

GENERAL SUBJECT: THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION

Message One

The Two Steps of Reconciliation

Scripture Reading: 2 Cor. 5:19-20

- I. **The ministry of reconciliation is to bring us back to God fully, thoroughly, completely, and entirely—2 Cor. 5:18:**
 - A. The ministry of reconciliation is not merely to bring sinners back to God but, even the more, to bring believers absolutely into God.
 - B. Until we are wholly one with the Lord, being in Him and allowing Him to be in us absolutely, we will need the ministry of reconciliation.
- II. **Two steps are required for us to be fully reconciled to God:**
 - A. In 2 Corinthians 5:19 it is the world that is reconciled to God, but in verse 20 it is the believers, who have already been reconciled to God and are to be reconciled further to God.
 - B. The first step of reconciliation is to reconcile sinners to God from sin—v. 19:
 1. For this purpose Christ died for our sins that they might be forgiven by God—1 Cor. 15:3; Luke 24:46-47; 1 John 2:12.
 2. This is the objective aspect of Christ's death; in this aspect He bore our sins on the cross that they might be judged by God upon Him for us—1 Pet. 2:24; Isa. 53:11-12; Heb. 9:28; Col. 1:22; Rom. 8:3.
 - C. The second step of reconciliation is to reconcile believers living in the natural life to God from the flesh—2 Cor. 5:20:
 1. For this purpose Christ died for us—the persons—that we might live to Him in the resurrection life—2 Cor. 5:14-15.
 2. This is the subjective aspect of Christ's death; in this aspect He was made sin for us to be judged and done away with by God that we might become the righteousness of God in Him—v. 21.
 3. In the objective aspect of His death, Christ bore our sins; in the subjective aspect He became sin—1 Pet. 2:24; Rom. 8:3; 2 Cor. 5:21.
 4. Because we are still separated from God and because we are not fully one with God and altogether in harmony with Him, we need the second step of reconciliation.
 5. The subjective aspect of the death of Christ needs to be applied to our situation and to our natural life—Rom. 6:6; 8:13; Gal. 5:24; Matt. 16:24:
 - a. In order that we may be reconciled to God in full, the Father exposes our natural life and unveils our real situation to us—1 John 1:5, 7:
 - (1) As a result, we condemn our natural being and apply the cross subjectively, and this application of the death of Christ crucifies our natural life.
 - (2) As our natural man is crossed out, we experience the second step of reconciliation; in this step the veil of our natural man is rent so that we may live in God's presence.

- b. Instead of taking place once for all, the second step of reconciliation is continuous.
- D. By the two aspects of His death, Christ fully reconciles God's chosen people to God—Rom. 5:10; 2 Cor. 5:19-20.