

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians

by Oliver B. Greene

Copyright @ 1963

The Gospel Hour, Inc., Greenville, South Carolina

CHAPTER ELEVEN -

IN CHRIST WE HAVE PEACE

Ephesians 2, verses 14-18

"For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one NEW MAN, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both unto God in ONE BODY by the Cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."

You will notice the word "**peace**" is used three times in this short portion of our study. In the Old Testament the peace offering must be "**without blemish**" (Leviticus 3:1). Certainly JESUS, our peace offering to GOD, was without blemish. He was an offering that GOD could and did accept. In the Old Testament, the peace offering was "**an offering made by fire unto the Lord**" (Leviticus 3:3). Of course, the fire was a picture of the wrath of GOD upon sin. JESUS went through the fire for us. I do not mean that He literally burned in hell - no, certainly not; but He suffered every pain and all the agony that an eternal hell affords. He took the sinner's place. Before He left this world, He said, "**Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid**" (John 14:27).

The result of the Cross is peace for both Jew and Gentile, because by the death of JESUS on the Cross, He "**hath broken down the middle wall of partition.**" This refers to the temple's outer court which was for Gentiles, separated from the inner court into which only the Jew dared enter. But now, in this marvelous day of grace since Calvary, "**CHRIST IS THE END OF THE LAW FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS TO EVERY ONE THAT BELIEVETH**" (Romans 10:4).

Through His Blood He has "**abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances.**"

Note these precious words of truth: "**For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power: in whom also ye (Gentiles) are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of CHRIST: Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of**

God, who hath raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses; BLOTTING OUT the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, NAILING IT TO HIS CROSS; And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: WHICH ARE A SHADOW OF THINGS TO COME; BUT THE BODY IS OF CHRIST" (Colossians 2:9-17).

JESUS LEFT THE Father'S BOSOM AND CAME TO EARTH'S SORROWS . . . **"to make in Himself of twain one new man."** This - and only this, is the solution to the problem of sin, bigotry and hatred among the peoples of earth, regardless of what governments try to do to wipe out race hatred, religious hatred, and bigotry.

The governments of earth will never solve the problem. There is only one solution: The grace of GOD in hearts, creating within the heart a new man. When this happens, regardless of color, race or whatsoever, brothers and sisters in CHRIST will love one another.

JESUS did not come into the world to patch up the old creation by cleaning up slums, building superhighways, colleges and universities.

JESUS did not come to patch up the old nature. GOD's wisdom knew that this could never solve the problem of sin, and in His wisdom He provided the Lord JESUS, that through His sacrifice - His shed Blood on the Cross, Gentiles and Jews, rich and poor, bond and free, could be made one new creation in CHRIST (II Corinthians 5:17). True love one for another is not the result of an outward experience - but of an inward miracle through the grace of GOD.

See this word-picture of the unregenerated heart: **"For we ourselves (that includes Paul) also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. BUT after that the kindness of the love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of The Holy Ghost; which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life"** (Titus 3:3-7).

So . . . according to the Apostle Paul, all sinners (some more than others) are foolish, disobedient, deceived. They serve all kinds of lusts and pleasures, and they live in malice and envy. They are hateful - and they hate one another.

Let us not be deceived, beloved: The unregenerate heart is a spiritual garbage can! The only way to get rid of the garbage is to get rid of the can . . . the old heart . . . and let GOD through the miracle of the operation of The HOLY GHOST put a new heart in your bosom - because it is from the heart that the issues of life proceed. We MUST have a change of heart before we can live right, think right, act right, be right . . . and love right. I say this humbly - but I make no apology for saying it: An unsaved person does not know the meaning of real love. No person can love in the deeper sense until GOD, by faith, abides in the heart . . . because **"God is love."**

The Age of Grace is not the old order repaired, nor a better day. This Day of Grace is a new day. Former things are set aside (Colossians 2:9-17). Believers are partakers of GOD's life and nature. We are led by a Person . . . The HOLY SPIRIT within. True believers live in harmony, in loving accord, because we are members of one body.

There is a day coming when there will be peace on earth - not just among individuals, but the whole earth will be at peace one with another. Good will among men will be everywhere. But that will only be when JESUS sits on the throne in Jerusalem, and the knowledge of the Lord covers this earth as the waters now cover the sea. All of this is made possible by the Cross. There He gave His body in sacrifice, that from its poured-out life He might form a new body. JESUS suffered "**in His flesh**," that He might meet GOD in the flesh and satisfy the demand of GOD's holiness in a body like unto your body and mine, that He might reconcile to GOD Jew and Gentile . . . every race and every man . . . regardless of his position or condition.

