

HOW TO DO RECONCILIATION—PART THREE

Mt 5:25ff

I. RECAP OF PREVIOUS SECTION

A. WHAT IS RECONCILIATION

1. Greek = two word combination (dia + allasso)

- a. Meaning: to make different (transform) + thoroughly
- b. Result = to cause a complete change with two effects:
 - Restore to favor
 - Change mutually

2. Latin = two word combination (reconciliation)

- a. To call + to bring together
- b. Result = to call together with three effects:
 - Harmony—put aside hostility restoration/repair
 - Restoration/repair
 - Unity

3. Definition:

- ❖ Conscious effort to repair breach between 2 parties, producing 4 results (in this order):
 1. putting aside hostility—harmony
 2. mutual change (of both parties)
 3. restored relationship
 4. unity—to be one in sentiment

B. THREE CONSIDERATIONS

1. True reconciliation is **initiated only by God**
2. We **cannot be reconciled with others** without being so with God
3. Reconciliation with God **compels us to be so with others**

C. THREE REASONS RECONCILIATION IS IMPERATIVE IN CHURCH—vv 23-24

1. It is a key to understanding our own individual **salvation** and **security** in Christ
2. It is an essential foundation for **growth** of the church
3. It is central to the **vision** of the church

II. READ THE TEXT (MT 5:25-26)

NASB—25 *Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way, so that your opponent may not hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. 26 Truly I say to you, you will not come out of there until you have paid up the last cent.*

NIV—25 *Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. 26 Truly I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.*

KJV—25 *Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. 26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.*

III. COMPARISON BETWEEN TWO TYPES OF RECONCILIATION

A. FIRST SITUATION (previous one)—vv 23-24

1. Inside church
 - a. Persons—involves ‘brothers’
 - b. Context—at the altar—inside Temple (church)
2. Problem
 - a. Relational—other person is offended
 - b. Spiritual—need for unity between brothers
 - c. Corporate—involves two parties inside body—and the whole body (indirectly)
3. Ending positive
 - Assumes reconciliation complete
 - Assumes restored fellowship and sacrifice
 - Assumes approval of God

B. SECOND SITUATION (this one)—vv 25-26

1. Outside church
 - a. Adversary taking you to court
 - b. Jewish system did not imprison for financial wrong—Roman and Greek courts did
2. Problem
 - a. Financial-legal—secular situation
 - b. Practical
 - Recognizes real danger of litigation

- Inevitable grinding of legal machine
 - Necessity of settling “out of court” before this happens
- c. Individual—resolving your own problems in outside society
- d. Ending negative—if remedy not applied
- Assumes inevitable prosecution
 - Assumes conviction
 - Assumes judgment of God

IV. EXPLANATION OF SECOND SITUATION

A. BACKGROUND

- Roman law allowed accuser to summon defendant to court
- If defendant refused—prosecutor could go and demand his presence
- Prosecutor could take a witness
- If the witness consented—he would offer tip of his ear—which prosecutor touched
- Then prosecutor and witness went—and prosecutor could force defendant to appear
- If defendant refused—prosecutor could drag him to court

B. SETTLE MATTERS

1. Combines two words—being (εἰμι) + good-minded (εὖ + νοῦσ)
 - Be well-disposed to—peaceful to
 - Go beyond settling dispute—actually make friends
2. See parallel with vv43-44
 - a. There Jesus says to love your enemies [ἐχρῶσ = hated/hostile one]—not to hate them
 - b. Here—make friends with adversary [ἀντιδικῶσ = opponent who wants to punish you]
3. No limitations: do *whatever* (reasonable) to resolve problem
4. See similarity with expediency and urgency of v40

If someone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat as well

C. HAND OVER TO COURT

1. Points to gravity of even secular situations
2. Foretaste of what might later happen to disciples?
 - Language used in Mt 10/Mk 13
 - Disciples will be handed over for prosecution at court

- Not to worry about what to say—just to rely on the Holy Spirit

D. LAST PENNY

1. The very smallest amount—squeezing out the last drop!
2. Quadrans = smallest Roman coin
 - 1/64th of a denarius
 - Denarius was one day's pay
 - 1/64th x \$58 (8 hrs of minimum wage \$7.25) = 91 cents [2014]
3. So—the very last dollar!

E. IMPOSSIBILITY OF REMEDY

- If you don't do it before convicted—you may never get out!
- Why? You must pay last penny—but cannot work and earn anything while in prison!
- Implication—this has 'forever' consequences—touches on eternal matters!

V. BOTH SITUATIONS

1. Both insist that immediacy/urgency is imperative
2. Both involve believers—disciples—followers of Christ
3. Both assume God's sovereignty over both realms
4. Both imply need for good witness and accountability: inside and outside body
5. Assumed context of eternal judgment carried over from [verses 21-22](#)
 - So each situation is earthly—with present consequences
 - But each one also points to eternal consequences of current actions

VI. SPIRITUAL PARALLEL

1. Both situations could be referring to heavenly tribunal
 - a. We are held accountable in heaven how we treat each other in the body
 - b. But also for how we treat others outside the body
2. Also, second situation *might* go to outside court if not resolved within the body
3. Gravity of situation—seen in language of second situation—“Truly I say to you”
4. If so—parallel to grave language in judgment statements elsewhere:

[Mt 5:29-30](#)—read—cutting off offending part is better than being thrown into Hell

[Mk 9:43,48](#)—read—cutting off offending part is better than going to Hell

5. If so—we should be urgent about reconciling—settling dispute—with God
 - a. Parallels **II Cor 6:1-2**—“now is the acceptable time—today is the day of salvation”
 - b. Some Roman Catholics wrongly use **vv 25-26** to justify doctrine of purgatory