

Treasures from Our Heritage: God Reconciles

By Bob Young

INTRODUCTION

1. An important concept fundamental to the gospel of Christ is that of "reconciliation"
2. In [2Co 5:17-21](#), Paul expounds this subject...

He discusses how there is some sort of reconciliation between God and man

He describes the role he played in what he calls the "ministry" of reconciliation

Reconciliation is a process, a series of actions with consequences

Interestingly, we have a limited number of NT passages dealing with reconciliation, one passage from Hebrews translates "sacrifice for atonement" as reconciliation. Not consider that passage in this study. Also have two passages that deal with reconciling people: Matt. 5:24; 1 Cor. 7:11.

Thus we have the following:

2 Cor. 5:17-21; Rom. 5:10; Eph. 2:16; Col. 1:20-21

Used of humans to other humans in 1 Cor. 7:11; Matthew 5:24

See these texts, then try to get to the basic meaning of the word, reconciliation.

DEFINING RECONCILIATION...

Vine's definition of "reconcile" (Grk., katallasso)...

a. "It properly denotes to change, exchange (esp. of money)"

b. "Hence, of persons, to change from enmity to friendship, to reconcile"

He goes on to add: "With regard to the relationship between God and man, the use of this and connected words show that reconciliation is primarily what GOD accomplishes..."

a. There is enmity between God and man (because of man's sin, cf. [Isa 59:1-2](#))

b. The gospel proclaims how GOD has taken the initiative to reconcile man back to Himself

We should note this fine distinction:

a. God is not reconciled to man, as though God were partly to blame for the enmity

b. Man is reconciled to God, for it is man who moved away from God!

Thus the reconciliation between man and God is different, the difference is important!

a. People reconciled to one another--often involves situation with fault on both sides

b. Not so between man and God; man moved away from God, man must be reconciled to

God, not God to man

c. Thus reconciliation is a passive concept, we do not reconcile ourselves, we cannot "cook the books" spiritually.

With this definition in mind, read text, see three great interwoven concepts.

The text of 2 Cor. 5:17-21 provides our list:

Newness, v 17

Grace, v 18

Adjustment, v 19

Reconciliation brings newness, but we do not make ourselves new

PAST

Two Greek words for new: "brand new"

With the change made, the adjustment in place, a new situation/status now exists

It is as though the old did not exist

The debt is cancelled, the debt is adjusted, written off, the books are reconciled

Need to let go of past in order to be renewed, but is impossible. We do not yet "feel" new, cannot accept the new situation

Reconciliation involves grace, so that we are recipients

PRESENT

Reconciliation involves returning to the favor of another, relationships are broken, couples are reconciled, families are reconciled; friendship is restored

Grace is bestowed, favor can be courted, but is ultimately given

We do not grace ourselves.

The question is one of compatibility: are you compatible with God?

Reconciliation is the restoration of compatibility by God's gracious initiative to fix what we could never repair

Reconciliation involves transformation/change, but we cannot change ourselves

FUTURE

There can be no reconciliation without change; someone has to change, someone has to give, someone has to "eat the debt"; either the debt is paid, or it is negotiated, or it is written off as a bad debt

Reconciliation demands that we include this concept of change/adjustment