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# RECONCILIATION

## Reconciliation — Tracing the Eternal



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## Use of God Through Creation,

# Redemption, Judgment, Sonship, the Kingdom, and the Ages Until God Is All in All

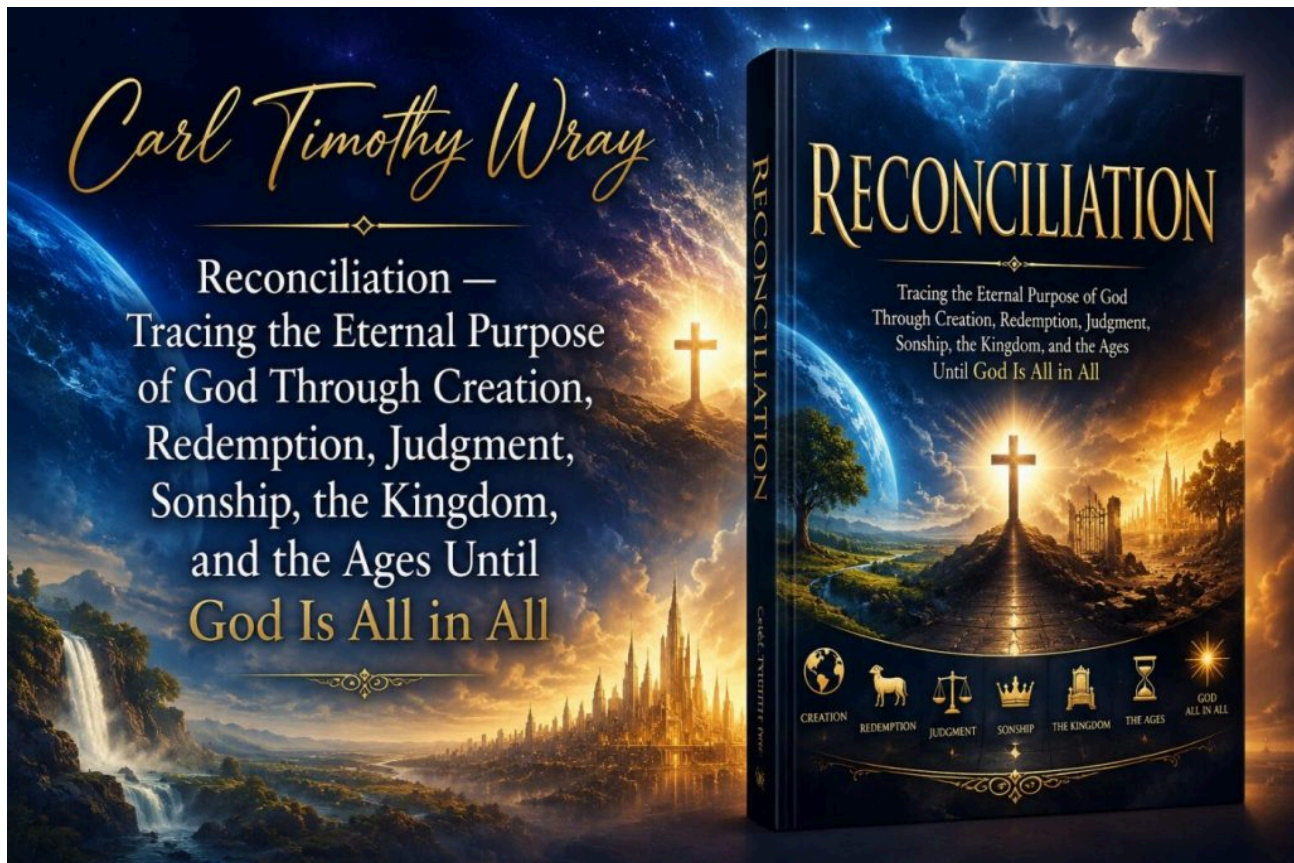
By Carl Timothy Wray

## AUTHOR

[Carl Timothy Wray](#) is a Bible teacher, author, and founder of The Finished Work of Christ. For more than four decades he has dedicated himself to the study of Scripture, tracing the eternal purpose of God from Genesis to Revelation through the Full Counsel of God. His teachings focus on the Finished Work of Christ, the Gospel of Grace, the Plan of the Ages, the Kingdom of God, Sonship, Zion, Reconciliation, and God's ultimate purpose of gathering all things together in Christ. Through hundreds of books, articles, teachings, and videos, Carl Timothy Wray continues to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ and the triumph of God's redemptive purpose until God is all in all.

What is reconciliation? Is reconciliation merely the forgiveness of sins, or does it reveal something far greater within the eternal purpose of God? In this comprehensive study, Reconciliation traces God's plan from before the foundation of the world through creation, the fall, redemption, judgment, sonship, the Kingdom of God, and the ages to come. Discover how reconciliation is woven throughout Scripture, how Christ made peace through the blood of His cross, why judgment serves God's redemptive purpose, how the ministry of reconciliation is entrusted to the saints, and how all things ultimately find their fulfillment in Christ until God is all in all. This book examines reconciliation through the Full Counsel of God, revealing its place within the Plan of the Ages and the consummation of [God's purpose for creation](#).





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## INTRODUCTION

Few subjects in Scripture are more misunderstood than reconciliation.

For many believers, reconciliation means little more than forgiveness. Others understand reconciliation as peace between God and man. While these truths are certainly included, the Full Counsel of God reveals that reconciliation reaches far beyond the forgiveness of sins or the restoration of individual believers.

Reconciliation is woven into the very fabric of God's eternal purpose.

Before the foundation of the world, before Adam was formed from the dust of the earth, before sin entered the world, God had already purposed the gathering of all things in Christ. The purpose of God did not begin with man's fall.



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Redemption was not God's reaction to human failure. Reconciliation was not an emergency plan established after creation went wrong.

God works all things after the counsel of His own will.

From Genesis to Revelation, Scripture reveals a God who is bringing creation toward a predetermined conclusion. Every covenant, every promise, every sacrifice, every judgment, every age, every administration, every manifestation of Christ serves the unfolding of that eternal purpose.

The Apostle Paul declared that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. He further revealed that Christ made peace through the blood of His cross in order to reconcile all things unto Himself, whether things in earth or things in heaven. These statements reveal a scope far larger than individual salvation. They reveal a purpose as vast as creation itself.

Yet reconciliation cannot be understood apart from the larger framework of God's purpose.

To understand reconciliation, we must understand creation.

To understand creation, we must understand the image of God.

To understand the image of God, we must understand Christ.

To understand Christ, we must understand the Cross.

To understand the Cross, we must understand the Kingdom.

To understand the Kingdom, we must understand the ages.

To understand the ages, we must understand God's ultimate purpose of becoming



Throughout this study we will follow reconciliation through the entire testimony of Scripture. We will examine its origin in the heart of God, its necessity because of the fall, its accomplishment through Christ, its administration through the Kingdom, its manifestation through sonship, and its consummation in the fullness of the ages.

This is not merely a study of a doctrine.

It is a study of the eternal purpose of God.

May the Spirit of Truth guide us as we trace the glorious theme of reconciliation from creation to consummation, until we behold the triumph of Christ and the fulfillment of God's purpose in all things.

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## CHAPTER 1

# THE ETERNAL PURPOSE OF RECONCILIATION

One of the greatest mistakes believers make when studying reconciliation is beginning at the Cross.

The Cross is central.

The Cross is glorious.

The Cross is the legal foundation of redemption.

Yet reconciliation did not begin at Calvary.

Neither did reconciliation begin with Adam's fall.

Neither did reconciliation begin when sin entered the world.

To understand reconciliation, we must begin where God begins.

We must begin before the foundation of the world.

Scripture reveals that God's purpose existed before creation itself. Before there was a heaven and an earth, before angels, before mankind, before covenants and  
God already possessed a purpose within Himself.



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Reconciliation is not God's reaction to failure.

Reconciliation is part of God's eternal purpose.

## **CHOSEN BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD**

Paul opens the mystery of God's purpose with these remarkable words:

Ephesians 1:4-5

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

Notice carefully that God's purpose existed before the foundation of the world.

Before Adam sinned.

Before death entered.

Before redemption was needed.

Before judgment appeared.

Before history began.

God already knew the end from the beginning.



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“For I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done.”

The God who declares the end from the beginning never reacts to events as though surprised by them.

The eternal purpose was established before creation itself.

Therefore reconciliation belongs to the purpose of God rather than merely to the problem of sin.

## THE MYSTERY OF HIS WILL

The Apostle Paul repeatedly points believers back to the mystery hidden in God before the ages.

Ephesians 1:9-10

“Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ.”

Notice the language.

He hath purposed.

He might gather together.

All things in Christ.



was not formed after the fall.

The purpose was already established in God.

The gathering together of all things in Christ reveals the broad scope of reconciliation within the divine plan.

What God purposed before creation, He unfolds through the ages.

What He unfolds through the ages, He completes in Christ.

## **LET US MAKE MAN IN OUR IMAGE**

The first great declaration concerning mankind reveals God's intention.

Genesis 1:26

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."

These words reveal more than creation.

They reveal destination.

God did not merely create man.

God intended man to bear His image.

The image of God stands at the center of His purpose.

The tragedy of the fall is not merely that man became guilty.

The tragedy is that man fell short of the glory of God.



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"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

The image was obscured.

The glory was lost.

The dominion was corrupted.

Yet God's purpose did not fail.

What God intended in Genesis, He completes through Christ.

Therefore reconciliation is inseparably connected to the restoration of God's image in humanity.

## **THE LAMB SLAIN FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD**

Many believers imagine that redemption was invented after Adam sinned.

Scripture reveals something entirely different.

Revelation 13:8

"The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

Before the fall occurred in time, provision already existed in the heart of God.

Before sin appeared, grace was already present.



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ation entered, reconciliation already existed within God's purpose.

This does not mean the Cross happened before creation.

It means the purpose of the Cross existed before creation.

The Lamb was not God's emergency response.

The Lamb was God's eternal provision.

Acts 15:18

"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."

Nothing catches God by surprise.

Nothing interrupts His purpose.

Nothing prevents the fulfillment of His will.

## **ALL THINGS WERE CREATED FOR HIM**

One of the most important passages in Scripture concerning God's purpose is found in Colossians.

Colossians 1:16-17

"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible... all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."

Everything begins in Christ.



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xists through Christ.

Everything was created for Christ.

The visible creation.

The invisible creation.

Thrones.

Dominions.

Principalities.

Powers.

All things originate in Him.

This truth becomes crucial when studying reconciliation.

If all things came from Him, and all things were created for Him, then God's purpose concerning creation cannot be separated from Christ.

The beginning is Christ.

The center is Christ.

The end is Christ.

## THE PURPOSE OF THE AGES

The Scriptures reveal that God is working through successive ages to accomplish His purpose



Ephesians 3:11

“According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

The phrase eternal purpose literally carries the idea of the purpose of the ages.

God unfolds His will progressively.

