***The Summary of the Doctrine of Reconciliation
RO53-01***

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Please open your Bibles to Romans 5:9-11 once more. Our subject is "The Assurance of Reconciliation," and this is the fifth segment.

**The Love of God**

The love of God for mankind (which was enslaved in sin) was infinite in degree. We must never forget that about the love of God. It was infinite in degree for that reason, therefore, God refused to do less for humanity than to provide a salvation which was capable of satisfying divine justice, not only completely, but forever.

**Justification**

God calls upon us as sinners, therefore, who are outside of the family of God, to take a stand upon the fact of an achieved justification – a justification to which nothing needs to be added, and to which nothing can be added. Justification is not a progressive thing. It is a thing that you receive in total. You are either justified or you are not. You are never progressing toward justification. You have either entered it or you have not. But once you have entered it through faith in Christ (receiving Christ as Savior), then because God's love for you was of such a degree, the justification you have received is complete and permanent. That has been the point that the apostle Paul has been driving home here in Romans.

Furthermore, the standard is that we have to be as good as Jesus Christ to go to heaven. Since God was able to reconcile the sinner to absolute righteousness while the sinner was God's enemy, He will also be able to preserve the sinner in salvation now that he has become a child of God, and now that he is a friend of God. This is the logical argument that Paul has been dealing with. If God would do so much for us when we were His enemies, now that we are His friends, He will certainly preserve us in that salvation. It's a logical deduction.

Paul stresses that the reconciliation that God has provided for us is in perpetuity. And you may rest assured that that's exactly the kind it is. Since God no longer directs His wrath toward the believer, He will not permit the Christian to lapse back into an unreconciled condition. Just as a believer's justification was secured by the death of Jesus Christ, Paul says, so, your preservation in justification is achieved by the resurrected life of Jesus Christ. By dying for you, He made it possible for you to be justified. By being resurrected, He ensured that He would preserve you in that resurrection.

The response of the believer to such security in salvation should be simple, joyous exultation. You can sleep soundly at night. You need not wake up in the middle of the night fearful that should you die, your soul would go to hell. You can walk confidently by day. You need not fear that if you should drop dead of a heart attack, your destiny would be hell forever. You need have no fear of eternity, and you will have none if you understand the Bible doctrine which we have been studying of divine reconciliation.

We have come, in our study of Romans 5:9-11, to verse 11. So, we pick up the study there today where the apostle Paul, Romans 5:11 says, "And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation.

First of all, let's look at the phrase "and not only so." The word "and" is the Greek conjunction "de." It's used here to indicate an additional fact is coming up. The word "not" is the strong Greek word for "not:" "ou." The word "only" is an adverb: "monon." The word "so" is not in the Greek. What does this phrase mean? Well, the whole phrase simply calls attention to the fact that another and final benefit of justification is about to be introduced.

You remember that we told you that Romans 5:1-11 is a series of: "So, here are the consequences of justification." Paul is listing a series of benefits of possessing justification. Now this phrase, beginning at verse 11: "and not only so" is indicating that here comes one more final benefit of justification.

So, we could translate the phrase in this way: "but that is not all," or we could say, "and not only that." The phrase simply indicates that something more, in addition to the eternal security and salvation, which he has just finished discussing in verse 10, is coming up. Not only do you have a salvation provided entirely by God, apart from human doing, with no human works; no human penance; and, no human performance of any kind involved in securing eternal life. And then what He has provided is secure. And that's what he's talking about in verse 10. He says, "Not only do you have that, but here's something more. Here's one final consequence of justification." You would have thought that when he got to verse 10, and he indicated that you could never lose that salvation, that nothing more could be added. But here it is: one thing more.

Then he comes to the phrase, "but also." And in addition to all this (not only that): "but also." The word "but" is "alla," and that is a stronger conjunction. We have a couple of different kinds of words for the word "but," and this is the strong one. It contrasts the certainty of future salvation through reconciliation with a certain pleasant reality. The word "also" is "kai." This is used to indicate that an additional point is now coming up. The phrase introduces a current consequence of reconciliation in addition to the future benefits.

