

190814-4 Doctrine Series, Reconciliation, Objective & Subjective-CThurman

32. Reconciliation*

All believers through the knowledge of that justification of life given by the Father and brought forth by the blood of Christ have as their great privilege of that new covenant, peace with God and reconciliation. Yea, all believers joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have received atonement.

2Co.5:19; Ro.5:9, 10, 11; Is.26:12; 54:10; Eph.2:13,14; Phl.4:7.

**Formerly Article 30 of 1644 COF*

The word *reconcile* is a compound of two words, re + conciliate, meaning to conciliate again: conciliate means to become friendly or agreeable.

O.E.D.

Reconcile

I. 1. *trans.* To bring (a person) again into friendly relations *to* or *with* (oneself or another) after an estrangement.

Wycliffe (1382) *2Co.5.19 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.*

6. b. To restore to purity, to absolve or cleanse.

1535 Coverdale *Ps.51.7, O reconcile (KJV, purge) me with hyssop, and I shall be clean ...*

purge, Hebrew verb root כָּטַף, cha-ta, KJV, to cleanse, pacify, reconcile, purge

c. To expiate, atone

1535 Coverdale *1Sa.3.14 This wickedness of ye house of Eli shall not be reconciled (KJV, purged) with sacrifice.*

purge, Hebrew verb root כָּפַר, ka-phar, KJV, *to pitch, atone, reconcile, purge, pacify, appease, pardon, forgive, disannul, cleanse.*

d. *absol.* To make atonement. *obs rare*

1539 Bible (Great) *Lev.6.30 And no sin offering ... brought into the tabernacle of witness (KJV, of the congregation) to reconcile with all in the holy place shall be eaten ...*

to reconcile, see above, כָּפַר, ka-phar.

In the N.T. the verb *to reconcile* is tss. from the basic Greek καταλλάσσω (also with the affixed preposition, ἀπό, or drop κατά and add διά) and ἰλάσκομαι, and the noun *reconciliation* is tss. from καταλλαγή.

κατά a prefixed Gr. preposition meaning *as, according to, against, down, under*, + ἀλλάττω, *to change*; to be about or under a change.

καταλλάσσω, katallassō, is always tss. with the English *to reconcile*.

Ro 5:10 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.

καταλλαγή, katallagē, is tss. *atonement* (1), *reconciliation* (3).

Ro 5:11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement (or, reconciliation, καταλλαγή).

‘The words *katalassō* and *katalagē* signify “to reconcile” and “reconciliation.” They point to an action by which enmity is changed to friendship, and surely have, first of all, an objective signification.’ *Systematic Theology*, Louis Berkof, p.375

ἰλάσκομαι, hilaskomai, is tss. *to be merciful* (Lk.18.13), and *to make reconciliation for* (He.2.17).

There are sinners that God has reconciled by the death of His son. The fact that He reconciled some proves that He has a discriminating and eternal love.

Ro 9:18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

The truth is that God's love for His elect is unchangeable.

'God is love. He loved us while sinners, and before satisfaction was rendered. Satisfaction does not awaken love in the divine mind. It only renders it consistent with his justice that God should exercise his love towards transgressors of his law.' *Systematic Theology*, Charles Hodge, vol.2, p.478

'With God, reconciliation does not mean His change of heart from an angry to a friendly disposition. ' *Justification before God (Not by Faith)*, W. E. Best, p.18 (comp. this to the text which states, 'It repented the LORD.' [cf. Ge.6.6)

Reconciliation first settles the issue of the punishment due for sin in all of the elect of God; and after this it will work to turn the life from what had been an unbroken practice of sin. The first objectively sets the elect at peace with God in Christ. The second, subjectively works in the sinner so that he might personally experience the peace of God which passes all understanding. (Phl.4.7)

Beginning at Lev.1.1-4 there is the implication of unsatisfied sin under which the nation of Israel operated. The LORD set up an entire sacrificial system that pictorially showed their need for reconciliation. In a mystery it spoke of one who should come to die for their sins.

Le 1:1 And the LORD called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying,

2 *Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man of you bring an offering unto the LORD, ye shall bring your offering of the cattle, even of the herd, and of the flock.*

3 ¶ *If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish: he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD.*

The voluntariness reveals the need for a change in the sinner's disposition. It assumes that the enmity between God and he is satisfied, and therefore based on this sacrifice he was to draw near to God.