JESUS has "**slain the enmity**." This came about only because JESUS took a body like unto the body possessed by the men who, through envy, delivered Him up to Pilate to be crucified. Therefore, He who was slain by the enmity of wicked men, has in turn slain the enmity that existed between a holy GOD and sinful men.

JESUS preached peace . . . peace to the Jew and peace to the Gentile. An angel announced the birth of JESUS by proclaiming, "**Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy . . . for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour . . .**" The heavenly host announced good tidings, great joy, a Saviour, peace on earth, and good will toward men (Luke 2:10-14).

When JESUS came as a babe in a manger nineteen hundred years ago, He came to die (Hebrews 2:9 and 14). He came to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10).

He came to lay His life down (John 10:17-18), a ransom for many. He died on the Cross, laid down His life for sinners. They crucified Him and buried Him; but the grave could not hold Him. He arose, ascended back to the Father, and sent The HOLY SPIRIT as He had promised His disciples. The HOLY SPIRIT now abides in the bosom of every born again child of GOD. Today every believer belongs to one body, baptized into that body by one SPIRIT (I Corinthians 12:13). As individual believers, we should be busy going to every creature in obedience to the command, "**Preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things**" (Romans 10:15).

The world's need at this solemn, crucial, dangerous hour is not guided missiles, nor man in outer space. The answer to the ills of the peoples of earth is found in the message of the Gospel: Peace and glad tidings. But the sad thing is that we in America are spending billions of dollars to put a man on the moon - while we give only pennies to win men to CHRIST!

Perhaps someone is asking, "Has the mission of JESUS to earth failed?" Perhaps you are suggesting that there is no peace on earth today. This is the age of wholesale slaughter. Every nation under Heaven is making a mad rush to invent and manufacture a bomb that will kill the most people for the least invested. But beloved, let me remind you that those of us who "**study to shew [ourselves] approved unto God**" (II Timothy 2:15) know that THIS IS NOT THE HOUR

OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

Read Matthew chapter ten, and you will discover that JESUS said, "**Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.**" This is not the hour of the Prince of Peace; His hour is just ahead of us. This is man's day . . . next comes HIS day.

We are warned, "**For when they shall say, PEACE AND SAFETY** (are not the front pages of our newspapers filled with such propaganda?), **then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape**" (I Thessalonians 5:3).

The failure of man is inevitable. It is in evidence all around us. GOD knows the end in the beginning, and He has provided that day of peace; but it will only come when GOD has put all enemies under the feet of His beloved Son! At this particular time, The HOLY GHOST is calling out a people . . . Jew and Gentile . . . (a people made up of all races, all nations, all classes) who are known as the church, the Body of CHRIST. When this body is completed the church will be caught up into the clouds in the air to meet JESUS (I Thessalonians 4:13-18). Then GOD will deal with the wicked on earth, and after that we will have that grand and glorious day of peace! However, never forget that the Person and the work of the Lord JESUS CHRIST are the center, the heart, the soul, the very essence of the whole Christian program of GOD. JESUS is our peace. He made peace, He brought peace, and He gives peace now to the individual who believes in Him.

When He comes again there will be "**peace on earth.**"

While on this earth, the Lord JESUS backed up everything He said, by the things He did. Had it been possible for the devil to stop JESUS before He reached the Cross, the entire program of Christianity would have fallen apart, because it was imperative that JESUS die on a Cross.

This truth is set forth in His own words: "**And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me**" (John 12:32). It was an eternal necessity that JESUS die on the Cross. The Blood of JESUS is the essence of GOD's requirement in answer to the demands of GOD's law. The offering had to be the sinless offering provided by a sinless person, "**AS OF A LAMB WITHOUT BLEMISH AND WITHOUT SPOT.**" You may be asking, "Why?" The answer: The very nature of a holy GOD, separate from sin, could not accept any offering less than a sinless offering. Sin had separated man from GOD, and had created a great gulf between GOD and man. The only way this great separating gulf could be removed was through the sacrifice of a sinless offering.