**Learning Doctrine**

So, he says, "But that is not all" in terms of the assurance that you cannot ever be lost again. But also this, in terms of right now where you're living – the practicality of doctrine. And that's why the apostle Paul always tried to indicate that a doctrine has meaning to us today where you live now. That is the point of learning doctrine. It's just not so you can stand up and go through some catechetical examination. That isn't what Paul is trying to say. Paul is saying, "You learn doctrine in order that you may say, 'Now, how does this relate to my situation now?'"

**Exaltation**

There is a very great current relationship of the doctrine of reconciliation (that's what we're studying) to your situation right now. That is one of the greatest principles you'll ever learn. That's what God the Holy Spirit is trying to lead the apostle Paul to say to us by these phrases: "and not only so, but this also:" "That's not all, but also this, in terms of our present situation." And here's what we have in terms of the present: a past security; but it leads to a present consequence which is: "that we joy." Here is our word "kauchaomai." We've had it several times before. "Kauchaomai" is a word that simply means "to exalt" or "to rejoice." It connotes a joyous exaltation. It connotes an inward sense of elation. It just connotes that sense of how blessed and fortunate and privileged you have been.

It's as if you've left the service today, and somebody at the door stood there, and you became the beneficiary, like that old television program where a man came and gave you a million dollars. So, you walked out, and somebody handed you a check for a million dollars. When you realize that this is really the case, and it really is a bonafide check for a million dollars, and it's yours, the internal reaction would be that you'd have a "kauchaomai" experience. You would have an inward elation. You would think, "This is fantastic. My goodness, but I'm privileged." What a spot to be in! There would be a mental permeation of joy – a privileged position.

This word actually connects back with the phrase in verse 10 that says, "We shall be saved by His life" – the last phrase of verse 10. "We shall be saved by His life. We joy in God," The fact that we shall be saved and preserved in our salvation because Christ is now alive, as we were saved through His death. Now that He's alive, we're preserved in salvation. The result of that is a certain inward elation. That's what He has reference to here – reference to the believer' current response to the fact of his present eternal security relative to his future salvation. It is present tense, so that the normal reaction of a Christian is this exalted rejoicing. It's middle in form, but this is one of the words in the Greek language which is active in meaning. So, here the Christian is doing the rejoicing himself. It's in a participle mood, which indicates that here we have a statement of a spiritual principle.

This word "kauchaomai" has been used three times so far in this passage of 11 verses: in verse 2; verse 3; and, verse 11. In verse 2, we were told that we exalt in hope of reflecting God's glory. And remember that the word "hope" meant that you would absolutely secure this. Hope did not connote uncertainty. And the certainty that you had was that someday you would reflect externally the brilliant "Shekinah" glory in all of its brilliant laser-like qualities of God's holiness.

Verse 3 said that we are to exalt in the present daily sufferings leading to glory. Again, Paul is bringing it down to our present situation. He says, "You can rejoice now because every trial leads to a quality of proving just what you are – that you are a regenerated child of God, and that glory is going to be reflected in you someday.

Now here in verse 11, we get it again (the same word – "kauchaomai") – exalt in God, Who made glory for us possible. God, Who made this glory possible and made it certain, gives us another ground for exalting and rejoicing.

All of this is quite a contrast when you think back to the situation in Eden. After man's sin, and God came on the scene, man was terrifically depressed. All he wanted to do was to have God go away and to leave him alone. So, he tried to hide from God. But here we joyously exalt in God's presence. Obviously, something has taken place. Something has been changed terrifically. If you find yourself in Adam's position, and Eve's position – that you're fearful of God, then something is a problem. You have a big, big problem. If you are in a fearful position of dying and facing God, you have a problem of some kind, because the normal result of justification is that you no longer are fearful of being in God's presence. You actually rejoice in thinking of meeting God. You look forward to it.

So, here is quite a contrast in Eden – depression, by the appearance of God. Today, there is nothing but rejoicing, fully attained, and fully expressed at the rapture when we actually see Jesus Christ.

