

PEACE & RECONCILIATION

by **David Lee Burris**



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~ Timothy B. Tyson

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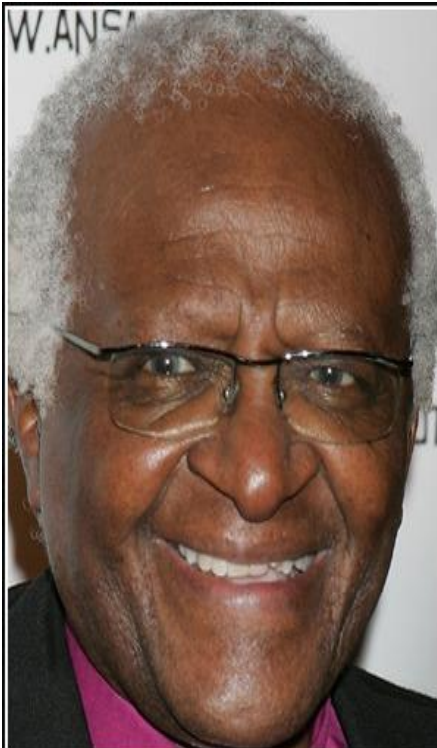
**The government of South Africa did not
establish a Reconciliation Commission
to deal with what happened under
apartheid; they created a Truth and
Reconciliation Commission.**

**Accountability and truth-telling are
what pave the way for reconciliation.**

These are my practices today.

Karen Jandorf

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True reconciliation is never cheap, for it is
based on forgiveness which is costly.
Forgiveness in turn depends on repentance,
which has to be based on an
acknowledgment of what was done wrong,
and therefore on disclosure of the truth.
You cannot forgive what you do not know.

