***Peace, No. 2

Colossians 1:15-20

COL-154***

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Our subject is "Hymn in Honor of Christ," segment number 44 in Colossians 1:15-20.

The apostle Paul, in Romans 3:17, describes people who were not saved as lacking a sense of peace in their souls. Romans 3:17: "And the path of peace they have not known." Paul is quoting an Old Testament verse here, in making this declaration, and it is similar to one that the prophet Isaiah also makes in Isaiah 57:21. Isaiah says, "'There is no peace,' says my God, 'for the wicked.'"

In Hebrews 2:14-15, we're told that the reason that there is no peace for the wicked (for the unbeliever) is because he is afraid of dying, and having to meet God: "Since, then, the children share in flesh and blood, He (Jesus) Himself also likewise partook of the same – that through death he might render powerless him who had the power of death (that is, the devil), and might deliver those who, through the fear of death, were subject to slavery all their lives." The devil held the power to kill people, so that the unsaved played ball with him for fear of being put to death.

**Peace with God**

The Lord Jesus Christ took on humanity in order to die as the sacrifice for man's sin, and thereby to release people from enslavement to the devil, and thus to be in fear of Him, and in fear of death. Now, a spiritually born-again person is freed from serving the devil, and being afraid to meet God. He is instead reconciled. He has been redeemed. He is justified. And, thus, he is at peace with God. It is because of these great things that God has done for us that we are at peace with him. And the people who are uneasy about dying just do not understand some very foundational biblical principles – what Christ's death really accomplished. Romans 5:1 says, "Therefore, having been justified (having been declared absolutely righteous) by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Why doesn't a Jew (who rejects Jesus Christ) have peace with God? Well, it's because Jesus Christ is the only means of peace. Why do the people of all the religions of the world knock themselves out, doing good works, right up to the very end, in order to get some comfort and hope that they're going to make it into heaven? Because they do not have peace with God. And they never will, on the basis of their own efforts. Paul says, "Therefore, having been declared righteous by faith (by an act of faith in Jesus Christ), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." There are no "ifs" or "buts" there. There are no qualifications. There is no: "If you continue behaving yourself, then you will have peace with God." No, it's a settled deal.

Move over to Romans 5:9-11: "Much more, then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only this, but we also exalt in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom we have now received the reconciliation." Nothing is more important to know in life than the fact that you have to be adjusted (reconciled) to God's glory, which is His standard of absolute righteousness.

Now, the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ has died with Christ in payment for his sin. Don't forget that that was a co-crucifixion. We were there crucified with Him. And since you died with Him, you will also be resurrected with Him. Notice Romans 6:8: "Now, if we have died with Christ which you have if you have been placed in Christ by faith in Him), we believe that we shall also live with Him." That is a settled deal. If you have been placed in Christ by the grace of God, because you've accepted the salvation He provides, then you will be resurrected. Man has nothing in the process by which he contaminates the security of his own salvation. The Lord Jesus Christ has established peace between God and man through the simple sacrifice of Himself on the cross as the Lamb of God. That's what John the Baptizer meant when he saw Jesus at the start of his ministry. He pointed through the crowd toward the Lord, in John 1:29, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world."

**The Great Triumvirate**

This was the final Lamb. There were actually three great things – the great triumvirate, that resulted from the death of Christ. Let me take the time this morning to point these out to you, because, if you understand this, you will understand why you never have to worry about not making it into heaven. If you have to worry about that, you will not have peace with God.

1. **Redemption**

The first of the three things (the great triumvirate), resulting from the sacrifice of Christ on the cross as the Lamb of God is redemption. Redemption means that you have been freed from enslavement to sin. You have been removed from the slave market of sin. Galatians 3:13: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us. For it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.'" You absolutely could not be saved – nobody could be saved until the condemnation of the Mosaic Law, which summarized the absolute righteousness of God, was removed. That Law puts every one of us under a curse. Until that curse is removed, there was nothing you could do. But Christ removed it. Therefore, he has brought us out of the slave market of sine. He paid the price of redemption.

Notice Ephesians 1:7:" In him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses according to the richness of His grace." It is the riches of His grace that brought the blood of Christ into effect to provide us with that redemption.