The ages are not random.

History is not accidental.

The rise and fall of kingdoms is not meaningless.

God is moving creation toward a predetermined conclusion.

Romans 11:36

“For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.”

The entire universe moves within this divine framework.

Out of Him.

Through Him.

Unto Him.

The purpose never changes.

The administration unfolds through the ages.



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**CHRIST IS THE CENTER OF RECONCILIATION**

The purpose of God is not centered in Adam.

It is not centered in Israel.

It is not centered in the Church.

It is not centered in nations.

The purpose is centered in Christ.

Colossians 1:18

“That in all things he might have the preeminence.”

Christ is Alpha.

Christ is Omega.

Christ is the beginning.

Christ is the ending.

Everything God does is moving toward the exaltation of His Son.

The work of reconciliation is therefore Christ-centered from beginning to end.

The Father purposes.

The Son accomplishes.

The Spirit applies.



The ages reveal.

The Kingdom manifests.

Creation ultimately responds.

## RECONCILIATION IN THE HEART OF GOD

Before creation, God purposed.

Before the fall, God knew.

Before redemption, God provided.

Before history, God established His will.

The story of reconciliation does not begin with human failure.

It begins with divine purpose.

The eternal purpose of God is larger than sin.

Larger than death.

Larger than judgment.

Larger than history itself.

The purpose existed before the foundation of the world and moves steadily toward its glorious fulfillment.

The God who began with, "Let us make man in our image," will not abandon His purpose



The God who purposed all things in Christ will complete what He began.

The God who declares the end from the beginning is bringing creation toward the fulfillment of His eternal purpose.

The story of reconciliation is therefore the story of God's purpose unfolding through the ages until all things find their fulfillment in Christ.

And that story begins before the foundation of the world.

## CHAPTER 2

# THE FALL AND THE NEED FOR RECONCILIATION

If reconciliation originates in the eternal purpose of God, then we must next understand why reconciliation became necessary within creation.

Scripture reveals that God created man in His image and after His likeness.

Genesis 1:27

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him."

Man was created for fellowship.

Man was created for dominion.

Man was created to express the nature, character, and government of God within creation.

Yet something happened.



The image was not destroyed, but it became obscured.

The fellowship was broken.

The dominion became corrupted.

The creation that was designed to function in harmony with God entered into a condition of alienation.

This is where the need for reconciliation enters the story.

## THE ENTRANCE OF SIN

The fall did not begin with an outward act.

The fall began with a departure from dependence upon God.

Genesis 3:6

“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes... she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat.”

The essence of sin was not merely eating forbidden fruit.

The essence of sin was independence.

Man chose another source.

Man departed from trust.

Man sought wisdom apart from God.

This produced separation in consciousness and experience.



Immediately the effects became visible.

Genesis 3:7

“And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked.”

Fear appeared.

Shame appeared.

Self-consciousness appeared.

Condemnation appeared.

The harmony that existed between God and man was disrupted.

Thus began the condition that reconciliation would ultimately address.

## **ALIENATION ENTERED THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE**

Before the fall, Adam walked in fellowship with God.

After the fall, Adam hid from God.

Genesis 3:8

“And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.”

Notice carefully.

God had not moved.



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t changed.

God was still seeking.

God was still calling.

Genesis 3:9

“And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?”

The change occurred in man.

Alienation entered man’s experience.

Fear replaced confidence.

Hiding replaced fellowship.

Separation replaced communion.

This pattern would continue throughout human history.

## **THE CARNAL MIND IS ENMITY AGAINST GOD**

The Apostle Paul explains the deeper issue behind the fall.

Romans 8:7

“Because the carnal mind is enmity against God.”

The problem was never merely behavior.

The problem was nature.



The problem was consciousness.

The problem was the mind of the flesh.

The carnal mind cannot produce fellowship with God because it operates independently from God.

Romans 8:6

“To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.”

Peace and reconciliation stand on one side.

Carnality and alienation stand on the other.

The fall introduced a condition that man could not remedy through his own effort.

The problem was deeper than conduct.

It touched the very source from which man lived.

## **ALL HAVE SINNED**

What began in Adam spread throughout humanity.

Romans 5:12

“By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin.”

The fall was not merely Adam’s story.

It became mankind’s story.



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"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

Every nation.

Every generation.

Every culture.

Every civilization.

All have fallen short of the glory for which mankind was created.

The image remains present, but the manifestation is incomplete.

The purpose remains intact, but the experience is fractured.

The calling remains, but the condition has changed.

Thus the need for reconciliation extends to all humanity.

## CREATION SUBJECTED TO VANITY

The fall affected more than mankind.

The entire creation became involved.

Romans 8:20-21

"For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope."



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self became subjected to limitation.

Decay entered.

Corruption entered.

Death entered.

Groaning entered.

Romans 8:22

“For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.”

This is important.

The need for reconciliation extends beyond individuals.

The need reaches into creation itself.

The groaning of creation reveals that something remains unfinished.

The creation longs for restoration.

The creation awaits fulfillment.

The creation awaits the manifestation of God’s purpose.

## THE LOSS OF DOMINION

God originally gave mankind dominion.



“And let them have dominion.”

Dominion was part of man’s original calling.

Yet the fall brought bondage.

Instead of ruling creation, mankind became ruled by sin, fear, corruption, and death.

Hebrews 2:8

“But now we see not yet all things put under him.”

What God intended in Genesis is not yet fully manifested.

The purpose remains.

The fulfillment awaits.

This tension between purpose and manifestation forms one of the central themes of Scripture.

Reconciliation ultimately addresses this problem.

## **THE PROMISE HIDDEN IN THE FALL**

Even within the judgment of Genesis 3, hope appears.

Genesis 3:15

“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed.”



The first promise appears immediately after the fall.

God speaks of a coming Seed.

A Deliverer.

A Redeemer.

A Victor.

The fall did not interrupt God's purpose.

The fall became the stage upon which God's purpose would be revealed.

The promise points forward to Christ.

The answer to alienation is not human effort.

The answer is God's provision.

The answer is the Seed.

The answer is Christ.

## **MAN CANNOT RECONCILE HIMSELF**

One of the greatest lessons of Scripture is that man cannot restore himself.

Adam could not cover himself.

Israel could not save itself.

The Law could not perfect mankind.



Religion could not heal the breach.

Human effort cannot reverse the fall.

Jeremiah 13:23

“Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?”

The answer is obvious.

Man cannot change his own nature.

A deeper work is required.

A divine work is required.

A new creation is required.

This is why reconciliation must ultimately be the work of God.

## **GOD NEVER ABANDONED HIS PURPOSE**

The fall was real.

The consequences were real.

Sin was real.

Death was real.

Alienation was real.

Yet none of these altered the purpose of God.



Isaiah 14:27

“For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it?”

The purpose remained intact.

The image remained God’s intention.

The Kingdom remained God’s destination.

The ages continued to unfold according to His will.

The need for reconciliation became visible because of the fall, but the purpose of reconciliation existed long before the fall occurred.

## **THE NEED FOR RECONCILIATION**

The fall revealed humanity’s condition.

Alienation entered.

Death entered.

Fear entered.

Corruption entered.

Creation itself became subject to vanity.

The image became obscured.

The dominion became fractured.



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ip became broken.

Yet beneath all of this stood the unchanging purpose of God.

The need for reconciliation did not arise because God changed.

The need arose because mankind departed from the life and harmony for which it was created.

The story of Scripture now moves toward God's answer.

The fall revealed the problem.

The promise revealed the hope.

The coming of Christ would reveal the solution.

For where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

And where alienation entered, reconciliation would ultimately triumph.

## CHAPTER 3

# THE PROMISE OF RECONCILIATION

The fall revealed the problem.

Alienation entered.

Death entered.

The creation became subject to vanity.



Man lost the conscious fellowship he once enjoyed with God.

Yet the fall did not end the story.

The God who purposed all things before the foundation of the world did not abandon His creation when sin entered.

Instead, God immediately began revealing His purpose through promise.

The story of reconciliation moves forward through a series of divine promises that progressively unveil the coming of Christ and the ultimate restoration of all things.

Before redemption was manifested, it was promised.

Before reconciliation was accomplished, it was foretold.

Before Christ appeared, He was revealed through prophecy, type, shadow, covenant, and promise.

## THE FIRST PROMISE

The first promise appears in the midst of judgment.

Genesis 3:15

“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”

Often called the first gospel, this promise points beyond Adam’s failure.

The serpent would not have the final word.

Sin would not have the final word.



Death would not have the final word.

God announced that a Seed would come.

A Deliverer.

A Redeemer.

A Conqueror.

The promise of reconciliation begins with the promise of Christ.

The solution appears before the story has scarcely begun.

Even in judgment, mercy shines.

Even in the fall, hope appears.

Even in alienation, God reveals reconciliation.

## THE PROMISE GIVEN TO ABRAHAM

The next major revelation appears through Abraham.

Genesis 12:3

“And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”

Notice the scope.

Not merely one tribe.

Not merely one nation.



Not merely one generation.

All families of the earth.

The promise expands the horizon of reconciliation.

God's purpose extends beyond Abraham himself.

It extends beyond Israel.

It extends toward all nations.

Paul later identifies the promised Seed.

Galatians 3:16

"He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."

The promise given to Abraham ultimately points to Christ.

The Seed through whom blessing would come.

The Seed through whom the nations would be touched.

The Seed through whom reconciliation would be manifested.

## THE COVENANTS TESTIFY OF CHRIST

Throughout Scripture God establishes covenants.

The covenant with Noah.



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it with Abraham.

The covenant with Israel.

The covenant with David.

Each covenant reveals another aspect of God's purpose.

Each covenant points toward Christ.

Hebrews 10:1

"For the law having a shadow of good things to come."

The Law was a shadow.

The sacrifices were shadows.

The priesthood was a shadow.

The tabernacle was a shadow.

The feasts were shadows.

The reality toward which they pointed was Christ Himself.

The promise of reconciliation grows clearer with every covenant and every prophetic revelation.

## THE PROPHETS FORETOLD RESTORATION

The prophets repeatedly looked beyond judgment toward restoration.



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coming Redeemer.

Jeremiah saw a new covenant.

Ezekiel saw a new heart and a new spirit.

Daniel saw an everlasting Kingdom.

Isaiah 9:6-7

“Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder.”

The prophets understood that God’s purpose was moving toward a glorious fulfillment.

Though they often prophesied judgment, they never ended with judgment.

Hope always remained.

Promise always remained.

Purpose always remained.

God’s intention was never destruction.

God’s intention was restoration.

The promise continually pointed toward reconciliation.

## A NEW HEART AND A NEW SPIRIT

One of the greatest prophetic promises appears in Ezekiel.



Ezekiel 36:26-27

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you."

Notice carefully.

God does not command man to create a new heart.

God promises to give one.

God does not command man to manufacture a new spirit.

God promises to provide one.

This is vital to understanding reconciliation.

