

06-23-13

Series: Fifteen Words of Hope

Fifteen Words of Hope

(6)

Pastor Eddie Idefonso

[2 Corinthians 5:21](#)

(Continuation from 06/16/13)

Fifteen Words of Hope

[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]

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

It yields truths about the 1) benefactor, 2) the substitute, 3) the beneficiaries, and 4) the benefit.

The Benefactor

He made (5:21a)

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

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.

Only God knew how to make sinners deserving of hell acceptable in His sight and fit to spend eternity in His presence. Therefore, only God could author and execute the plan of redemption and reconcile sinners to Himself. That plan is so utterly beyond the comprehension of the unregenerate that it seems foolishness to them ([1 Corinthians 1:18, 23](#); [1 Corinthians 2:14](#)). No religion of human design has anything like it.

Reconciliation flows out of God's love; it was because He "so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" ([John 3:16](#)). "God demonstrates His own love toward us," wrote Paul, "in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" ([Romans 5:8](#)); though "we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son" ([Romans 5:10](#)).

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Because

Ephesians 2:4-5 (NASB)

⁴But God, being [is] rich in mercy, [and] because of His great love with which He loved us,

⁵even when we were dead in our transgressions, [He] made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

It is this emphasis on a loving God reaching out to sinners that sets Christianity apart from the false religions of the world. The gods of those religions are sometimes depicted as cruel, angry, and hostile and hence to be feared and appeased—even by such appalling means as child sacrifice (cf. [2 Kings 16:3](#); [2 Kings 23:10](#); [Jeremiah 32:35](#); [Ezekiel 16:21](#); [Ezekiel 23:37](#)).

Others are viewed as apathetic and indifferent to the worshipers who grovel before them, like Baal, whose followers Elijah mockingly challenged, **“Call out with a loud voice, for he is a god; either he is occupied or gone aside, or is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and needs to be awakened”** ([1 Kings 18:27](#)). Their devotees are often driven to desperate measures to get their attention (cf. [1 Kings 18:28](#)).

But Christianity proclaims the glorious, liberating truth that God is neither hostile nor indifferent but a loving Savior by nature. He does not need to be appeased (and indeed cannot be by any human means). Instead, He Himself has provided His own appeasement for justice and the means for sinners to become His beloved children through the sacrifice of His Son ([Romans 8:32](#); [1 John 4:10, 14](#)), which fully propitiated His wrath.

As a result, those who come to Him through faith are **“justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus”** ([Romans 3:24](#)). Because Christ’s sacrifice perfectly satisfied the demands of God’s righteousness and justice, God freely offers forgiveness and reconciliation: **“Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost”** ([Isaiah 55:1](#); cf. [Revelation 22:17](#)).

Reconciliation required the death of God’s Son because **“the wages of sin is death”** ([Romans 6:23](#)) and therefore, **“The person who sins will die”** ([Ezekiel 18:20](#)). The slaughter of countless millions of sacrificial animals under the Old Testament economy graphically illustrated that truth. Though unable to atone for sin, since **“it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins”** ([Hebrews 10:4](#)), those sacrifices forcibly drove home the point that sin results in death, and death is required to satisfy the demands of God’s law when it is violated.

They also made the people who incessantly offered them long for the final substitute to whom the sacrifices pointed (cf. [Isaiah 53](#)). And when in accordance with the Father’s plan the final substitute came, He willingly laid down His life to bring the final satisfaction to God only pictured in the sacrificial ceremonies and ritual killings of animals ([John 10:11, 18](#); [Philippians 2:7-8](#)).