Not only this: in addition, we have an internal exaltation in God. The word "in" is the Greek word "en." This is the preposition meaning "in the sphere of God ('theos')." And the Greek has "*the* God," indicating "in the sphere of God the Father." Since the Christian is absolutely eternally secure in salvation, he has cause for joyous exultation toward the Father.

Before our reconciliation, the Christian had only cause to dread God – to find Him a burden, and try to avoid thinking about God. Now the believer's normal attitude is taking great delight in God. He is fully at ease with his heavenly Father. He thoroughly enjoys thinking about the one he loves supremely.

So, happiness, in time, begins for a human being when he's able to be elated about God as his Father, and just to be thrilled to think that "God is my Father." And we do this through ("dia"), which indicates agency: "the Lord Jesus Christ." The word "Lord" is "Kurios." That indicates deity. The word "Jesus" is "Iesous." That's the word indicating the humanity of Christ. And the word "Christ" is "Christos." indicating His position as Messiah.

**Occupation with Christ**

So, exalting in the Father simply means that you are occupied with Jesus Christ. You are delighted to consider the fact that God is your Father through the fact that you are preoccupied with Jesus Christ. And He is the agent of that exaltation. Jesus Christ, in other words, is the key to rejoicing in the Father. For this reason, if you would pause to look through verses 1-11, you would find that Jesus Christ is mentioned nine times in these verses, because He is the key to everything: to justification; to reconciliation; and, now finally to just rejoicing in the fact that you are a child of God, and that God is your Father.

However, let's face it: a lot of believers indeed do not rejoice in God the Father. A lot of believers don't rejoice in much of anything. And there are some reasons for it. And it would be well for us to briefly look at those.

**Reasons that Believers Don't Rejoice in the Father**

1. **They Don't Understand Justification**

One reason that believers do not rejoice in God as their Father is because of their failure to understand the nature of justification by faith apart from works. These people are still trusting in their human good to save them. They're trying to balance their evil against their good. This is the old idea that came right out of the pagan Babylon mystery religion system – that God dealing with you is on the basis of balancing how much good works you did or how much bad works you did. And because they do not understand that justification has nothing to do with that, they are depressed. They cannot take pride in their own words and God's works at the same time. And they are well aware that their own works fall pretty far short of what they would envision God would demand of them.

So, if you don't understand the nature of justification, as Paul has explained it; that is, justification apart from your human effort, you'll not be very happy, and you'll not have much occasion to rejoice in the Father.

1. **They're Trying with their own Efforts**

Another reason people do not rejoice in the Father is because they're trying to complete God's work with justification with their own efforts. They believe that they have to suffer for their sins. They believe that God just can't say, "It's forgiven.” They think of all the terrible things they've done, and they say, "Now, let's see, I've got to suffer." And because this is such a pagan concept, it has been structured into the Roman Catholic system, for example, so that you go to confessional in order that the priest can tell you what you must do now to punish yourself, and what you must do to suffer the penance that you must perform in order to provide for your justification.

A person who is working out as penance, and a person who is working out his suffering, is not going to just be overjoyed about thinking about God as his Father. He's still back in the condition of Adam, being very fearful of God, and he'd just as soon not meet Him for a long time.

Self-merit prevents us from rejoicing in God's complete provision of the divine good, which we need for salvation, and which Jesus Christ has provided.

1. **The Old Sin Nature**

A third reason is failure to understand the continued presence of the old sin nature in the believer. There is a false concept if sinlessness that is held by many that you can come to the place where you do not sin anymore. These people are simply chasing rabbits. As long as you have the old sin nature, you never will be perfect, and you never will get rid of the old sin nature, the Bible says, until you see Jesus Christ. It says, "When we see Him, we shall be like Him – not before. If you are going to not realize that you took the old sin nature into the Christian life, and therefore you can do all the terrible things you did before, then you will soon find you're not exalting in God as your Father because you will not be sure that he is your Father. Failure to distinguish between eternal (the outer circle of fellowship) and temporal (the inner circle of Christian fellowship) is the problem that prevents us from exalting in our real position of security in Christ.