1. **Propitiation**

The second of the three great things that God has done through the death of Christ is propitiation. Propitiation means that the demands of God's justice for the payment of death for sin have been satisfied, since that satisfaction required not only physical death, but spiritual death. Ah, there's the rub. We're already dead spiritually. How in the world are we going to pay the price of spiritual death when we're already dead? Somebody else had to do it for us. And that's where Christ came in. The justice of God says that somebody has to pay the price of spiritual and physical death for sins, and only somebody who is spiritually alive, the God-Man Jesus Christ, was able to do this.

So, in 1 John 2:2, we read, "He Himself, Jesus Christ, is the propitiation (the satisfaction) of the justice of God for our sins, and not only for ours, but also for those of the whole world." That's a very sobering verse. Christ has died not only for the sins of the people who are going to heaven, but He died for those who are already in hell, who are on their way to hell, but who refused to accept His provision.

Look ahead in 1 John 4:10: "And this is love: not that we love God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. It isn't a matter of how much you do, like loving God and showing Him that you love Him through your good words. It is the fact that God was willing to love you. But before He could do that (remember the principal), He had to put something in us as the receptor of His love, and that was His absolute righteousness. That is all that God loves. God loves His own perfection; His own righteousness; and, His own absolute righteous perfection that He puts in us through justification. Then we're under His love.

So, all these people who are running around; trying to do good; trying to gain the favor of God; and trying to carry on with a bunch of touchy, feely religious experiences, are never going to make it, because what it takes is something that a human being cannot provide. And that is the satisfaction for our own sin.

1. **Reconciliation**

The third of the great triumvirate that God has provided through the death of Christ, then, and is the one we've been studying about: reconciliation. Reconciliation means adjusted through justification, and adjusted to being declared righteous to God's standard of absolute righteousness for fellowship with Him. And 2 Timothy 5:18-21 declare that: "Now all these are from God, Who reconciled this to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; 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. Therefore, we are ambassadors (this is our mission in life) for Christ, as though God were entreating through us. We beg you, on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God."

Every now and then, you hear the phrase: "Get a life." Next Sunday morning, at rally day, the keynote address is going to be about "Get a Life." Some of you shouldn't attend: "Get a Life." Here what the Bible tells us is the life we're supposed to get – the life of ambassadorship for serving Jesus Christ.

I gave you an assignment last week. I hope you've been thinking about it. We'll answer it next Sunday morning: "What is worship?" That is a very significant thing. I see every lousy, botched-up thing that comes in the life of a Christian, in Christians who have walked with God for many years, and have known them for many years. And one tends to become very impatient with what Christians will do with their lives. And you wonder: "How can you do that?" Well, it's because you never learned to worship God. You never understood what worship is. So, you make these horrendous choices in life, and these horrendous decisions, and these horrendous views, and you move right along, just as smug and satisfied as you can be, never realizing for one moment the horror of revelation that's awaiting you at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

"Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating to us. We beg you on behalf of Christ: be reconciled to God." How? "He made Him Who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

So, the Lord Jesus Christ has established a peace between us. Now, one you understand, on a permanent basis, the great triumvirate: redemption; propitiation; and, reconciliation, as a result of justification. Because we have this, you can't go anywhere else but to heaven. You cannot have a useful life in terms of your eternal rewards, but you are going to get to heaven. Without personal reconciliation with God through Christ, however, you can have no peace in your soul. Many people do not have this triumvirate in their lives. They do not have the redemption, obviously, out of the market of sin. They do not understand that God is not angry at them anymore. His wrath has been satisfied toward sin. And they don't understand that God can now reconcile (can adjust a person to absolute righteousness, so that they are qualified for heaven, that person will never have peace, because he's always trying to redeem himself; he's always trying to satisfy God against his sin; and, he's always trying to adjust himself to God. Isn't that what your friends do? Isn't that what those disillusioned, disoriented, and (maybe even) Christian family members do, who do not have peace because they don't understand what's happened to them? Nobody has ever taught them.

