

Since it is our first assembly of a new year, I think it is appropriate to look the first gospel. Theologians call it the *protoevangelium* and it is found in...

Text: Genesis 3:1-15

Immediately we see several *firsts*. The first man and woman. The first commandment. The first temptation. The first alienation. And the first reconciliation.

Proposition: At the very beginning of human history, there was a massive failure. But God had a massive fixtore. Alienation is met with reconciliation.

Interrogation: How is this significant to me?

Transitional: Allow me to explain and give you some personal applications.

I. Sin Causes Alienation from God (1:8).

A. **Explanation:** Alienation is a state of being separated from or being apart from something or someone accompanied with a painful awareness of being separated. [Ad lib: Alienation is seen in their discomfort before God's presence. *See 1:8-10, Isa 6:5 and Lk 5:8.*

B. **Argumentation:** Col 1:21: "And **you**, who once were **alienated** and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled."

C. **Illustration:** Gen 4:3-8: "And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord. ⁴ Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering, ⁵ but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

⁶ So the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?"

⁷ If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire *is* for you, but you should rule over it."

⁸ Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him."

D. **Personal Illustration:** Video Scavenger Hunt in Delano, CA.

E. **Application:** You sir, and you ma'am, have become alienated from God. You have become an enemy of God because *sin causes alienation from God!* You have been separated from God because of your sin that you shared in Adam and Eve. You became God's enemy because of sins that you personally committed against God! Now, what must you do? What must you do to be reconciled to God?

II. Sending Christ as Reconciliation to God (1:15).

A. **Explanation:** “This verse has long been recognized as the first messianic prophecy of the Bible. Thus, it also contains the first glimpse of the gospel (*protoevangelium*). It reveals three essential truths: (1) that Satan is the enemy of the human race, explaining why God put **enmity** [related to the word *enemy*] **between thee** [Satan] **and the woman**; (2) that He would place a spiritual barrier between **thy seed** (Satan’s people) and **her seed** (God’s people); and (3) that the representative seed of the woman (i.e., a human being: Christ) would deliver the deathblow to Satan, but in so doing would be bruised Himself. **It** [or “He,”] **shall bruise** [lit., “crush”] **thy head, but thou shalt bruise his heel** refers to Christ’s bruising on the cross, which led to the eventual crushing of Satan and his kingdom.” (*King James Study Bible Notes*, 13-14.)

“Reconciliation is the act whereby God on the basis of Christ’s death, has eliminated the cause of hostility between Himself and humanity, making possible a complete and maturing fellowship. (The hostility was caused by sin, and was eliminated by the Cross.)” (*Ibid*, 1798.)

B. **Argumentation:** Col 1:21-22: “And **you**, who once were **alienated** and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight”

Rom 5:10-11: “For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. ¹¹ And not only *that*, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.”

2 Cor 5:18-21: “Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹ that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

²⁰ Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

C. **Illustration:** Gen 50:19-21: “Joseph said to them, ‘Do not be afraid, for *am* I in the place of God? ²⁰ But as for you, you meant evil against me; *but* God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as *it is* this day, to save many people alive. ²¹ Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones.’ And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.”

D. **Application:** My friends, understand that you are enemies of God because of your sin. I urge you to be reconciled to God.

Conclusion: Don't be like the Pharisee who "stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.'"

But be like "the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise *his* eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."¹

At the very beginning of human history, there was a massive failure. But God had a massive fixture. Alienation is met with reconciliation. And you can be reconciled to God when you acknowledge your sin against a holy God, humble yourself and beg for forgiveness. The only basis for this is the reconciling death of Jesus Christ on the cross. He died as a substitute for sinners so that we may be reconciled unto God.

¹ *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Lk 18:11–14.