4 *And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him. (6.30 to make atonement, כִּפָּר, ka-phar, is tss. to reconcile.)*

As justification was divided into two parts: standing versus state; sanctification into past versus present, so reconciliation may be divided into objective and subjective reconciliation.

'[T]here is a two-fold reconciliation, one of which is the work of Christ, and was made at his death; the other [the] work of his Spirit, at conversion; when by his grace, men are reconciled to the way of salvation by Christ; and both may be seen in one text, Rom. v.10.' *A Body of Doctrinal & Practical Divinity*, John Gill, p.491

Objective reconciliation

Ro.5.10 For if, when we were (ὄντες, nom. pl. masc. part. pres., For if when being ...) enemies, we were reconciled (aor. ind. pass., stating that we received it as a matter of historical fact) to God by the death of his Son ...

Subjective reconciliation

Ro.5.10 ... much more, being reconciled ('having been reconciled,' part. aor. pass., receiving), we shall be saved by his life.

'Christian reconciliation has two sides—objective and subjective. God must be reconciled to man, and man must be reconciled to God (Eph.2:16; Col.1:20, 21; Heb. 2:17; Matt. 5:24; Romn.5:9-11; 11:15; 2Co. 5:18-21; 1Pe. 3:18) (1) The satisfaction of God's holy law is objective reconciliation. It is a reconciliation by which God has reconciled man to Himself. God has laid aside His holy anger against sin and the sinner and has received the redeemed sinner into His favor. (2) Subjective reconciliation is the operation of the Holy Spirit in removing the sinner's enmity against God. It is subordinate to objective reconciliation. Objective reconciliation makes subjective reconciliation a reality. Mere subjective reconciliation would be psychological, and all would be based on feeling. Assurance comes not from feeling but from knowing that God's nature has been satisfied and that He looks with favor on the redeemed.' *Justification before God (Not by Faith)*, W. E. Best, p.18

Reconciliation is objective because it is what Christ did for all of the elect at one time on the cross.

1Pe 3:18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit ...

It is objective because it is what another does, it is outside of us and not something in which any man may contribute.

Le 6:30 And no sin offering, whereof any of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of the congregation to reconcile withal in the holy place, shall be eaten: it shall be burnt in the fire. (eating is a type of partaking or of personal involvement)

Heb 2:17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins (referring to the guilt and defilement) of the people. (objective reconciliation)

to make reconciliation, or 'propitiation,' 'atonement', ἱλάκεσθαι, pres. infin.

It is subjective because, when the Spirit of God makes application of Christ's redemptive work to the sinner's heart he is changed so that his actions reflect that he has been reconciled. This is synonymous to conversion. When God does a work of regenerating grace in a sinner he will not live as he had before that work was begun.

This two-fold aspect to reconciliation is clearly shown in these two texts:
2Co.5.18-20; Col. 1.19-22

Objective reconciliation:

2Co.5.18 And all things are of God,

Paul just said, 2Co 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

who hath reconciled us to himself by (διά, through) Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

hath reconciled, καταλλάξαντος, gen. sing. masc. part. aor.;
an historical matter of fact, done by Jesus Christ.

'The tense of the verb in 2Co. 5:18 proves that objective reconciliation is a finished work. It is not continuously wrought by God. Having been reconciled (aorist passive participle of *katallasso* [referring to Ro.5.10, added]), we shall be saved (future passive indicative of *sodzo*) by (*en*, instrumental of agency) His life. Hence, going from the aorist passive participle to the future passive indicative verb proves that having been reconciled to God guarantees that we shall be saved by His life (Rom. 5:10).

...

God is reconciled to the sinner in the sense of making it possible for the holy God to look with favor upon sinful mankind. ... Reconciliation effects no change in God, but it does change the administration of His government. His law

regards with approbation those against whom it was formerly hostile. The change is with the relation between those for whom Christ died and the Judge of all.' *Justification before God (Not by Faith)*, W. E. Best, p.17, 18

Subjective reconciliation:

19 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.

reconciling, καταλλάσσω, nom. sing. masc. part. pres.

20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

be reconciled, καταλλάγητε, 2ppl. aor. imper. pass.; The Corinthians were living out of order and knew better. They needed to reign in the disorder and be reconciled in way they were living.

