

Fifteen Words of Hope

(3)

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[2 Corinthians 5:21](#)

(Continuation from 05/26/13)

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[2 Corinthians 5:21 \(NASB\)](#)

²¹ He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. [24 words]

[2 Corinthians 5:21 \(KJV\)](#)

²¹ For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. [25 words]

[2 Corinthians 5:21 \(Greek\)](#)

²¹ τον μη γνοντα αμαρτιαν υπερ ημων αμαρτιαν εποιησεν ινα ημεις γενωμεθα δικαιοσυνη θεου εν αυτω [15 words]

The inevitable outcome for all those infected by the sin plague is death. [Ezekiel 18:20](#) states plainly, “**The person who sins will die**” (cf. [v. 4](#)). Adam’s tragic epitaph, “**and he died**” ([Genesis 5:5](#)) will be written for all his descendants (cf. [Genesis 5:8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 27, 31](#); [Genesis 9:29](#)).

Nor is the prognosis any better in the spiritual realm.

Sin produces **two disastrous spiritual consequences**:

- 1) Alienation from God in this life ([Ephesians 2:12](#); [Ephesians 4:18](#); [Colossians 1:21](#)), and
- 2) Unrelenting punishment in hell in eternity ([Matthew 25:41, 46](#); [2 Thessalonians 1:9](#); [Revelations 14:9-11](#); [Revelations 20:11-15](#)).

But the good news of the gospel is that there is a cure for the sinner infected by the deadly sin epidemic. God, in His mercy and love, provided a remedy for sin—the sacrifice of His Son. The Lord Jesus Christ “**released us from our sins by His blood**” ([Revelation 1:5](#)),

“**For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified**” ([Hebrews 10:14](#)).

Those who experience “**redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of [their] trespasses, according to the riches of His grace**” ([Ephesians 1:7](#)) are cured from sin’s deadly spiritual effects.

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As a result, they have “passed out of death into life” ([John 5:24](#); [1 John 3:14](#)), and “are no longer strangers and aliens, but... are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household” ([Ephesians 2:19](#)).

How God made the cure possible is the theme of [2 Corinthians 5:18-20](#).

Now, I'm not sure if you notice what [verse 19](#) says, “namely, *that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.*”

In those three verses, Paul described the glorious truth of reconciliation—that the sin-severed relationship between holy God and unregenerate sinners can be restored “through” and “in” Christ. But reconciliation raises some profound questions.

I have six questions that need to be answered.

- 1) How can an absolutely and infinitely holy God be reconciled to sinners?
- 2) How can His just and holy law, which demands the condemnation and punishment of all who violate it, be satisfied?
- 3) How can those who deserve no mercy receive it?
- 4) How can God uphold true righteousness and give grace?
- 5) How can the demands of both justice and love be met?
- 6) How can God be both “**just and the justifier**” ([Romans 3:26](#)) of sinners?