Preoccupation with your sins will make you morbid and miserable instead of being occupied with confession of sin, and again exulting in the provision that God has made.

Once in a while, I've had occasion to meet Christians who indeed are the morbid and miserable type. And I have noticed on a couple of occasions that they were the kind who would actually come up to you and say, "I want to be sure that everything is right between me and the Lord. Is there anything I have done that has offended you that I need to confess?" I love it when they come up and ask me that, because I say, "Yeah, just your asking me has offended me, and I'll never forgive you." And that kind really gets into a turmoil. They're all vibrated out, because now they think that if you don't forgive them, then they're really all shot-through. A person like that is morbid and miserable. He never can enjoy the Father because he's always looking around saying, "I wonder whom I've offended."

1. **Bible Doctrine**

Well, another problem is failure to take Bible doctrine into the soul to maintain the divine viewpoint perspective on what God has provided in justification. Somebody the other day said, "I have moved where I'm 25 miles away. And I have wondered, "What on earth am I going to do now? When I have to drive to church, I go 25 miles one way, and 25 miles the other way." Then the person said, "And it occurred to me about the fact of the cassette recorder." And this person said, "I am amazed. I'm going through basic Bible doctrine– an area that I have assumed I have known and known well. And I am amazed what I am learning off basic Bible Doctrine tapes – I who have been around here so long."

Now that's exactly the point that Peter made when he said, "I repeat things to you by way of refreshing your pure minds by way of remembrance." Peter said, "I have to repeat things so that the doctrine you know is freshly accessible to you."

So, failure to take doctrine into the soul on a regular basis will cause you to lose your mental joy of being a child of God. It is a very great tragedy that many Christians and many Bereans come to church, and that's about the extent of the doctrine they get. They never listen to a tape, and they say, "Well, I've heard that, and I don't need to listen to it." Boy, could I give you the case histories of people who could have been preserved from some miseries in their lives had they taken my advice of spending their time driving back and forth listening to the Word of God? That would have given them perspective on problems that they were too stupid to recognize, and stumbled into, simply because they did not take seriously the enlightenment of doctrine.

The Bible says, "We shall not live by mere food, but by every Word that proceeded from the mouth of God," and these people say, "I don't need it." The Bible makes it clear that human viewpoint darkness possesses our mentalities from the day we take our first breath, and only the gradual filling up with doctrine removes that deficiency. And these people say, "I'm not deficient." They just don't understand what their condition is.

So, you fail to take doctrine into the soul because you're too busy to meditate on the Word of God. That is going to result in a loss of happiness and exaltation in God. You do not share God's min, so you're not awed by His fantastic wisdom and its provisions for you.

If your church services that you attend are spiritual entertainment and emotional excitement, then you have no content for rejoicing in God. You can go to plenty of church services where you get a big kick. You'll laugh at the jokes, and you'll enjoy the singing, and the entertainment will be great, and the instrumentalists will awe you, but you'll go out a poor shot-through empty soul without any ground for rejoicing in God your Father. You'll have no content for reasoning to logical deductions that cause your soul to stand back in awe and joy.

1. **You cannot Lose your Salvation**

Finally, to be anticipating possible loss of salvation indicates unbelief, and finding pleasure in God is then impossible? Anybody who anticipates losing his salvation is not going to be a happy person. In fact, that person has even more of a serious problem, because anybody who anticipates losing his salvation shows that he doesn't understand it in the first place. And in all likelihood, there's a very strong possibility that that person is not born-again to begin with. If you do not understand that you cannot lose your salvation, then you think there's something else involved in terms of human doing. We have already learned from Romans that if you interject one speck of human doing, you're lost. Salvation is by grace and grace alone, without any human works involved.

