***The Doctrine of Reconciliation  
RO52-01***

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Please open your Bibles to Romans 5:9-11. This is the third segment on the assurance of reconciliation.

**Logic**

Paul, in this passage, is proving the principle of the eternal security of one's salvation by the method of logical deduction. In verse 9, he has pointed out that we believers have been justified by the death of Jesus Christ. The logical deduction from this fact is that we believers shall be preserved from the lake of fire without question and without doubt. The line of reasoning is that if God has done the harder and the greater thing for us of providing us with justification, He will surely do the less difficult thing of preserving us in that justification.

**Eternal Security**

The fact that God alone is involved in the process of our salvation makes eternal security no problem at all really. It's a logical necessity for a perfect God. God is perfect and everything He does is perfect. And if He says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, that's exactly what's going to happen.

In verse 10, which we are currently looking at, Paul reiterates the principle of logical deduction from the greater to the less. Paul begins by pointing out the fact that every person is by nature an enemy of God. The New Testament word for "enemy," which we have already studied, we found, connotes the idea of angry hostility and hatred. It is not merely that we are indifferent toward God, it is simply that we are actually mad at Him, and that we, by nature, actually despise and hate God.

The Bible, we have found, is filled with examples of the use of the word "enemy" to indicate this concept of hatred and hostility toward God. The old sin nature hostility toward God is manifested in all areas of our society. We had this clearly demonstrated in the natural inclination of people to be independent of God; for people to be self-willed; for them to completely ignore God; and, not to take Him into consideration at all in what they do.

We have the violation of the divine institutions, which is increasingly prominent in our society: the institution of marriage; the institution of family life; the institution of divine government; and, the institution of personal responsibility – the concept of morality. One of the latest attacks this week was on Miss Anita Bryant and her campaign against the homosexual cause. One of the current attacks against her is that she's bringing religion into this question. This feminist just came down real hard that Miss Bryant has no business bringing religion into this question.

It's not really bringing religion in at all. That lady is showing her own ignorance by saying a thing like that. What Miss Bryant has brought in is the Bible. And if you were to say that this feminist that what Miss Bryant has brought in is the Bible, it wouldn't make any difference. She would say, "Well, you shouldn't bring the Bible in on this question." And they look you straight in the eye and straight-faced, and they'll actually think that they have spoken wisdom.

Well, that shows you how degenerative American society has become, and it shows you how deep is the hostility toward God that His Word is discounted as having any bearing upon the question of morality – such a large question of morality as is involved in the sexual area. We have the human-good programs that surround us. We have men in government that our society lauds as wonderful men. "Humanitarians" is the word they call them. The Bible calls them evil men, because they are productive of human good programs – programs of one kind or another that originate from the old sin nature. And the Bible says, "These are acts of evil, and these are evil men who do these things."

**Hatred toward God**

In our society today, people are antagonistic to doctrine, and they're antagonistic to sound doctrine. They're not antagonistic to false doctrine. But they are also antagonistic to the teachers of sound doctrine. The government attempts at controlling our Christian schools is nothing more than a hidden hostility and hatred toward God. They hate what Christian schools do. They not only hate what Christian schools do in terms of the spiritual factors. If you are here at this academy program (our spring festival, which we put on Friday), you came away with the clear-cut understanding and demonstration before your very eyes that a Christian school properly run is infinitely superior academically. And the government agencies hate that.

Their public schools have all the money in the world. Their schools never have to worry about money. The public school never has to produce a quality product, because next year, the money still going to be there, so who cares? The only thing that the public school has to worry about is keeping the place from being torn up too much so that everybody can keep coming in to collect the salaries that are automatically provided. But a Christian school has to be productive, and it so far outstrips the public school that the hatred toward God is evidenced in the attempt to destroy the freedom of parents to choose the kind of education they want for their children.

Well, this goes on and on in all kinds of ways – hostility toward God. Men are the enemies of God.

So, Paul, in verse 10 says, "For if (and the word is first-class condition – 'since') when we were enemies (hostile, hating, and antagonistic toward God), we were reconciled." Count yourself blessed to have attended this service today because you are going to touch upon one of the most dramatic, and one of the most fantastic, doctrines in the Word of God. So, listen carefully.

