

THE SIN BARRIER

God desires to extend to all mankind eternal salvation. The Scriptures describe God as *".. not wishing that any should perish..."* (II Peter 3:9) However, a problem exists in the form of the SIN BARRIER that blocks the way and prevents God from extending such a benefit to mankind. The Scripture states: *"But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, so that He does not hear."* (Isaiah 59:2)

THE PROBLEM OF THE SIN BARRIER:

The "separation" which Isaiah speaks of is the SIN BARRIER. The SIN BARRIER exists between God and man due to the fact that God is perfect Righteousness and mankind is completely unrighteous. God's perfect Righteousness cannot extend to or be related to man's complete unrighteousness.

Mankind's total unrighteousness stems from two sources. First, man is tainted by Adam's original sin. The Scripture states: *"For this reason, just as through one man sin entered the world, so death spread to all mankind."* (Romans 5:12) Secondly, man's unrighteousness results from each individual's own personal sins. The Bible says, *"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God."* (Romans 3:23)

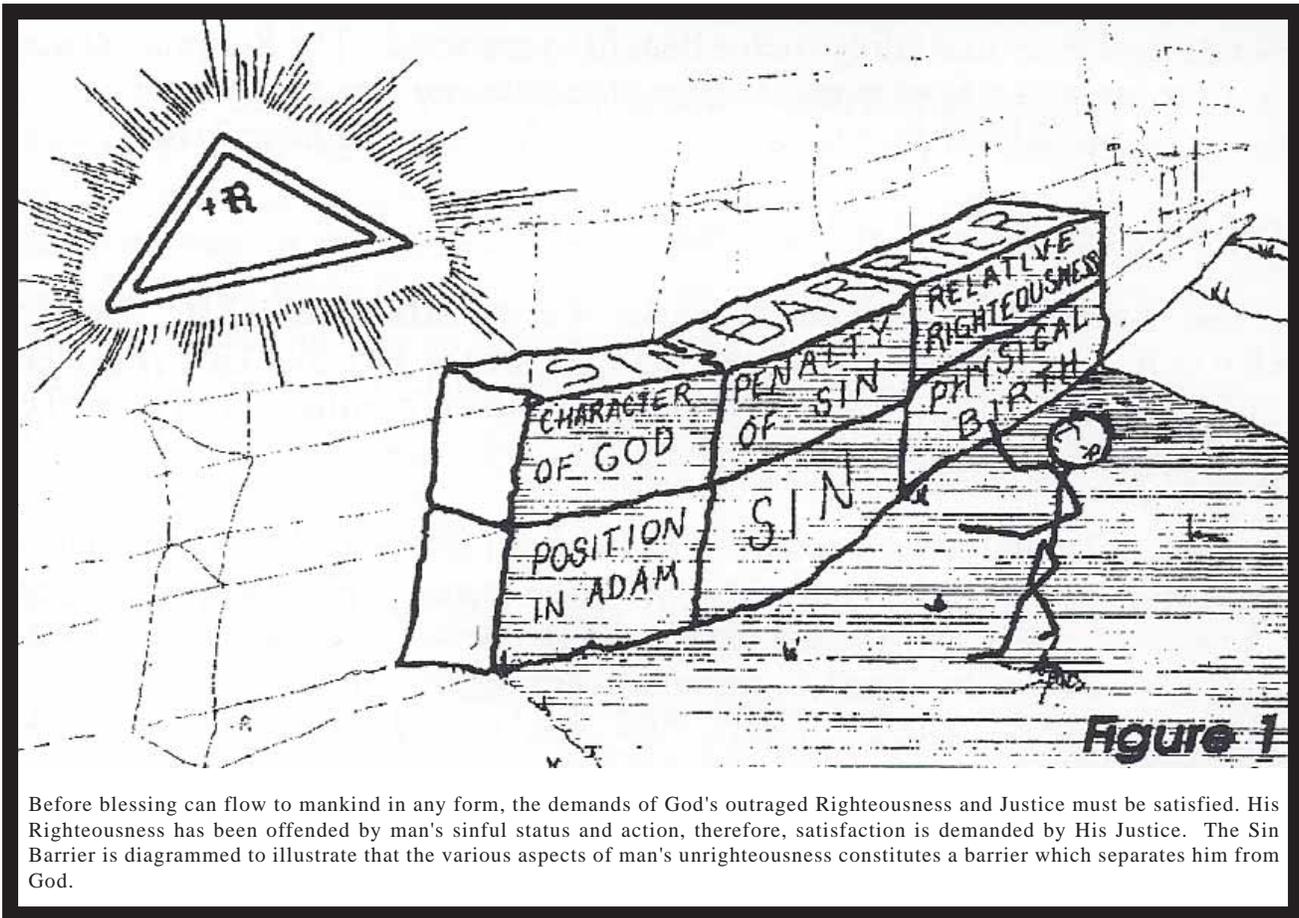
Understanding God's nature is the key to understanding why the SIN BARRIER exists. God's Righteous nature is depicted in Scripture as "light" or "glory." I John 1:5 states that, *"God is light and in Him is no darkness at all."* On the other hand, man's sinful and unrighteous nature is depicted in Scripture as "darkness." I Peter 2:9 states that the Believer has been rescued *"...out of darkness into His marvelous light."* The SIN BARRIER exists due to the fact that since "all have sinned," all have, therefore, failed to measure up to the standard of the perfection of the "light" and "glory" of God's nature.

