

What does this mean for me?

(1) If I have trusted Jesus for my salvation, am I living as a true ambassador of Christ? Am I engaged in my calling as a minister of reconciliation sharing with others?

If not, what keeps me from doing so?

(2) If I have never considered surrendering my life to Jesus, do I understand that I cannot make myself right with God by my own efforts and that I need to accept the reconciliation Jesus has made possible to start new with God and others?

What is stopping you from making that decision today?

Words That Matter!
The Wonder of Reconciliation
2 Corinthians 5:17-21 (page 805)

Sunday, July 15, 2018

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Reconciliation defined:

Webster's Dictionary:

- to restore friendship or harmony;
- to settle or resolve

Biblically:

- to change completely (*katalasso*)

Reconciliation always implies two things:

- a removal of the enmity that caused the alienation in the first place *and*
- the restoration of a relationship and the placation of anger

Reconciliation can properly be described as:

- the work of God for man in which God undertakes to transform man and make possible and actual his eternal fellowship with a holy God.

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Reconciliation comes by the will of God (2 Cor 5:17-18)

- All things are from God, including salvation (vs 18-19a; Eph 1:4)
- If anything was to change in our relationship with God, it was because God took the initiative to rereconcile us through Christ's sacrifice (v 18; Isa 59:1-2; Rom 5:6-8)

Reconciliation is made possible by an act of forgiveness

(2 Cor 5:19; John 1:29; Rom 4:8; Psalm 32:2)

- The scope of the reconciling work of Christ is worldwide (v 19a; 1 John 2:2)
- Because of the Cross of Christ, God no longer counts our sin against us, but is free to extend forgiveness

Reconciliation becomes possible through the obedience of faith (2 Cor 5:20)

- God's reconciliation has removed the hostility between us (Col 1:21-22; Rom 5:11)
- This new opportunity implies that we have to make a response to the reconciliation supplied by God (v 20; Col 1:23-24)

Reconciliation is made possible by the sacrifice of Christ (2 Cor 5:21; Col 1:20)

- This forgiveness is effective by the blood of Jesus Christ that removed the barrier of sin and reconciled us to God (vs 19b; Col 1:20)
- God's justice is satisfied by Christ's sacrifice where He took God's wrath for our sin that He might impute Christ's righteousness to us. (v 21)

The result of our *reconciliation* is that we are called by God to share this message of restoration to God with others (2 Cor 5:18c; 19c; 20; 21)

We have been called by virtue of:

- a new beginning - a new life (v 17)
- a new responsibility - a ministry (v 18)
- a new message - the gospel (v 19)
- a new status - His ambassadors (v 19)
- a new motivation - God's grace (v 20)
- a new hope - Jesus Christ (v 21)

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