**Reconciled**

We begin with the word "reconciled." It looks like this in the Greek Bible: "katallasso." The word "katallasso" basically means "to change" or "to exchange." This word actually comes from another verb. The verb is also "allasso." The first part of this verb ("all" here) comes from the word "allos." "Allos" means "another." The word means "to change" or "to transform into something else."

Several times this word "allasso" is used in terms of changing or transforming into something else in the Bible. For example, we have it in Acts 6:14, where Jesus is falsely accused of wanting to "allasso" (to change) the customs of the Jews which were given to them by Moses.

In Galatians 4:20, the word is used in terms of Paul changing the tone of his voice toward the people in consequence of their conduct.

In 1 Corinthians 15:51-52, this word is used to indicate that, at the rapture, all the Christians are going to be "allasso" (are going to be changed here physically from a corruptible body to an incorruptible body.

**The Doctrine of Reconciliation**

In Hebrews 1:12, it's used to indicate a change of garments. Then we go from there to "katallasso." "Katallasso" comes from "allasso." "Allasso" means basically "to change into something else." When we come to "katallasso," we have an emphasis added to the idea by this preposition Kata." "Kata" makes a word emphatic. So, it means "to make thoroughly another" or we translate it "to reconcile." "To reconcile" means "to change a person thoroughly" from one condition to another condition, or from one relationship to another relationship. So, the word "katallasso" is a basic word for the doctrine of reconciliation.

We get some idea of its meaning when we take a look at how it was used in classical Greek. In classical Greek, we find this word used of changing of money – transactions where money is exchanged. And the word "katallasso" means to change money from one form to another form.

Also, when we read classical Greek, we find it used in soldiers who are willing to exchange their life for money. We call them mercenaries. The classical Greek, when describing the work of mercenary soldiers, describes it by the word "katallasso." They are willing to exchange their lives for money.

It is also used in classical Greek of a strange people, and bringing nations and individuals together who have been at odds, and creating a reconciliation between them. That third use is the one that has come down to us in New Testament use – that basic idea of individuals, who were at odds with one another, being brought into a position where they are friends.

**Adjustment**

So, when we look at this word "katallasso" in the New Testament, we have it used in a variety of ways. Remember that basically the word "katallasso" is the word that is used to describe what you had to do to your watch in order to change it from standard time to daylight saving time. When daylight saving time arrives, you have to change your watch to "katallasso" it – to reconcile it, or to adjust it to the new standard. The same thing is done when you get your bank statement at the end of the month and you have to see that your checkbook is changed or reconciled to fit the bank statement.

When we come to the use of this word in the New Testament, we should pause to read these. Please turn to 2 Corinthians 5:18-20 first of all. We have this word "katallasso" used, where it says, "And all things are of God who has reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation. To wit that God was in Christ, reconciling the world (and there's the word again) unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and has committed unto us the word of reconciliation (that's the noun form). We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us. We beg you, in Christ' stead, to be reconciled to God."

There are certain things in this passage that explain to us the meaning of reconciliation (this word "katallasso)." First of all, notice that sinners are an enmity with God. They are hostile to His authority.

Secondly, sinners are incompatible, therefore, with God's standard of absolute righteousness. They're out of adjustment. Consequently, sinners are under the divine wrath of God because they're out of adjustment with His standard of absolute righteousness. That is the whole issue of the doctrine of reconciliation. God's standard is absolute righteousness. It is the "+R" level. And man falls someplace down below that. No matter where he is on this scale, he has to ultimately be reconciled to the standard of absolute righteousness. He has to be adjusted to this standard, or else his destiny will be the lake of fire.

**Helplessness**

That, in short, is the whole doctrine of reconciliation. A human being either takes the steps that are necessary to adjust himself to absolute righteousness, or else he's doomed forever in the lake of fire. Sinners are by nature incompatible with God's standard of absolute righteousness. Furthermore, sinners are unable to do anything about it. That's the whole tragedy. It is not too hard for most people to see that they are not in adjustment with God's standards. It is very easy for a person to say, "Yes, I'm a sinner. I certainly am out of adjustment with absolute righteousness." Then the terrible part is knowing that you can't do anything about it to get yourself back into adjustment. At least, when your watch is off, you can turn the hands and bring it back together. When your checkbook is off, at least you can change a figure and reconcile it with the bank statement. But here you can't do a thing about it. It is a helpless position. They need to make a change so that they become compatible with this standard. They need to be "katallasso." They need to be reconciled. They need to be changed. They need to be adjusted.