So, just the fact that you are sitting here shaking, and uncertain, and worried about the fact that you might die and go to the lake of fire, and that you do not understand what salvation really is – that show that your position is extremely dangerous. The Christian who lacks joy in the Father and assurance of salvation doesn't understand the doctrine of justification. So, to be certain of salvation is not presumptuous. And to be joyless toward God is not humility. To be sure that you're going to heaven is not presumptuous. That's biblical. And to be happy; to be joyous; and, to find yourself exalting in God your Father is what honors Him. To be a long-face is not humility.

So, Paul says, "We also (in addition to all this certainty of salvation), we do now at this point of time, rejoice in God our Father, through preoccupation with our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom." The word "by" is "dia," which means "agency" or "through." "Have received" is the Greek word "lambano." "Lambano" means to come into the possession of something. Here it is aorist tense, which means at the point of salvation. And aorist indicates once and for all. It's active. A Christian personally gets this. It's indicative mood. It's a statement of fact.

**We have now Received**

We have received something. What have we received? Well what we have received is something now. The Greek Bible adds the word "nun." And I remind you that this little adverb "nun" is a word that stresses time in the present as opposed to some past event. "Nun" really means. It's pointing to the current, present situation as opposed to something in the past. It points out our current possession of salvation which we did not possess in the past. The word "now" is also up front in the clause in the Greek Bible, which gives it even more emphasis. So, what I'm saying is that the word "now" is telling you really "now." Right now here is something that we have. You have it now. You possess it now. You have received it permanently. It is aorist tense. It is at a point – once for all. What?

**Reconciliation**

We have received reconciliation ("katallage"). We've had the verb before. This time it's the noun. This is a word, again, describing a change on the part of one party induced by action on the part of another. Here, the sinner is changed by the action of a holy God sending Christ to pay for the sins of the world on the cross.

In 2 Corinthians 5:18-19, you have the words "the ministry of reconciliation" and "the word of reconciliation." This noun form is used in that way. There it is referring to the Christian's ministry of beseeching the unbeliever to accept the objective reconciliation which God has provided, and to make it subjective in his case.

Unbelief rejects the reconciliation which God has objectively provided, and the person perishes despite it. In the Greek Bible it is "*the* reconciliation." Right down here at the end of this section of Romans 5:1-11, you have "*the* reconciliation" in order to indicate that it's the one that he's been speaking about all the way here through the context.

So, this verse is saying, "It's tremendous to know that you have been justified in God's presence, which means you have absolute righteousness credited to your account. And it is fantastic to know that, because God used a method that did not involve human doing, that justification is eternally secure to me. And not only that, but right now I go through life in a state of fantastic, joyous exaltation in my Father, through His Son, Jesus Christ, through Whom I have received the reconciliation that has made it possible for me to be this happy, and for me to stand at ease."

**God's Integrity**

Exactly why does reconciliation make it possible for you to be so much at ease? There is an implication in the doctrine of reconciliation, I told you, which I don't want you to miss. Most Christians, I think, do. Here it is. The provision of reconciliation by God for the sinner clearly establishes the fact that God only blesses on the basis of His integrity. There is the word. God only blesses on the basis of His integrity. If there's anything you should have learned thus far from the doctrine of reconciliation, it is this. God only blesses on the basis of (or from the sphere of – within the context of) His integrity. No one, therefore, who falls short of the divine standard of absolute righteousness still goes to heaven. God cannot do that. That would be a violation of His integrity. If you fall short of absolute righteousness, you do not go to heaven. I don't care how nice a person you are on this earth. God's integrity would not permit you to enter heaven. Letting evil go unpunished would violate the holiness of God. Therefore, the integrity of God never lets evil go unpunished. This is true of the unbeliever. But now let's bring it home: it's also true of you as a believer.

God's integrity deals with us constantly. And our evil-doing is never permitted to go unpunished. If God did that for you and me as believers, He would compromise His integrity. God never compromises His Holiness. Thus He preserves His personal integrity. What divine holiness demands is the basis upon which God acts, and there are no exceptions. What God's holiness (His integrity) demands – that is the guideline upon which He acts.

Now, what's the implication? The implication should be clear to you, therefore, that all prosperity and all happiness in your life is given by God on the basis of His integrity. All prosperity to you, and all happiness, is given to you by God your Father on the basis of His integrity.