The Epistles of Paul are a continuation of truth . . . truth that begins in the Gospels, words uttered by Him who said, "**I am the... Truth.**" But truths that go deeper and become more precious in the Epistles, when we see and lay hold on the fact that in the Person and work of the Lord JESUS we are not only reconciled TO GOD, but we become a partaker of the life of GOD, and we are one with Him in CHRIST. The Blood that ran from the veins of the Lord JESUS, the Blood that covered His face as it ran from His thorn-pierced brow - that Blood has sufficed to form a new body in which all believers are incorporated and made one - yea, one person: CHRIST. He is the head, we are the body (Ephesians 5:30). Tremendous? Yes. Past human wisdom and understanding? Yes. Nevertheless - Bible truth.

Speaking to the Colossians (referring to believers in the church), Paul said, "**And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that CREATED HIM: where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but CHRIST is all, and in all**" (Colossians 3:10-11).

In these words we have revealed the very heart and secret . . . the very essence . . . of the Christian system.

The grace of GOD does not make one a better man; grace creates a new man belonging to another order . . . a brand new family, a new creation.

Verse 18 in our present passage leads us a step further: "**Through Him (JESUS) we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.**" All born again believers, regardless of race, have access through the Lord JESUS - the Mediator of the new covenant.

- It was JESUS who "**suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God**" (I Peter 3:18).
- It was JESUS who said, "**No man cometh unto the Father but by me**" (John 14:6).
- It was JESUS who said, "**He that... climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber**" (John 10:1).
- It was JESUS who said, "**And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life**" (John 5:39-40).

Keep in mind the fact that all spiritual blessings are IN CHRIST JESUS. Redemption has been wrought for us in CHRIST JESUS. The SPIRIT works in us, the Spirit possesses the regenerated heart. The SPIRIT is the power that lives daily in us. The new man, whether he be Jew or Gentile, is led by the HOLY SPIRIT.

The proof of Christianity is not found in theology or ethics - but in the new man created by Christianity . . . and JESUS CHRIST IS Christianity. The life lived in CHRIST is the proof that Christianity is right and every other religion on this earth is man-made. "**There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death**" (Proverbs 16:25).

There is one GOD . . . we believe that. Most religions acknowledge that fact - but there is also ONE Mediator between GOD and men: "**THE MAN CHRIST JESUS**" (I Timothy 2:5). The only One who can mediate between GOD and the believer is the Lord JESUS CHRIST.

Can the place be found in GOD's holy Word where the believer is invited to intercede in prayer to Peter or to some other saint? Can it be found in holy writ where we are to consult saints for the privilege of talking to GOD? Is it found in the Bible that believers are to request the mother of JESUS to plead our case? You know the answer - NO!

There is but One to whom GOD listens. GOD the Father hears mediation from the SON, on behalf of the saint (who became a saint because of simple faith in the shed Blood of JESUS CHRIST). In this marvelous Dispensation of the Grace of GOD, we are all kings, priests and saints - and the least believer, the most insignificant person, is invited boldly into the holy of

holies by a new and living way . . . through the body (the death) of the Lord JESUS CHRIST .
(Study I Peter 2:9 and Hebrews 10:19-20.)

There is no other name given under Heaven among men whereby we must be saved.

- There is one Mediator between GOD and men - the Man CHRIST JESUS. He who climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. JESUS is the Way, the Truth, the Life. No man cometh unto the Father but by JESUS.
- The entrance to Heaven is singular - the Man, CHRIST JESUS.
- The Intercessor between GOD and men is singular - the Man, CHRIST JESUS.
- All spiritual blessings become ours through a singular avenue - the Man, CHRIST JESUS.
- When we enter the portals of glory it will be because the Man, CHRIST JESUS, confesses us to the Heavenly Father.

Do not let anyone rob you of the right to eternal life by preaching to you that there is some other way. Remember - the devil is transformed as an angel of light, and his ministers are transformed as ministers of righteousness - but their end will be according to their damnable heresies.

Just as surely as GOD has called Spirit-filled, ordained ministers, the devil also has called demonized ministers. (Study carefully II Corinthians 11:13-15.) Beware of wolves in sheep's clothing! The dirtiest thief this side of hell is a spiritual thief who will steal your right to Heaven by teaching damnable heresies and doctrines of demons. Beware!

The HOLY SPIRIT says of Jesus, "**But this man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them**" (Hebrews 7:24-25). Again, "**Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, JESUS THE SON OF GOD, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest (like some of the modern day religious confessors and mediators) which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, YET WITHOUT SIN. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace (please note: let us come boldly to the throne of grace - not to the pastor's study, not to the confessional, not to man or woman - but to the throne of grace), that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need**" (Hebrews 4:14-16).

~ end of chapter 11 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