Notice that God not does to be reconciled. God does not need to be changed. He already is absolute righteousness. He already is up to His standard. Don't ever talk about God being reconciled. God never has to be reconciled to anything because God is always perfect, and God is always right. Only man has to be reconciled.

It is true that God has a problem also with sin, and that is that His justice demands the just penalty for sin. So, what does God need to be? Think of it. What doctrine? Propitiation. God needs to be propitiated. He needs to have His justice satisfied, but He does not need to be reconciled. Only man needs to be adjusted to a standard.

The sinner therefore needs to change, by reconciliation, from enmity to friendship with God; and, from relative righteousness to absolute righteousness. You and I have been reconciled. And this passage indicates to us we are now responsible, as ambassadors of Jesus Christ, to be appealing to unbelievers to make the objective reconciliation (which God has provided) subjective in their case; and, to make this reconciliation that God has made possible actual in their experience by their receiving of Jesus Christ the Savior.

**Evangelism**

So, in short, here is the heart of evangelism. The heart of evangelism is meeting a human being who is in this position. He is someplace on this scale of relative righteousness, but he is short of the absolute righteousness that God demands, and therefore he is doomed to the lake of fire. You must turn to him and appeal to him, for his own sake, to be reconciled to God; to get himself adjusted to God's standard; and, to get himself compatible with what God demands of a human being, for that human being to be permitted to enter heaven. And, of course, having alerted him to the need, you will then have to explain to him the gospel so that he will understand how he can adjust himself to the standard of absolute righteousness.

At this point, he can go far straight. At this point, he can assume that he can do this on his own in some way. And, of course, that's what the whole world is trying to do. All the religions of the world recognize that they're out of tune with God; they're out of step with God; and, they're all trying to get in step by some humanly devised system. And every one of them is rejected by God, and every one of them is a total failure.

That's why it's great in the providence of God to have been selected for the enlightenment of the gospel. You never sought God. Nobody on this trail of relative righteousness ever looks for God. All you have to spend some time talking to an unbeliever, and you will discover how totally indifferent and unconcerned he is about the fact that he's out of step with God. It bothers him: "Well, it's not good. Yeah, it's bad. But we go on. It's like inflation: "Yeah, well, it's bad, but will go on, and we do nothing about it.

It's when God reaches down and does something more in drawing us to Himself that a person reverses and adjusts himself through faith in Christ to the absolute standard.

So, what we do, as ambassadors of Jesus Christ, is plead with people to get themselves adjusted to God's standard. Let me read the passage again (2 Corinthians 5:18-20): "And all things are of God." This includes all the provision for eternal life; all the calling to eternal life; and, all the moving of your souls to accept Christ as Savior: "Who has reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ." That's potential. That is our objective reconciliation. The ground has been provided.

Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer of Dallas Seminary used to describe this by the word "savable." He used to describe what God has done here as making a person savable. Now a person can be reconciled to God. Until the death of Christ, it was all on credit, and it was all possible. Now God has been propitiated. Therefore, man can now be reconciled to God's standard: "And have given to us the ministry of reconciliation. To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself (the world of unbelievers), not imputing their trespasses unto them; and has committed unto us the word of reconciliation (that is, the preaching of this doctrine). Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us. We beg you in the name of Jesus Christ, in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God for your own sake." This is for the terrible things that are ahead of you, and for the horrendous experience of spending forever in the lake of fire: "We plead with you to be reconciled to God."

You can explain to the unbeliever, in a very simple way, that he is out of step with God. He is out of synchronization with God's standard, which is absolute righteousness, and that he must take some action on that, and God has spelled out exactly what that action is. When a person knows he needs to be reconciled, and he knows how to be reconciled, he will understand that that's the only way he can get to God. By no other way can he come to God. And, of course, that is through the person of Jesus Christ.

Another place that this word "katallasso" is used, which is illuminating, is 1 Corinthians 7:11, which describes the situation of a wife who decides to pack up and desert her husband. The Bible lays out the fact that a wife who packs up and deserts her husband now has placed that husband in a position where divorce is in order (God leading him in that direction). It is the same thing if a husband deserts the wife (he packs off and goes), and that's the end. He shoves off. That wife then, as per Scripture, is free to consider the option of divorce. The other option, of course, is the case of deliberate, willful, persistent adultery, which also opens the option to legitimate divorce, and thus freedom thereafter of the believer to legitimate remarriage.