— Desmond Tutu —

AZ QUOTES

CHARRETTE COMMUNITY SUMMITS

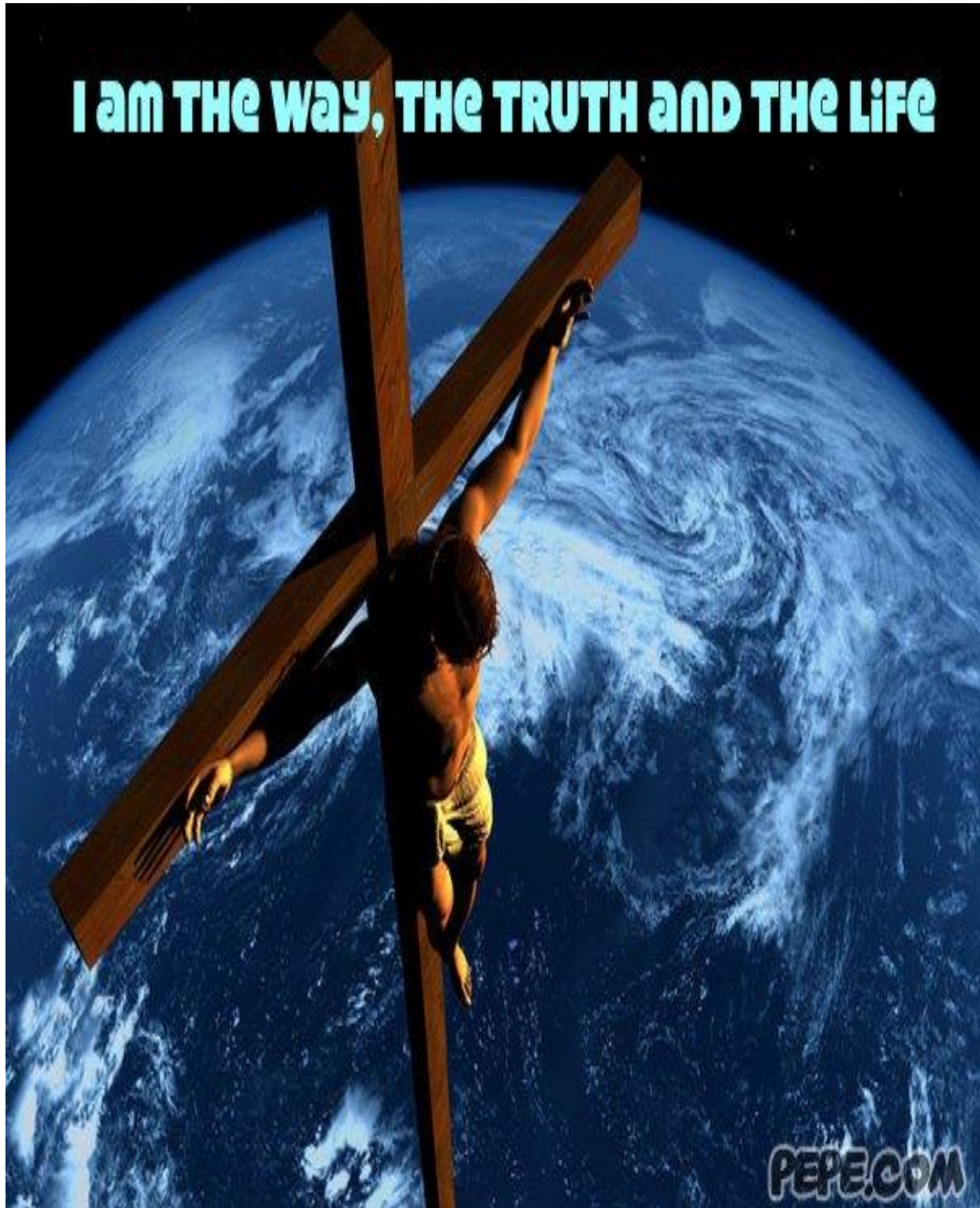


Solely because of his friendship with Atwater, Ellis left the KKK and never returned, despite threats to his life.

He converted to Christianity, and even began to champion civil rights.

Ellis died in 2005. Atwater gave his eulogy.

Vertical-Horizontal God-Man Reconciliation



Vertical Dimensions of Peace & Reconciliation

Dictionary of Paul and His Letters. In Paul's letters, there's only one direct reference to *eirēnē* between humans and God ([Romans 5:1](#)). The forty-three other occurrences of *eirēnē* surface in contexts that illuminate a divine attribute and social, cosmic, political, ecclesial, and inner-spiritual realities. When discussing vertical dimensions of soteriology, Paul prefers the reconciliation word family ([Romans 5:10](#); ; [2nd Corinthians 5:18](#); [Ephesians 2:16](#); [Colossians 1:20](#), [22](#)), but he nuances this language for the post-resurrection world. For example, the Apostle Paul is the first of Jewish background to merge [Old Testament](#) theology of atonement with reconciliation and then to map the divine-human relationship, but he flips the paradigm: instead of the offending party taking initiative by offering [*sacrifice](#) at the altar to atone for [*sin](#), God, the offended party, takes initiative by offering sacrifice *through* Christ to restore peace and friendship—to reconcile humans to God (Fitzgerald).

The Apostle Paul also flips the secular paradigm of reconciliation in Hellenistic diplomacy and in interpersonal relations, wherein the offending party was expected to take initiative in restoring of peace with the offended party (Fitzgerald). The Jewish and Hellenistic backdrop animates the profundity of God's graceful initiative: even while humans were "sinners" ([Romans 5:8](#)) and "enemies" ([Rom. 5:10](#)), *through* Christ God restored estranged humans' friendship and peace with God. For Paul, then, reconciliation and peace with God are bound up with justification ([Rom 5:1, 9](#)), whereby Christ's faithfulness to the point of death restored and redefined friendship between God and neighbor.

Reconciliation, therefore, is "the joyous result of a series of initiatives begun and sustained by God.... God is the One who makes friends of his human adversaries. **The friendship of the Christian community is thus grounded in its members' friendship with God**" (Fitzgerald, 259) . . .

The Dictionary of Paul Continues . . .

The restoration of humans' friendship and peace with God is rooted in Paul's perception of God's character, a concept captured through Paul's use of the appellation "God of peace." In continuity with an Old [Testament](#) appellation or ("God of [*truth](#)," [Isaiah 65:16](#)) Paul formulates the peace epithet in benedictions ([Romans 15:33](#); [Phil 4:9](#); [1 Thess 5:23](#); [2 Thess 3:16](#)), promise or prediction ([Romans 16:20](#); [1 Corinthians 14:33](#)), moral pronouncement ([2 Corinthians 13:11](#)), and as "Lord of peace" (Swartley 2006). Strikingly, the appellation only occurs once elsewhere in the [NT](#) ([Hebrews 13:20](#)) and once in early Jewish text ([Daniel 5:2](#)), illuminating its significance for Paul's thought. To be sure, in Paul's letters, "God of [*hope](#)" occurs once ([Romans 15:13](#)) and "God of love" once ([2 Corinthians 13:11](#)). Notably, Paul nowhere speaks of a God of war or God of [*wrath](#) — "God of peace" best captures God's character and incarnational purposes in Christ (Mauser, 106).