The answer to alienation is not self-improvement.

The answer is divine transformation.

The answer is a new creation.

The answer is the work of God within humanity.

The promise already points toward the thorough change that reconciliation would accomplish.

## THE PROMISE OF THE NEW COVENANT

Jeremiah expanded this revelation.

Jeremiah 31:33



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...law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts."

The old covenant revealed man's inability.

The new covenant reveals God's ability.

Under the old covenant, man struggled to obey.

Under the new covenant, God works within.

The promise shifts attention away from human effort and toward divine action.

Reconciliation is not ultimately achieved by what man does for God.

Reconciliation is accomplished by what God does within man.

This truth stands at the heart of the Gospel.

## THE PROMISE OF THE KINGDOM

The prophets also spoke of a coming Kingdom.

Daniel 2:44

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed."

The Kingdom is not separate from reconciliation.

The Kingdom is the administration through which God's purpose is manifested.

The reign of Christ advances the purpose of God throughout the ages.



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promised by the prophets moves toward the establishment of God's government in creation.

The Kingdom becomes one of the great instruments through which reconciliation unfolds.

## THE PROMISE OF THE MESSIAH

Every promise ultimately converges upon one Person.

Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 53:5

“He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities.”

Micah revealed His birthplace.

Isaiah revealed His suffering.

David revealed His kingship.

Zechariah revealed His coming.

The prophets spoke with many voices, yet all pointed toward the same Person.

Christ is the fulfillment of promise.

Christ is the center of prophecy.

Christ is the foundation of reconciliation.

Luke 24:27



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...ing at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.”

The entire Old Testament moves toward Christ.

## THE PROMISE NEVER FAILED

For centuries Israel waited.

Empires rose and fell.

Kingdoms appeared and disappeared.

Generations passed.

Yet the promise remained.

Numbers 23:19

“God is not a man, that he should lie.”

The promise was not forgotten.

The purpose was not abandoned.

The covenant was not revoked.

The Seed was coming.

The Redeemer was coming.

The King was coming.

The ministry of reconciliation was approaching.



Every prophecy moved history closer to its appointed fulfillment.

# THE HOPE OF RECONCILIATION

The promise of reconciliation is one of the great themes of Scripture.

It appears in Eden.

It appears in Abraham.

It appears in the covenants.

It appears in the prophets.

It appears in the Psalms.

It appears throughout the entire Old Testament.

The promise continually points forward.

Forward to Christ.

Forward to redemption.

Forward to restoration.

Forward to the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose.

The fall revealed humanity's need.

The promises revealed God's answer.

Generation after generation looked forward in hope.



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The prophets searched diligently.

The saints waited expectantly.

And in the fullness of time, the One promised from the beginning would appear.

The Seed of the woman.

The Son of Abraham.

The Son of David.

The Messiah.

The Christ.

The One through whom reconciliation would become a living reality.

The next chapter brings us to the center of history itself:

The Cross and the Peace of God.

## CHAPTER 4

# THE CROSS AND THE PEACE OF GOD

All of the promises of God ultimately point to one event.

The Cross.

The prophets pointed toward it.



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s foreshadowed it.

The covenants anticipated it.

The Law testified of it.

The feasts proclaimed it.

The entire Old Testament moves toward the moment when Christ would offer Himself upon the Cross.

The Cross stands at the center of God's redemptive purpose.

Yet the Cross is more than a sacrifice for sin.

The Cross is more than an act of forgiveness.

The Cross is more than a legal transaction.

The Cross is the place where God made peace.

The Cross is the place where reconciliation was secured.

The Cross is the place where heaven's answer to humanity's alienation was revealed.

## **GOD WAS IN CHRIST**

One of the most misunderstood ideas in Christianity is the belief that Christ came to persuade God to love mankind.

Scripture teaches exactly the opposite.

2 Corinthians 5:19



"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself."

Notice carefully.

God was in Christ.

God initiated.

God purposed.

God provided.

God acted.

The Cross did not create God's love.

The Cross revealed God's love.

John 3:16

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son."

The giving of the Son was the manifestation of a love that already existed.

The Father was not reconciled to humanity.

Humanity needed reconciliation to God.

The initiative always belongs to God.

The purpose always belongs to God.

The provision always belongs to God.



# CHRIST THE LAMB OF GOD

From the beginning God revealed redemption through sacrifice.

Abel offered a sacrifice.

Noah offered sacrifices.

Abraham offered sacrifices.

Israel offered sacrifices.

The entire sacrificial system pointed toward one final sacrifice.

John 1:29

“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

Jesus did not merely bring a sacrifice.

Jesus was the sacrifice.

He was the fulfillment of every lamb offered upon every altar throughout history.

Hebrews 10:10

“We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”

What countless sacrifices could never accomplish, Christ accomplished through one offering.



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gave way to the substance.

The type gave way to the reality.

The promise gave way to fulfillment.

## **HE MADE PEACE THROUGH HIS CROSS**

The Apostle Paul makes a remarkable statement concerning Christ.

Colossians 1:20

“And, having made peace through the blood of his cross.”

Peace was not achieved through human effort.

Peace was not established through religion.

Peace was not secured through the works of the Law.

Christ made peace.

The Cross became the meeting place between divine purpose and human need.

The war introduced by the carnal mind met its answer at Calvary.

The alienation introduced by Adam met its answer at Calvary.

The condemnation introduced by sin met its answer at Calvary.

The peace established by Christ forms the foundation upon which reconciliation rests.



## **THE BLOOD OF THE NEW COVENANT**

On the night before His crucifixion, Jesus declared:

Matthew 26:28

“For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”

The blood of Christ established the New Covenant.

The old covenant revealed sin.

The new covenant provides life.

The old covenant exposed weakness.

The new covenant supplies power.

The old covenant demanded.

The new covenant imparts.

The Cross became the dividing line between the administration of Law and the administration of grace.

Through Christ, God began the fulfillment of everything the prophets had promised.

## **THE JUST AND THE JUSTIFIER**

The Cross reveals both the righteousness and the mercy of God.

Romans 3:25-26



“To declare his righteousness... that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”

At Calvary, justice and mercy meet.

Righteousness and grace meet.

Truth and love meet.

God remains righteous.

God remains holy.

Yet God also reveals His mercy through Christ.

The Cross demonstrates that God’s purpose is never contrary to His character.

Everything God accomplishes through reconciliation is perfectly consistent with who He is.

## **THE END OF THE OLD MAN**

The Cross was not only something Christ did for humanity.

The Cross reveals something God accomplished concerning humanity.

Romans 6:6

“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him.”

The problem introduced by Adam required more than forgiveness.



The old man had to be brought to an end.

The carnal nature had to be judged.

The independent life had to be exposed.

At the Cross, God pronounced judgment upon the Adamic order.

The old creation reached its conclusion in Christ.

This becomes essential for understanding reconciliation.

God is not merely improving the old man.

God is bringing forth a new creation.

## THE LOVE OF GOD REVEALED

The greatest revelation of the Cross is the love of God.

Romans 5:8

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

Christ did not die for friends only.

Christ died for enemies.

Christ died for the ungodly.

Christ died for sinners.



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veals the heart of the Father toward a fallen creation.

The Cross demonstrates that God's purpose is redemptive.

The Cross reveals that divine love is stronger than human rebellion.

The Cross becomes the supreme manifestation of God's desire for reconciliation.

## THE VICTORY OF THE CROSS

The Cross was not defeat.

The Cross was victory.

Colossians 2:15

"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it."

What appeared to be weakness became triumph.

What appeared to be loss became victory.

What appeared to be death became the pathway to life.

The Cross secured everything necessary for the fulfillment of God's purpose.

Sin was confronted.

Death was confronted.

The powers of darkness were confronted.



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ion of reconciliation was established forever.

# THE CROSS AND THE PURPOSE OF GOD

The Cross cannot be separated from God's eternal purpose.

Revelation 13:8 speaks of:

"The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

The sacrifice of Christ was not an afterthought.

The Cross was woven into the purpose of God before creation itself.

The God who purposed reconciliation before the foundation of the world accomplished that purpose through Christ.

The Cross stands at the center of history because Christ stands at the center of God's purpose.

Everything before the Cross pointed toward it.

Everything after the Cross flows from it.

## THE FOUNDATION OF RECONCILIATION

The Cross did not complete every aspect of God's purpose.

The Kingdom must yet be manifested.

The sons of God must yet appear.

The ages must yet unfold.



The fullness of God's purpose must yet be revealed.

Yet the legal foundation was laid at Calvary.

Peace was made.

The sacrifice was offered.

The victory was secured.

The New Covenant was established.

The Lamb accomplished His work.

The Cross therefore stands as the foundation upon which reconciliation rests.

Because peace has been made, reconciliation becomes possible.

Because Christ has triumphed, restoration becomes possible.

Because the Lamb has prevailed, the purpose of God cannot fail.

The promises anticipated it.

The prophets proclaimed it.

The Cross accomplished it.

And from that finished work flows everything that follows in God's great purpose of reconciliation.

The next question naturally arises:



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reconciliation actually mean?

To answer that question, we must examine the language, scope, and nature of reconciliation itself.

## CHAPTER 5

# WHAT DOES RECONCILIATION MEAN?

The word reconciliation is one of the most important words in Scripture.

Yet it is also one of the most misunderstood.

Many believers think reconciliation simply means forgiveness.

Others believe reconciliation means peace between God and man.

Still others view reconciliation as little more than the cancellation of a debt.

While each of these ideas touches part of the truth, none of them fully captures the depth of what Scripture reveals.

To understand reconciliation, we must look beyond religious tradition and discover how God Himself uses the word.

The biblical meaning of reconciliation reaches far beyond pardon.

It reaches into transformation.

It reaches into restoration.

It reaches into union.



It reaches into the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose.

# THE MEANING OF RECONCILIATION

The Greek words translated reconciliation carry the idea of change, exchange, restoration, and adjustment.

At their root is the idea of bringing something into harmony with its intended purpose.

A relationship that has become estranged is restored.

A condition that has become disordered is corrected.

A creation that has become alienated is brought back into harmony.

This helps us understand why reconciliation is so much larger than forgiveness alone.

Forgiveness deals with guilt.

Reconciliation deals with relationship.

Forgiveness removes the barrier.

Reconciliation restores the union.

God's purpose is not merely to forgive.

God's purpose is to restore.

## RECONCILIATION REQUIRES CHANGE



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One of the great lessons of Scripture is that reconciliation requires change.

Amos 3:3

"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"

Harmony requires agreement.

Fellowship requires union.

Peace requires alignment.

The problem introduced by the fall was not merely that man broke a rule.

The problem was that man departed from the life of God.

Alienation entered.

The carnal mind emerged.

Self became the center.

The result was separation from the conscious enjoyment of God's life.

Therefore reconciliation requires more than pardon.

It requires transformation.

It requires a thorough change.

## THE OLD CREATION AND THE NEW CREATION

The Apostle Paul reveals the true scope of reconciliation.