Sometimes people will ask other people to do things which violate their personal integrity. This is not uncommon for somebody to go up and ask somebody to do something that's wrong, and to compromise their integrity, because that person wants a certain benefit that he can secure if the other person does something wrong. And people often do violate their integrity for some benefit – either for themselves or for someone else. This is so common that it is very easy for us to transfer this to God, and say that this is how God acts – that God will look the other way, and that God will ignore the little things.

This, again, is at the heart of the Roman Catholic system. At the heart of the Roman Catholic system is that there are venial sins. They're not such bad sins. They won't permanently do you in, but mortal sins – you're going to be finished with those. What is that except a subtle way of declaring that God violates His integrity; that God would bless you in contradiction to His integrity; and, that there are some things He will look the other way at? Of course, ultimately, as I read in the writing of one Roman Catholic priest: "Stealing is not stealing unless it's over $40 worth. Then it becomes stealing." What is that but that God has an integrity which is not absolute, and that at a certain points, it will be compromised? At certain points, it will be adjusted to where man is.

God will only bless in some matter in your life on the basis of His integrity. He will not look the other way to ignore evil. So, when you make a move in life which violates His integrity, do not expect His prosperity, and do not expect His blessing. But you may expect His chastening; you may expect His discipline; and, you may expect to get the ax and to be at a loss. You may expect grief, grief, grief. I'll guarantee it to you. If you do not act in compatibility to divine integrity, you're not going to get away with anything.

So, don't ask God to bless something which violates His integrity, whether it's something in a way that you know is sin (it's a violation of the moral code), or if it's some human good that you're in that violates His integrity. So, don't ask Him to bless it. If you want to do some sin; if you want to do some cutting of the corners; or, if you want to do some conniving and some evil type of thing, just do it. But don't ask God to prosper you it. And don't cover it with some dignity, like saying, "The money I'm going to make from this, I'm going to give to the Lord's work." How often have I heard that? He is not going to bless you, and prosper you, and make you happy if it has to compromise His integrity. Just do it. Don't cover it with some dignity. If you've got some human good thing that you're involved in, just say, "I have this human good, and it gives me a lot of satisfaction, and it really makes my old sin nature feel good.

It's like the lady that we read of one time who had a terrible face cancer, and she found that when she ate pig meat, the cancer didn't hurt her as much. But she probably got the cancer, in part, from eating the pig meat. So, she felt that the way to help herself was to eat pig meat, and that made her cancer feel better.

So some people think, "My human good just make my old sin nature feel so good that I like to do it." OK, but don't go asking God to bless you. That violates His integrity.

So, obviously we're back to square one, aren't we? You have to learn doctrine so that you can pray and you can live in keeping with divine integrity. And then, indeed, prosperity will be yours. And then, indeed, happiness will be yours. You won't be coming to these shock events of catastrophes in your life of one kind or another, and you will look and say, "God, where were You? Why didn't You bless me? I asked You to bless me." Sure, but you asked Him on a basis that violated His integrity. And you should have learned from reconciliation now that God does not violate His integrity. He paid the fantastic price of the death of His Son so that His justice could be preserved, and that His holiness could be maintained. And as he did it to save us, so He does it to sanctify us. He will never violate His integrity. And that's the only source of blessing and prosperity and happiness for us.

Don't think that God will excuse some evil you're engaged in because you don't consider it all that bad. Don't think that pulling the wool over the eyes of people about some shenanigan you're involved in also cons God. I'm always amazed how people think that if they kind of con, and make it look good, and present a kind of a plausible reason for what they're doing in the eyes of men, that that has also made it OK with God. And God just reaches under, and He just jerks the rug out. And instead of prosperity, there's loss; and, instead of happiness, there's grief.