PEACE ~&~ RECONCILIATION

Peace. Reconciliation. To some, these might seem like merely nice ideas, pretty little concepts, theories and hopeful dreams that will never truly see the light of day.

But to the one whose sight remains fixed on Jesus, these are realities, truth in action as the kingdom of heaven continues to break into our current existence.

Peace and reconciliation were at the center of the message brought to shepherds years ago. They were stunned and shocked by the appearance of angels in their field, to the point that one of the angels had to encourage them not to be afraid, for their message was one of hope and promise (Luke 2:10).

Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger... Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased! (Luke 2:10-14)

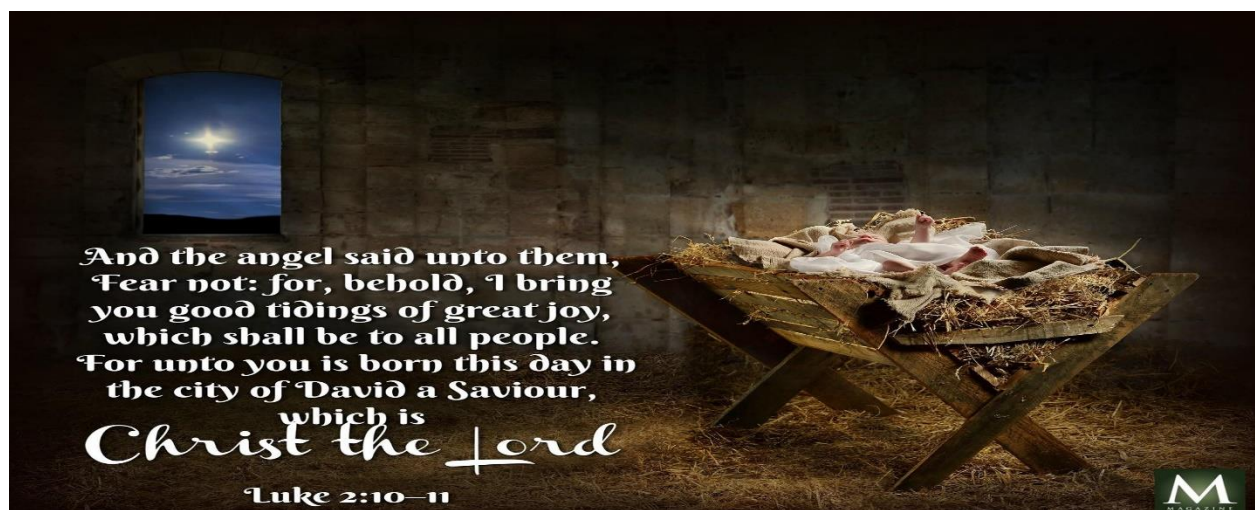
To the Jews of Jesus' day, these are precious words of transformation and life. The long-promised Messiah was here! I imagine that they must have doubted their ears, even as they had hoped beyond hope that the years of prophecy and longing were finally fulfilled.

Can you picture it? Peace on earth? In a region that was (and still is) constantly in conflict?

How often had the children of Israel wandered, conquered and been conquered throughout their existence? How many times were they exiled and persecuted?

Yes! That's the resounding message of the angels. Ultimately **His life was lived and given to bring peace back to earth through the reconciliation of Creation to Creator.** How beautiful and miraculous. And how much do we need to hear this, even now? Our world is in constant upheaval. You name it and it's broken.

And yet still this quiet message of a Savior baby ripples throughout human existence. In the midst of pain and suffering, hold fast to Christ. He is our peace. He is our reconciliation. — *Jeremy Hunt*



Reconciled - by R. E. Harris

An instance of reconciliation always brings joy to the heart of the godly. The terms “reconcile,” “reconciled,” seed of “reconciliation” and “reconciling” are found a total of 13 times in the New Testament. The passages speak of four areas of reconciliation.

Brother To Brother

In Matthew 5:24, Jesus explained that it was futile to attempt to worship God if we were at enmity with a brother. Hence, he stresses the importance of being reconciled immediately. If there arises dissension between two brethren, both have a responsibility, and should desire, to achieve reconciliation at the earliest moment. In the passage mentioned above Jesus is simply saying, they must “make up.” There had been mutual hostility. Now there must be some concession on the part of each, that they might be reconciled and at peace again.