The "light" and "glory" of God's nature cannot physically coexist with man's sinful "darkness." The Bible uses the mutual exclusiveness of light and darkness to illustrate that Righteousness and unrighteousness cannot coexist. The SIN BARRIER symbolizes the inability of perfect God to accept imperfect man.

God, therefore, makes one universal pronouncement which characterizes every member of the human race as being under the curse and separated from God by the SIN BARRIER. The Scripture says of mankind, *"There is not a righteous one, not even anyone."* (Romans 3:10)

THE NATURE OF THE SIN BARRIER:

The SIN BARRIER consists of man's failure to measure up to the demands of the Norms and Standards of the Righteousness of God. Mankind is absolutely unholy and without anything that is acceptable to God. *"The Scripture has concluded all (mankind) to be under sin..."* (Galatians 3:22) Therefore, the Justice of God demands separation of God from mankind. Before, grace blessing can flow to mankind in any form, the demands of God's outraged holiness must be satisfied. His Righteousness has been offended by man's sinful action and status, therefore, satisfaction is demanded by His Justice. The Righteousness of God demands conformity to Divine Righteousness as the acceptable norm and standard. The SIN BARRIER exists since mankind is unrighteous, hence, fallen below the norms and standards of God's Righteousness.



REMOVING THE SIN BARRIER:

Mankind's separation from God, which is called Spiritual Death, (Genesis 2:17 cf. Ephesians 2:1) is a direct result of man's possession of the Sinful Nature of Adam (Romans 5:12) and his own personal sins. (Romans 3:23 cf., I John 1:8) This status of dual sinfulness, wherein man is absolutely unrighteous and fails to measure up to the norms and standards of the Righteousness of God, results in separation from God -- THE SIN BARRIER.

God the Father authored the only acceptable Plan for the removal of the SIN BARRIER. The Plan of God provides a way for God to have a relationship with mankind without compromising the perfect balance between His Righteousness and Justice.

FIGURE 2



The left column represents :the six "bricks" which make up man's unrighteous status. This depicts the SIN BARRIER which separates man from God. The right column represents the areas of the work of dents Christ on the Cross to remove the Barrier. This diagram depicts the means of reconciliation between God and Man.

Since man lacks the ability to attain perfection, God devised a Plan which provides for man's salvation by Grace. The Scripture states that "...by means of Grace you have been saved ... definitely not out from the source of works, so that no one can of himself boast." (Ephesians 2:8-10) The principle of Grace means that the SIN BARRIER can only be removed if God does all the work. The SIN BARRIER cannot be removed through good works or personal sacrifices. The Bible states that the best that man can ever produce through human efforts and works are "filthy rags" in His sight. (Isaiah 64:6) Therefore, the grace salvation plan called for Jesus Christ to intervene on behalf of unrighteous man. (John 3:16)

The Grace Plan of Salvation provides the means by which man, through non-meritorious faith in Christ, can receive the benefit of the removal of the Sin Barrier -- Eternal Salvation. John 3:36 says, "He who believes in the Son has eternal life, but he who does not obey the son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." Salvation is available through faith in the work of Christ on the Cross because that work completely paid the price of all aspects of sin. II Corinthians 5:21 states, "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

Therefore, it is the work of Christ on the Cross, dying for the sins of the world, which both removes the SIN BARRIER and makes it possible for the Believer to receive a Righteousness which is acceptable to God.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTS OF THE SIN BARRIER AND THE WORK OF CHRIST FOR THEIR REMOVAL:

If we break the SIN BARRIER down into its various components, we might imagine or model it as constructed of actual bricks which separate us from God. The bricks represent the primary reasons for Jesus Christ's essential intervention on man's behalf.