2 Corinthians 5:17

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

Notice the connection.

Immediately after speaking of the new creation, Paul speaks of reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:18

“And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ.”

Reconciliation is connected to new creation.

The old creation cannot produce the life of God.

The old man cannot manifest the image of Christ.

The old nature cannot fulfill God’s purpose.

Therefore God does not merely repair the old creation.

He brings forth a new creation.

The work of reconciliation is inseparably connected to this new creation reality.

## **GOD DOES NOT CHANGE**

One of the most important truths concerning reconciliation is this:

God does not need reconciliation.



"For I am the Lord, I change not."

The change required in reconciliation does not occur in God.

The change occurs in man.

The change occurs in creation.

The change occurs in the condition produced by alienation.

God has always loved.

God has always purposed redemption.

God has always desired fellowship.

God has always been faithful.

James 1:17

"With whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

The need for reconciliation arises because mankind departed from God's purpose.

The answer comes from God Himself.

## **GOD WAS IN CHRIST RECONCILING**

The initiative in reconciliation belongs entirely to God.

2 Corinthians 5:19



"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself."

This verse overturns many religious misunderstandings.

The Cross was not Christ convincing the Father to love humanity.

The Father already loved humanity.

The Cross reveals that God Himself was acting in Christ.

The Father initiated.

The Son accomplished.

The Spirit applies.

The work of reconciliation begins and ends with God.

## **RECONCILIATION PRODUCES PEACE**

Colossians 1:20

“And, having made peace through the blood of his cross.”

Peace is one of the great fruits of reconciliation.

The warfare introduced by the carnal mind ends.

The hostility introduced by sin ends.

The alienation introduced by the fall ends.

Demons 5:1



“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Peace is more than the absence of conflict.

Peace is harmony with God.

Peace is union with God.

Peace is participation in the life of God.

Peace is the fruit of reconciliation.

## **RECONCILIATION AND THE IMAGE OF GOD**

The purpose of reconciliation reaches beyond forgiveness and peace.

Romans 8:29

“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son.”

This reveals the ultimate direction of reconciliation.

God is restoring what was lost.

God is bringing mankind into conformity with Christ.

God is restoring the image.

The first Adam introduced alienation.



The last Adam introduces restoration.

The first Adam brought death.

The last Adam brings life.

The first Adam obscured the image.

The last Adam reveals the image.

The work of reconciliation ultimately serves this purpose.

## RECONCILIATION AND UNION

One of the highest themes in Scripture is union with Christ.

John 17:21

“That they all may be one.”

The heart of God has always moved toward union.

Not merely forgiveness.

Not merely acceptance.

Not merely legal standing.

Union.

Christ in you.

You in Christ.



The Father and the Son dwelling within their people.

John 14:20

“At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.”

This is the deeper goal toward which reconciliation moves.

The restoration of fellowship.

The restoration of communion.

The restoration of union.

## **RECONCILIATION IS CHRIST-CENTERED**

Every aspect of reconciliation is found in Christ.

He is the source.

He is the mediator.

He is the sacrifice.

He is the peace.

He is the life.

He is the image.

He is the goal.

Ephesians 1:10



“That he might gather together in one all things in Christ.”

The purpose of reconciliation is not merely to solve a problem.

The purpose of reconciliation is to gather all things into Christ.

Everything begins in Him.

Everything is sustained through Him.

Everything ultimately finds fulfillment in Him.

## THE THOROUGH CHANGE

The deepest meaning of reconciliation can be summarized in one phrase:

A thorough change.

A change of condition.

A change of relationship.

A change of nature.

A change of consciousness.

A change from death unto life.

A change from alienation unto fellowship.

A change from Adam unto Christ.

A change from the old creation unto the new creation.



This is why reconciliation is far greater than many imagine.

It is not merely the cancellation of guilt.

It is not merely the removal of sin.

It is not merely a legal declaration.

It is the mighty work of God restoring creation into harmony with His purpose through Jesus Christ.

The God who purposed all things before the foundation of the world is bringing creation toward its appointed destiny.

The peace has been made.

The foundation has been laid.

The new creation has begun.

The work of reconciliation is advancing according to God's eternal purpose.

The next question is unavoidable:

If reconciliation means restoration into harmony with God, how far does that restoration reach?

To answer that question, we must examine one of the most far-reaching statements in all of Scripture:

"By him to reconcile all things unto himself."

And thus we arrive at the subject of the next chapter:



# RECONCILING ALL THINGS

## CHAPTER 6

# RECONCILING ALL THINGS

Few statements in all of Scripture are as sweeping, majestic, and far-reaching as the words written by the Apostle Paul:

Colossians 1:20

“And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.”

For many believers, these words present a challenge.

How far does reconciliation reach?

What are the “all things” Paul speaks about?

Why does the Holy Spirit use such comprehensive language?

Can reconciliation truly be understood apart from this remarkable declaration?

To answer these questions, we must allow Scripture to speak for itself.

The purpose of this chapter is not to force conclusions upon the text.

The purpose is to examine the text honestly and allow the breadth of God’s purpose to emerge from the Word itself.



# THE CONTEXT OF ALL THINGS

Before speaking of reconciliation, Paul establishes the scope of creation.

Colossians 1:16

“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him.”

Notice the repeated phrase:

All things.

Everything in heaven.

Everything in earth.

Visible things.

Invisible things.

Thrones.

Dominions.

Principalities.

Powers.

Paul begins with the widest possible scope.



Nothing lies outside the creative work of Christ.

Nothing lies outside His sustaining power.

Nothing lies outside His ultimate purpose.

The same “all things” created through Him become the “all things” spoken of in reconciliation.

## **CREATED BY HIM AND FOR HIM**

Paul reveals two profound truths.

Colossians 1:16

“All things were created by him, and for him.”

Creation came from Christ.

Creation exists for Christ.

Creation moves toward Christ.

This truth becomes foundational to understanding reconciliation.

If all things originated in Him and all things were created for Him, then God’s purpose concerning creation cannot ultimately be separated from Christ.

The beginning is Christ.

The center is Christ.

The destination is Christ.



Reconciliation serves that purpose.

# HAVING MADE PEACE

Before Paul speaks of reconciling all things, he speaks of peace.

Colossians 1:20

“And, having made peace through the blood of his cross.”

Peace precedes reconciliation.

The Cross establishes the foundation.

The sacrifice provides the basis.

The blood secures the peace.

Everything that follows rests upon what Christ accomplished at Calvary.

Without the Cross there is no peace.

Without peace there is no reconciliation.

Without reconciliation there is no restoration.

The Cross stands at the center of God’s purpose.

## WHAT ARE THE ALL THINGS?

The phrase appears repeatedly throughout Scripture.

Ephesians 1:10



“That he might gather together in one all things in Christ.”

Romans 11:36

“For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things.”

1 Corinthians 15:28

“That God may be all in all.”

The language is expansive.

The language is comprehensive.

The language consistently points toward the totality of God’s purpose.

Paul does not restrict the phrase.

He enlarges it.

He broadens it.

He repeatedly draws attention to the universal scope of God’s plan.

The reconciliation of all things must therefore be understood within the same broad framework established by Scripture itself.

## THINGS IN EARTH

Paul specifically mentions:

“Things in earth.”



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the realm of humanity.

The earth is the realm of nations.

The earth is the realm of history.

The earth is the realm where redemption unfolds.

Throughout Scripture, God reveals His concern for the earth.

Psalm 24:1

“The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof.”

The earth belongs to God.

Humanity belongs to God.

The nations belong to God.

The purpose of reconciliation therefore includes God’s dealings within the earthly realm.

His purpose reaches beyond individuals.

His purpose touches families.

Nations.

Peoples.

Generations.



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earthly order stands within the scope of God’s purpose.

# THINGS IN HEAVEN

Paul also speaks of:

“Things in heaven.”

This statement often surprises readers.

Why would heavenly things be mentioned?

Why would reconciliation extend beyond earth?

The answer is found in the magnitude of Christ’s work.

The Cross was not a local event.

The Cross was a cosmic event.

The One who died upon the Cross was the Creator of heaven and earth.

The One who shed His blood was the Lord of all realms.

Therefore the effects of His work extend as far as His authority extends.

Hebrews 9:23

“It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified.”

Scripture repeatedly reveals that God’s purpose encompasses both heaven and earth.



Christ unites both realms within Himself.

# THE GATHERING OF ALL THINGS

Ephesians 1 provides another important key.

Ephesians 1:9-10

“Having made known unto us the mystery of his will... that he might gather together in one all things in Christ.”

Notice the language.

Gather together.

In one.

All things.

In Christ.

This is not fragmentation.

This is not perpetual division.

This is not endless separation.

The mystery of God’s will is the gathering together of all things in Christ.

Reconciliation serves that gathering.

Reconciliation serves that unity.



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on serves that purpose.

# THE RESTORATION OF CREATION

The Apostle Paul reveals that creation itself is waiting for something.

Romans 8:19

“For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.”

Creation groans.

Creation travails.

Creation waits.

Why?

Because creation was subjected to vanity.

Romans 8:21

“The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption.”

Notice the language.

Delivered.

Bondage removed.

Corruption overcome.



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tored.

The promise extends beyond individual salvation.

The promise reaches toward the restoration of creation itself.

The ministry of reconciliation therefore possesses a scope as large as creation's need.

## **CHRIST MUST REIGN**

The reconciliation of all things does not occur apart from the Kingdom.

1 Corinthians 15:25

"For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet."

The reign of Christ serves a purpose.

The Kingdom serves a purpose.

The government of God serves a purpose.

The purpose is the subjection of all opposition.

The purpose is the restoration of divine order.

The purpose is the fulfillment of God's eternal will.

The reign of Christ advances the work of reconciliation throughout the ages.

## **EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW**



Paul makes another remarkable declaration.

## Philippians 2:10-11

"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow... And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord."

The language is universal.

Every knee.

Every tongue.

Every realm.

Every sphere.

The Lordship of Christ ultimately extends throughout creation.

The One who created all things shall be acknowledged by all things.

The One who redeemed shall be recognized.

The One who reigns shall be confessed.

This harmonizes perfectly with the larger purpose revealed throughout Scripture.

## **GOD ALL IN ALL**

The reconciliation of all things cannot be separated from the final goal of God's purpose.

1 Corinthians 15:28



"That God may be all in all."

This is the great climax.

This is the consummation.

This is the destination toward which the ages move.

God all in all.

Not merely all in some.

Not merely all in a few.

But all in all.

The reconciliation of all things finds its ultimate fulfillment in this glorious conclusion.

Everything that began in God's purpose before the foundation of the world moves steadily toward this end.

## THE SCOPE OF RECONCILIATION

The testimony of Scripture reveals that reconciliation is far larger than many have imagined.

It begins in the heart of God.

It is secured through the Cross.

It advances through the Kingdom.



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rough the ages.

It touches heaven and earth.

It reaches creation itself.