It should be noted that this is the only passage in the New Testament using a term denoting mutual hostility and mutual concession. In every other passage dealing with reconciliation, a term is used denoting one-sided hostility, demanding one-sided change.

In other words, in such a dispute the innocent party has nothing to repent of and need not make concessions. Only the guilty has to adjust his course of action!

Wife To Husband

In 1 Corinthians 7:11, Paul explains that a woman who departs from her husband (when he hasn't committed adultery) has but two choices. She must either remain unmarried or "be reconciled" to her husband. The word "reconciled" in that passage is used as a verb denoting action. The very nature of the term here indicates that the woman having departed, must make the concession or adjustment and come back.

Jew And Gentile

In Ephesians 2, Paul explains that by abolishing the law of Moses, the wall between the Jews and the Gentiles had been broken down. Hence, for the first time in 1,500 years, there could be a reconciliation between the seed of Abraham and other people. In Ephesians 2:16, we learn that this reconciliation was made possible by the cross of Christ. As Jews and Gentiles obeyed the gospel and were baptized into Christ, they adjusted their lives, came into fellowship with God and so in the one body, the church, they had fellowship one with another.

Man To God

Even though we are pleased to see brethren, marriage partners and nations reconciled, it is infinitely more important to see people reconciled to God. The person who has never been a Christian, and unfaithful members, need to be reconciled to God. Until our sins are removed, we are separated from God. In Isaiah 59:2, the prophet explains, “Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.” We remind you that God has never sinned against man. God has never separated himself and left man. No, God is not at fault. The problem is always with man. Man sins, he departs, he alienates himself from his Creator, the loving heavenly Father. Again, it isn't up to God to make concessions to bring about a reconciliation.

However, the Bible makes it very plain that our heavenly Parent so desired a reconciliation that he went to great lengths to work out **a system whereby peace could be restored and there could be an honorable reconciliation.**

In 2 Corinthians 5:18-20, the apostle Paul wrote, “And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us (Christians R.E.H.) to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and committed unto us the Word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.”

If you have never been a Christian, believe in God and Jesus (Heb. 11:6), repent or turn from your sins (Acts 17:30), confess that Jesus is the Son of God (Matt. 10:32), and be baptized for the remission of your sins (Acts 2:38). These are God’s terms of reconciliation for you.

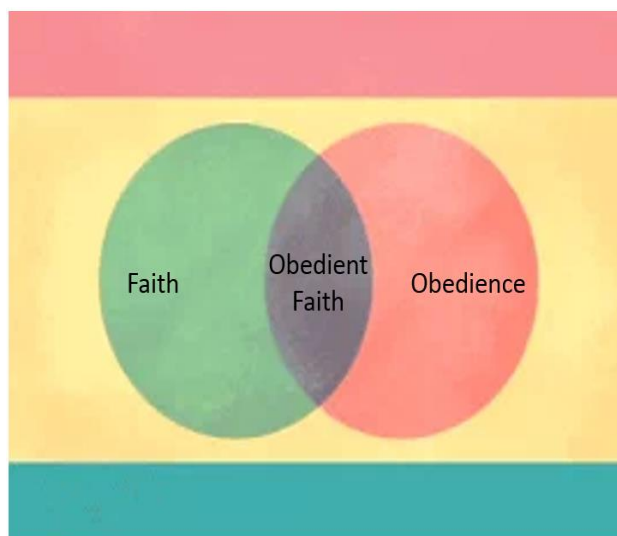
If you are a child of God, but you have become unfaithful, God also wants you to be reconciled. You must consider the goodness of God, be sorry for past sins, and truly repent of them (Acts 8:22). Brethren and friends, life is short and judgment is certain — “Be ye reconciled to God.”

Guardian of Truth XXXI: 18, p. 559
September 17, 1987

AT THE NEXUS OF GRACE & GLORY

Five Steps For Saving:

- HEARING:
- Romans 10: 17; Matthew 7: 24 - 27
- BELIEVING:
- Hebrews 11: 6; Mark 16: 15, 16
- REPENTING:
- Acts 2: 38; 17: 30; Luke 13: 3
- CONFESSING:
- Matthew 10: 32, 33; Acts 8: 36, 37
- BAPTISM:
- Romans 6: 3 – 5; Acts 8: 36 – 38



O That Will Be Glory

2. *When by His grace,*

I am Glory for me, glory for me;

When by His grace I shall look on His face,

That will be glory, be glory for me. me.

