

Reconciliation with God

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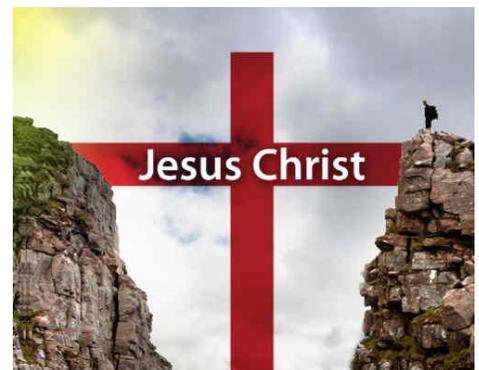
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The weeping prophet pleaded, **“Restore us to yourself, O Lord, that we may be restored!”** (Lam. 5:21). In a sense, the entire message of Genesis through Revelation can be summed up in the concept of restoration...Jehovah reconciling man to himself. We see God’s plea with us in the inspired pen of Paul when he wrote his second letter to Corinth: **“Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God”** (2 Cor. 5:20). His love for us is so great, his compassion so deep, his kindness so beyond comparison, that he was willing to give his only begotten Son for our redemption (John 3:16; 1 John 3:16).

Our Father is the source of **“every good gift and every perfect gift”** (James 1:17). His love for man is so far-reaching that he sends blessings every day even upon those of us who reject him and do not even try to follow his ways (Matt. 5:44-48), which in the end will be the majority of his creation (Matt. 7:13-14). The plate of food for which the atheist refuses to give thanks to a God he refuses to acknowledge, each breath of air taken by Muslims who adhere to corrupted views of their Creator...all come willingly and freely from a God who loves them in spite of themselves, a God who freely offers us all the gift of salvation and eternal life which none of us deserve (Rom. 6:23; Tit. 2:11).



Reconciliation with God could not nor cannot come by the hand of man.

Yet it takes two for complete reconciliation to occur. God’s hand has always been outstretched from Eden until today, and will continue to be held out for us until the day of judgment. Are we willing to take his hand and allow him to pull us back to his side? We are given the choice as to whom we will serve (Josh. 24:15). The Almighty is pleading with us to make the right choice. The apostle wrote, **“Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain”** (2 Cor. 6:1). God loves us with all his being, and only asks that we do the same by submitting our lives to his will (Matt. 22:37; John 14:15; Rom. 12:1-2).

How Satan tries to deceive us into thinking that we can offer God less than our all and still be restored to him...and how sad it is that he succeeds more times than not! From the beginning God’s followers have

often wrestled with the sin of giving him lukewarm, mediocre service (Rev. 3:14-22; Mal. 1:6-9). We love the idea of God saving us from our sins by his grace...and yet we also love to follow own desires instead of his! This leads us to believe Satan's lie that we are still reconciled to God even if we unrepentantly and rebelliously usurp his authority and turn away from his commandments (Rom. 6:1-2; Heb. 10:26-31; 2 Pet. 2:20-22).

Friends, our Father in heaven has done and continues to do more than enough to bring us back to him. His hand is outstretched. We must take hold of it by giving to him what is rightfully his...our lives, our service, our obedience.

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