**Gravitas (Dignity)**

You don't hear this stuff in church. You hear touchy feely in church. Consequently, you don't get to what God has done. You don't have gravitas. That is a Latin word. George Will used it in his article superbly, when he said that the problem in American lives today is that in the political realm, we no longer have politicians who have gravitas – dignity. How do you get dignity? That's another thing we're going to talk about next Sunday morning – the dignity of being able to worship God. This is not like some benighted heathen with his ritualistic and emotional orientation, and call this worshiping God. The Bible has a very specific, and a very clear declaration of what it is to worship God. And from worshiping God comes your personal dignity before man and God.

The basis of peace established by the reconciling work of Jesus Christ is therefore irreversible. It can never be lost to the believer. Let me remind you once more of a few things. Because there are so many in the Christian community (in the Christian world) who say, "Yes, Christ has paid for your sins, you can undo what He did," I need to remind you once more that the Bible itself, on the basis of these three things, says, "Here is the result: an irreversible salvation, and an assured testimony into the new Jerusalem.

Romans 6:9-10: "Knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again." Death is longer master over him. Some would say, "If you sin and you lose your salvation, then somebody has to pay for that because Christ only paid for the sins in the past." Now, if you have some new sins coming up, He's going to have to die again. But it says that He won't: "For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all. But the life that He lives, He lives to God."

All over the Metroplex area, Roman Catholics are now standing in the presence of their priest who stands at the altar, and is converting bread into the very body of Christ, and wine, into the blood of Christ. And they're going to come up and eat it. And what he tells the people he has done is that he has sacrificed Christ again in their presence. But the Bible says that He did it once for all. He will never again die for sin. What He has done will never be repeated. What a provision! What an amazing provision!

Then there is John 5:24: "Truly, truly," Jesus says, "I say to you, he who hears My words (that means that you pay attention and you listen – positive position), and believes in Him Who sent Me (God's testimony that Christ is covering your sins), has eternal love. He does not come into judgment, but is passed out of death into light.

Romans 8:1 makes a magnificent statement: "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." There is no condemnation once you are in Christ. The Greek language here means that you can't do it again.

Now, someplace in the Middle Ages, when someone was copying this particular book, he read that Scripture, and he reverberated with shock: "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." It was such a clear statement – that once you're saved, you're always saved, but that went against everything that he'd ever been taught as a Catholic. He'd always been taught that he had to behave himself. He had to have his works. He had to prove his salvation. He had to maintain it. It was not beyond him to let his eye drop down to verse 4, and he added the end the verse 4 to the end of verse 1. And all of a sudden, in some of the Greek manuscripts, were finding the end of verse 4 attached to the end of verse 1, and then in verse 4 again. And what he attached was: "It might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit."

So, we read, "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit." Now, if you're reading the King James Bible today, you'll see that that's where it is. That's in there. But suddenly we get better (older), manuscripts, and we discover that that wasn't in verse 1. But now it does belong in verse 4, because there, there are certain things that are the result of how you live. But in verse 1, it bothered that poor monk to think that nothing could be done by a human being to undo the salvation that God had given him. It is secure.

How about 1 Thessalonians 1. Why do we not have peace? "Well, I'm afraid of facing God and the wrath that is potentially there against me. 1 Thessalonians 1:10: "To wait for His Son from heaven, Whom He raised from the dead (that is, Jesus), Who delivers us from the wrath to come." Please tell me: what is "the wrath to come?" It's the lake of fire. And before that, the tribulation era. Because you are saved you will be preserved from experiencing wither the tribulation wrath or the lake of fire.

1 Thessalonians 5:9: "For God has not destined us for wrath." What wrath? The wrath of the lake of fire, and the wrath of the tribulation: "But for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Let's look at one more, in Hebrews 7:25: "Hence also, He (Christ) is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them." Here's the verse that clinches the fact that you cannot choose your salvation, because every time the devil in heaven (which Revelation 12:10 tells us that he does night and day) comes and accuses, and throws up before God the sins of Christians, God the Son intercedes for us with the Father. And He says, "Father, I claim for this Christian my death, which has covered his sins. And as evidence of that, I show the wounds in My body." And God the Father says, "You're not guilty." You cannot be guilty of a sin that will lose your salvation once you're saved, because Christ ever lives to make intercession for you.

Now, don't you feel sorry for all your relatives, and for all your friends, and for all these untaught Christians, who go around in misery, and in uneasiness, and uncertainty, and live their lives trying to establish redemption; to establish propitiation; and, to establish reconciliation, all of which God has already done for us? And which you could never do to begin with? Your heart goes out to them.

