

## ENDING HOSTILITY (continued from inside)

hostility to God is our first parents: Adam and Eve. When Man decided to “do his own thing,” **hostilities** broke out *immediately* and spread *pervasively*. Yet God has done something about it to bring **peace**, *that is, a ceasing of hostilities*.

Most everything of great value has its counterfeit, including **peace**. This may be one reason Jesus made the following distinction: “**Peace I leave with you, MY peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid**” (Jn. 14:27). OK, many may retort: “I’m not troubled and I’m not afraid, so I don’t need this **peace**.” Remember, the supreme **hostility** often “feels” that everything is just fine.

Jesus’ **peace** for us (mentioned above) comes from Him, from God and from His Spirit. It doesn’t come from the world, as Jesus says above. For this reason St. John tells us: “*Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him*” (1 Jn. 2: 15).

St. James spares no words about it, saying: “*Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God*” (Jam. 4:4). Those who “seek first” the things of the world (cf. Matt. 6:33) are in spiritual adultery against their Pre-eminent Lover: the Creator and Saviour. James says that this constitutes “**enmity**” (**hostility**) and

makes us an “**enemy of God**.” That “love of the world” is the opposite of “the Golden Text of the Bible” that says: “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life*” (Jn. 3: 16).

So Jesus provides the peace that is needed. In his letter of Joy, St. Paul speaks of “**the peace of God**” and “**the God of peace**” in a combined and powerful way (Phil. 4: 7-9). And in another verse, St. Paul opens the gates to endless possibilities in knowing God when he says: “*Now may the very God of peace Himself sanctify you completely [make you entirely holy]; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calls you, Who also will do it* (1 Thess. 5: 23, 24). **Hostility ended in “sanctified” peace!**

**Atheism’s Argument:** Through the generations, advancing knowledge and technology have generally not helped convince committed *unbelievers* to accept God’s existence, much less “*savingly*” believe in Him and His salvation through Christ. Asking for “*evidence*” and “*rational arguments*” are generally tricky tactics of a deceitful heart (Jer. 17:9). In Jesus’ story in Lk. 16: 19-31, Abraham’s reply to the man in hell still captures the reality: “*And he said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ But he said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.’*” (Lk. 16: 30, 31). “**The Lord is risen indeed!**” (Lk. 24: 34).

**“AS IF!”** In Luke 24, we have Christ’s resurrection appearance to two men on the road to the town, Emmaus. They didn’t realise who He was! The Lord’s reply to them (see v. 27), gave them the greatest Old Testament exposition ever heard! He did it again for the others (v. 44-49). St. Paul did the same (Acts 26:22,23), as did Peter (1 Pet. 1:10,11). But please note that when those two men reached their destination, Jesus acted “**AS IF**” He would just keep walking further (v.28). *Maybe He would have!* I’m so glad those men got spiritual heartburn (v. 32). They might have missed that singular opportunity forever! Let us learn this tremendous lesson. Jesus may seem **AS IF** He will just walk away from you. Invite Him to stay & eat! (v. 29,30). He always returns the favour (Jn. 21:9, 12; Lk. 12:37; Rev. 3:20; Jn. 14:23).

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# London Christian Standard ...and Provincial

“Lift up a standard for the people.” Isaiah 62:10

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## ENDING HOSTILITY

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**Good Friday and Easter** focus on God’s eternal plan of rescuing man from sin. His plan *always* included *all* nations and people, though Israel *was* and *is* His chief nation-instrument.

Through Abraham and Israel came God’s long-promised Messiah-Saviour, Jesus Christ. The means through which Christ accomplished God’s supreme and “redeeming” plan for man was through His death on the cross and His resurrection.

**As I have told many Muslims**, if Jesus did not die on the cross, *and therefore, did not rise from the dead*, (as the Koran claims), then Jesus would not even be a *good*, much less *great* prophet for Islam. The reason I say this is because Jesus repeatedly told His disciples that He would be betrayed into the hands of sinners, crucified, then would rise from the dead. If this did not happen, then



Jesus either lied or made a mistake. In any case, He would be considered a false prophet under Moses’ God-given law (Deut. 18:20-22 with I3:1-3). Of course, the Bible clearly says that Jesus **WAS** crucified and **DID** rise from the dead, just as He said. By the way, the “**movie trailer**” **preview for the crucifixion** was aired more than 500 years before by the prophet Isaiah in 52: 13 to 53:12. No wonder chapter 54 breaks out with singing!

What was accomplished in that supreme event was so vast that it supplies for the greatest need of the world’s entire populations that **HAVE** ever and **WILL** ever live; giving attention to the detail of every individual. **Talk about a reason for singing!** Here’s a little chorus:

*How big is God? How big and wide His vast domain? To try to tell, these lips can only start. He’s big enough to rule this mighty universe, yet small enough to live within my heart!*  
**(Ask me, and I might sing it for you!)**

(continued inside)

**RESURRECTION LIFE:** Christ’s death & resurrection is not to end with Himself. It is intended to help mankind— *that is totally “dead IN sin”—* to die **TO** sin, and be raised to new life in Christ. **THAT’S** a resurrection to fit all sizes! St. Paul guides us in this resurrection life, saying: “*If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died [to sin, self & the world], and your life is hidden with Christ in God*” (Col. 3: 1-3). St. Paul goes on in that chapter to name-out specific sins, so that we make no mistake in trying to cut corners, yet his list is not complete. In Gal. 5: 19-21, he put “*and such like*” so as not to miss any! Also 1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Eph. 5:3, onwards.