The thing that you and I need to do is to pray for full compatibility with the character of God, so that He is really free to prosper us, and He's really free to make us happy. You must learn to distinguish between self-prospering and divine prospering; and, between self-pleasure and divine pleasure. A lot of prospering we have is self-prospering. God didn't prosper you. You prospered yourself. There is many a crook who has robbed a bank, and thanked God for prospering him. God didn't prosper. He prospered himself. Many times the prosperity we have has nothing to do with God at all. It's just the old, human-nature, clever, mentality-capable conniving that you've made it. So don't ask God to compromise His integrity.

By the same token, on the principle of the just procedures that God follows in reconciliation, don't ask other people either to compromise their integrity. It won't bring you prosperity or happiness. It will cost you your prosperity and happiness. I would suggest that we follow God's example, and we deal on the basis of integrity with Him, and we should expect other people to do the same. And we deal with each other on the basis of integrity.

One of the things, I'll guarantee you, that is going to be demonstrated at the Judgment Seat of Christ for believers, and at the great white throne judgment for unbelievers is the integrity of God. That's where it's all going to come out. That's where it's all going to be demonstrated. All the conning you got away with in the meantime is going to go right down the drain at the Judgment Seat of Christ, because the rewards are going to make clear as to who was functioning in compatibility with the integrity of God, and who was not; and, who was putting on fronts, and who really thought that you were kidding anybody but yourself. And the great white throne is going to be the same thing. All the smug unbelievers in the world today who think they're getting away with it are going to get the shock of their lives when they find themselves in the presence of God at that point, and find themselves cast into the lake of fire. The integrity of God is going to be well-demonstrated.

**The Summary of the Doctrine of Reconciliation**

Let's pull it all together, summarizing the doctrine of reconciliation.

1. **Adjustment**

The Greek words for "reconciliation" mean a change in one party induced by an action on the part of another. The words connote one party adjusting to the specific standard of another. The words connotes changing from hostility to compatibility, or from enmity to friendship. This meaning is illustrated by adjusting a watch to a chronometer, or adjusting a checkbook to a bank statement. The verb forms for "to reconcile" are used in 1 Corinthians 7:11; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; Romans 5:10; Ephesians 2:16; and, Colossians 1:20-21. The noun form for "reconciliation" is used in Romans 5:11; Romans 11:15; and, 2 Corinthians 5:18-19.

1. **Absolute Righteousness**

The next point in the summary of the doctrine of reconciliation is that originally, in Eden, man enjoyed complete conformity to the absolute righteousness of God. At that time there was face-to-face fellowship, and there was perfect compatibility with God and spirit, soul, and body.

1. **Sin**

Man sinned in Eden, and thereby turned his back on God. Now man was out of adjustment with God's standard, and he needed to be reconciled. Now man could not have fellowship with God. Absolute righteousness could not have fellowship with total depravity. While God was still absolute righteousness, man was spiritually helpless; hostile toward divine viewpoint; a sinner; and, an enemy of God.

1. **Comparison**

The Bible indicates that all mankind is compared by God to the standard of God's own character of absolute righteousness. God has not set up some arbitrary standard by which to judge human performance. God has Himself as the standard by which He judges people. And since God is immutable, His standards of judgment are also unchangeable.

1. **God Turned His Back upon the Sinner**

Man's lack of absolute righteousness caused God to turn His back upon the sinner, because the sinner was now under divine wrath.

1. **The Lost Sinner**

The lost sinner does not conform to the divine standard of absolute righteousness. In Romans 5:6-10, we find in verse 6 that man is spiritually weak, and so he's incapable of conforming to God's standard of absolute righteousness. In verse 6 also we see that man is ungodly, and He's hostile toward God's standard. In verse 8, we see that man is born a sinner, and thus, by nature, lacks conformity with the divine standard of absolute righteousness. In verse 9, the lack of conformity to absolute righteousness places a human being under the wrath of God, we're told. And finally, verse 10 indicates that man is an enemy of God, and so he's in conflict with God's standard.

1. **Man Needs Reconciliation**

Every human being falls short of conformity to God's glorious standard of absolute righteousness, and so needs to be adjusted (or reconciled) to God. The only exception is Jesus Christ.

