

What is Atonement: Reconciliation

Jesus' crucifixion and death was in atonement for the sins of mankind. Atonement, what Jesus did to reconcile human beings with God has many aspects to it, and this lesson introduces you to one facet of the extent and depth of His work on the cross.

Of all the writers of the New Testament, only the apostle Paul speaks of reconciliation with God. This can be observed by searching for "reconcile, reconciliation" in a concordance and examining the verses of the search result in the context of God. This is unique, because the Greeks never use the Greek term for "reconciliation" within the context of their pantheon gods.

"To reconcile" is to exchange anger / hostility for friendship, and it usually requires that the cause of anger or hostility be removed.

1. What does this passage tell you about us? Why is God angry with human beings?

Once you were alienated and hostile in your minds as expressed in your evil actions. But now he has reconciled you by his physical body through his death, to present you holy, faultless, and blameless before him— (Col 1:21-22, CSB)

2. What do you observe in this passage? How is God's hostility towards us averted?

But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. How much more then, since we have now been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from wrath. For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, then how much more, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. (Rom 5:8-10, CSB)

3. What do you see here? What is different when you forgive someone compared to when God forgives you?

Everything is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. That is, in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and he has committed the message of reconciliation to us. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us. We plead on Christ's behalf, "Be reconciled to God." (2 Cor 5:18-20, CSB)

What is Atonement: Reconciliation Teacher Notes

Jesus' crucifixion and death was in atonement for the sins of mankind. Atonement, what Jesus did to reconcile human beings with God has many aspects to it, and this lesson introduces you to one facet of the extent and depth of His work on the cross.

One method to teach this lesson to this age group is to write (or rewrite) some of this lesson so that it can read together with certain words circled and defined. Another method is to project the passage on a large screen. The advantage of writing on a board or butcher paper is that it allows you, or student, to write on top of it as you teach the lesson.

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Write the definition of reconciliation so that the class can read and follow along with you. Circle or underline key words that need defining to help the student with reading and understanding what reconciliation means.

1. What does this passage tell you about us? Why is God angry with human beings?

Once you were alienated and hostile in your minds as expressed in your evil actions. But now he has reconciled you by his physical body through his death, to present you holy, faultless, and blameless before him— (Col 1:21-22, CSB)

As a point of discussion and definition, circle "alienated," "hostile," and "evil."

Contrast the above words with "holy," "faultless and blameless."

Ask the student, why "before Him."

2. What do you observe in this passage? How is God's hostility towards us averted?

But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. How much more then, since **we have now been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from wrath.** For if, **while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son,** then how much more, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. (Rom 5:8-10, CSB)

Write out the bold text of the passage to help the student with their observation of the text.

Circle "justified" and define the term for the student.

Justify is to "declare one righteous in the eyes of God." Because Jesus Christ paid for the price of our sins, Believers of what Jesus Christ did are no longer held accountable and thus are "righteous" before God. This is the basis of our reconciliation with God.

3. What do you see here? What is different when you forgive someone compared to when God forgives you?

Everything is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. That is, in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and he has committed the message of reconciliation to us. **Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us.** We plead on Christ's behalf, "Be reconciled to God." (2 Cor 5:18-20, CSB)

Help the student recognize an amazing unexpected result of reconciling with God.

When you reconcile with God by accepting the fact that Jesus died for your sins, despite being a former enemy of God, He accepts you as His representative to the world!

Would you allow a former enemy represent you after reconciliation?