It moves toward the gathering together of all things in Christ.

The God who created all things has purposed all things in Christ.

The God who sustains all things is directing all things toward their appointed destiny.

The God who made peace through the blood of His Cross is working according to an eternal purpose that cannot fail.

Yet this raises an important question.

If reconciliation extends so broadly throughout creation, what role does judgment play?

How do divine judgments fit within God's purpose?

Are judgment and reconciliation opposing realities?

Or does judgment itself serve the purpose of restoration?

To answer these questions, we must examine one of the most misunderstood themes in Scripture.

And that brings us to the next chapter:



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## RECONCILIATION AND DIVINE JUDGMENT

# CHAPTER 7

## RECONCILIATION AND DIVINE JUDGMENT

One of the greatest obstacles to understanding reconciliation is misunderstanding judgment.

For many believers, reconciliation and judgment are opposites.

Reconciliation is viewed as mercy.

Judgment is viewed as wrath.

Reconciliation is viewed as restoration.

Judgment is viewed as destruction.

Yet when we study the Scriptures carefully, we discover that judgment and reconciliation are not enemies.

Judgment serves the purpose of God.

Judgment removes opposition to God.

Judgment exposes what is contrary to God.

Judgment prepares the way for restoration.

In the Full Counsel of God, judgment is not the failure of reconciliation.

Judgment is one of the instruments through which reconciliation advances.



# GOD IS BOTH SAVIOR AND JUDGE

The same God who redeems is also the God who judges.

Isaiah 33:22

“For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us.”

Notice that all three functions belong to the same God.

Judge.

Lawgiver.

King.

Savior.

Scripture never presents these attributes as contradictory.

God’s judgments flow from His righteousness.

God’s salvation flows from His love.

Both serve His purpose.

Both reveal His character.

Both move creation toward His intended end.



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## ...ENT BEGAN IN EDEN

The first judgment appears immediately after the fall.

Genesis 3:17

“Cursed is the ground for thy sake.”

The judgment was real.

The consequences were real.

Yet even in judgment, God revealed mercy.

Genesis 3:21

“Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.”

The same chapter contains both judgment and provision.

Both correction and mercy.

Both consequence and promise.

The Seed of the woman was announced within the context of judgment.

From the very beginning, judgment served a larger purpose.

## **WHOM THE LORD LOVETH HE CHASTENETH**

One of the clearest revelations concerning divine judgment appears in Hebrews.



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"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth."

Judgment is often misunderstood because many view it through the lens of punishment alone.

Scripture frequently presents judgment as correction.

Discipline.

Training.

Instruction.

Formation.

The Father disciplines His children because He loves them.

The purpose of chastening is not destruction.

The purpose of chastening is transformation.

The purpose is to produce righteousness.

Hebrews 12:11

"Nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness."

Notice again the connection to peace.

Judgment produces what is necessary for harmony with God.



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erves reconciliation.

# FIRE IN THE PURPOSE OF GOD

Throughout Scripture, fire frequently represents divine judgment.

Yet fire does more than destroy.

Fire reveals.

Fire purifies.

Fire refines.

Malachi 3:2-3

"For he is like a refiner's fire... and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver."

A refiner does not burn silver because he hates it.

A refiner applies fire because he values it.

The fire removes impurities.

The fire reveals what is genuine.

The fire produces purity.

God's judgments often function in the same way.

His purpose is not merely to expose evil.

His purpose is to remove it.



# THE CONSUMING FIRE OF GOD

Hebrews 12:29

“For our God is a consuming fire.”

Many read these words with fear.

Yet the question remains:

What does God’s fire consume?

The answer throughout Scripture is clear.

God’s fire consumes:

- Sin.
- Corruption.
- Rebellion.
- Pride.
- Unrighteousness.

God’s fire removes whatever opposes His purpose.

The goal is not the preservation of evil.

The goal is the removal of evil.

The purpose is not endless corruption.

The purpose is ultimate restoration.



# THE JUDGMENTS OF THE LORD ARE TRUE

Psalm 19:9

“The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.”

Human judgments are often flawed.

Human judgments are often excessive.

Human judgments are often driven by emotion.

God’s judgments are perfect.

God judges with complete wisdom.

God judges with complete knowledge.

God judges with complete righteousness.

Abraham declared:

Genesis 18:25

“Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?”

The answer remains yes.

Every judgment of God serves His righteous purpose.

Nothing He does is arbitrary.



Nothing He does is unjust.

Nothing He does is contrary to His character.

## JUDGMENT AND THE KINGDOM

The Kingdom of God advances through judgment.

Isaiah 26:9

“For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.”

Notice what judgment produces.

Righteousness.

Learning.

Correction.

Growth.

The prophet does not say the inhabitants learn hopelessness.

He does not say they learn despair.

He says they learn righteousness.

Judgment becomes a teacher.

Judgment becomes a servant of God’s purpose.



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advances the work of reconciliation by confronting everything that opposes the will of God.

# EVERY ENEMY MUST BE SUBDUED

The Kingdom of Christ continues until every enemy is subdued.

1 Corinthians 15:25

“For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.”

The reign of Christ has a purpose.

Enemies must be subdued.

Opposition must end.

Rebellion must cease.

Death itself must be destroyed.

1 Corinthians 15:26

“The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.”

This is one of the clearest demonstrations that judgment serves reconciliation.

God does not preserve His enemies forever.

God removes enmity.

God removes opposition.

God removes death.



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Everything contrary to His purpose ultimately gives way before His Kingdom.

# THE LAKE OF FIRE AND THE PURPOSE OF GOD

Few subjects generate more discussion than the Lake of Fire.

Whatever conclusions believers reach concerning prophetic details, one truth remains certain:

The Lake of Fire exists within the government of God.

It is not outside His authority.

It is not outside His purpose.

It is not outside His plan.

Revelation 20:14

“And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire.”

Notice what enters the fire.

Death.

The final enemy.

The very thing Christ came to destroy.

The purpose of God’s judgments is consistent throughout Scripture.

God deals with whatever opposes His life, righteousness, and purpose.



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not the eternal preservation of evil.

The goal is the ultimate triumph of Christ.

## JUDGMENT PREPARES THE WAY

Again and again throughout Scripture, judgment prepares the way for restoration.

The flood prepared the way for a new beginning.

Israel's captivities prepared the way for restoration.

The wilderness prepared the way for inheritance.

The Cross itself involved judgment before resurrection.

The pattern is consistent.

Death before life.

Correction before restoration.

Judgment before renewal.

God removes what cannot remain in order to establish what cannot be shaken.

Hebrews 12:27

"Those things which cannot be shaken may remain."

## RECONCILIATION AND RIGHTEOUSNESS



Reconciliation can never ignore righteousness.

God does not simply overlook evil.

God deals with evil.

God confronts evil.

God judges evil.

Yet His judgments always move toward the fulfillment of His purpose.

Psalm 89:14

“Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.”

Notice the balance.

Justice.

Judgment.

Mercy.

Truth.

All flow from the same throne.

All reveal the same God.

All serve the same purpose.



# JUDGMENT IN THE SERVICE OF RECONCILIATION

The story of Scripture reveals that judgment and reconciliation are not opposing forces.

Judgment serves reconciliation.

Judgment removes what alienates.

Judgment exposes what corrupts.

Judgment destroys what opposes life.

Judgment prepares creation for restoration.

The God who judges is the same God who redeems.

The God who chastens is the same God who loves.

The God who corrects is the same God who restores.

The purpose never changes.

From Eden to the prophets.

From the Cross to the Kingdom.

From the ages to come until God is all in all.

God's judgments move creation toward His intended end.



The purpose of reconciliation therefore cannot be understood apart from divine judgment.

For judgment is one of the great tools through which God removes opposition and advances His eternal purpose.

Yet another question now arises.

How does God progressively unfold this purpose throughout history?

To answer that question, we must examine one of the most profound prophetic patterns in all of Scripture.

The three great feasts of Israel.

And so we come to the next chapter:

## **THE THREE FEASTS AND RECONCILIATION**

### **CHAPTER 8**

## **THE THREE FEASTS AND RECONCILIATION**

One of the greatest prophetic pictures of reconciliation is found in the three annual feasts that God gave to Israel.

Many believers study the feasts as historical events.

Others study the feasts as prophetic timelines.



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ches contain truth.

Yet the feasts reveal something even greater.

The feasts reveal the progressive unfolding of God's purpose.

They reveal the journey from redemption to transformation to manifestation.

They reveal the path through which reconciliation advances according to the divine plan.

The three great feasts are:

- Passover
- Pentecost
- Tabernacles

Together they reveal God's purpose from beginning to completion.

What was accomplished through Christ is progressively manifested through the ages until God's purpose reaches its fullness.

## **THE FEASTS WERE SHADOWS OF THINGS TO COME**

Paul explains the prophetic nature of the feasts.

Colossians 2:16-17

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday... Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."

The feasts were never merely Jewish celebrations.



They were prophetic shadows.

They revealed Christ.

They revealed God's purpose.

They revealed the stages through which reconciliation would unfold.

The substance of every feast is Christ Himself.

## **PASSOVER AND RECONCILIATION**

The first feast is Passover.

Exodus 12:13

"When I see the blood, I will pass over you."

Passover reveals the foundation of reconciliation.

A lamb is slain.

Blood is shed.

Deliverance is provided.

Judgment passes over.

Israel leaves Egypt.

Centuries later John the Baptist declared:



John 1:29

“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

Christ is the fulfillment of Passover.

The Cross becomes the great Passover event.

The Lamb dies.

Peace is made.

The foundation of reconciliation is established.

Passover reveals the legal aspect of God’s purpose.

The debt is addressed.

The sacrifice is offered.

The blood is applied.

The journey begins.

Yet Passover is not the end.

Passover is the beginning.

## **DELIVERANCE IS NOT THE DESTINATION**

One of the great lessons of Israel’s history is that deliverance alone does not complete God’s purpose.



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ypt.

Yet Egypt had not fully left Israel.

The people were delivered outwardly.

Their minds still required transformation.

Their understanding still required renewal.

Their hearts still required change.

This reveals an important principle.

The work of reconciliation extends beyond deliverance.

The purpose of God includes transformation.

God does not merely bring people out.

God brings people through.

The journey continues.

## **PENTECOST AND RECONCILIATION**

Fifty days after Passover came Pentecost.

Acts 2:1

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come.”

Pentecost reveals the next stage in God’s purpose.



Passover dealt with redemption.

Pentecost deals with transformation.

Passover reveals the Lamb.

Pentecost reveals the Spirit.

Passover reveals forgiveness.

Pentecost reveals empowerment.

Passover reveals peace made.

Pentecost reveals peace working within.

The Spirit comes to dwell within God's people.

The Law written on stone gives way to the Law written in the heart.

Jeremiah 31:33

"I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts."

The inward work of God begins.

The mind is renewed.

The heart is changed.

The life of Christ is formed within.

This is a vital aspect of reconciliation.



