

06-09-13

Series: Fifteen Words of Hope

# Fifteen Words of Hope

(4)

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[2 Corinthians 5:21](#)

(Continuation from 06/02/13)

## Fifteen Words of Hope

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

<sup>21</sup> 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 \(KJV\)](#)

<sup>21</sup> 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 \(Greek\)](#)

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

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.

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.

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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?

As hard as those questions seem, one brief verse answers them all and resolves the seeming paradox of redemption. With a conciseness and brevity reflective of the Holy Spirit, this one brief sentence, only fifteen words in the Greek text, resolves the dilemma of reconciliation.

This sentence reveals the *essence of the atonement*, *expresses the heart of the gospel message*, and *articulates the most glorious truth in Scripture*—how fallen man’s sin-sundered relationship to God can be restored.

[2 Corinthians 5:21](#) is like a cache of rare jewels, each deserving of a careful, reverential examination under the magnifying glass of Scripture.

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

<sup>21</sup> **He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**