In Colossians 1:20, the last verse of this early Christian hymn, the apostle Paul has pointed out that we have peace through the blood of His cross: "And through Him (Jesus Christ) to reconcile all things to Himself (His own standard of righteousness), having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven." The effect on nature, which also has been disrupted from its peace by Adam’s sin – the reconciliation Jesus Christ extends to all the universe. All of the earth and heavenly spheres are out of joint. They're out of sync. They're just in disarray. And the reconciliation of that Christ has provided is going to be extended to covering the earth. The earth will be restored to its pristine, pure condition. The heavenly areas will be friends of the demon angels, and also be restored to the pristine purity that existed out there.

So, this hymn ends on a high note, saying that God is going to clean up (reconcile) the whole thing: all of earth; and, all of heaven – the extent of reconciliation has affected every area of creation itself. Romans 8:19-23 indicate that to us repeatedly.

So, this hymn honoring Christ, that we've been studying here, in verse 15-20, closes by pointing out that nothing lies outside the realm of Christ's reconciling work. Everything is going to be brought back in line with God. And those on a human level who refuse to accept the reconciliation that God has provided – their knees are going to bow, and we're told that they will bend in subjection to Christ, in all of their rebellion. The demon angels will bow in all of their rebellion. The reconciliation of all of creation of man to God will be affected. God's creation will be brought back into peace, and to righteousness, and to order. Without the reconciliation of Jesus Christ, nobody can have peace in your life. There's nothing but uncertainty.

Now, this is an interesting expression: "Made peace through the blood of His cross." It could have said, "Made peace through His cross." But it says, "Through the blood of His cross," because what the Holy Spirit is stressing here is the shed blood of Jesus Christ – the sacrificial nature of the death of Christ. It wasn't just that He was murdered on the cross. It wasn't just that He was treated in such a horrendous way as an innocent man. It was that He was being placed upon an altar. He was being hung on wood. That cross, being wood, through every Jew's mind, they went back to the Scripture that says, "Cursed is anyone who hangs on wood." That was a sign, when anybody was executed, being hanged or being hung from a piece of wood, that you were under the condemnation and judgment of God. The wrath of God is upon you. And here, the Romans put Jesus Christ on that wooden cross. So, the Jews were very happy to say, "He is under the judgment of God, or He wouldn't be hanging on wood."

**The Peace Offering**

So, this was a sacrificial death of Christ, and this death could bring us peace with God through the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament, there was this sacrifice of peace. I want to just run you briefly to that, because remember that all of these Old Testament rituals were pictures of what was to come. So, the fulfillment of this picture is enhanced considerably when we see how God was previewing it through these rituals.

This was a voluntary offering that a Jew brought, and it portrayed the fact of reconciliation. It portrayed the fact that the barrier of sin between himself and God had been removed. Reconciliation, as you know, has to do with adjusting the sinner to God's standards so that there is peace between God and man. Enmity is removed. People are born sinners, so they are unfit for fellowship with God. Man is inclined toward evil, so there is no peace with God, Who is absolute righteousness. So, people who want to dismiss God are readjusted. Of if they want to dismiss the Bible, they are readjusted. The peace offering very clearly stressed the finish work for peace on the cross for the sins of the world as the basis of all peace with God. Nobody can make his own peace.

Every now and then, in literature, or in some drama program, somebody is about to stand before a firing squad, and he is told, "Make your peace with God." You can't do it. Nobody can make his peace with God. Only Christ can reconcile us, and thus, give us peace with God. God has to reach out for us in our sins to reconcile us to Himself, and to bring us back into peace.

2 Corinthians 5:18-19 points this out: "Now all these things are from God, Who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; namely, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them. And He has committed to us this word of reconciliation." The peace offering, therefore, declared that God had been propitiated relative to sin. The sinner has been reconciled to God, and the barrier removed.

So, the divine appeal for the fulfillment of the peace offering pictured that the sinner be reconciled to God by his act of trust in Christ as Savior, as we read in 2 Corinthians 5:20-21.

