

not imputing men's trespasses against them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. ...As Christ's ambassadors...we beg you, as though Christ Himself were here pleading with you, **RECEIVE THE LOVE HE OFFERS YOU** - be reconciled to God (that is, come to Him and receive His pardon) (2 Cor. 5:19-20). Can't you see that the pardon is there, waiting for you? But it must be received in order to avoid the Day of God's Judgment. "The Wages of Sin is Death" (separation from God eternally) (Rom. 6:23). Who earns those wages? You and I do, as sinners. **DO YOU WISH TO TAKE YOUR WAGES** or the pardon that God so freely offers you today? God says, "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing or cursing therefore choose life.... (Dt. 30:19)

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THE PARDON

In 1790, the Quakers in Pennsylvania built what has become known as a "penitentiary." This was a place for people who felt or expressed sorrow for their sins or misdeeds. The Quakers believed that this separation would cause these people to think about their sins and repent, and turn away from evil.

In Acts 24:24-25, the story is told of the apostle Paul, who spoke to a man named Felix, about faith in Jesus Christ. As Paul talked about righteousness, self-control, and about a time when God would judge everyone, Felix became afraid and said, "**Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.**" It is uncomfortable to think that we must answer for our deeds. "For there is going to come a Day of Wrath when God will be the just Judge of all the world. He will give each one whatever his deeds deserve" Romans. 2:5-6.

In 1829, a man named George Wilson, robbed the United States mails,

killing a person in the process. Later he was caught, found guilty and was sentenced to die for his crime. Some friends intervened in his behalf and were able to speak to the President of the United States, Andrew Jackson. President Jackson gave a pardon on Wilson' s behalf. When Wilson was informed of this pardon he refused to accept it! An appeal was sent back to President Jackson asking to advise. The President, not knowing what to do, turned to the United States Supreme Court for an answer. The Court gave this ruling: "A pardon is a piece of paper, the value of which depends upon its acceptance by the person implicated. It is hardly to be supposed that a person under the sentence of death would refuse to accept a pardon; but, if it is refused, it is no pardon. George Wilson must die." The sentence of death was carried out upon George Wilson, even though a pardon was lying in the Sheriff' s office.

The Bible tells us that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself,

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