However, when that wife (and that's the illustration here in 1 Corinthians 7:11) decides to shove off, the Scriptures tell her that she has two options open to her as long as her husband remains unmarried: "But if she departs, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled ("katallasso") to her husband, and let not the husband put away his wife." The thing also works the other way. The husband is not to desert her, and she is not to desert him. If she does desert him, she is to remain unmarried. He has the option of divorce in that case. But the burden of responsibility that is upon her is that unless he had deserted her, and unless there was a matter of adultery, she has no grounds for divorce. Therefore, she is to remain unmarried.

The other option is that she is to be reconciled. What does that mean? Well, that means that she is to come back to her husband, and accept his standards. She is to come back to the standards of her husband. The feminist, of course, would tear their hair roots out with such a statement as that, because that's the very thing that they don't want to do. They don't want to be adjusted to their husband's standard. They don't want to be adjusted to what their husband thinks, and the plays that their husband calls. But that's exactly what this word means here. This word tells a woman who has deserted her husband that she has only one ground for returning, and that is to be "katallasso."

So, what does that mean? It means for her to change. Remember that this word originally came from a Greek word that means "to change." It means "to exchange." And what she has to do is exchange her will; her viewpoints; and, her standards for that of her husband, providing that those standards of her husband are not violations of Scripture.

So, the return has to be on the standard of the husband, and not on some deal that she makes of her own standards. In Scripture, the Christian wife represents the church as the bride of Christ. And the Christian husband in Scripture pictures Jesus Christ as the bridegroom of the church. So, the efforts and the appeal of the husband to marital reconciliation (which is what he should do when the wife deserts) is to appeal, and he is to make every effort for reconciliation. She is to respond. When Christ appeals to us as His bride, we are to respond. When we are out of line, and He, as our bridegroom, appeals to us, we, as the bride, are to respond to Him. That's all that is involved in this tremendous word for "reconciliation." There is to be response by the estranged wife here in this case.

Now, taking all this back to our passage in Romans 5:10, where we had the word "katallasso," we make the application of all this meaning of the word "katallasso: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son." So, Romans 5:10 is telling us this: that sinners, as God's enemies, were given a ground of adjustment to God's standard of absolute righteousness by Jesus Christ. This word here is in the aorist tense, which means at the point that Christ died for the sins of the world, objective reconciliation was provided. We have to make it subjective in our case (apply it). It was passive. This was done for the sinner. There is no way that a sinner can reconcile Himself to God. It's indicative – a statement of fact.

So, so this does not mean that all sinners are automatically reconciled to God. But what verse 10 is saying is that we were objectively reconciled; that is, a ground of reconciliation was provided by God, and then we had to make the move of acceptance. The unbeliever therefore has to accept Christ as personal Savior to make actual, in his case, the potential reconciliation which God has provided.

There is another related word to reconciliation, which I should call your attention to, and that is a double compound of prepositions: "apokatallasso." It has the preposition "apo," and it has the preposition "kata," and that really indicates an emphatic change. We would translate it to reconcile completely. It's an intensified compound word. It connotes a complete, thorough, absolute reconciliation where nothing is left at odds. People often reconcile themselves to one another, but they often leave little pieces here and there that they're really not together on again. But this word is telling us that when God reconciles, there's nothing at which you and God are not on proper terms thereafter. Everything has been taken care of for you completely.

This is used in the Ephesians 2:16 to describe how God has taken Jews and gentiles who were at enmity with one another, and has reconciled them together into one new body – the church, the body of Christ.

This is used in Colossians 1:20 of God's work in Jesus Christ in bringing the whole universe into complete accord with the mind of God. So, all of nature will once more be reconciled to God's standard.

It is used in Colossians 1:21 of a person going from evil to full mental compatibility with God's absolute righteousness. And this is what happens in salvation. God changes our thinking. He moves us from where we have minds of evil to where we have minds that are completely compatible to His thinking. And how do we do that? Through doctrine. The more doctrine you take into your soul: the more you secure the mind of Christ; the more "apokatallasso" becomes real in your experience; and, the more completely reconciled you are in terms of experience. You can't be more reconciled objectively, and you can't be more savable than you are now. God has provided the ultimate in that. But your day-by-day actual incorporation of the effects of that reconciliation are constantly being improved.