Col.1.19 For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; 20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross (as a matter of fact; objective reconciliation), by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. (not under the earth, as those that have died without Christ shall never be reconciled to God. Phl.2.10, which refers to the sovereignty of Christ as opposed to his work to reconcile.)

having made peace, ειρηνοποιήσας, nom. pl. masc. part. aor.

to reconcile, αποκαλλάξαι, aor. infin., or perhaps, 'to have reconciled

21 And you, that were (ὄντας, part. pres., being) sometime (once) alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled (subjective reconciliation, which affects our mind and lives)

hath reconciled, αποκατήλλαξεν, 3ps. aor. act.; as a matter of fact

22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight ...

Christ's death brought peace between God and the sinner. The issue of the punishment due for sin is settled once for all. The disorder between the sinner and God is healed, not by faith, but by the death of the blessed Son of God.

Isa 53:5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. (The concerns all of the elect of God that were in Christ already from eternity, not as they come to faith.

Yom Kippur, The Day of Atonement, Leviticus chapter 16

Once a year the high priest came into the holiest of all with blood to atone (propitiate) and reconcile the people of God.

'Propitiation presupposes the holy displeasure of God; therefore, it is Godward. The purpose of propitiation is to remove God's displeasure. Hence, the death of Jesus Christ propitiated the holy anger of God, rendering Him propitious to those for whom Jesus Christ died.' *Justification before God (Not by Faith)*, W. E. Best, p.20

The Day of Atonement manifests that Israel was barred from coming into the presence of the LORD because of sin without this atoning sacrifice. Or, we could say that the Day of Atonement showed that God's justice for sin was not yet settled.

He.10.1 ¶ For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. (The fact that the sin issue remained unsettled.)

4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

7 ¶ Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.

Leviticus chapter 16 begins by citing the deaths of Nadab and Abihu, who, as you might recall, were stricken dead because they *presumed* to come before God as they pleased, rather than as the LORD had ordained.

Read Lev.16.1-3

As we read on, we learn that access into the holiest of all was limited to a certain month, a certain day, a certain man (the high priest), that was washed & dressed in his priestly garments, and bringing a certain incense burning on coals of fire that were taken from the brazen altar, and the blood of certain beasts. To do otherwise would result in instant death. In this type, it is clear that only Christ could remove once for all from the people, all of the elect, the great offense of sin which aroused the justice of God. First there must be peace, then there is reconciliation.

Eph.2.14 ¶ For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

*16 And that he might reconcile both unto God (and who are these but the elect among both the Jews and the Gentiles) *in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:**

17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

There is a sin offering and a burnt offering. The sin offering relieved the sinner of the guilt and defilement for sin; by it also came the forgiveness of sin. Then there is the burnt offering. The burnt offering forms the basis for the *peace offering* by which communion is restored with God. (cf. Lev.3.5) It represents the offering up

of the body of Jesus Christ as the satisfactory sacrifice to God. By it sinners are reconciled to God.

- The herd animal represents that most costly & incomparable of sacrifices; strong and able. (incomparable, cf. Ex.15.11; 1Sa.2.2; Ps.86.8; Is.46.5)
- The flock animal, the most precious sacrifice, harmless & obedient.
- The fowls being the least esteemed.

Read Lev. 16.4-19 objective reconciliation

Read Lev. 16.20-22 subjective reconciliation

When Christ died on the cross, God was once-for-all propitiated for the sins of all of the elect, and they were reconciled to Him forever. God's justice for sin is satisfied by Christ's death. This is objective reconciliation. No man cooperates in this work. This was the work of God by Jesus Christ alone.

But when the Spirit of God brings us forth in the new birth and we come to faith in Jesus Christ by the hearing of the gospel then begins subjective reconciliation. In this we cooperate by yielding our members as instruments of righteousness to holiness. (Ro.6.19) In this every believer should partake, but because of unrepentance and unconfessed sin we might not be. And so Paul commands the Corinthians that had failed in this respect:

2Co 5:20 ... we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

be ye reconciled, καταλλάγητε, 2ppl. aor. imper. pass.

Do we know that Christ died for us? If so, we know that He reconciled us to God once for all. Are our lives reconciled to God by the Spirit of God living in us? Or are we despising the sacrifice that Christ made for us by choosing rather to live for the world? Since Christ has reconciled us to God by His death, then we should be reconciled in our lives.