Please turn to Leviticus 3, where the peace offering is presented. I want to read that fact: Now, if this offering is a sacrifice of peace offering, and if he is going to offer out of the herd whether male or female, he shall offer it without defect before the Lord. He should lay his hand on the head of his offering, and slay it at the doorway to the tent of meeting. And Aaron's sons, the priests, shall sprinkle the blood around on the altar. And from the sacrifice of the peace offerings, he shall present an offering by fire to the Lord. The fat that covers the entrails, and all the fat that is on the entrails, and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them, which is on the loins, and the lobe of the liver, which he shall remove with the kidneys. Then Aaron's sons shall offer it up in smoke on the altar, on the burnt offering which is on the wood that is on the fire. It is an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to the Lord."

Here's the picture. If the offerer is going to make a peace offering (a voluntary thanksgiving offering) from the herd of bullock, then he will proceed with either a male or female. If he uses a male animal, that will indicate the authority to die on the cross that Jesus Christ exercised. It was His active obedience. If he uses a female from the flock of the herd, then it symbolized Christ as the responsive one to the Father's authority in going through to cross (passive obedience). So, if you used the male, this was active obedience: "I'm going to pay the price." If you used a female (a female in the role of submission), it's his passive obedience. The male animal is pictured as Christ actively going to the cross. The female animal pictured Him passively receiving punishment for the sins of the world. Now, of course, either way, the animal must be without any imperfection to portray the sinlessness of Jesus Christ.

The man or woman who was going to offer this animal as a peace offering would lay his hand on the head of the animal, to symbolize the imputation of his sin to the animal, as his substitute in death. Now, clearly, you can understand how that portrayed Christ – our sins imputed to Him. He is our substitute. And that is was is indicated in verse 2. Then the offerer will kill the animal. The priest will sprinkle the blood around the brazen altar, indicating the blood of Christ, which is to come. Various portions of the fat of the animal were burned on the altar along with the kidneys. The fat was considered the richest part of the animal, picturing Jesus Christ in the finest qualities of humanity which He offered in sacrifice – the perfect person. The grace of God gave the best for the worst of sinners.

The kidneys were viewed in Scripture as the seed of emotion. Sometimes they are referred to as the bowels of mercy, in the King James Version. That is because you have the sense such that when you get emotionally startled, it's in the pit of your stomach. That the area. We talk about the heart being the place of emotions. But in ancient times, it was the visceral area of the stomach that was viewed as the place of the emotions. So, the kidneys represented a center of emotions, and it pictured Christ's love for the sinner, moving Him to choose to sacrifice Himself on the cross. He wanted to love us. He wanted to give us absolute righteousness, so that He could engulf us in love. He had a target for His love.

The burning of the parts of the animal created an aroma which was related to God, because what did it do? It commemorated the reconciliation that Jesus Christ was going to make for all sinners.

Did the Jew understand all this? No. He just understood that everything was OK between him and God, personally. God had told him that – to trust Him, as he told Abraham to trust Him for salvation to come. And the Bible tells us that Abraham believed God, and it was handed to him for righteousness. It was credited to him for absolute righteousness. So, they knew that. But how all the details were going to be filled out, we know better, looking back from our end.

There was also the possibility that one would come, in verse 6, for the sacrifice of the peace offering for the Lord from the flock. And there, again, he could offer a male or female without defect, and you went through the same thing. If you offered a lamb, you would lay the hand on it, and then they sprinkled the blood around, verse 9. They'd take the fat, and the fat tail, which would be removed close to the backbone – the fat in the tail, and the two kidneys, and the lobe of the liver, and so on. All of these particular things were considered the most desirable parts.

The Jews were told that they were not to eat fat. Now, that's a dietary law. You shouldn't eat fat. And that is interesting that here, even in the sacrificial system, that was a portion that was simply burned as an offering to God. And the same thing is done – it is burnt.

However, in verse 12, the offering could be a goat. That was the third category. They went through the same thing again: put your hand on the head of the animal. It is slain. The blood is sprinkled around the brazen altar. Then it is presented with the fat, and the certain parts of the animal are placed as the smoke on the altar, and the offering is a soothing aroma.

Verse 16 says, "All fat is the Lord's." So, those of you who are inclined to eat fat things, you know Whom you're stealing from. And I would cease and desist that. All fat is the Lord's: "It is a perpetual statute throughout your generations – all dwellings. You shall not eat any fat or any blood. There are dietary reasons for that. You don't eat fat, and you don't eat blood.