There is one other word: the verb "diallasso." "Diallasso" means to reconcile, but in a different way. It means to reconcile in terms of two people who were both at fault, and they both admit their fault, and they both exchange the admission, and they both come together on a reconciled basis. In other words, this word is only used to describe where you have both parties who are at fault, and they get together. Guess what? This word is never used to describe the biblical doctrine of reconciliation. I think now you should be able to see why, because God does not ever need to be reconciled. God is already compatible with the standard of absolute righteousness. Only man has to be reconciled.

You have this word used in Matthew 5:24, where you have it describing a situation where there was mutual hostility which is going to be exchanged for mutual adjustment. This, of course, could never describe the biblical doctrine of reconciliation because only the sinner needs to be reconciled, and not God.

Just to complete the study, the noun form "katallage," and it means the same thing. It is the noun for the idea of a change in one party induced by an action on the part of another. We translate it as "reconciliation," referring to the act of a sinner becoming adjusted to God's standard of absolute righteousness. This is used in Romans 5:11, and it is used in Romans 11:15, and it is used in 2 Corinthians 5:18-19.

The object of this reconciliation, Paul says, is: "We were reconciled to God." This indicates the standard to which the sinner must be reconciled, and that is the character of God. The Greek Bible says *the* God, indicating God the Father in view here. The father does not need to be reconciled – only to be propitiated. The sinner needs to be reconciled to God; that is, to his standard.

Unsaved people are always making the monumental mistake of thinking that if they adjust themselves to one another, all is going to be well between them and God. This is exactly what Adam and Eve did, Once they were sinners, with an old sin nature, they said, "We'll adjust ourselves to one another." The first problem they discovered was that their clothing of glory light was gone, so they made themselves fig leaf aprons to adjust to that problem. That was a human viewpoint solution for a monumental problem of lack of adjustment to God which they could actually not do anything about.

What they should have done is, when they heard God coming into the garden that evening, just walked down the road to meet Him and said, "Father, we've blown the whole thing. It's obvious that we are in a terrible condition here. We are even aware of our nakedness now, and what should we do about it?" And they should have sought a divine viewpoint, doctrinal solution to begin with, but they did not. Instead, they immediately began functioning the way the old sin nature functions in our society – by human viewpoint. Everything's going to be well with God if you and I relate ourselves properly to one another on the human level. It really was ridiculous. All these human solutions that permeate our societies are just exactly like those fig leaf aprons of Adam and Eve. It didn't take very many days before those leaves obviously dried out to a crisp, and the first time they sat down, that was the end of that human viewpoint solution. That could be downright embarrassing in a crowd.

Yet man goes around with these smug, wonderful, intelligent provisions that we have for all the problems of our society, and all the poor people, and all the stupid people, and all the people who have trouble, and all the criminals, and all this and that, and every one of them is nothing but fig leaf aprons that soon dry up, and then the politicians come up with another fig leaf apron. And all the Americans trudge like sheep to the polls, and they elect another fig leaf apron maker. And that's what we have – a Congress full of fig leaf apron makers. And we never catch on that there are no solutions in that direction.

So, the standard in man's lost condition has become his lost condition. He says, "We'll adjust to our old sin nature. Then everything will be well between us and God." And they assume that if people can be related to one another (they can adjust to each other so they don't kill each other and tear each other to shreds), and they have some tolerable way of being able to live with one another, that now society will progress. That's what Nimrod did. Nimrod came along and said, we don't need God. We just need a few rules. We need a few regulations. We need a few procedures. We just need a few adjustments to one another. And we're going to be just as happy as Adam and Eve were in the garden." I have no doubt that those very words were on Nimrod's lips. He told people: "We can be just as happy as Adam and Eve (our parents who were in the garden), if we can just work this out between one another. God says, "Never, never, never."

Reconciliation to man does not indicate reconciliation to God. As a matter of fact, it usually indicates just the very opposite, because the more you are reconciled to God's viewpoint, the more you find yourself at odds with the human viewpoint that most people function on. So, you find yourself out-of-step with people more and more.

