

Editorial: Reconciliation: What the world needs now

June 26, 2025

“What the world needs now

is love, sweet love.

It’s the only thing

that there’s just

too little of.”

I don’t argue with these lyrics Jackie DeShannon made famous.

I do think the world needs a particular expression of love right now. The world—and most everything in it, including the church—needs reconciliation.

Reconciliation in Scripture

I’m serving two roles this week—editor of the *Baptist Standard* and camp pastor for our church’s student ministry.

Baptist Standard Publishing’s three core commitments are, first, the redeeming and reconciling work of Jesus Christ, and then, historic Baptist principles and responsible journalism.

The theme verse for our student camp is 2 Corinthians 5:17—“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here.”

The verse following, 2 Corinthians 5:18, reads: “All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.”

We spent time this morning meditating on Colossians 1:15-20, the end of which states: “For God was pleased ... through him [Christ] to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross” (vs. 19-20).

Studying reconciliation

Paul declares the new creation results from Christ reconciling all things to God. Paul also declares God gives “us the ministry of reconciliation.” So, I guided our students through a study of the verb “to reconcile” and the noun “reconciliation” so they have a stronger understanding of the concept and its significance—since it’s to be our ministry.

Our students learned how to use an interlinear Bible, Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance, biblical commentaries and other resources to study Greek terms in Paul’s letter to the Corinthians, to understand those terms in context, to think theologically with Paul and Scripture and each other, and to apply all of it in real time.

This is where you say, “Amen!”

Yes, these are students age 12 to 18 engaging in this level of biblical study. For those who wonder if youth have any interest in studying the Bible, who wonder if youth take such study seriously, if youth want to grow and mature in Christ, I tell you, our God is the God of hope—not just idealized, but also realized.

Again, can I get an “Amen?”

We learned “to reconcile” involves a decisive change. In the context of Scripture, that decisive change is between two or more people, namely, a change in the nature of their relationship to each other, and most especially, a positive change in a person’s relationship to God. “To

reconcile” describes changing a relationship “from enmity to friendship.” It means restoring a broken relationship.

How great, that though we once were enemies toward God, God didn’t want that kind of relationship with us, but sent Jesus to effect the change in that hostile relationship through his own death, not ours, so we can enjoy peace with God forever! That’s reconciliation.

Surely, you can shout, “Amen” to that.

And God gives us this ministry. Incredible.

Meditating on reconciliation

We have spent hours meditating on reconciliation this week, because this wonder called reconciliation elicits awe and joy in those who receive it. As much as the students understood the concept of reconciliation and being reconciled, it’s probably more accurate to say the adults were more in awe of it than the youth, but that’s no slight against the youth.

We come to marvel at reconciliation when we are fully aware how broken the world and we who inhabit it are. So, we spent some time studying a couple examples of brokenness—the woman at the well (John 4) and the demon-possessed Gerasene man (Luke 8:26-39).

The students acted out both stories and learned Jesus restored each person to themselves, to God and to their communities. In each story, reconciliation reached beyond the individual’s personal, spiritual and mental life. It reached into their community, their corner of the world.

Also, in each story, the person Jesus reconciled—the woman at the well, the demon-possessed man—became a minister of reconciliation. One did so without being instructed. The other was sent to tell what God had done. Neither had formal training. Neither had become mature disciples. That by

itself is worthy of our meditation.

And our meditation should move us beyond meditating, because ours is not to think about reconciliation. Ours, as those reconciled to God in and by Jesus, is to engage in the ministry—the service—of reconciliation.

Brokenness is everywhere in our world. This week, our students studied that Jesus repairs, restores, reconciles brokenness, not just inside us and not just between us and God, but as Paul puts it, in “all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven.”

This is our ministry. Our world needs it. Are we doing it?

Practicing reconciliation

A world full of broken relationships needs the ministry of reconciliation—the mending of relationships.

A world at war with itself, whether through nature or manmade weapons, needs the ministry of reconciliation—the restoring to the wholeness of God’s creation intent.

Reconciliation—that specific expression of God’s love for creation—is what the world needs now. But all too often, we who have been reconciled rehearse disrepair.

In 1988, [Joel Gregory](#)—then-pastor of Travis Avenue Baptist Church in Fort Worth—likened this practice of disrepair to a stone mason disassembling a treasured castle to build the protective stone wall around it. It took time to build that wall—one-stone-at-a-time kind of time. There were thousands of opportunities to stop and go the other way.

We, too, have thousands of opportunities to repent from our disassembling and to turn to the ministry of repair, restoration, reconciliation. And if we

believe even half of what we say about what Jesus did for us in his death, burial and resurrection, we won't be able to stop ourselves from running back to town, so to speak, excitedly calling others to receive reconciliation for themselves. That's what the world needs from us now.

The world needs it in our families, our neighborhoods, our schools, our workplaces, our governments, our economy, our culture, even in our churches. It already has begun in Jesus, and we must carry it forward, for this is our call:

"The ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God" (2 Corinthians 5:18-20).

Eric Black is the executive director, publisher and editor of the Baptist Standard. He can be reached at eric.black@baptiststandard.com. The views expressed in this opinion article are those of the author.