Now, there is a divine human enjoyment in this peace offering, which is pointed out to us a little further on in Leviticus 7:11-34. Let's look at that. One reason for bringing the peace offering was to express thanksgiving. Let me go ahead and read these verses: "Now, this is the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings which shall be presented to the Lord. If he offers it by way of thanksgiving, then along with the sacrifice of thanksgiving, you shall offer unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers spread of oil, and cakes of well-stirred, fine flour mixed with oil. With the sacrifice of his peace offering for thanksgiving, he shall present his offering with cakes of leavened bread. And of this, he shall present one of every offering as a contribution to the Lord. It shall belong to the priest, who sprinkles the blood of the peace offering.

"Now, as for the flesh of the sacrifice of his thanksgiving peace offering, it shall be eaten on the day of his offering. He shall not leave it over until the morning. But if the sacrifice of his peace offering is a votive (fulfilling a vow – freewill offering), it shall be eaten on the day that he offers his sacrifice. And on the next day, what is left of it may be eaten, but what is left over from the flesh of the sacrifice on the third day shall be burned with fire.

So, if any of the flesh of the sacrifice of this peace offering should ever be eaten on the third day, he who offers it shall not be accepted. And it shall not be returned to his benefit. It shall be an offensive thing. And the person who speaks of it shall bear his own iniquity. Also, the flesh that touches anything unclean shall not be eaten. It should be burned with fire. As for other flesh, anyone who is clean may eat such flesh. But the person who eats the flesh of the sacrifice of the peace offering, which belongs to the Lord, in his uncleanness, that person shall be cut off from his people. And when anyone touches anything unclean, whether human unpleased, or an unclean animal, or an unclean, detestable thing, and eats of the flesh of the sacrifice of the peace offering which belongs to the Lord, that person shall be cut off from his people." A number of these things, again, were dietary laws – in pre-refrigeration time in human history.

"Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'You shall not eat any fat from an ox, a sheep, or a goat; also the fat of an animal which dies; and, the fat of is an animal torn by beasts may be put to any other use, but you must certainly not eat it. For whoever eats the fat of the animal from which an offering by fire is offered to the Lord, even that person who eats it shall be cut off from his people. You are removed from the blessings upon the Commonwealth of Israel. And you are not to eat any blood, either of bird or animal in any of the dwellings. Any person who eats any blood, even that person shall be cut off from his people.''

"Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 'Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'He who offers the sacrifice of his peace offering of the Lord shall bring his offerings to the Lord from the sacrifice of his peace offering. His own hands are to bring offering by fires of the Lord. He shall bring the fat with the breast, that the breasts may be presented as a wave offering before the Lord. And the priest will offer up the fat in smoke on the altar, but the breasts to belong to Aaron and his sons. And you shall give the right thigh to the priest as a contribution from the sacrifices of your peace offerings. The one among the sons of Aaron who offers the blood of the peace offerings, and the fat, the right thigh shall be his as his portion. For I have taken the breast to the wave offering, and the thigh of the contribution from the sons of Israel, from the sacrifices of their peace offerings, and have given them to Aaron, the priest, and to his sons as their due forever from the sons of Israel.''"

So, the peace offering here is a moment of celebration and joy. It is accompanied here, therefore, by a meal offering – all of this portraying reconciliation and sinlessness because of what is going to be done by the Messiah. Also, they were to offer cakes with leaven, symbolizing that the offerer who expressed the thanksgiving had an old sin nature. That's important. Leaven in the Scripture is always a sign of sin.

So, these cakes had yeast in them, so that it is clear: "Yes, I'm bringing a peace offering because I'm happy to be reconciled to God, but I have a sin nature, and I will act accordingly – if I do not act according to the guidance of the Word of God." Now, for the Jew, that was a big problem, because nobody can do right. For the Christian, we have the power of the Holy Spirit, so we can do right. We both have the guidelines of righteousness, but only the Christian has the enablement from God to do this.

Part of the animal was not burned on the altar. That was to be eaten by the priest and the worshiper the same day. The wave offering – you could eat part of it the next day.