"For if (since), when we were haters of God (enemies – hostile), we were adjusted to God's standard of absolute righteousness by the death of His Son." The word "by" is this Greek preposition "dia," which means "by means of:" "By means of the death (the "thanatos") of His Son" – the death of Jesus Christ. This word "death" here ("thanatos") refers to the payment of Jesus Christ for the sins of the world to provide the ground for the justification of sinners, and thus for their reconciliation. It is specifically in Scripture described as the death of His Son. It is "*the* Son" in the Greek, indicating the second person specifically of the Trinity, the Lord Jesus Christ.

This word "the" adds an emphasis to Son. The emphasis upon the Son as the agent of reconciliation also stresses the fact that God the Father is the one to whom the sinner needs to be reconciled. The one that you are going to be faced with an eternity is the Father. And your reconciliation; your adjustment; and, your compatibility with the standard of God the Father is going to be the issue when you die and face God. The Son is the agent in this transaction. And it is specifically, therefore, described as the death of His Son.

Thus we have here the unique sinless God-Man who is a complete deity and complete humanity. The death of Christ in the Atonement was both physical and spiritual. He had to die spiritually, which He did, separated from the Father as he bore the sins of the world. He had to die physically, which He did. He had to die physically in a certain way – by the shedding of His blood, which He did. He probably shed so much blood in the process of the brutal treatment he had received, and the suffering on the cross, that eventually He came to the point where the whole system, under His control, at the right point in time, received shock, and He permitted Himself then to die from that loss of blood.

As you know, Christ was in the state of spiritual death high noon to 3 P.M. on the cross. At that time, he was forsaken by God the Father and by God the Holy Spirit. Have you ever stopped to ask yourself a very interesting question? What if Jesus Christ had died physically from noon to 3:00 P.M.? From noon to 3:00 P.M., He was crying out and screaming out, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" He was addressing the Father and addressing the Holy Spirit.

Now in this span here that began at noon, what if someplace along the line here He had died physically? The argument is that the physical death of Jesus Christ is not involved in our salvation, and that it is not involved in our atonement, because He didn't die physically until He declared the word "finished:" "It is finished." Then He died physically. What if he had died from noon to 3 P.M.? He would have died then under the status of spiritual death, for He was suffering spiritual death at that point. And if he had died during that period under spiritual death, the consequences to Him would have been the same as they are to any other human being. The result would have been that He would have gone to the torments compartment as Hades, and He would have been destined eventually to spend eternity as a human being in the lake of fire.

Jesus Christ could not have died from noon to 3 P.M. and still provided an atonement for us. If He had, He would have ended up in the lake of fire. Isn't that interesting? That just hit me a couple of weeks ago when I was reading this, and I think it's a sound observation.

Therefore, Jesus Christ declared on the cross that the spiritual death phase of the atonement for the sins of the world was finished. He announced when the spiritual death phase was finished. And it was finished before He died physically. It had to be finished before He died physically. So, while He was out of fellowship, He was crying, "My God, My God." But when he was in fellowship, immediately He indicated that by changing from the word "God" to the word "Father:" "Father, into Your hands, I commit My spirit." And He died spiritually alive. He died physically while spiritually alive. It had to be that way. That's why the word "it is finished" was critical – to announce to us that the spiritual phase was done, but not the atonement phase. Only the spiritual phase of paying for the sins of the world was completed. Now the physical death was going to complete the atonement. The physical death phase completed the whole transaction.

So, the physical death phase of the atonement very clearly took place after Christ was spiritually alive again, and thus safe from being cast into the Torments compartment of Hades. The physical death occurred after He was back in eternal fellowship with the Father. Verse 9, as you remember, says, "Justified by His blood," indicating to us that His death was in the form of a sacrifice. The sins of the world thus were poured out on Jesus Christ on the cross so that the Father's justice judged them all by imposing the penalty of physical and spiritual death. And that's what it means here. The word "thanatos" refers to the complete payment for sins – the death, both in terms of the spiritual phase, and in terms of the physical phase, and that of the death of His Son; that is, the second person of the Trinity.

Let me see if I can tie this together to illustrate for you the principle of reconciliation. Here is what this word has told us. Here is what has happened. First of all, let's begin with the way conditions were to begin with. We have an illustration of creation and innocence. You see two figures here that are friends. Man is the figure on one side; and the figure on the other side represents God. They are both in a condition of friendship, and they are able to hold each other's hands, and they are in the status of fellowship.