1. **God does not Need Reconciliation**

God does not need to be adjusted to man, but rather a man to God. God is not out of harmony with His character. Man is out of harmony with God's standard. Thus, God is always the one who does the reconciling, and man is always the one who is reconciled. Reconciliation is not reciprocal between God and man, as if both equally became friends, because they were both equally enemies.

1. **Propitiation**

The propitiation of God by Jesus Christ satisfied divine justice, and made it possible for God to turn and face man again, and invite sinners to be reconciled to Him.

1. **Jesus Christ**

God has reconciled the world of lost humanity to His standard of righteousness through Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:19). The world refers to those who are under divine wrath. But God has, through Jesus Christ, made it possible for a believing sinner to be adjusted to God's standard of absolute righteousness; that is, man was made savable. So, God has established a basis on which to reach out for sinners, and still be true to His character. The death of Jesus Christ accomplished a great positional change, and made it possible to reconcile the individual; that is, objective reconciliation was provided.

1. **The Wall between God and Man**

Objective reconciliation provided for sinners by God means that the wall between God and man has been removed: sin; spiritual death; the old sin nature; penalty of spiritual death; and, position in Adam. These were all removed.

1. Reconciliation is based upon Christ's identification with sinners, whose place He took in paying the penalty demanded by divine justice. 2 Corinthians 5:20-21 teaches us that. A sinner can be adjusted to God's standard of holiness because Jesus Christ became sin for the sinner (substitution). So, it is now possible to adjust an individual sinner in the lost world to God's standard.
2. **Subjective Reconciliation**

2 Corinthians 5:18 describes man's subjective reconciliation to God as a completely new relationship. When we accept reconciliation, we become new creatures in Christ Jesus. His old state of spiritual helplessness; hostility toward divine viewpoint; lack of absolute righteousness; being under divine wrath; and, being God's enemy – all these are changed because man turns and he faces God again. He becomes a new creation. And God's love functions in this new creation as it could not before reconciliation.

1. **Objective Reconciliation**

In Romans 5:10, the sinner is said to be reconciled to God. That's potential ground of reconciliation, objective reconciliation. But in 2 Corinthians 5:20, the sinner is to reconcile himself to God. That's actual reconciliation, subjective reconciliation. It's made possible, and the sinner accepts. The reconciliation of the world and of individual sinners is by Jesus Christ Romans 5:11.

1. **God's Immutability**

The removal of God's wrath against a sinner does not contradict His immutability, but it confirms it relative to His holiness, God does not change. He is completely compatible to His character.

1. **Peace**

Reconciliation creates the condition of peace between God and sinner (Colossians 1:27).

1. **Enmity**

The enmity between Jews and gentiles is reconciled by the death of Jesus Christ, so the two enemies form a new body of saints – the church (Ephesians 2:16).

1. **Compatibility**

Achieving adjustments, making sinners compatible among themselves, in no way makes them compatible with God. People think that if they adjust to each other's old sin natures, they have reconciled themselves to God as they have to one another. That is not true.

1. **Messengers of God**

Every believer has been entrusted with the message of reconciliation to the lost world (2 Corinthians 5:18-20). The only way a sinner is adjusted to God's standard is through the testimony of a believer. So, every Christian is a full time ambassador of Jesus Christ. A believer is not a representative of the church with a message of reconciliation. He's a messenger of God. He's a representative of God. The believer must point the unbeliever to Jesus Christ, God's agent in reconciliation. One of the basis of the rewards is certainly going to be our faithfulness and being ambassadors of reconciliation. The question is not, "Am I an ambassador of Jesus Christ?" The question is, "What kind of an ambassador am I?"

1. **Plead with Sinners**

God does not find it too humiliating to plead with sinners to be reconciled to him; nor, should we as believers.

1. **Heaven or Hell**

Sinners must either be reconciled to God's absolute righteousness or be banished forever to hell – separated from God in punishment.

1. **In Perpetuity**

Believing sinners are reconciled to God in perpetuity, and so can never become unreconciled.

1. **Only on Divine Integrity**

One final point: Reconciliation establishes the fact that God blesses man only on the basis of divine integrity.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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