# THE RENEWING OF THE MIND

The fall introduced alienation.

Pentecost begins reversing that condition.

Romans 12:2

“Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

Transformation becomes one of the great themes of Pentecost.

The Spirit reveals Christ.

The Spirit teaches truth.

The Spirit forms the nature of God within His people.

The purpose is not merely external obedience.

The purpose is inward conformity to Christ.

The ministry of reconciliation advances through this transforming work.

The image that was obscured in Adam begins to appear again through Christ.

# THE FIRSTFRUITS PRINCIPLE

Pentecost is also called the feast of firstfruits.

James 1:18



“That we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.”

Firstfruits reveal order.

Firstfruits reveal priority.

Firstfruits reveal the beginning of a larger harvest.

This becomes extremely important when studying reconciliation.

God often begins with a firstfruits company before extending His work more broadly.

Christ is the Firstfruits.

The Church is called firstfruits.

The overcomers are firstfruits.

The principle remains consistent.

God begins with a firstfruits people as part of His larger purpose.

## **TABERNACLES AND RECONCILIATION**

The final feast is Tabernacles.

Leviticus 23:34

“The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles.”

Tabernacles points beyond redemption.

Tabernacles points beyond transformation.



Tabernacles points toward manifestation.

The central theme of Tabernacles is:

God dwelling with man.

Revelation 21:3

“Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men.”

The journey reaches maturity.

The purpose reaches fulfillment.

The life of God is manifested openly.

The image of Christ is revealed.

The Kingdom becomes visible.

Tabernacles reveals the fullness toward which reconciliation moves.

## **GOD DWELLING IN HIS PEOPLE**

Throughout Scripture, God’s desire is consistent.

Exodus 25:8

“Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.”

John 1:14

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.”



1 Corinthians 3:16

“Ye are the temple of God.”

Revelation 21:3

“The tabernacle of God is with men.”

The theme remains unchanged.

God desires fellowship.

God desires union.

God desires habitation.

The goal of reconciliation is not merely the removal of guilt.

The goal is the dwelling of God within His people.

Tabernacles reveals this glorious reality.

## **THE FEASTS REVEAL PROGRESSIVE RECONCILIATION**

Passover reveals redemption.

Pentecost reveals transformation.

Tabernacles reveals manifestation.

Each feast reveals another dimension of God’s purpose.



Each feast reveals another stage in the journey.

Each feast reveals another aspect of reconciliation.

Passover establishes peace.

Pentecost produces change.

Tabernacles manifests completion.

The feasts therefore reveal the progressive nature of God's work throughout the ages.

## THE HARVEST PATTERN

The feasts are also connected to harvest.

Passover occurs during the beginning of harvest.

Pentecost occurs during the firstfruits harvest.

Tabernacles occurs during the final ingathering.

This agricultural pattern reveals another principle.

God works progressively.

Seeds are planted.

Growth occurs.

Harvest arrives.



EN

principle appears throughout Scripture.

Christ the Firstfruits.

Afterward they that are Christ's.

Then the larger fulfillment of God's purpose.

The feasts reveal order within reconciliation.

## **THE FULLNESS OF GOD'S PURPOSE**

The three feasts reveal more than events.

They reveal the structure of God's plan.

Passover reveals the foundation.

Pentecost reveals the process.

Tabernacles reveals the consummation.

Together they form a prophetic picture of God's purpose from redemption to manifestation.

The God who begins the work completes the work.

The God who establishes peace produces transformation.

The God who produces transformation ultimately reveals His glory.

The feasts reveal the progressive unfolding of reconciliation throughout the ages until God's purpose reaches its fullness.



Yet this raises another important question.

Who administers this purpose within creation?

Who carries the ministry of reconciliation?

Who becomes the instrument through which God advances His purpose?

To answer these questions, we must examine the revelation of sonship.

And so we come to the next chapter:

## **SONSHIP AND THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION**

### **CHAPTER 9**

## **SONSHIP AND THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION**

As we have seen, reconciliation originates in the eternal purpose of God.

It was promised through the prophets.

It was secured through the Cross.

It unfolds through the progressive pattern revealed in the feasts.

Yet a question remains.

How does God administer His purpose within creation?



How does He advance reconciliation throughout the ages?

The answer brings us to one of the highest themes in all of Scripture:

Sonship.

God's purpose has never been merely to save servants.

God's purpose is to bring many sons unto glory.

Hebrews 2:10

"For it became him... in bringing many sons unto glory."

The ministry of reconciliation is inseparably connected to the revelation of sonship.

The sons of God become instruments through which God's purpose advances within creation.

## THE PURPOSE OF SONSHIP

From the beginning, God created mankind in His image.

Genesis 1:26

"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."

The purpose was always greater than mere existence.

The purpose was likeness.



EN

was image.

The purpose was family.

The purpose was sonship.

The fall obscured that image.

The purpose itself never changed.

Romans 8:29

“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son.”

Notice the destination.

Not merely forgiveness.

Not merely acceptance.

Conformity to Christ.

The work of reconciliation ultimately moves toward sonship.

## **CHRIST THE FIRSTBORN SON**

Every aspect of God’s purpose centers in Christ.

Romans 8:29

“That he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”



EN

merely a son.

He is the Firstborn Son.

He is the pattern.

He is the image.

He is the standard.

Everything God intends for His sons is first revealed in Christ.

John 20:17

"I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God."

The Son came to bring many sons into relationship with the Father.

The ministry of reconciliation begins with the Firstborn.

## THE SPIRIT OF SONSHIP

Sonship is not achieved through human effort.

Sonship is the work of God.

Romans 8:14

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

The Spirit produces what the Law could never produce.

The Spirit forms Christ within.



The Spirit reveals the Father.

The Spirit transforms the believer into the image of the Son.

Galatians 4:6

“And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts.”

The work of reconciliation is not merely external.

It is internal.

It is transformative.

It is the life of God working within His people.

## THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD

Paul reveals a remarkable truth concerning creation.

Romans 8:19

“For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.”

Creation is waiting.

Creation is groaning.

Creation is expecting something.

What is creation waiting for?



EN

tation of sonship.

Why?

Because the sons play a vital role in God's purpose.

Creation was subjected to vanity.

Creation entered bondage.

Creation entered corruption.

Yet creation waits in hope.

Romans 8:21

"Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption."

The manifestation of the sons is directly connected to the deliverance of creation.

The ministry of reconciliation extends beyond personal experience into God's larger purpose for creation itself.

## **AMBASSADORS OF RECONCILIATION**

Paul gives one of the clearest statements concerning this ministry.

2 Corinthians 5:18

"And hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation."

Notice the language.



EN

es a ministry.

God entrusts that ministry to His people.

God works through vessels.

God works through sons.

God works through ambassadors.

2 Corinthians 5:20

“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ.”

An ambassador represents another kingdom.

An ambassador carries another government’s authority.

An ambassador speaks on behalf of another ruler.

The sons of God become ambassadors of the Kingdom.

They become ministers of reconciliation.

They proclaim what God has accomplished in Christ.

## **THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION**

Many ministries focus primarily on information.

Others focus on programs.

Others focus on institutions.



Yet Paul identifies the central ministry entrusted to believers:

The ministry of reconciliation.

This ministry announces:

God was in Christ.

God made peace.

God reconciled.

God restores.

God transforms.

God fulfills His purpose.

The ministry of reconciliation reveals the heart of the Father toward creation.

It reveals the triumph of Christ.

It reveals the hope of restoration.

## **KINGS AND PRIESTS**

The sons are also described as kings and priests.

Revelation 5:10

“And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.”

Priests minister before God.



Kings administer government.

The ministry of reconciliation contains both dimensions.

Priestly ministry.

Kingdom ministry.

Intercession.

Administration.

Compassion.

Government.

The sons become instruments through which God's purpose advances within the earth.

The Kingdom and reconciliation are inseparably connected.

## THE MANY-MEMBERED CHRIST

Christ is the Head.

His people are His Body.

1 Corinthians 12:27

"Now ye are the body of Christ."

The Head and the Body function together.



EN

Christ flows through His Body.

The ministry of reconciliation therefore extends through a many-membered expression.

Christ continues His work through His people.

Christ reveals His life through His people.

Christ ministers through His people.

This is one of the great mysteries revealed in the New Testament.

Christ in you.

The hope of glory.

## **THE FIRSTFRUITS COMPANY**

Throughout Scripture God often begins with a firstfruits company.

James 1:18

“That we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.”

Firstfruits reveal order.

Firstfruits reveal priority.

Firstfruits reveal purpose.

The firstfruits are not the entire harvest.



EN

s reveal what the harvest will become.

Christ is the Firstfruits.

The sons are firstfruits.

The overcomers are firstfruits.

The principle remains consistent.

God begins with a firstfruits company as part of His larger purpose of reconciliation.

## THE IMAGE OF CHRIST REVEALED

The goal of sonship is not position.

The goal is image.

The goal is likeness.

The goal is conformity to Christ.

2 Corinthians 3:18

“But we all... are changed into the same image from glory to glory.”

The Spirit works continuously toward this objective.

The image obscured through Adam is restored through Christ.

The sons become living expressions of the life of God.

They reveal His character.



They reveal His nature.

They reveal His government.

The ministry of reconciliation advances through this manifestation.

## **SONSHIP AND THE PURPOSE OF GOD**

Sonship is not an isolated doctrine.

It is part of God's eternal purpose.

The Father is bringing many sons unto glory.

The Son is the Firstborn among many brethren.

The Spirit forms Christ within His people.

The creation waits for their manifestation.

The Kingdom advances through their ministry.

The ministry entrusted to them is the ministry of reconciliation.

Through sonship, God's purpose moves forward.

Through sonship, the image is restored.

Through sonship, creation witnesses the life of Christ.

Through sonship, reconciliation advances toward its appointed fulfillment.

Yet the ministry of reconciliation does not operate apart from government.



It operates within the Kingdom of God.

To understand the larger administration of reconciliation, we must now examine the reign of Christ and the purpose of the Kingdom.

And so we come to the next chapter:

# THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND RECONCILIATION

## CHAPTER 10

# THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND RECONCILIATION

The ministry of reconciliation cannot be understood apart from the Kingdom of God.

The Cross established the foundation.

The Spirit produces transformation.

The sons carry the ministry.

But the Kingdom provides the administration.

God is not merely saving individuals.

God is establishing His government.

God is not merely restoring people.



God is restoring divine order.

God is not merely reconciling hearts.

God is bringing all things under the headship of Christ.

The Kingdom is the divine administration through which reconciliation advances throughout the ages.

## **THE KINGDOM WAS THE MESSAGE OF CHRIST**

One of the most overlooked truths in Scripture is that Jesus continually preached the Kingdom.

Matthew 4:23

“And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom.”

The Kingdom was not a side subject.

The Kingdom was the message.

The Kingdom reveals the government of God.

The Kingdom reveals the reign of Christ.

