

The Attackers: Former Ritual, Present Reality: Reconciliation: Those Reconciled Have the Ministry of Reconciliation: Evangelistic Function of Ambassadorship; Imperative of Entreaty, 2 Cor 5:18–20; Removal of the Barrier: (1) Sin by Redemption & Unlimited Atonement, (2) the Penalty of Sin by Expiation, (3) Physical Birth by Regeneration

6. Having been the recipient of God’s gracious provision of a Mediator to resolve the impasse, the believer is obligated to take the message of reconciliation to those who have not believed:

2 Corinthians 5:18 - Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry [call to service] of reconciliation,

v. 19 - namely, that God was in Christ [the divine plan for salvation] reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation [the gospel].

v. 20 - Therefore, we keep on being ambassadors on behalf of Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we plead with you on behalf of Christ: be reconciled [aojist passive imperative]¹ to God.

7. Verse 20 ends with a command in the form of a plea. The aorist tense indicates the point in time that a person hears the gospel. The passive voice means that the unbeliever is the one who receives the message. The imperative mood is a command in the form of a plea that the person believe in Christ.
8. Should the person use his free will to respond to the gospel, then the barrier that separates him from the fellowship with God is removed.
9. This removal constitutes reconciliation. The barrier is made up of six problems every person has at birth that he is unable to remove on his own. At salvation, the barrier is deconstructed due to the work of Christ as Mediator:

- (1) **Sin:** “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). It is removed by two divine acts:

Redemption: The saving work of Jesus Christ on the cross whereby every human being is purchased from the slave market of sin and delivered to the freedom of grace. (Romans 6:22; 1 Peter 1:18–19)

- (1) **Unlimited Atonement:** The judgment of Christ on the cross for the sins of the entire human race. “He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world” (1 John 2:2).
- (2) **Penalty of Sin:** The status of spiritual death which is separation from God at physical birth. “Therefore, just as through one man, Adam, the sin nature entered into the world, and spiritual death through the sin nature, so spiritual death spread to all men, because all sinned when Adam sinned” (Romans 5:12).

¹ “Imperative of entreaty: On occasion, used by a superior when addressing an inferior, especially when the one in authority is pleading” (Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996], 488).

Expiation: That aspect of Christ's work on the cross that canceled the debt for the penalty of sin which is spiritual death. "Having canceled out the certificate of the debt consisting of decrees against us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross" (Colossians 2:14).

- (3) **Physical Birth:** Adam was created trichotomous with a body, soul, and human spirit. When he sinned, Adam became spiritually dead having lost the human spirit which is the entity that enables a person to understand divine thought and consequently grow in grace. ""but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for the day that you eat from it you will surely (מֹת *moth*): the Qal infinitive absolute: dying spiritually) die (תָּמֹת *tamuth*): the Qal imperfect: physically)" (Genesis 2:17).