



## Introduction

- When are talking about reconciling God and man, the problem is not just a difference of opinion. The problem is we have offended the holy God by our sin and rebellion.

## Separated from God

### Alienated

And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds. (Colossians 1:21 ESV)

Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. (Ephesians 4:17–18 ESV)

Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. (Ephesians 2:11–12 ESV)

### Enemy

For if while we were enemies. (Romans 5:10a ESV)

For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. (Philippians 3:18 ESV)

You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. (James 4:4 ESV)

For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. (1 Corinthians 15:25 ESV)

### Hostile

For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. (Romans 8:7 ESV)

Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. (Hebrews 12:3 ESV)

## Cause of Separation

- We are separated from God because of our sin.
- One effect of the Fall was alienation from God.



Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him. (John 3:36 ESV)

### Remedy for Separation

For in him [Christ] all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. (Colossians 1:19–20 ESV)

And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. (ESV)

In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (1 John 4:10 ESV)

- Love was certainly not the only motivation for the cross, but the relationship between God's love and the cross is clear in Scripture.

## Reconciliation

### Loving Reconciliation

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. (Romans 5:1–11 ESV)

- Justification is being in a right standing with God because his wrath against us has been propitiated or satisfied.
- The peace referred to in Romans 5:1 is an objective peace.
- Through the work of Christ on the cross we have objective peace with God, and through the Holy Spirit we have subjective peace with God.
- Hope brings us peace because the Spirit confirms God's love for us.



- Through the death of Christ for the ungodly we see the incredible nature of God's love.
- The blood of the cross justifies us and saves us from God's wrath.
- God reconciled those that hated him because he loved them in Christ.

### Worldwide Reconciliation

From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Corinthians 5:16–21 ESV)

- Our reconciliation with God occurs through Christ.
- This is a worldwide reconciliation. This reconciliation is not just for one people group but for all people groups of the world.
- Christ took our sin and grants his people his righteousness.

### Complete Reconciliation

For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him. (Colossians 1:19–22 ESV)

- God's victory against all rebellion on earth or in heaven is based on Christ's work on the cross.
- There will be no more enemies of God either because the enmity against God has been removed through Christ, or the enemies have been judged and are cast into the lake of fire.

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:5–11 ESV)

- Paul is describing the ultimate reconciliation, the elimination of all enemies.
- God taking his people who were alienated and making peace with them, not eliminating them.



But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 2:4–7 ESV)

### New Man Reconciliation

Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. (Ephesians 2:11–22 ESV)

- God reconciling us to himself through the cross reconciles us to one another.
- In the cross of Christ the Gentiles have been brought near and both Jew and Gentile are reconciled to God in Christ.

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,  
and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat,  
and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together;  
and a little child shall lead them.  
The cow and the bear shall graze;  
their young shall lie down together;  
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.  
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra,  
and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den.  
They shall not hurt or destroy  
in all my holy mountain;  
for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD  
as the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11:6–9 ESV)



But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering. (Hebrews 12:22 ESV)

## Godward Reconciliation

- God takes those who are alienated from him, enemies of him, and hostile to him and lovingly reconciles them to himself.
- God's alienation from man is holy and justified because man has rebelled against God. Man's alienation from God is unholy and not justified. Man has no justifiable reason to rebel against the true and living God.
- The atonement satisfies God's wrath. All that we experience due to the atonement flows from God to us and not the other way around.
- The reconciliation brought about by the cross was the reconciliation of God to his people.

## Conclusion

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Ephesians 2:1–9 ESV)

- We showed our hostility to God by walking in trespasses and sin.
- God's hostility towards us is seen in that we were by nature children of wrath.
- God intervened because he is rich in mercy and he has a great love for us.
- God did this so he could forever show his gracious kindness to us in Christ.
- The love God has for his people is a "great love."

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Ephesians 3:14–19 ESV)

- Rooted refers to a tree with deep and strong roots and grounded comes from the idea of a building.



- Paul is referring to Christ's love for us.
- We don't have the ability to comprehend this love.

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.  
(Ephesians 2:19–22 ESV)

- The breadth of the temple, the breadth of Christ's love, which is the foundation of the temple, is the whole world.
- The length of the temple, the length of Christ's love, is from eternity past to eternity future.
- The height of the temple, the height of Christ's love is as high as heaven.
- The depth of the temple, the depth of Christ's love, goes to the depths of hell for our sake.
  
- It is not that we can't know Christ's love at all, but we can't know it fully.
- Paul is describing is an experiential knowledge of Christ's love, not deriving our knowledge of Christ's love from our experience, but truly experiencing Christ's love based on our knowledge of his love.
- The filling is not getting more of God but experiencing more of God.
- Through the cross of Christ, God lovingly reconciles himself to his people and calls his people to look on Christ, the very embodiment of the love of God.