The Kingdom reveals heaven’s order being established within creation.

The ministry of reconciliation operates within this Kingdom framework.

## **THE KINGDOM BELONGS TO THE SON**



EN

as entrusted all authority to Christ.

Matthew 28:18

“All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”

The authority of Christ is universal.

Heaven.

Earth.

Visible.

Invisible.

Nothing exists outside His authority.

The One who made peace through the Cross is the same One who possesses all authority.

The One who secured reconciliation is the same One who administers the Kingdom.

This is why reconciliation cannot fail.

Its administration rests in the hands of Christ Himself.

## THE THRONE OF GOD

Every Kingdom requires a throne.

Psalms 103:19



EN

He has prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.”

The throne represents government.

The throne represents authority.

The throne represents administration.

The throne reveals that God's purpose is not uncertain.

Creation is not without government.

History is not out of control.

The Kingdom of God operates from the throne.

The ministry of reconciliation flows from the throne.

Everything unfolds according to divine purpose.

## **CHRIST MUST REIGN**

Paul reveals one of the most important statements concerning the Kingdom.

1 Corinthians 15:25

"For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet."

Notice the language.

He must reign.

The reign of Christ is not optional.



The reign of Christ is necessary.

The reign of Christ serves a purpose.

Every enemy must be subdued.

Every opposition must be removed.

Everything contrary to God's purpose must give way before the Kingdom.

The reign of Christ advances reconciliation by removing everything that opposes God's will.

## THE SUBJECTION OF ALL THINGS

Scripture repeatedly speaks of the subjection of all things.

Hebrews 2:8

"Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet."

Again we encounter the phrase:

All things.

The Kingdom is not concerned with a small corner of creation.

The Kingdom concerns the whole purpose of God.

Everything created through Christ ultimately comes under the administration of Christ.

The government of God moves steadily toward this objective.



Nothing lies beyond His authority.

Nothing lies beyond His purpose.

## THE STONE CUT WITHOUT HANDS

Daniel saw the Kingdom centuries before Christ appeared.

Daniel 2:34-35

“A stone was cut out without hands.”

This stone struck the kingdoms of men.

The image collapsed.

The kingdoms of the world passed away.

The stone became a great mountain that filled the whole earth.

Daniel 2:44

“The God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed.”

The Kingdom grows.

The Kingdom advances.

The Kingdom fills the earth.

The Kingdom outlasts every earthly government.

The Kingdom becomes the instrument through which God’s purpose is fulfilled.



# THE INCREASE OF HIS GOVERNMENT

Isaiah prophesied concerning Christ:

Isaiah 9:7

“Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.”

Notice the connection.

Government.

Peace.

The increase of God’s government produces the increase of peace.

This is profoundly connected to reconciliation.

Where Christ reigns, peace increases.

Where peace increases, reconciliation advances.

Where reconciliation advances, the purpose of God becomes manifest.

The Kingdom is therefore not separate from reconciliation.

The Kingdom is one of its primary instruments.

# SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM

Jesus instructed His disciples:



Matthew 6:33

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness."

Why first?

Because the Kingdom reveals God's priority.

The Kingdom reveals God's administration.

The Kingdom reveals God's purpose.

Many seek blessings.

Many seek experiences.

Many seek knowledge.

Jesus directs attention toward the Kingdom.

The Kingdom places everything else into proper order.

The Kingdom aligns humanity with God's government.

The Kingdom advances the work of reconciliation.

## THE KINGDOM AND THE NATIONS

The purpose of God extends beyond individuals.

Psalm 22:28

"For the kingdom is the Lord's: and he is the governor among the nations."



The nations belong to God.

History belongs to God.

Governments ultimately answer to God.

The Kingdom is not confined to personal experience.

The Kingdom reaches into creation itself.

The Kingdom touches nations.

The Kingdom touches generations.

The Kingdom touches the entire course of history.

The ministry of reconciliation therefore possesses a scope far larger than personal salvation alone.

## **THE DELIVERANCE OF CREATION**

Romans 8 reveals that creation itself awaits deliverance.

Romans 8:21

“The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption.”

How does this occur?

Through the administration of God’s purpose.

Through the manifestation of the sons.



EN

reign of Christ.

Through the advancing Kingdom.

The Kingdom is God's instrument for restoring divine order within creation.

The Kingdom is the governmental side of reconciliation.

## THE LAST ENEMY

Paul identifies the final enemy.

1 Corinthians 15:26

"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

Death entered through Adam.

Life comes through Christ.

The Kingdom continues until death itself is removed.

This reveals the comprehensive nature of God's purpose.

The reign of Christ does not stop until every enemy is subdued.

The reign of Christ does not stop until the purpose is fulfilled.

The reign of Christ does not stop until reconciliation reaches its appointed goal.

## THE KINGDOM DELIVERED TO THE FATHER



the culmination of the Kingdom.

1 Corinthians 15:24

“Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father.”

The Kingdom has an objective.

The Kingdom has a purpose.

The Kingdom advances the will of God throughout the ages.

When the purpose is fulfilled, the Kingdom is delivered to the Father.

This does not mean the reign of Christ failed.

It means the reign of Christ succeeded.

The purpose has been accomplished.

The mission has been completed.

The work has reached fulfillment.

## **THE ADMINISTRATION OF RECONCILIATION**

The Kingdom of God is the administration of God’s eternal purpose.

The Cross established peace.

The Spirit produces transformation.



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ry the ministry.

The Kingdom governs the process.

The reign of Christ removes opposition.

The government of God establishes order.

The throne directs history toward its appointed end.

Everything moves toward the fulfillment of God's purpose.

The Kingdom therefore serves reconciliation by bringing all things under the authority of Christ.

The government of God advances what the Cross secured.

The reign of Christ unfolds what the Lamb accomplished.

The Kingdom moves creation toward its appointed destiny.

Yet Scripture reveals that this purpose unfolds according to a divine order.

Not all things occur at once.

Not all things are manifested simultaneously.

God works progressively.

God works according to order.

And that brings us to one of the most important principles in all of Scripture:



EN

in his own order.”

The next chapter reveals the divine order through which God's purpose unfolds throughout the ages.

# EVERY MAN IN HIS OWN ORDER

## CHAPTER 11

# EVERY MAN IN HIS OWN ORDER

One of the greatest errors in understanding reconciliation is the assumption that God accomplishes everything at the same time.

Scripture does not teach that.

The Bible reveals progression.

The Bible reveals seasons.

The Bible reveals harvests.

The Bible reveals ages.

Most importantly, the Bible reveals order.

The Apostle Paul provides one of the most important keys for understanding the unfolding of God's purpose.

1 Corinthians 15:22-23

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his



This statement unlocks much of the mystery surrounding reconciliation.

God works according to order.

God works according to purpose.

God works according to appointed times and seasons.

The fulfillment is certain.

The manifestation is progressive.

## THE PRINCIPLE OF DIVINE ORDER

The word translated "order" carries the idea of rank, sequence, or arrangement.

God is not the author of confusion.

1 Corinthians 14:33

"For God is not the author of confusion."

Everything God does follows divine order.

Creation followed order.

The feasts followed order.

The harvests followed order.

The covenants followed order.



The Kingdom unfolds according to order.

Reconciliation itself advances according to order.

The certainty of fulfillment never changes.

The timing of fulfillment follows God's wisdom.

## CHRIST THE FIRSTFRUITS

Paul begins with Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:23

"Christ the firstfruits."

Everything begins with Him.

The first resurrection begins with Him.

The new creation begins with Him.

The Kingdom begins with Him.

The harvest begins with Him.

Christ stands at the head of every purpose of God.

The firstfruits always reveal what is coming.

The firstfruits are not the entire harvest.

The firstfruits are the guarantee of the harvest.



Because Christ rose, the purpose of God cannot fail.

Because Christ lives, reconciliation advances.

Because Christ is the Firstfruits, the harvest will follow.

## THE LAW OF FIRSTFRUITS

The principle of firstfruits appears throughout Scripture.

Proverbs 3:9

“Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase.”

The firstfruits were never the whole harvest.

They were the beginning.

They revealed what was to come.

James applies this principle to believers.

James 1:18

“That we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.”

Again we see divine order.

Christ.

Firstfruits.

Harvest



Completion.

God consistently begins with a firstfruits company before revealing a larger fulfillment.

## **AFTERWARD THEY THAT ARE CHRIST'S**

Paul continues:

1 Corinthians 15:23

"Afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."

Notice the progression.

First Christ.

Then those who are Christ's.

God works according to sequence.

The Head appears.

Then the Body.

The Firstborn appears.

Then the brethren.

The pattern remains consistent throughout Scripture.

The purpose unfolds progressively.



EN

expands progressively.

Reconciliation advances progressively.

## THE FEASTS REVEAL ORDER

The three feasts illustrate this principle beautifully.

Passover comes first.

Pentecost follows.

Tabernacles concludes the cycle.

God did not reverse the order.

God did not combine the feasts into a single event.

Each feast arrived at its appointed time.

Each feast revealed another stage of His purpose.

The same principle appears in reconciliation.

The foundation is established.

The transformation unfolds.

The manifestation follows.

God works according to order.



EN

## RECONCILIATION REVEALS ORDER

Nature itself teaches the principle.

Mark 4:28

"First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."

Growth is progressive.

Harvest is progressive.

Maturity is progressive.

God designed creation to reveal spiritual realities.

The farmer does not expect full harvest immediately after planting.

Likewise, God's purpose unfolds through appointed stages.

The certainty of harvest never changes.

The order of harvest remains.

## THE AGES REVEAL ORDER

The Scriptures speak repeatedly of ages.

Ephesians 2:7

"That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace."

Notice the plural.



Ages.

God works through successive administrations.

The purpose remains one.

The unfoldment occurs progressively.

Each age reveals another aspect of God's purpose.

Each age reveals another dimension of Christ.

Each age advances reconciliation toward its appointed fulfillment.

The ages themselves testify that God works according to order.

## **THE KINGDOM ADVANCES ACCORDING TO ORDER**

Christ reigns according to divine order.

1 Corinthians 15:25

"For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet."

The Kingdom advances progressively.

Enemies are subdued.

Opposition is removed.

The government of God expands.



EN

The purpose unfolds.

Nothing occurs outside divine order.

The reign of Christ is not random.

The reign of Christ is purposeful.

Every stage moves toward fulfillment.

## THE LAST ENEMY

Paul identifies the final enemy.

1 Corinthians 15:26

“The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.”

Notice again the principle.

Last enemy.

This implies sequence.

This implies order.

This implies progression.

Death is not destroyed first.

Death is destroyed last.

The purpose unfolds according to divine arrangement.



Every enemy is addressed.

Every opposition is removed.

Every obstacle gives way before the reign of Christ.

The order is perfect.

The outcome is certain.

## **GOD IS NEVER IN A HURRY**

One lesson repeated throughout Scripture is that God is never rushed.

Abraham waited.

Joseph waited.

Israel waited.

David waited.

