



**The Westminster Abbey Church**

*To Connect People To Jesus Christ And To Each Other.*

**Pastor Dave Burkhart**

6650 Faulkner Road  
Westminster, Ohio 45850  
Phone: 419 648 8151

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This month we are going to continue to explore the Catechism of the Global Methodist Church. We are going to do so in the order that it is written and therefore, this month, we are going to examine how God reconciles us in Christ Jesus.

This is another one of those essential points about our faith and our understanding of salvation in Christ Jesus. “God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them”. The New Testament writers use a variety of metaphors to capture the significance of Jesus’s death on our behalf. The Gospels particularly invite us to understand Jesus’s death as the sacrifice of a new Passover, given the Passover setting and overtones throughout the Gospel narratives of Jesus’s last supper with His disciples, His trial and His crucifixion. This suggests God gather us to Himself by Jesus’s act of liberating us from slavery to sin and death.

Just as the Hebrew people were bound in slavery in Egypt for 400 years, we too are bound in slavery to sin until the time we call on the name of Jesus Christ to free us and take away the chains of our slavery.

While Scripture makes no suggestion concerning anyone to whom the ransom is paid, we are told that Christ was “buying us back for God...to be a kingdom, priests for our God”. The apostle Paul uses the image of God himself paying a debt on our behalf in Christ, “having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This He set aside, nailing it to the cross”. Of course, the most prevalent Scriptural metaphor for speaking of the significance of Jesus’s death is that of a sacrifice-both a sacrifice that atones for our sin and a sacrifice that inaugurates the new covenant of Jeremiah 31:31-34 and, with it, this decisive removal of our sins and implanting of God’s law in our hearts.

We must recognize that all that God has given us has been at a very high price, especially the gift of salvation and eternal life. For God, this was the sacrifice of His one and only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. His sacrifice is not something that can simply be swept aside or erased, as if it had not been devastatingly real. It was however a debt that needed to be paid to bring humanity back into relationship with the one true and living God.

We must try to understand that this is the very depth of love that God has for us and the extent that He was willing to go, to bring us back from the darkness of sin and debt that we had fallen so deeply into.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Dave

“I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation, and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death”. John Wesley