

# Reconciliation

There was need for reconciliation between humans and their Creator God from the very beginning of human existence.

This division was the result of Satan's influence.

**Genesis 3:1-6** [NIV] *“Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?” The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’” “You will not surely die,” the serpent said to the woman. “For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.”*

How did Satan cause this break-up of what was a good working relationship between Adam, Eve and God?

By causing them to doubt God's Word!

This was done by presenting them with a “half truth”.

God must have told them the reason for their existence, why they had been given life.

**Genesis 1:26** [NIV] *“Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”*

They had been created in God's image and He wanted them to become like Him in character.

Satan knew this and offered them what looked like a short-cut to fulfil what God had told them He wanted to accomplish so that they could live forever.

**Genesis 3:7** [NIV] *“Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realised that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.”*

When their eyes were opened they realised what a mistake they had made and were ashamed [naked].

Then they tried to cover this shame, and get rid of the guilty feeling by their own effort [works], fig leaves.

**What was the result of this?**

**Genesis 3:8-13** [NIV] *“Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?” He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.” And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree from which I commanded you not to eat?” The man said, “The woman you put here with me, she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.” Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”*

Division between the man and woman, the “battle of the sexes” had begun.

More need for reconciliation.

How did God, taking the initiative, start the process of reconciliation, between Him and His created children, and His children with each other?

**Genesis 3:21** [NIV] *“The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.”*

For God to make these garments of skin an animal had to give up its life and shed its blood.

I believe the animal involved was a lamb!

**Romans 5:8-9** [NIV] *“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him!”*

It is the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, who would in the end be the means of reconciliation.

This original rebellion of Adam and Eve extended to all of God’s physical creation.

**Genesis 3:17-19** [NIV] *“To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat of it,’ “**Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.**”*

The land was put under a curse and physical death was introduced into God’s human creation as a result of their sinful rebellion.

**Romans 8:19-22** [NIV] *“The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the **creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.** We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the **pains of childbirth** right up to the present time.”*

Earthquakes and volcanoes are like the pains of childbirth that the earth is going through at this time.

Becoming more frequent and intense as the time when God’s children will be revealed for all to see.

Just as they do in physical childbirth.

**Romans 8:23-24** [NIV] *“Not only so, but **we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.** For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has?”*

Here is expressed the attitude we as God’s “*firstfruits*” should have, “*groaning inwardly*” for the time of reconciliation.

**Romans 8:25-27** [NIV] *“But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.”*

If we let Him, the Holy Spirit will assist us in our prayer and our seeking reconciliation with God and all humanity.

**Romans 8:28-30** [NIV] *“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined **to be conformed to the likeness of his Son**, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.”*

God again taking the initiative has a plan for this reconciliation to take place.

### **What is our part in this plan?**

Note the word “*know*” and the word “*love*”, these two go together for us who have been called by God at this time.

“*know*” – the intimate relationship God desires we have with Him through the Holy Spirit Whom He has made available to us. Love is the basis of any Godlike relationship.

**John 14:15-18** [NIV] *“If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you **another Counsellor** to be with you for ever, the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; **I will come to you.**”*

Jesus Christ living in us through the Holy Spirit, who is identical to Him [both God].

The Holy Spirit with us and if we let Him comes into us, and creates in us a new being, by a new birth.

**John 3:1-2** [NIV] *“Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no-one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him.”*

**Here we see a man who’s life was dictated by the law given through Moses, the Old Covenant.**

**John 3:3** [NIV] *“In reply Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, **no-one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.**”*

We are “*born again*” by the Holy Spirit coming “*in us*”, and leaving the seed of God in us. The Holy Spirit uniting with our spirit and giving birth to a new being, a child of God.

### **How do I know this?**

**John 3:4-7** [NIV] *“How can a man be born when he is old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb to be born!” Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, **no-one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.** Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’”*

Born of water, we have to have a physical birth.

As we know, water is involved in any physical birth.

Also born of spirit.

Note a capital “*s*” indicating the Holy Spirit.

### **How will we know this has happened?**

**John 3:8** [NIV] *“The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”*

We cannot see the wind but we can see the result of the wind being present.

We do not see the Holy Spirit in a person but we can see the “fruits”, end product of the work of the Holy Spirit in a person.

**John 3:9** [NIV] *“How can this be?” Nicodemus asked.”*

Nicodemus, the Pharisee who was passionate about law-keeping, had difficulty in understanding what Jesus was saying.

What was Jesus Christ’s reply to this?

**John 3:10-15** [NIV] *“You are Israel’s teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things? I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? No-one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven, the Son of Man. **Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.**”*

**Jesus Christ introduced Himself as the answer to this question.**

Being “*lifted up*” points towards His crucifixion.

The person being crucified was nailed to the cross that was laying on the ground.

The cross with them on it was lifted up and dropped into a hole in the ground, with horrifically painful results.

The person was then upright with their feet just above ground level, stripped naked for all to see and taunt, even to spit in their face, which was a sign of total contempt, or to slap their face, also a sign of contempt.

**John 3:16-21** [NIV] *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.”*

God’s Word, Jesus Christ, is the light that exposes what is in our heart.

**Luke 12:2-3** [NIV] *“There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the roofs.”*

We cannot hide even our thoughts from God.

**Jesus Christ is the “key” to this reconciliation.**

**Romans 5:10-11** [NIV] *“For if, when we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.”*

**What is the process of this reconciliation through Jesus Christ?**

- a) **We all have one thing in common**, we all need to accept the sacrifices of Jesus Christ to cleanse us of our sins.

**We have a regular reminder of this as we accept together the bread and wine of the Communion.**

- b) **Having total faith in the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ**, allows God to offer us the gift of Christ's righteousness.

**Romans 4:3, 24-25** [NIV] *“What does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” ... “but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness, for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.”*

**Romans 5:1-2** [NIV] *“Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.”*

Note this faith is in the whole of the Godhead.

**Jesus Christ** who died for us.

**God the Father** who will credit us with Christ's righteousness.

**The Holy Spirit** Who raised Christ from the dead.

**Romans 8:11** [NIV] *“And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.”*

- c) Receive the Holy Spirit into our lives.

**Romans 8:9** [NIV] *“You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.”*

We as Christians all have the same spirit in us.

This indwelling of the same spirit will bring about our reconciliation with God and other human beings with the same Holy Spirit in them.

**2 Corinthians 5:17** [NIV] *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”*

**We are in Christ, and Christ in us, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in us.**

**John 14:15-18** [NIV] *“If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you for ever, the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.”*

The Holy Spirit in us is Christ in us.

**2 Corinthians 5:18-20** [NIV] *“All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.”*

Once we are reconciled to God the Father through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, God wants us to take this message of reconciliation to the rest of humanity.

**Until we are reconciled to God and to one another this will not happen in this congregation, nor in any other throughout the world.**