The prophets waited.

The disciples waited.

The Kingdom itself unfolds according to God's timetable.

2 Peter 3:8

"One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

God's purpose is not measured by human impatience.



God sees the end from the beginning.

He works according to wisdom.

He works according to order.

He works according to His eternal purpose.

## THE CERTAINTY OF FULFILLMENT

Divine order does not create uncertainty.

It creates confidence.

Because God works according to order, His purpose cannot fail.

Isaiah 46:10

“Declaring the end from the beginning.”

The end is already known to God.

The destination is already established.

The path unfolds according to His wisdom.

Every promise moves toward fulfillment.

Every prophecy moves toward fulfillment.

Every purpose moves toward fulfillment.

Reconciliation advances according to order until God’s purpose is complete.



# THE AGES MOVING TOWARD COMPLETION

The principle of "every man in his own order" explains much of Scripture.

It explains firstfruits.

It explains harvest.

It explains the feasts.

It explains the Kingdom.

It explains the ages.

It explains why God's purpose unfolds progressively rather than instantaneously.

The fulfillment is certain.

The manifestation is ordered.

The destination is fixed.

God is bringing creation toward an appointed conclusion.

Christ the Firstfruits.

Afterward they that are Christ's.

Then the completion of God's purpose.

Then the final victory.



Then the consummation.

Then the glorious moment toward which all Scripture points.

The moment when every enemy has been subdued.

The Kingdom has accomplished its purpose.

Death itself has been destroyed.

And God becomes all in all.

This brings us to the final chapter of our study.

The consummation of reconciliation.

The fulfillment of the ages.

The ultimate purpose of God.

## **GOD ALL IN ALL**

### **CHAPTER 12**

## **GOD ALL IN ALL**

Every river has a destination.

Every journey has an ending.

Every purpose moves toward fulfillment.



EN

true of reconciliation.

Throughout this book we have traced reconciliation from before the foundation of the world through creation, the fall, the promises, the Cross, the Kingdom, sonship, judgment, and the ages.

Now we arrive at the ultimate destination of God's purpose.

The Apostle Paul describes that destination with one of the most profound statements in all of Scripture.

1 Corinthians 15:28

"That God may be all in all."

These words reveal the consummation of God's purpose.

They reveal the fulfillment of the ages.

They reveal the ultimate goal toward which reconciliation moves.

## **THE END FROM THE BEGINNING**

God has always known the end.

Isaiah 46:10

"Declaring the end from the beginning."

Nothing surprises Him.

Nothing alters His purpose.



**EN**

strates His will.

The God who spoke in Genesis already saw the fulfillment revealed in Corinthians.

The God who began with:

Genesis 1:26

“Let us make man in our image.”

is the same God who brings creation to completion.

The beginning and the ending are united in His purpose.

The image intended in creation reaches fulfillment in Christ.

The reconciliation purposed before the foundation of the world reaches its consummation in God becoming all in all.

## THE REIGN OF CHRIST

Before Paul speaks of God all in all, he reveals the reign of Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:25

“For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.”

The reign of Christ has a purpose.

The Kingdom has an objective.

The government of God advances toward a conclusion.



EN

until every enemy is subdued.

Christ reigns until every opposition is removed.

Christ reigns until every obstacle to God's purpose has been dealt with.

The Kingdom is not aimless.

The Kingdom is moving toward fulfillment.

## **EVERY ENEMY SUBDUED**

Paul continues:

1 Corinthians 15:27

"For he hath put all things under his feet."

Again we encounter the language of all things.

Not some things.

Not many things.

All things.

Everything opposed to God must ultimately give way before the reign of Christ.

Sin cannot stand forever.

Corruption cannot stand forever.

Rebellion cannot stand forever.



Death cannot stand forever.

The purpose of God advances steadily until every enemy is subdued.

The triumph of Christ is complete.

## THE LAST ENEMY DESTROYED

Paul identifies the final enemy.

1 Corinthians 15:26

“The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.”

Death entered through Adam.

Death became the great enemy of creation.

Death touched every generation.

Death touched every nation.

Death touched the entire creation.

Yet death does not have the final word.

Christ has the final word.

The resurrection of Christ announced the defeat of death.

The Kingdom of Christ manifests that victory.

The final destruction of death reveals the completion of God’s purpose.



The last enemy falls.

The final obstacle is removed.

The reign of Christ reaches its appointed goal.

## **THE RESTORATION OF THE IMAGE**

The purpose of God has always centered upon His image.

Genesis 1:26

“Let us make man in our image.”

The fall obscured that image.

Sin distorted that image.

Death interrupted that image.

Christ restores that image.

Romans 8:29

“To be conformed to the image of his Son.”

The work of reconciliation ultimately serves this purpose.

The image lost in Adam is restored in Christ.

The purpose conceived before creation reaches fulfillment.

The family of God reflects the nature of God.



The sons reveal the image of the Son.

The purpose is accomplished.

## THE GATHERING OF ALL THINGS

Paul revealed this mystery earlier in Ephesians.

Ephesians 1:10

“That he might gather together in one all things in Christ.”

The gathering of all things is one of the great themes of Scripture.

What was scattered is gathered.

What was divided is united.

What was alienated is restored.

What was subjected to vanity is brought into harmony with God’s purpose.

The work of reconciliation moves steadily toward this gathering.

Everything centers in Christ.

Everything finds fulfillment in Christ.

Everything reaches its appointed destiny in Christ.

## THE TABERNACLE OF GOD



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es the fulfillment in Revelation.

## Revelation 21:3

"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them."

The desire revealed throughout Scripture reaches fulfillment.

God dwelling among His people.

God dwelling within His people.

Union fully manifested.

Fellowship fully restored.

The purpose revealed in Eden appears again at the consummation.

The story comes full circle.

The God who walked with Adam now dwells openly with humanity.

The purpose never changed.

The manifestation reaches completion.

## **THERE SHALL BE NO MORE DEATH**

Revelation continues:

### Revelation 21:4

"And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be  
in."



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The effects of the fall are removed.

Death is gone.

Sorrow is gone.

Pain is gone.

The old order passes away.

The new creation stands revealed.

The purpose of God triumphs.

The work of reconciliation reaches its intended goal.

The creation enters the fullness of God's purpose.

## **OF HIM, THROUGH HIM, AND TO HIM**

Paul summarizes the entire plan of God.

Romans 11:36

"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things."

This verse captures the whole story.

Creation came from Him.

History unfolds through Him.



The destination is Him.

The beginning is God.

The process is God.

The fulfillment is God.

The purpose never originated in man.

The purpose never depended upon man.

The purpose always belonged to God.

Reconciliation reveals the unfolding of that purpose throughout the ages.

## **GOD ALL IN ALL**

Now we arrive at the climax.

1 Corinthians 15:28

“That God may be all in all.”

This is not merely the end of a chapter.

This is not merely the end of an age.

This is the fulfillment of God’s eternal purpose.

God all in all.

His life filling creation.



His government fully established.

His purpose completely fulfilled.

His image fully manifested.

His Kingdom fully accomplished.

His will fully realized.

Everything moves toward this glorious conclusion.

Everything serves this purpose.

Everything advances this destiny.

## **THE CONSUMMATION OF RECONCILIATION**

The story of reconciliation begins before the foundation of the world.

It appears in promise.

It unfolds through covenant.

It is secured through the Cross.

It advances through the Kingdom.

It unfolds through the ages.

It reaches fulfillment in God all in all.

The purpose never changes.



The destination never changes.

The God who purposed reconciliation before creation completes reconciliation at the consummation of the ages.

Every promise finds fulfillment.

Every prophecy reaches completion.

Every enemy is subdued.

Every purpose is accomplished.

Christ triumphs.

The Kingdom succeeds.

The ages fulfill their purpose.

And God becomes all in all.

This is the consummation of reconciliation.

This is the fulfillment of the eternal purpose.

This is the glorious destiny toward which all Scripture moves.

This is the triumph of God.

## CONCLUSION

### THE THOROUGH CHANGE



Throughout this study we have traced the glorious theme of reconciliation from before the foundation of the world to the consummation of the ages.

We have seen that reconciliation is far more than the forgiveness of sins.

It is far more than the restoration of an individual relationship.

It is far more than a theological doctrine.

Reconciliation is woven into the very fabric of God's eternal purpose.

Before creation, God purposed.

Before Adam fell, God knew.

Before sin entered, God provided.

Before history began, God established His will in Christ.

The story of reconciliation therefore begins not with human failure, but with divine purpose.

The fall revealed the problem.

Alienation entered.

Death entered.

Corruption entered.

Creation became subject to vanity.



yet the purpose of God remained unchanged.

The promises declared that a Deliverer would come.

The prophets spoke of restoration.

The covenants pointed toward Christ.

The entire testimony of Scripture moved toward the coming of the Lamb.

At the center of history stands the Cross.

There Christ made peace through the blood of His Cross.

There God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.

There the foundation was laid for the fulfillment of God's purpose.

Yet the Cross was never the end of the story.

The Cross was the foundation.

The Spirit continues the work.

The Kingdom advances the work.

The sons administer the work.

The ages unfold the work.

The purpose moves steadily toward fulfillment.

We have seen that reconciliation is a thorough change.



A change from death unto life.

A change from alienation unto fellowship.

A change from the old creation unto the new creation.

A change from Adam unto Christ.

A change from independence unto union.

A change from corruption unto glory.

The work of reconciliation touches every dimension of God's purpose.

It touches redemption.

It touches transformation.

It touches sonship.

It touches the Kingdom.

It touches creation itself.

The Scriptures reveal that God is gathering all things together in Christ.

The same Christ through whom all things were created is the Christ through whom all things find their fulfillment.

The same Christ who is the Firstfruits stands at the head of a divine order unfolding throughout the ages.

The same Christ who reigns from the throne continues until every enemy is subdued



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feet.

The final enemy is death.

When death is destroyed, the purpose reaches its culmination.

The Kingdom accomplishes its mission.

The ages fulfill their purpose.

The government of God reaches its appointed goal.

Then comes the glorious declaration:

1 Corinthians 15:28

“That God may be all in all.”

This is the destination toward which all Scripture moves.

This is the fulfillment of the eternal purpose.

This is the consummation of reconciliation.

The God who declared the end from the beginning completes what He purposed before the foundation of the world.

The image is restored.

The purpose is fulfilled.

The Kingdom triumphs.



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ified.

God becomes all in all.

The testimony of reconciliation therefore reveals the triumph of divine purpose over human failure.

It reveals the triumph of grace over sin.

It reveals the triumph of life over death.

It reveals the triumph of Christ over every enemy.

Most importantly, it reveals the triumph of God's eternal purpose.

From Genesis to Revelation, from creation to consummation, from promise to fulfillment, the Scriptures testify of one glorious reality:

God is accomplishing His purpose through Jesus Christ.

The story begins with God.

The story unfolds through God.

The story ends in God.

For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things:

To whom be glory forever.

Amen.





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