

Reconciled by the Death of His Son

By Elder David Pyles

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. – Rom 5:10

The death of Jesus Christ did not merely make sinners *reconcilable* to God. The above text says they were actually *reconciled* by it. This reconciliation occurred when they were still contemplated as enemies to God, and was therefore prior to any faith, repentance or obedience on their part. It was done entirely by Christ. This same principle is communicated elsewhere in the Bible. For example:

And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 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. 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. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. – 2Cor 5:18-21

So the reconciliation of God toward His people was completed in the death of Christ and was suspended on nothing else. As Paul said elsewhere, “*For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified,*” (Heb 10:14). And in the same place he said, “*... we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all,*” (Heb 10:10). See how that it was the *offering* of Christ that accomplished these things. It had no basis whatsoever in any obedience of our own. Nor should it be thought that this “*offering*” is something that we do or have already done because Paul elsewhere said that Christ “*through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God,*” (Heb 9:14), and in yet another place he said, “*But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God,*” (10:12). So it was Christ Himself who *was* the offering and it was Christ Himself who *made* the offering.

These facts serve to explain the following important text:

And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having

forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. – Col 2:13-14

So at the time we were quickened or born again, we had *already* been forgiven for Christ's sake. Our sins had been nailed to the cross at the very same time that Jesus was. We were quickened by God on account of this fact, not in order to make it a fact.

In short, all legal aspects of our salvation were completed when Christ died on the cross, and the way was then opened and ensured for all else that would follow. His death bought our regeneration, justification, resurrection and glorification. This is why Paul said that God "... *hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ,*" (Eph 1:3). Hence, there is no such thing as any spiritual blessing outside of Christ, nor is there any such thing as a spiritual blessing that is disconnected from the cross of Christ. As Paul said elsewhere, "*But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world,*" (Gal 6:14).

The chapter containing our primary verse began with the crucial claim, "*Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,*" (Rom 5:1). This important declaration should not be interpreted in disregard to the explanations that followed it. The principle of justification by faith should never be taught in denial of the facts that we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son alone, and that such was done when we were counted as enemies, not as believers. This means that our faith should not be considered as a basis, cause or means of being reconciled to God. It is rather the *declaration* and *certification* of this fact. As Paul told the Ephesians, "*In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,*" (Eph 1:13). The word "sealed" means to be certified. This is the divine certification of a work done by Christ alone, entirely through His grace, and we should always be cautious to praise only Him for it.

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