

## 2 Corinthians 5:21

*Brody Thibodeau*

**2 Corinthians 5:21...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.**

The hostility has been dragging on for decades. Common ground seems impossible. One side remains rigid in its insistence that it's conditions be met, and the other rebels at the thought of submitting, actively avoiding any meaningful interaction, thinking that the requirements for a truce can never be met. Years of this have given rise to the reality that there may actually be no hope for peace...until now.

Now, ambassadors are sent with a message of reconciliation. Not to negotiate, but to declare the basis of this truce. With news that the unbending conditions of peace have been fulfilled, they plead with the rebels to come and put an end to the running.

While this could sound like the narrative of a political conflict, what we have been thinking of is actually the reality of the spiritual enmity that exists between the Creator and His creatures. The Bible tells of ongoing enmity between God and man, with our position described as being "enemies in your mind by wicked works"<sup>1</sup>. Isaiah tells us "your iniquities have separated between you and your God"<sup>2</sup>, and Romans 5:10 reinforces that "we were enemies" of God. So, not only is our position as adversaries highlighted in the Scriptures, but the cause of this divide is clearly given as well. Sin is the separator. Lawlessness and rebellion mark us as sinners and our transgressions are magnified in the conflict, as in fear we find that we are hopeless, helpless and alienated from God.

On the other side, God remains consistent. For peace to be realized, God's unbending integrity demands that sinners be held accountable, as there can be no compromise on righteousness.

For this story to have any kind of happy ending there must be a third party to mediate peace. We are introduced to this third party in our verse as "Him". He is described to us as one "who knew no sin". Immediately we recognize that this man is different, as His relationship to sin is entirely unique. Peter, a man of action tells us of the activities of the Lord, and that "He did no sin"<sup>3</sup>. John, who was so close that he was able to hear His heartbeat, tells us "in Him is no sin"<sup>4</sup>. And now Paul, the intellectual, assesses the mind of this man and tells us that He "knew no sin". It's not that He didn't know all about sin, or that He wasn't grieved by the presence and effects of sin on the world, but that He had no experiential knowledge of sin. The Biblical summary? He didn't sin, He couldn't sin and He could not be defiled by sin! This is the one

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<sup>1</sup> Colossians 1:21

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 59:2

<sup>3</sup> 1 Peter 2:22

<sup>4</sup> 1 John 3:5

characteristic that makes The Lord Jesus Christ uniquely qualified to broker peace in the conflict.

God must treat sin with absolute, merciless wrath. This merciless wrath is what we as enemies deserve, but instead God now unloads the wrath for sin upon the Sinless One. Making Him sin, does not imply that God caused Christ to sin, but that God treated Christ as sin deserved to be treated!<sup>5</sup> This profound statement informs all that the righteous requirements of God to make peace have now been met at the cross! What great news. The apostle Paul considers it an honour to have been entrusted as an ambassador on Christ's behalf, with a word for every enemy...be reconciled to God!

Because of the cross and the Man of the cross we have the same message for all today. Stop running, turn from sin, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and have peace with the God of heaven!

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<sup>5</sup> McShane, A. (2015). [2 Corinthians](#). In *1 and 2 Corinthians* (p. 301). John Ritchie.