

Will Casey Anthony Ever Be Reconciled to Her Family?

Casey Anthony won the court case but lost some very important people in her life. She has damaged relationships that may never be repaired. She needs reconciliation. She was found guilty of lying on four counts that led investigators on wide goose chases in search of her already dead two year old daughter, Caylee. Casey said her father, George Anthony, and brother, Lee, sexually molested her as a child and also that her mother, Cindy, left the ladder on the above ground swimming pool on which Caylee allegedly climbed and accidentally drowned. Casey Anthony has made a lot of enemies out of her family.

After the announcement of the not guilty verdict, some of the 500 people outside the courtroom shouted "Baby Killer" and "Justice for Caylee." Other said her trial was "the 2nd O.J. trial."

Defense attorney Jose Baez convinced the 12 person jury that there was not enough forensic (DNA or finger prints) nor circumstantial evidence (Casey was a liar but not a murderer) to send Casey Anthony to the electric chair. The so-called CSI effect may have played a roll. Therefore the jury found her not guilty of first-degree murder, aggravated manslaughter, and aggravated child abuse.

The parallels between this courtroom drama and how the Bible describes each sinner's case before God are striking.

Like Casey Anthony we are estranged from God and people. In Romans 5:10, sinners are said to be enemies with God.

Dr. Phyllis Chesler, a psychologist who authored *Mothers on Trial*, said, "The public would lynch her if they could get their hands on her. How is she going to cope with the hatred?"

Police have already reported that the Anthony's family has received death threats via e-mails.

It is one thing to have an enraged public as your enemy or even family members, it is all together different to have God as your enemy. Jesus said, "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28). So many people live their entire lives fearing the wrong people. If you properly fear God He will not destroy but deliver your body and soul from hell.

The Defense Team was successful in persuading the jury to acquit Casey Anthony of murder, but who can acquit you and me of sinning against our holy God?

Only God, our Heavenly Advocate, can effect our reconciliation with Him and others. And He has!

In the Garden of Eden, God was friends with Adam and Eve and walked daily with them in a face to face relationship. All that ended when they sinned against Him. They turned their back on God and because God cannot approvingly look on sin, He also turned His back. But God the offended party took the initiative to bring reconciliation.

First, at the cross, God punished His Son in our place. Now God can be both just and the justifier. In 2 Corinthians 5:19, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself."

This means that God provided for the reconciliation of the world. Theologians call this objective reconciliation. The potential for reconciliation was now possible. At the cross, God turned back and faced His offender based on the payment for sin His Son, Jesus had paid.

Second, God at our conversion made reconciliation a reality and not just a potentiality. In 2 Corinthians 5:18, "God has reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ." The aspect is called subjective reconciliation. Paul elaborates on these two aspects of reconciliation in Colossians 1:20-21.

In Colossians 1:20, there is objective reconciliation at the cross: "Having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself." This step did not save the world but made the world savable. In Colossians 1:21, there is subjective reconciliation at our conversion: "And you, who were sometime alienated and enemies in our mind by wicked works, yet now has he reconciled."

At conversion, the repenting and believing sinner turns back to God and accepts His reconciliation. Now at last the offender and offended are face to face and reconciled. What was lost in the Garden at the Fall is finally regained at our conversion.

Will Casey Anthony ever be reconciled with all the people who now hate her?

A Facebook page entitled "I hate Casey Anthony" with 22,000 people who "like" it appeared shortly after the trial. Some of the comments wished Casey the same fate as Caylee.

In Ephesians 2:14-18, Paul states that those who have been reconciled to God can be reconciled with each other. The two groups reconciled were the Jews and Gentiles who hated each other (John 4:9). "For He is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us...that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." If the cross can reconcile these two peoples who nursed deep seated prejudice for each other, He can reconcile enemies today. Do you have any enemies? At home? At work? At church?

In 1 Corinthians 7:10-11, separated husbands and wives can be reconciled. Jesus said in Matthew 5:24, reconciliation is possible if one of the parties will take the initiative and seek healing for the broken relationship.

Jennifer Ford, juror # 3, after the Casey Anthony trial said, "I did not say she was innocent. I just said there was not enough evidence. If you cannot prove what the crime was, you cannot determine what the punishment should be." Jeff Ashton, the lead prosecutor, was not able to persuade the jurors beyond a reasonable doubt that Casey suffocated Caylee with duct tape. Much of the physical evidence was no longer available after six months of exposure of the little body of Caylee to the elements in the swamp.

I agree "not guilty" is not the same as "innocent" in a court of law. But not in God's court of law. Each of us is guilty because we are not innocent. We have sinned against the Judge of the universe. I admit judge Belvin Perry ran a tight ship but he still is not the all righteous Judge. In the jury selection process, Perry allowed jurors who opposed the death penalty to be empaneled, over the protest of the prosecutor, where a unanimous vote is necessary for conviction in a murder trial. The Judge of the Universe has voiced His support of the death penalty and the soul that sins shall die.

God the prosecutor has proven our guilt and declared "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." God the defender, however, has also proven our innocency if we have trusted Christ as our substitute who took our punishment on the cross. Now the jury can declare us "not guilty" because we are not just innocent but righteous in God's eyes. This point Paul summarizes in 2 Corinthians 5:21: "For God has made him sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness on God in him."