# SHEDDING LIGHT ON
# BIBLICAL CONTRASTS

**#11 – <u>Christ Came to Bring Peace / Division</u>**

Jesus said, "***Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you…***" (**John 14:27**).  Paul spoke of us as being reconciled to God because Jesus made peace through the blood of His cross (**Col. 1:20**).  Yet the Lord Jesus Himself made the startling declaration, "***Do not think that I came to bring peace on Earth.  I did not come to bring peace but a sword***" (**Matt. 10:34**).

Which is it?  Did Jesus come to bring peace, or did He come with a sword of division?  The Bible clearly says that He came to bring *both* peace *and* division.

## <u>Christ Came to Bring Peace</u>

1.  Zacharias, before Christ's birth, prophesied that the Messiah would "***guide our feet into the path of peace***" (**Luke 1:78-79**).

2.  Christ laid the basis for peace between God & us through His death on the Cross (**Romans 5:1;  Colossians 1:20**).

3.  Christ gives those who trust Him an inner peace far beyond anything the world can offer (**John 14:27**).

4.  Christ calls on us to follow His example – to be peacemakers (**Matthew 5:9**) – to turn the other cheek (**Matthew 5:39**) - & to love our enemies (**Matthew 5:44**).

## <u>Christ Came to Bring Division</u>

1.  Christ divides people into two groups – those who receive Him & those who do not (**John 1:11-13**).

2.  Christ often brings a "***sword***" instead of "***peace***" into family relationships - those who reject Him, hating those who believe in Him (**Matthew 10:34-36**).

3.  Christ said that those who followed Him would be hated by the world, because the world hated Him; & because His followers would not be of the world  (**John 15:18-19;  17:14**).

4. Christ will bring about an eternal separation of those who believe in Him from those who do not believe (**John 5:28-29**).

## <span style="color:#8B0000">**Resolution**</span>

Jesus Christ made it possible for us to be at peace with God & to have the inner peace of God. But following Him puts us at odds with those who reject Christ's rule over their lives, causing division & conflict.

## <span style="color:#8B0000">**Reflection**</span>

An elderly Australian citizen who emigrated from the Ukraine as a young man tells how accepting Christ brought him great inner peace. But it also caused severe conflict with his parents, relatives and acquaintances.

He had grown up in the state church and became so disgusted with the hypocrisy of the clergy that he became an atheist. When he began to proclaim his unbelief zealously, his family was disturbed, but they didn't oppose him.

One day, however, his atheism was challenged by a Christian. After a few weeks of daily meetings, he accepted Christ Jesus as his personal Saviour. He went home that evening to tell his parents what had happened, thinking that they would be glad. Much to his surprise, his father became so angry that he struck him on the head and ordered him to leave the house.

His family and acquaintances turned on him and his employer fired him. Strangely, they preferred atheism to a vibrant faith in Christ. He did odd jobs and continued to be persecuted until he found a way to escape to Australia.

But even though his Christianity caused conflict and division in his relationships, the Lord Jesus brought peace to his heart.

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