

God wants us to be at peace with Him, for that is what He had when He created Adam and Eve to live in the cosmos, which meant an 'orderly universe.' However, when the devil seduced them, their peaceful orderly world under God turned to 'chaos.' Sin brought corruption and death not only to mankind but also to creation itself. It became subject to frustration and the bondage of decay.

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. - Romans 8:22 NIV

Death not only brought decay but also **separation** between God and mankind. Man now felt estranged and afraid of God because of his shame and guilt - Genesis 3:10. Since man had sinned, it would require a man to make amends between God and man. Jesus was the perfect solution, for he was not only God but he also became a man.

If only there were someone to arbitrate between us , to lay his hand upon us both, someone to remove God's rod from me, so that his terror would frighten me no more. - Job 9:33-34

At the birth of Jesus the angels announced from heaven that special someone:

.....peace on earth, good will toward men

The ultimate peacemaker had arrived to earth from heaven. He had come to **remove the barriers** between God and man and **bring full reconciliation.**

BARRIERS TO GOD

1. GOD'S HOLINESS

God is so pure and set apart from all others that sin cannot reside in His presence.

God alone is immortal and lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. - 1 Timothy 6:16

Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrong - Habakkuk 1:13

For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. - Romans 3:23

The Answer : PROPITIATION = Turn away wrath by the satisfaction of violated justice

If anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world. - 1 John 2:1-2 NKJV (see also Romans 3:25-26; 5:9)

Jesus bore the wrath of God for our sins so God's justice could be satisfied.

#2. THE DEBT OF SIN

The wages of sin is death - Romans 6:23a

Adam and Eve had experienced the fullness of life in Eden until they sinned. God had instructed them earlier, that if they ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil they would surely die. This was not only physical death but a spiritual one, for Adam and Eve were immediately separated from God because of their disobedience. Adam would go on to live physically for many years and died at the age of 930. Man's death began in the spiritual realm and proceeded gradually in his physical body until it died. Jesus would later restore man in the same order. He would first need to be born in the spirit and will later receive a new body at the resurrection of the dead when Jesus returns to earth at the second coming.

The Answer : **JESUS PAID OUR DEBT**

Mankind owed a debt they could not pay but Jesus paid a debt He did not owe....OURS.

In Jewish synagogues there is one chapter the rabbis never read.....Isaiah 53. This is because this passage sounds too much like Jesus is the Messiah that died for our sins. It is true, for it describes the **substitutionary sacrifice** that Jesus made for us on the cross. Read Psalm 22, which is an amazing detailed prophetic passage about Jesus on the cross.

**We all like sheep have gone astray, each of us have turned our own way; and
The Lord has laid on Him the **iniquity** of us all. - Isaiah 53:6**

INIQUITY = Avon (Hebrew) going our own way, inward rebellion against God

AVON CALLING

A well known door to door business is Avon skin care products. They used to advertise with the slogan.....'Avon Calling.' Ever since the fall of Adam and Eve, avon/ iniquity has still been calling. All mankind has a bent towards going their own way and resisting God's way.

**Sin is crouching at your door, it desires to have you, but you must master it. - Genesis 4:7b
All of us like sheep have gone astray, we each have turned our own way. - Isaiah 53:6**

That ultimate way is through Jesus, who is **The Way, The Truth and The Life**. - John 14:6.
Jesus is the door to life, now and into eternity! - John 10:7-10. Man was spiritually bankrupt, but Jesus paid our sin debt and gave us freedom and His righteousness.

**God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might
become **the righteousness of God**. - 2 Corinthians 5:21 NIV**

#3 SLAVERY TO SATAN

The whole world is under the control of the evil one - 1 John 5:19b

**The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they
cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image
of God - 2 Corinthians 4:4**

**You were dead in your transgressions and sins in which you used to live
when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom
of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient
- Ephesians 2:1-2 NIV|**

The Answer: REDEMPTION

Redemption has two aspects:

- 1) To set free from the slave market of sin on receipt of a payment
- 2) To buy out, to ransom, to purchase

Be shepherds of the flock of God, which He bought with His own **blood** - Acts 20:28

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law becoming a curse for us, for it is written: Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree. - Galatians 3:13

God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the written code with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us, nailing it to the cross, And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. - Colossians 2:13-14 NIV

Jesus will be honored forever as the Lamb of God who was slain for all of mankind:

You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your **blood** you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God and **they will reign on the earth**. - Revelation 5:9-10

In the first century, nearly half the population was in slavery. No slave could free himself. A criminal would have a **certificate of debt** (a record of his crimes and prison sentence) nailed on the outside of his prison cell. When he had done the time for his crime, the words '**Paid in Full**' would be written on the certificate and he would go free. The same word is used in Greek restaurants when the bill is paid. Jesus uttered the same words from the cross, '**It is finished**'. Believers in Jesus are free from slavery to sin, Satan and the sin nature - Romans 6:6,7,18. (For a complete message about the phrase **It is Finished**, go to the section King of Kings and scroll to the 4th message)

#4 SPIRITUAL DEATH

The Answer: JESUS' SUBSTITUTE DEATH

- Jesus tasted death for all mankind - Hebrews 2:9

Jesus tore down all the barriers that separated us from God, but we still needed to be brought close to God in friendship and fellowship which is **full reconciliation**. There are two Greek words for reconciliation.

