered an evil deed. Not just the extreme actions. An evil deed is ANYTHING that stands in opposition to what God has told us. Before our salvation, we lived for ourselves and not for God and His glory. The mind set on the flesh leads to deeds of the flesh.
- b. To some degree, Christians must sense their capacity to commit for every kind of sin. This realization is necessary for continued spiritual development. Remember who you are. We need to break through the contemporary disguises of sin. The subtlety of sin is that it always travels incognito.
- c. What was once clearly identified and labeled as sin in Proverbs 6:16-19 is now openly paraded in modern garb as good. The world gives those sins new status by recasting them in psychological terms: self-expression, self-fulfillment, assertiveness, identity, taking care of my own being, the right of my own space, and therapeutic enhancement.

“These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: ¹⁷ A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, ¹⁸ An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, ¹⁹ A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.”

- d. **We justify fornication and adultery** and other non-Christian uses of sex by talking about self-expression and personal freedom. Without any sense of responsibility, we become unavailable to others because we must seek our own space.

- e. **We callously trample on the being and feelings of others because we want to assert who we are ... and on it goes.**
- f. **Sex is reduced to lust;** we become gluttonous as we move from one effort at satisfaction to another; our neurotic need to belong makes us envy, and our accomplishments fill us with pride.
- h. Even when the strangle-hold of sin is broken, we do well to remember: “And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled”

THE MEANS OF RECONCILIATION

“yet now hath he reconciled ²² In the body of his flesh through death” – Col. 1:21b-22a

- 4. How can a man be reconciled to God? Colossians 1:21b-22; 2 Corinthians 5:18; Romans 5:8-10
 - a. The terms of our reconciliation is found in this passage. God’s wrath towards us needs to be propitiated (satisfied). That can only be done through the Person and Work of Christ. God needs to be propitiated for men to be reconciled.

2 Corinthians 5:18 – “And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ.”

- b. We are reconciled to God by Jesus Christ. But note what Jesus did to reconcile us

Romans 5:8-10 – “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, *Christ died for us*. ⁹ Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. ¹⁰ ***For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son***, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”

Please note again that God has not been reconciled to man, but a man must be reconciled to God. Scripture always speaks of people being reconciled to Him. It is God’s passion and yearning for men to return back to Him. What Jesus did was satisfy God’s wrath towards us.

- c. God’s wrath being satisfied is found in the biblical term “propitiation” which means to appease or to satisfy.

Speaking of Jesus, **Rom. 3:25** says:

“God hath set forth (Jesus) to be a **propitiation** through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God”

In **1 John 2:2** it says:

Jesus “is the **propitiation** for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

In **1 John 4:10** it says,

“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the **propitiation** for our sins.”

Christ’s death on the cross was for us. He took our place and God’s wrath that was due us was poured out on Jesus. He alone satisfied the wrath of God.

g. Listen to the Scriptures on this matter:

Rom. 1:18 – “For the **wrath** of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; BUT . . . **Rom. 5:9** Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from **wrath** through him.

1Th. 1:10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the **wrath** to come.”

1Pet. 2:24 Who his own self **bare** our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Through faith in Christ we find forgiveness and are thoroughly reconciled to God and escape the wrath to come.

THE RESULTS OF RECONCILIATION

“to present us holy and unblameable and unproveable in God’s sight.” – Colossians 1:22

5. What is the purpose behind God reconciling us to Him? Colossians 1:22; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; 11:2; Ephesians 5:27; Jude 24

1. The purpose of reconciliation is “to present us holy and unblameable and unproveable in God’s sight.” – Colossians 1:22
2. The word “present” is the same word used to describe a bride being presented to her husband.

2 Corinthians 11:2 – “For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.”

Ephesians 5:27 – “That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”

3. The idea is that the Lord, having redeemed us by His death on the cross, is going to presents us “holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight.” – Col 1:22.

It speaks of the completeness of Christ’s work. **Jude 24** says,

“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.”

This is our future, because those in Christ have been reconciled to God by the work of Christ, “in the body of His flesh through death.” In that day when we stand before God, we will not stand as condemned sinners, but as reconciled saints. No charge will be brought before us because of His blood shed on the cross.”

6. What insights can we learn from this passage?

- a. First, being reconciled to God should affect all of our relationships. It appeases God’s wrath. 1) It comes through Christ’s work on the cross; 2) It is available to all who believe; 3) Reconciliation transforms men. We are no longer aliens or enemies; 4) God is satisfied.
2. Second, (for those who have been reconciled) we now have peace with God which should bring peace within our lives. Have you experience the peace of God that passes all understanding?
3. Third, we should strive to make peace with all men (forgiving and loving as Christ has forgiving us.)

This should affect every relationship we have – with our spouse, the workplace, with our children, with our neighbors and our conduct towards strangers.

4. Fourth, we have been made ministers of reconciliation –

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.
¹⁸ And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and **hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation**” – 2 Cor. 5:17-18.

It is not just man that has been reconciled to God, but all things have been reconciled.

“To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; **and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.** Now then we are ambassadors for Christ”

In Colossians 1:20, “And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself.”