

NORTH CHRISTIAN CHURCH PREP SCHOOL LESSON

WHAT EVERY CHRISTIAN SHOULD KNOW

Part Six

We have learned that because of sin in the Garden of Eden, we are all born into a state of sin. When this first sin happened, God could no longer fellowship (be friends) with His creatures. Now, you would think that God being so awesome and us being kinda like ants, that He would not care. But, He does care... a lot! He loves us so much that He went through the agony of sending His only Son to the cross to pay the price for ALL sin in order to restore our fellowship. He didn't just look the other way and say, "What sin, I don't see any sin, what are you talking about?" He designed a perfect plan because HE LOVES US SO MUCH!!! There is more to God than love, though. He is a fair Judge, holy and righteous and He cannot fellowship with anything less than perfection. He had to make it so that we were perfect again so that HE could have fellowship with us. Did you understand that last sentence? HE did all this to be friends with little ole' YOU!!! WOW!



The work on the cross was the perfect payment for all the sins of all mankind, so the payment in full has been made (Redemption – remember the coupon?). God was the one who was offended by the original sin, not Adam. And yet, God is the one who pursued us to have our fellowship restored. This is something we all need to learn, kids.

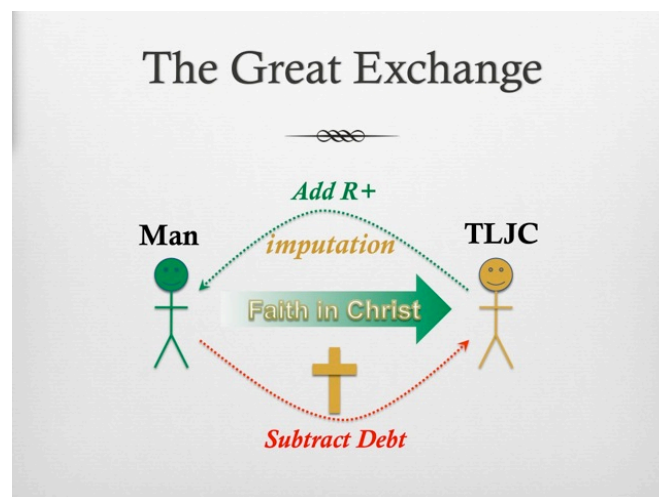
Once we grow up in His Word, we must start USING it. He will help us do this too! We will be able to find peace with someone who has offended/hurt US. We will pursue the fellowship again. Even though we are the one who is hurt, we can use God's love to get our friendship back. That is called RECONCILIATION. Now, your friend who hurt you may not accept your offer. I mean, think of how many people don't accept God's AMAZING offer of salvation, so don't be surprised when people reject your offer of friendship.

The law of double jeopardy that we learned about in our last lesson states that a crime or a sin can only be paid for ONCE. The fact that Jesus Christ paid for all the sins for all mankind means that SIN is no longer the issue. Sin is NOT the reason that some people do not spend all eternity with God. The only "sin" that is an issue is the sin of "unbelief". Not accepting what Lord Jesus Christ did for them on the cross is what makes them NOT allowed to enter into Heaven and have eternal fellowship with God.

God has done all the work to restore fellowship with mankind forever. Now it comes down to each person making ONE decision. Will they say “yes” or will they say “no” to Jesus Christ? Lots of people believe in “God”, but God’s perfect plan for salvation includes the cross and Jesus Christ’s work on that cross. God, the Father, designed the salvation plan to include the requirement that each person has to believe in JESUS CHRIST, His Son, who fulfilled this plan. So, if you believe in God and God says that the only way of salvation is “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved”, then you must believe in Jesus Christ to be saved.

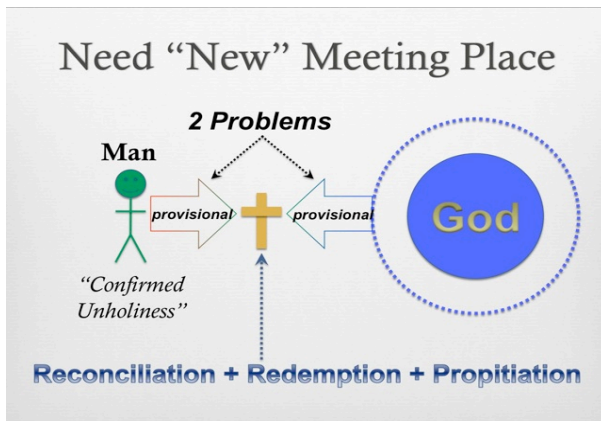
Acts 16:31 They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."