- One was meant to bring two people in mutual hostility back to friendship eg. Matthew 5:24. This term was never used regarding God. **We turned our backs but God did not.**

Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has **reconciled you** by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in His sight, without blemish and free from accusation - if you continue in your faith, established and firm... Colossians 1:21-22a

Note: It was Christ's physical death that purchased our deliverance. Did Jesus die spiritually? Yes, in the sense that he experienced separation from God on the cross as he cried: 'My God, My God, why have you forsaken me'. That was the hell he experienced. Spiritual death is never the cessation of existence but only separation from God and in all humans their physical death is a separation of their soul from their body.

- The other meaning of reconciliation is when one person is changed from enmity to fellowship.

God did not need to be reconciled to man, it was only man that needed reconciliation to God. God loved us while we were still sinners - Romans 5:8. The story of the prodigal son is a demonstration of that truth. The Father still loved the son who ran away in rebellion and longed for him to be reconciled. While he patiently waited, the wild son did his own thing and later came to his senses about returning to his father. However, he still was wary of returning as he expected his father to treat him like an outcast. Instead, the father treated him like royalty! - Luke 15:11-32.

Reconciliation / Greek katallasso is used in 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 (v.19).

For if when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to Him through the death of His Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life.
- Romans 5:10

THE PEACE OF GOD / INTERNAL PEACE

Mature Christians should walk in the reality that they not only have peace with God, but that they can have the peace of God in their daily walk. Even as a young teenager who had received Jesus into my life, I had assurance of peace with God in this life and into the afterlife. However, I was plagued for years with worry about the present and the future. I did not have the peace of God. As a young teen, I already knew that I had a call on my life and sensed that God wanted me to be a preacher. One time I even asked my mother, 'What if I go to Seminary and fail?' In my last months of high school I often had a 'queasy stomach' as I was fearful about my future.

It was not until my late 20's that I began to learn about trusting God and living by faith. God helped me to finally get some ministry training in 1981-1982, not at Seminary, but at a place called Christian Retreat in Bradenton, Florida. I was inspired to go there after reading a book called **Following the Fire**. It was the story of Gerald Derstine, a Mennonite young man from SE Pennsylvania who was called to Northern Minnesota as a missionary to the Indian people. Over time their little church prayed for revival and they got much more than they expected! The Holy Spirit showed up in a very supernatural way for one week, just as on the day of Pentecost. Derstine was asked to leave the Mennonites as the denomination did not accept this new move of the Holy Spirit, but about 10 years later Derstine became one of their foremost speakers and for many decades the Lord used him to start a church, a Christian Retreat Center, and then he went on to establish hundreds of schools and orphanages globally over his 70 years of ministry. In the Spring of 1981 I attended their 10 week Institute of Ministry Course, which taught me a lot about walking in the Spirit. Shortly after that I went on my first short term mission to Jamaica. I then got involved with evangelism in Florida for 1 1/2 years at the county jail, at a weekend Flea market and also a street ministry. From there I launched out to England for several years and to Belgium, Germany, Czech Republic, Kenya.

In 1993 at Christian Retreat, I heard about a need in Russia for evangelism and teachers for new believers, so I spent 2 1/2 months in the middle of Russia in Siberia. In the winter of 1997-1998 I went to most of the conferences at Christian Retreat and my faith was ignited in a great way! During that spring, someone stood up at the Retreat and said they were looking for a Bible teacher to go to a newly formed Bible School in India. I jumped at the opportunity and went there the next winter for three months. Through the years, God has taught me that I can walk in the peace of God wherever I go, especially when I am following His leading. As the great English missionary to China Hudson Taylor once said: **'Where God guides, God provides.'**

Jesus is our best example of walking in the peace of God. He faced all kinds of pressures and persecutions and yet never expressed doubt, fear or unbelief. Many persons admire Him for His ability to calm storms, but I am more impressed that he was **calm in a storm!** He was asleep in the boat while the disciples cringed in fear. - Mark 4:35-41. The apostle Paul was also a great man of faith midst all kinds of trials. If you go to the **Kingdom Wisdom** section on our website, you will read

the story of John Wesley. He became a Christian after he saw the calm and peace of the Moravians as they experienced a severe storm on the Atlantic Ocean.

Peacemakers need internal peace in order to facilitate external peace to others.

1. **Keep your mind focused on God and good things** -Isaiah 26:3, Romans 8:6, Philippians 4:4-7
2. **Walk in God's ways and righteousness** - Psalm 119:165, Romans 14:17
3. **Peace is a gift and fruit from God** - John 14:27, Galatians 5:22, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18
4. **Peaceful and quiet life through intercession** - 1 Timothy 2:2
5. **Peace should rule in our hearts to maintain peace in the body of Christ** - Colossians 3:15

The peace of God is available to those who pray to God and trust Him in all circumstances.

- **Philippians 4:6-7**

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