

## God's Desire for all to Come to Repentance

**II Peter 3:9** *“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”*

The delay of God's judgment is not due to slackness, but to the Lord's longsuffering attitude toward His people, not willing that any should perish. This text does not teach that God actually decrees that all will be saved (universalism.) Obviously everything that a Sovereign God decrees will occur. The reference here is not to God's decree but to His desire. God's desire is that none should perish and that all would come to repentance, but God has given man his own free will and does not forcibly impose His will but allows freedom to all people to come to repentance or not. In this particular bible verse Peter is describing the sovereign God's desire that all people would turn to Him and repent. God's desire that all men be saved does not mean that God has willed that everyone should come to salvation, for elsewhere Paul clearly teaches that only those who believe in Christ will receive salvation. **Romans 1:16 – 17**, *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written. The just shall live by faith.”*

**Romans 3:21 – 26** *“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”*

**Romans 5:17** *“For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.”* This is also the clear teaching of Jesus in **John 3:15 – 18** *“That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”*

God extends the offer of salvation to all. Christ died for the sins of all, but only those who believe receive the benefits of His sacrifice. God's desire is not only our salvation (justification) but also our growth in the truth (sanctification). The following bible verse validates the truth stated in II Peter 3:9. God desires all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge

of the truth.

**I Timothy 2:3 – 6** *“For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”*

The one mediator between God and men is Jesus Christ. Mediator is a concept derived from the ceremonial worship prescribed in the Old Testament. In the tabernacle and later in the temple, the priests mediated between God and Israelites by offering animal sacrifices to atone for the sins of the people and by interceding to God for the nation. In their position as mediators, the priests were the only ones eligible to enter the Holy of Holies, the place where God made His presence known. There is one God from whom salvation is available. There is only one way to Him, through the mediator, Jesus Christ, who has the full nature of God and had the full nature of man. Christ has identified with us, understands us perfectly and represents us at the right hand of God the Father.

**Romans 8:34** *“Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”*

Since Christ has fully justified believers and is interceding for us, then no one can possibly condemn us or oppose us with regard to our personal relationship with God, nor separate us from Christ's love for us. God loves us so much that He gave His only begotten Son. Christ gave Himself willingly as a ransom for all. The greek word translated ransom is found only in the New Testament. It specifically refers to a ransom paid for a slave. In Greek it is formed with a prefix that reinforces the idea of substitution. Christ substituted His life for ours. Our sins had separated us from God. Christ paid the penalty for our sins so that we could be reconciled to our Father.

Prayer

God, Heavenly Father

How I thank You for loving all of us enough to not want any of us to perish. Knowing that this is Your desire, I can confidently pray to You for all who have not accepted Your Son Jesus. I pray that they will repent of their sins and have salvation through Jesus Christ Your Son and come unto the knowledge of all truth. God I thank You for the relationship we have because of Christ the Mediator. I thank You that He has taken away our sins and cleansed us from all unrighteousness by becoming the propitiation for our sins. I thank You that I can now come boldly to the throne of grace and there is no longer a need for a high priest to atone for our sins once a year but that we have a high priest who has paid the penalty for our sins once for all and sees nor remembers our sins and it is finished.

In Jesus' name. Amen

