



1



2

Note that the definition assumes a relationship exists

καταλλαγή

katallagē Restoration of favor
reconciliation Recovering favor

3

The basis for all reconciliation is reconciliation with God.

- God has provided both the means and method of reconciliation
 - The means: The complete and finished work of Jesus Christ to pay for our sin.
 - The method: God uses His followers to deliver the message that the means has been provided.
- *“All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.” (2 Corinthians 5:18–19, ESV)*

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The basis for all reconciliation is reconciliation with God.

- Sin of any kind impacts our relationship with God.
- Sin of any kind impacts our relationship with other people.
 - This can be sin perpetrated against another person or a person’s sinful reaction to toward another person even though that person’s actions were not sinful or inappropriate.

5

Common causes of breaks in human relationships.

- Lying
- Deceit
- Adultery
- Failing to keep a promise when it is in your power to do so.
- Betrayal
- Disagreements
- Jealousy
- Selfish ambition
- Neglect

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Reconciliation among followers of Christ

• *“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”* (Matthew 18:15–20, ESV)

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Reconciliation among followers of Christ

- Jesus sets sin as the basis for a break in relationship.
- Only consider something as sin when the Bible defines it as sin.
 - The only legitimate grounds for a break in relationship is sinful behavior.
 - A first step is to consider the behavior of another and determine if it is sinful as described in the Bible.
 - The actions of a person that are simply contrary to my expectations, my desires, or different than I would have acted do not rise to the level of a legitimate break in relationship.
 - In the first encounter, which is to be initiated by the person who feels they have been sinned against, is to determine this very matter.

8

Reconciliation among followers of Christ

- Jesus sets sin as the basis for a break in relationship.
- Only consider something as sin when the Bible defines it as sin.
 - The only legitimate grounds for a break in relationship is sinful behavior.
 - A first step is to consider the behavior of another and determine if it is sinful as described in the Bible.
 - If the person has indeed acted sinfully and accepts the verdict of the Bible on his or her behavior, their biblical response is confession leading to repentance (2 Corinthians 7:9-10) and your biblical response is forgiveness. Colossians 3:13b
 - If agreement is reached that no sin has been committed each person must put into practice the instruction of “bearing with one another”. Colossians 3:13a

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 - The only legitimate grounds for a break in relationship is sinful behavior.
 - A first step is to consider the behavior of another and determine if it is sinful as described in the Bible.
 - A next step is to examine my heart to see if I have reacted sinfully to the actions of someone else when their actions do not fit the biblical definition of sin.
 - My next step then would be to confess my sin to God and that person.

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Reconciliation among followers of Christ

- Only consider something as sin when the Bible defines it as sin.
 - The only legitimate grounds for a break in relationship is sinful behavior.
 - A second step may be necessary if the initial meeting cannot resolve the nature of the behavior. Either that person is not convinced that their action was sinful, or you are still convinced that it was sinful.
 - This second step is no different than the first step in that the purpose is to biblically identify the nature of the alleged offense.

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Reconciliation among followers of Christ

- Only consider something as sin when the Bible defines it as sin.
 - The only legitimate grounds for a break in relationship is sinful behavior.
 - The difference is that you take one or two people along who will listen to each story and then make a determination regarding the biblical assessment of the situation.
 - At this point each person has the opportunity to make an appropriate response, either accept the verdict of scripture on sinful behavior and respond with confession and repentance or accept that a misunderstanding has taken place.

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Reconciliation among followers of Christ

- Only consider something as sin when the Bible defines it as sin.
 - The only legitimate grounds for a break in relationship is sinful behavior.
 - A third step
 - Note that this passage states that a sin has been committed.
 - In such a case where a sin has been committed and confession and repentance with the resulting reconciliation has not taken place the discernment of the larger church community is brought to bear.

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Reconciliation among followers of Christ

- Only consider something as sin when the Bible defines it as sin.
 - The only legitimate grounds for a break in relationship is sinful behavior.
 - A third step (cont.)
 - This is still with the chance and goal of reconciliation but if confession and repentance with the resulting reconciliation does not take place at this point the break in fellowship is publicly acknowledged and the person is faced with the consequences of their actions.

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Reconciliation among followers of Christ

- Only consider something as sin when the Bible defines it as sin.
 - The only legitimate grounds for a break in relationship is sinful behavior.
 - A third step (cont.)
 - An example of this is in 1 Corinthians 5 but the results are seen in 2 Corinthians 2:5-11
 - An unrepentant brother is turned away from the fellowship of the church
 - This put this person out into the pagan world where he was living like he belonged.

15

Reconciliation among followers of Christ

- Only consider something as sin when the Bible defines it as sin.
 - The only legitimate grounds for a break in relationship is sinful behavior.
 - A third step (cont.)
 - An example of this is in 1 Corinthians 5 but the results are seen in 2 Corinthians 2:5-11
 - The 2 Corinthians passage indicates that once in this setting he realized that he did not belong there anymore and had responded with confession and repentance and a desire for reconciliation.

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Two important matters to consider.

- Don't fall into the trap of being manipulated by unbiblical demands for reconciliation.
- We must earnestly desire reconciliation, but the key is recognizing what you control and what you don't control. Romans 12:18

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What is my responsibility when I am dealing with and unbeliever.

- First be careful about the relationships you enter into.
 - 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, 1 Corinthians 5:9-11
- A follower of Christ must always respond to a person as instructed by the Word of God.
 - Confess to God and repent of any sinful actions on your part
 - Forgiveness
 - Prayer

18

Case study of Jim and Judy

- Jim is a hardworking man who provides for his family well on a material level. He is a somewhat passive man, somewhere between passionate and lukewarm in his faith. Provides little spiritual leadership in the home. They are active in the life of a church.
- Judy is a stay-at-home mom. Homeschools the kids. Active socially and engaged deeply in women's ministry at the church.
- The relationship between Jim and Judy in the 20-year marriage has drifted apart and has grown cold. Little intimacy of any kind.
- Judy grows increasingly jealous over any kindness Jim shows to another woman. Jim grows increasingly resentful toward Judy because of her accusations.
- Judy begins talking to friends who suggest that she should at least separate from Jim but she resist this until one friend suggest that Jim may not really be a Christ follower and that Judy should not be unequally yoked with him.
