

Reveling in the Blessing of Reconciliation

Rom 5:10

“Here we see the infinite love of God, that He has been pleased to think of us poor creatures from everlasting and make it His work to reconcile us to Himself. And here is the foundation of the sweetness and comfort of all the mercies of God to those who are reconciled to Him: they are the fruits of the eternal love of God for us.” (Jeremiah Burroughs, 1599-1646)

“The thing that has to be dealt with, that has to be overcome, in the work of reconciliation, is not man’s distrust of God, but God’s condemnation of man... God would not be to us what He is now had Christ not died.” (James Denney 1856-1917)

“God propitiates, appeases, satisfies, and reconciles God! None of these are acts of the creature. In all this work of propitiation, reconciliation, and redemption, God Himself is the originating and active agent. He is therefore both active and passive, both agent and patient. God is the being who is angry at sin, and God is the being who propitiates this anger. God is the offended party. It is divine justice that demands satisfaction and it is divine compassion that makes the satisfaction. God is the one who holds man in righteous captivity, and he is the one who pays the ransom that frees him from it! God is the holy judge of man who requires satisfaction for sin, and God is the merciful Father of man who provides it for him.” (William Shedd 1820-1894)

“The glorious good news of the gospel is that the sin-devastated relationship between lost sinners and the holy God can be restored. That at first glance seems impossible. God’s perfect, infinite, righteous justice demands the punishment of all who violate His law. Standing before the bar of His justice are helpless, guilty sinners, unable either to satisfy God or to change their condition. But through God’s plan of reconciliation all the hostility, animosity, and alienation separating the Holy One and sinners vanishes, and those who were once His enemies become His friends. The high calling and noble privilege of preaching this message of reconciliation is the most important duty in the world, since it deals with eternal destinations.” (Dr. John MacArthur)

Review: Last class we saw how God’s mercy is the conduit through which forgiveness flows, and how our pursuit of godliness must include the pursuit of being men of mercy. God has given his people indicatives which lead to the imperatives we are given in scripture. This means that what Peter declared in his first letter (1:15) continues for us today as it is God’s holy character that determines and instigates our holy conduct. Thus, it is imperative that we continue to grow in these things (2 Pet 3:18). Therefore, our duty to train ourselves in godliness flows out of a heart of delight not drudgery when the heart and mind is amazed by God’s ongoing and underserved grace (2 Cor 5:14)! We also so how critical mercy is in both the life of the believer and the Church because we have received the saving mercy of God! Yet, just as God’s mercy to us does not mean “Tolerance” so our mercy or better yet our ministry of mercy must never be confused or equated with “tolerance.” It has been rightfully said by many throughout history that tolerance is the last virtue of a depraved and dying society! Sadly “Tolerance” is one of the clearest attributes of the “Christian” and modern church today which only proves they really do not understand the mercy of God!

1. Now as we continue to grow deeper in understanding of the gospel, read Col 1:20-22 & Rom 5:10-11 and see if you can spot the very important “theological” term repeated multiple times across these two passages which speaks of the sovereign work of God’s self-initiating mercy?

What does it mean in Col 1:21 that man is “alienated” (see Eph 4:18 same word used) from God? Is the alienation clearly assumed in Col 1:20?

To better understand the critical nature of this “alienation” consider these verses and what this “separation” from God means: Jn 3:18-20; Rom 1:18; Rom 3:10-18; Eph 2:3; 2:12; 5:6; Js 4:4

See Rom 5:9-10 explains that “we were enemies” of God and that believers are “saved by him from the wrath of God” and explain how these realities connect to man’s alienation from God?

How far is unredeemed man alienated from God?

Unbelievers follow who... (Eph 2:2)?

Unbelievers do the work of... (1 Jn 3:10)?

Unbelievers live in the kingdom of... (Col 1:13)?

Unbelievers are children of... (Mt 13:38; Jn 8:44; Acts 13:10; 1 Jn 3:10)?

However, this is where the glorious truth of God’s sovereign work in reconciliation start to shine brightly! What does this word “reconcile” that is found in Col 1:20-22 and Rom 5:9-10 mean especially in light of man’s alienation?

In these passages (Rom 5:9-10 & Col 1:20-22), where does the emphasis point as to the originator and giver of this reconciliation? Who does the passage point as it relates to being reconciled?

Who is the acting agent of this “reconciliation”? (2 Cor 5:18-6:2)

How does this amazing truth of God’s reconciling mercy help you grow in “What God has done” and how does that further equip and encourage you to train yourself to godliness (1 Tim 4:7)?

Memory Verse: Rom 5:10