Acts 4:12 "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."



Jesus Christ paid a debt that He did not owe and we owed a debt that we could not pay! God changed the relationship of the world to Himself. Man just has to accept salvation God’s way! Remember, He is Immutable (cannot change), so He made it that our “status” could change. The work was completed on the cross and now all we have to do is accept the free gift!

Remember our vocabulary words in our last lesson? We have been using a lot of big words that describe this great work of salvation. It is good that you try to remember what they mean: The work of the cross represents “redemption” toward sin (price paid / coupon), a “reconciliation” toward mankind (making peace with your enemy), and a “propitiation” toward God (God is completely satisfied with the work on the cross as payment for the sin of mankind). This is the pattern of “justification” (the process of declaring us RIGHTEOUS because of the work on the cross). Do you think you could remember that? It’s tough, I know, but you can remember EVERY word to songs you like, so... give it a try!



We have discussed the idea of a “meeting place”. We said that the Garden of Eden was man’s first meeting place with God. In the Old Testament, God would meet with His people at the mercy seat where they made offerings for sin. His wrath towards sin was satisfied by these offerings and, therefore, He could “meet” with them.

Exodus 25:17 – 21 *You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold, two and a half cubits long and one and a half cubits wide. You shall make two cherubim of gold, make them of hammered work at the two ends of the mercy seat. Make one cherub at one end and one cherub at the other end; you shall make the cherubim of one piece with the mercy seat at its two ends. The cherubim shall have their wings spread upward, covering the mercy seat with their wings and facing one another; the faces of the cherubim are to be turned toward the mercy seat. You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony which I will give to you.*

Exodus 25:22 *There I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel.*

This was a temporary Meeting Place for Israel, and their example of the PERMANENT “New Meeting Place”. This, we know, is the cross and Christ’s ultimate sacrifice on it to pay for ALL of the sins of ALL mankind.

The people of Israel had to have faith that obeying God by making the Ark, the Mercy Seat, and performing the offerings, would really work! It is always faith- faith alone, in the salvation plan of God, the Father! They did not know that they were believing in Jesus, per se. They DID know, however, that they were believing in what their offerings represented! They realized they were sinners and they needed a savior, just like we do today. Cool, huh?! So, throughout all of human history, the only way to eternal fellowship with God is accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and you shall be saved!

Now this gets really cool! What’s inside the Ark that God told them to build? God is very specific and each detail had to be perfect for God to “meet” them there.

- The tables of the Decalogue (10 commandments)
- Aaron’s rod that budded

- A container of manna

The Law is the 10 Commandments. Israel was what we call a “theocracy”. They didn’t have a king or a president. God was the ruler of their nation. Therefore, God wrote rules for them to live by as a nation. We call them the 10 commandments. What happens when you write rules? Some people break them, right? So, if the law wasn’t written, you technically didn’t ‘break the law” or sin. The law showed them their “sin or crime” just by being in existence. Think about that for a minute. The law represented freedom to Israel. If they all followed the rules they would live in freedom. But, since the law really brought about sin and crime (breaking of the law) the tables in the ark represented sin.

Aaron’s rod represented the authority of God’s chosen communicators (ie Disciples, Pastors, Evangelists). Aaron was chosen by God to be the High Priest of Israel and, therefore, commanded that they respect his authority. The rod in the ark represents rebellion against that authority. You know, “Spare the rod spoil the child”. When a child misbehaved, the parents used a “stick” to spank their lil’ behind. Not that God was going to spank Israel but I think you get the point.

The jar of manna represents logistical grace blessings (food, clothing, shelter, and transportation). It also shows us that The Lord Jesus Christ controls history and will provide for us when we live inside His plan. The Exodus generation rejected this grace and didn’t want manna from God. Manna would come down from heaven daily and you couldn’t save it for the next day or it would go bad. So, God was showing His people how to trust Him each day for what He provides. But, the Exodus Generation wasn’t happy and would accuse God of leaving them in the desert with just “MANNA” to eat. They were ultimately accusing God of not being fair, righteous, just and loving. I don’t think sooooo! So, this represented people rejecting God’s provisions.

The ark represented the many ways man reject God and His plan. We shall see more about the ark on our next lesson!