However, the time came when Adam and Eve entered into sin. So, we need to illustrate the fall into sin. The fall into sin immediately turned man's back on God, because man now became an enemy of God. It also turned God's back upon man, because God was now related to man in terms of His wrath. God's wrath was now exercised toward man.

**The Wall between God and man**

The fall into sin is represented by a wall. What happened was that a wall was established between God and man, and this wall had several facets to it that you're well acquainted with. Man was now a slave to sin. He was in the slave market of sin, and he couldn't get Himself out. Somebody had to redeem Him. He was now spiritually dead. The penalty for sin is spiritual death. He couldn't pay that. He already was spiritually dead. He was only capable of producing human good, and it takes divine good to go to heaven. Therefore, he could do nothing about removing this barrier (this block in the wall). The divine justice of God demanded the full penalty for his sin – a penalty which he could not pay. Therefore, he could not satisfy divine justice. That's why God's back was turned upon him, because God's justice brought down God's wrath upon a man who was now out of reconciliation with God.

Finally, man was in the position of being in Adam, the place of complete death – the place of complete helplessness. Adam was a corpse. There was no way that he could reconcile himself. There was nothing Adam could do. Adam was a corpse, and trying to do something religious is like giving a corpse a blood transfusion in order to reverse the process. Worse than that, it's like walking in and asking the corpse to give himself a blood transfusion. That's what all the world does. They say, "I'm going to save myself." They're a bunch of corpses walking around saying, "I have to find this vein and see if I can give myself a transfusion."

So, here is this wall – these various blocks separated God and man, and put them at enmity. Along comes Jesus Christ and the atonement of the cross. And the wall that separated them now becomes a cross. God, by that act of Christ on the cross, was propitiated. God now turns around, and He is facing man again. Man is now in a position still of being the enemy of God. But now we have objective reconciliation. Man is now savable. There is a ground for a human being to become compatible with God again. And unless you are compatible with God, you will spend eternity in the lake of fire. How compatible do you have to be with God? 100% compatible. You have to be absolute righteousness. That's how compatible you have to be with God.

**Subjective Reconciliation**

So, you have this picture here where man is turned one way, on one side of the cross, and God is facing him, with His hands now extended to him. The point in time comes when some ambassador of Jesus Christ performs the ministry of reconciliation, and he informs the sinners of what God has provided, and he pleads with him for his sake to be reconciled to God. At that point, that person believes; he turns; and, God takes his hands. On the cross of Jesus Christ, God and man have been reconciled. God has been propitiated – not reconciled, but man has been reconciled. This is subjective reconciliation. The sinner has believed in Jesus Christ as his Savior. That is our mission as believers – to plead with sinners to come to this being reconciled with God's standard of absolute righteousness by believing in Jesus Christ.

Please notice that there are not all these false invitations that divert multitudes from being able to find God taking their hand at the cross. Multitudes are diverted because of false invitations: "Giving your heart to Jesus Christ" Have you ever heard that? Please don't tell that to our children. We'll really get on you if you do this in Sunday school – tell our little kids to give their heart to Jesus Christ – their dirty little hearts. What would God do with it if He had it? What would He do with your dirty little heart if he had it? Or some Christians say: "to invite Jesus Christ into your heart?" That's even worse. Now you're asking HIm to come into the garbage pile. Where do you find anything in the Word of God with such phrases as that; or walking an aisle so that you can come and pray for victory down at the altar; or join something like a church, or an organization, or a hotshot group; doing something good or avoiding something bad so that you can be saved; or, the outpouring of some emotion of sorrow for your sin, and on and on – every one of these false invitations that only divert a person from being able to be saved, and from being able to subjectively become reconciled to the living God.

Come in your filth, and come in your evil, and God will do the cleaning up, and God will clothe with you in His righteousness. And you will find yourself standing at the cross, grasping the hands of God, a reconciled human being. That is the great doctrine of readjustment to the standard of absolute righteousness. God would not take your hands unless you were just as good as His Son. But that is what happens when you believe in Jesus Christ as Savior.

Our invitation to you is to believe the gospel. That's the only invitation the Bible knows about. You receive Him: "As many as received Him became the sons (the children of God), even to them that believe on His name. You can receive Him no other way. We beseech you, as ambassadors of Jesus Christ this day, if you have not done so, to be reconciled to the living God. He has made it possible. It is now up to you to accept what He has provided.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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[**Back to the Bible Questions index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/allarticles.htm)