

Reconciliation

○ The Problem

- All humanity is born in a state of enmity with God. All sinful thinking and living is a reflection of man's natural state of enmity with God.
- Like Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, sinners compulsively hide from their loving Creator.

There is none who seeks for God (Rom 3:11)

- Man's *natural* state is enmity with God: he is born in Adam.

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned —

- Man's *willful* state is enmity with God: he loves his sin

John 3:19 This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.

Isaiah 59:2 But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden *His* face from you so that He does not hear.

- Regardless of feeling, emotion, religious participation, moral striving, man will perpetually exist as God's willful and natural enmity until regeneration whereby he then is reconciled to God through the confessing his sin and surrendering by faith to Jesus Christ.
- God's grace in salvation through reconciliation solves this otherwise insurmountable problem.

○ Definition & Description

- Reconciliation is the restoration of the relationship between God and man.

- It includes a change in man's attitude toward God. Man is brought from being at enmity with God to friendship and sonship.
 - God's righteous anger is turned aside by the cross of Jesus, thereby removing the offense of sin and making it possible for God to bring man into fellowship with him.
 - The crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ in our place was fundamentally an act of reconciliation; reconciling elect sinners to God.
 - So great is the sinner's natural enmity with God, that nothing and no one less than the substitutionary atoning death of the impeccable God-man, Jesus Christ, will suffice to accomplish reconciliation.
 - Demarest: "[S]ince on the ground of Christ's perfect sacrifice believers are declared free from sin and guilt, enmity is abolished and restoration to communion with the God of love becomes a new reality."¹
- Scripture
- Colossians 1:22 He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach
 - 2 Corinthians 5:18-19 Now all *these* things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation,¹⁹ namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.
 - Romans 5:10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.
 - Romans 8:1 Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

¹ Bruce Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation: The Doctrine of Salvation*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1997), 377.

- Recommended resource:
 - *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*, John Murray, pp. 29-39, (Eerdmans, 2015).