## ENDING HOSTILITY

(continued from front page)

The Bible generally refers to two categories of people: Jews and Gentiles. Gentiles refers to all non-Jews. Let's look at one of the many places in the Bible telling how God made a way for ALL people...Jew and non-Jew... through the cross of Christ:

**Ephesians 2:13** But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off [i.e. all non-Jews] have been brought near by the blood of Christ. **14** For **He Himself is our peace**, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, **15** having abolished in His flesh the enmity [hostility], that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, **thus making peace**, **16** and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity [hostility]. **17** **And He came and preached peace** to you who were afar off and to those who were near. **18** For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. **19** Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, **20** having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, **21** in Whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, **22** in Whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

**ALWAYS ON CALL:** Ananias was listening and obedient when the Lord called his name. There was another Ananias also in the same "Book of Acts" in the New Testament. The *other* Ananias and his wife were united in deception, hypocrisy...and death. This *first* Ananias heard and obeyed God voice, notwithstanding the apparent danger, and became a great instrument in the conversion of the apostle Paul, who was the greatest declarer of Christ's resurrection, apart from the Lord Himself! **"I'll be somewhere listening for my name!"**

## PEACE VS. HOSTILITY

Note **two words** in that Bible passage from the book of **Ephesians**: *hostility* and *peace*. **Hostility** can appear quiet, calm, intelligent and even pretty. Many Bibles use the word "*enmity*," which has been defined as "implacable and irreconcilable hatred." When describing "*the carnal mind*" (the centrality of man without God), St. Paul says that it is "*enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*" (Rom. 8: 5-11).

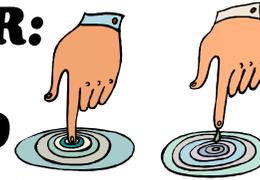
There is no *mending* this *hostility* in the sight of God. It must be *destroyed* (Rom. 6). This is accomplished by the Cross and Resurrection/Ascension. Christ's Cross achieved this destruction by His death. Yet this is only made effective as the individual applies Christ's act personally to himself/herself. We must die to sin and live to God by Christ's life-giving resurrection power. **Faith**, linked to genuine repentance, brings about the **Fact** of this glorious provision. It is **NOT fantasy, fairies nor fruitcake**.

Peace, hostility and other such terms can be elusive; even deceptive. Close and exact investigation must focus beyond the emotions. A cold-blooded murderer may not "feel" condemned nor guilty, but is (hopefully) found guilty by a judge and jury. So likewise does each person stand in the "courtroom" of God's perfect justice...which is flawless, and cannot be "bought off" nor frightened. Christ is the Standard by which to measure ourselves, and He knows perfectly how we measure up.

The source of mankind's in-built

(continued on back page)

## WATER: GOOD & BAD



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**Water: "the great thirst-quencher!"** Jesus told that woman at the water well that He has water to give that would satisfy the deepest depths like no other. (Jn 4) In faithful love, He had to make a condition which made her "face-up" to her sin and be clean of it. **She found that a small "price" for His water. She took it and told others!** The same happened in Thessalonica! (1 Thess. 1: 5-10).

God called out by His prophet, Isaiah: "*Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat...Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live*" (Isa. 55: 1-3). **Sounds like a bargain to me!**

Yet, old Jacob said to his eldest son, Reuben: "*Unstable [boiling over] as water, you shall not excel*" (Gen. 49:4). Some people "boil over." Others get preoccupied and let the "water" of Life's Greatest Issue go dry in the pan. Many people know very well that Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life (as He said in Jn. 14:6). Yet if they fail to be decisive and go forward, whole-heartedly with Christ, St. James says they are "double-minded" and "unstable," through and thorough (1:8).

The very last chapter in the Bible starts out "*And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb...And there shall be no more curse...and they shall see His face...*" and much more!! (Rev. 22) Like the woman at the well said: **"GIVE ME THAT WATER!!"**

## THE BEST TV EVER!

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Abraham "*looked for a city that had foundations, whose builder and maker is God*" (Heb. 11:10). That is far different than 16th century Spaniard, **Ponce de Leon, looking in Florida for the Fountain of Youth!** Abraham had a far-off vision, but it was based upon the clear calling and command of God, not upon **whims and fancy**. "Tele" means "far-off" or "distant." Abraham had the greatest Tele-vision ever!

**The point I make is not funny**, for Jesus had to tell His disciples to lift their eyes to see the thing that matters most to God: a perishing harvest field of never-dying souls! When did He say this? Right after dealing with that emancipated woman (Jn. 4, left column) while **THEY went out shopping**.

Oh, a visionless *professing* church in a visionless *perishing* world! (2 Cor. 4:3, onwards. Read it!). Yes, there are those who have a "vision" for "A New World Order," but such a "vision" is a hijacking perversity of God's plan for man and the world.

God calls repeatedly for the church and the world to wake up. So what happens when the church is asleep and visionless? Proverbs 29:18 says "*Where there is no vision* [or, revelation], *the people perish* (as in 2 Cor 4:3 above). The word "*perish*" is also translated "*cast off restraint.*" Another has "*is made naked!*" All of those translations fit together perfectly to describe our world today.

**We need "television"...the best television ever!** Far-off vision—*of God*. Such a vision sorts out individuals, communities and nations with peerless expertise. Nothing gets to the roots like a vision of God. Just ask Isaiah (see Isa. 6). God put *HIS* in Isaiah's front room! **WHAT A TV!!**

We meet at Christ Church on the corner of Brent Street and Heriot Road in Hendon (NW4) at 5:45 pm Sundays. Nearest Tube: Hendon Central.