So, God feasted on the sacrifice burned. The priest feasted, and the offerer feasted, all on the same sacrifice, indicating their fellowship together. And they portrayed, thereby, that they were all reconciled one to another. The idea here is not to feast on the peace offering if you're out of temporal fellowship. That is the whole unclean spirituality thing. If you touch a dead animal, or you touch a dead body, or you do something that makes you unclean ceremonially, you're out of fellowship with God. And you have to take appropriate offerings to correct that. Fellowship with God cannot be separated from the work of Jesus Christ on the cross. The peace offering was eaten, as for what it was – not how you felt about it. You didn't eat it because it tasted good. You didn't eat it because you enjoyed that particular part of the animal. You ate it because of what it told you about what God had done for you.

The fat and blood were not to be eaten. The fat represents the best part of Jesus Christ to satisfy the Father. The breast and the right shoulder of the animal went to the priests. That's how the Levites were provided for. The rest of the animal that wasn't burned, went to the offerer. The blood represented the work of Christ on the cross in which only He could atone. The prohibition declaring that people are saved only by grace, apart from human works, are found in Ephesians 2:8-9, and Titus 3:5. You cannot do it by your works. It's what the blood of Christ has provided.

**Peace with God**

We close with pointing out two kinds of things that God gives us. One is called peace with God. We have that in Romans 5:1. This is what you get at the point of salvation: "Therefore, having been justify (having been declared righteous) by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." This relates to your personal salvation. In the diagram of two concentric circles, this is the outer circle. As you enter that circle of eternal fellowship, you have peace with God that you never lose. It is a product entirely of God's grace. The channel to this peace is, of course, the cross. The way you get into this circle is through the cross. The wall has been removed between you and God (the wall of sin). By faith, you step across the line, and you have peace with God.

**The Peace of God**

Then there's another kind of peace, and that is the peace of God. That is in Philippians 4:7: "And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." This relates to the inner circle that one does enter at the point of salvation, but from which one can step out by sinning. That temporal fellowship circle can be abandoned. The eternal fellowship circle, you cannot ever leave. So, you have this inner circle of temporal fellowship. This refers to your personal spirituality. To return here is where confession of sin comes in (1 John 1:9). Peace here is in the sense of an inner happiness as a result of growing in the Word of God, in positive volition to believing of the Holy Spirit. When you are outside of the inner circle but still inside of the outer circle, you are a carnal Christian. When you are inside the inner circle, you have the spiritual Christian. The carnal Christian is one where the sin nature is running the life. Paul is very clear (in the early part of the book of 1 Corinthians) about the carnal Christian. The spiritual person is controlled by God the Holy Spirit. This is where life is at. When we say: "get a life," we mean: "get a life in the inner circles of spirituality." Get a life that enjoys the peace that Jesus gives. That is the life that comes as the result of the reconciliation through the blood of His cross.

The hymn says it well: "The peace that Jesus gives:"

"Like the sunshine after rain,
like the rest that follows pain,
like a hope returned again,
is the peace that Jesus gives.

Like a soft refreshing dew,
like a rosy daybreak new,
like a friendship tender true,
is the peace that Jesus gives.

Like a river deep and long,
with its current ceaseless strong,
like the cadence of a song,
is the peace that Jesus gives.

Oh, the peace that Jesus gives
never dies, it always lives.
Like the music of a song,
like a glad eternal calm,
is the peace that Jesus gives,
is the peace that Jesus gives."

Father, we thank You for this peace, because of our reconciliation through the blood of His cross, we ask You, our father, to have a new appreciation for the blood of Christ, held in contempt by the world, and by those who are disoriented to the authority of Scripture. But we thank You that, even in the Old Testament sacrifice of peace, it was very clear that the blood was sacred, and that this ceremony portrayed a bringing of man and God together without enmity between them, and a time of joy and fellowship, which could never be accomplished by human effort, but only by a work of God through the Son of God. We thank You, therefore, for the peace of our reconciliation. And we thank You for this tremendous hymn that You have preserved for us, that the early Christians used to sing, and they ended up on a high note of the peace of God, and the peace with God, from which we, by staying in our temporal fellowship, maintain the peace of God in our daily life. Thank You for this magnificent provision by Your grace. In Christ's Name. Amen.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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