BRICK ONE: SIN

Adam's original sin, man's inherited sinful Adamic nature, and man's personal sins combine to make up this first brick. The Lord Jesus Christ removed the **sin problem** by bearing all the sins of the world on Himself. (II Corinthians 5:21) Christ's stepping in on our behalf forever removed the believer's sins as an issue of separation. Isaiah 38:17 describes sins as being "*cast behind the back of God*" and Jeremiah 50:20 says that they are "*sought and not found.*" Micah 7:19 says that our sins are "*cast into the depths of the sea*" and Hebrews. 10:17 says that they are "*remembered no more.*" Christ's work on the cross, therefore, resulted in all mankind's sins -- past, present, and future, being "*removed as far as the east is from the west.*" (Psalm 103:12)

Related areas of study and the Bible Doctrines which describe the removal of **Brick One:**

THE DOCTRINE OF REDEMPTION - I Corinthians 1:29-30; Colossians 1:14

THE DOCTRINE OF UNLIMITED ATONEMENT - I John 2:2; II Peter 2:1

BRICK TWO: THE PENALTY OF SIN

The penalty of sin is Spiritual Death. According to Romans 3:23, all men are "sinners" in the eyes of God. I Corinthians 15:22 says that all men are counted guilty as a result of their sins. Since "*the wages of sin is death*" and man has nothing of worth to pay the price for his own sins, God the Father sent his Son to redeem man from his inevitable fate. Because Christ possessed "spiritual life," he was able to pay the debt for "spiritual death." Colossians 2:14a says that Christ "*canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us.*" Christ's redemption of man - paying man's debt - removed the SIN BARRIER. Colossians 2:14b says of man's sin, "*...and he has taken it out of the way, nailing it to the Cross.*"

Related areas of study and the Bible Doctrines which describe the removal of **Brick Two:**

THE DOCTRINE OF EXPIATION - Colossians 2:14

THE DOCTRINE OF THE BLOOD

THE DOCTRINE OF THE SPIRITUAL DEATH OF CHRIST

BRICK THREE: SPIRITUAL DEATH

John 3:1ff says that all men are born spiritually dead and, therefore, must be "born again." Being "born again" means to be spiritually regenerated through the reception of a human spirit. Since God is a spirit and "*must be worshipped in spirit and truth,*" (John 4:24) reception of a human spirit is absolutely necessary before mankind can have a relationship with God. (Ephesians 2:1ff)

Related area of study and the Bible Doctrine which describe the removal of **Brick Three**:
THE DOCTRINE OF REGENERATION - John 1:11-12; 3:3; Galatians 3:26

BRICK FOUR: THE CHARACTER OF GOD

God is absolute perfect Righteousness. Mankind is absolute unrighteousness. Therefore, God cannot have a relationship with mankind, because Righteousness can have no relationship with unrighteousness. (Romans 4:1-4) In order for mankind to become acceptable to God, he must possess the Righteousness of Christ. Possession of the Righteousness of Christ makes him acceptable to the Righteousness of God the Father. Man must be credited with Righteousness by means of Grace and not by human merit or works.

Related area of study and the Bible Doctrine which describe the removal of **Brick Four**:
THE DOCTRINE OF PROPITIATION - I John 2:2; Romans 3:25

BRICK FIVE: MAN'S UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

The "righteousness of man" is absolute unrighteousness in the sight of God. Therefore, even the best of the "righteousness" of man is never acceptable. (Isaiah 64:6)

Related areas of study and the Bible Doctrine which describe the removal of **Brick Five**:
THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION - Romans 3:24; 5:1
THE DOCTRINE OF IMPUTATION - Romans 3:22; II Corinthians 5:21

BRICK SIX: MAN'S POSITION IN ADAM

All men are born "in Adam", inheriting the sinful trend of Adam and the original sin of Adam. Inheritance of Adam's original sin and sinful trend results in mankind's spiritual death. Only by means of the "new birth" in Christ can a man be "made alive" and share the eternal life of Christ. (John 14:6)

Related area of study and the Bible Doctrine which describe the removal of **Brick Six**:
THE DOCTRINE OF POSITIONAL TRUTH - I John 5:11-12

CONCLUSION:

The barrier between God and man has been eternally removed! Now the Cross of Christ stands in its place. The unbeliever is free at the hearing of the good news about Salvation to believe in the work of Christ on that Cross as the means of "crossing over" into a relationship with God. The Christian Bible Doctrine which describes the total results of the removal of the Sin Barrier and an individual returning to God by means of belief is THE DOCTRINE OF RECONCILIATION. (Romans 5:10; II Corinthians 5:20) This Bible Doctrine describes the fact that there is nothing standing between man and God except man's unbelief. Unbelief, the only sin for which Christ could not die, in effect, reconstructs the barrier.

THE "GOOD NEWS" INFORMATION CONSISTS OF:

The **SIN BARRIER** has been removed by the Lord Jesus Christ dying on the Cross for all past, present and future sins of every member of the human race. Therefore, the work of Christ in purchasing salvation for the human race was completely finished on the Cross. **Now, all one must do to benefit from the work of Christ is to believe on Him.** *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."* John 3:16