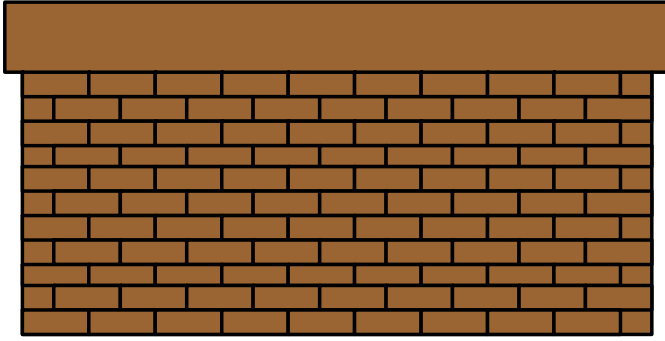


## TUMBLING WALLS

Dr. Fred Fourie ~Sunday, August 20, 2006



[Ephesians 2:13 - 22](#) But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he

might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then, you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

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The Gospel of Peanuts contains many precious truths. [Lucy and Linus have a chicken wishbone](#). They are going to pull it to make a wish. As Lucy explains to Linus how the wishbone works, Linus asks, "[Do I have to say the wish out loud?](#)" [Lucy says](#), "Of course, if you don't say it out loud it won't come true." Then she makes her wish! "I wish for four new sweaters, a new bike, a new pair of skates, a new dress and one hundred dollars."

[Linus then says](#), "I wish for a long life for all of my friends," he says. "I wish for world peace, I wish for great advancements in medical research." At this, Lucy takes the wishbone and throws it away. "[Linus, that's the trouble with you, you're always spoiling everything!](#)"

It does spoil things, does it not, when into our self-centered, materialistic, divided world comes one who is able to forget - his or her - own needs and look to the needs of us all? [That is what the Gospel of Jesus Christ is all about!](#)

Contrary to the hopes and expectations of many in the previous century, our [world today seems to be more divided](#) than ever before. Even [the custom of people shaking hands](#) was born in infamy! In ancient times, men always carried daggers. When a traveler met a man he did not recognize, [he automatically reached for his weapon](#), as did the stranger. The two would then circle each other until they knew what the situation called for. If the stranger were not a threat, both men would sheath their daggers. Then they would extend their right hands, their weapon hands, as a token of goodwill. [This explains why women never developed the custom of handshaking. They did not carry weapons.](#)

In today's world we are still circling each other as humankind always has, still checking each other out. The nations of the world are not ready to shake hands. For a few terrible weeks, Hezbollah, Israel and Lebanon stole the headlines from Iraq. Many nations of the world are not even considering shaking hands. The graves of [countless millions of those who perished untimely because of senseless wars](#) seem to hold no message for the warmongers of our time! How much innocent blood will still flow before humanity comes to its senses? All

over the world, nations not only are striving against one another, but many seem to self-destruct, destroyed by strife from within.

America used to hail itself as a haven of freedom and liberty for all. The melting pot is clearly not realizing its potential. Will we ever transcend our ethnic, racial, social, and cultural boundaries? Remaining are the walls of animosity, prejudice and separation that caused so much suffering in the past and build them even higher in our time!

Christianity is divided within itself and the so-called body of Christ --- the Church --- has ripped itself into fragments. [The divisions of society are also evident in churches.](#) Church battles that should be only a memory are still raging. There are not only walls between many of the different denominations, [but often divisions within.](#) Families of faith become broken losing their message to a suffering world in the process.

Walls of hostility exist within far too many families ... between fathers, mothers and children. It is part of our daily experience to see and hear about broken or breaking families. On the lighter side, a comedian recently said, ["If it weren't for marriage, husbands and wives and children would have to fight with strangers."](#)

In this sad reality with walls of hatred misunderstanding and separation everywhere, [the Word of God comes with a startling revelation.](#) Paul tells us that Jesus Christ stormed these walls of separation and broke them down.

Those who embrace faith in Jesus Christ can tell you that there is not a wall so high that it cannot be climbed. There is not a wall so thick that it cannot be broken down - there is not a wall so strong that it cannot come tumbling down!

["For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us."](#)

Christ's vision is building a new humanity! [Into](#) such a world came our Lord, Jesus Christ. Why did he come? He came to tear down walls. The Bible says, "For he is our peace, who made us both [one](#) and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility."

Is there a dividing wall of hostility in your life? How about in your family? In your community? How about in your heart? Robert Frost's words haunt us, ["something there is in us that doesn't love a wall,](#) that wants it down."

Jesus saw the walls of his day and he wanted them down. Walls between Jews and Samaritans. Walls between the super-righteous and sinners. Walls between fallen humanity and God.

Some people are like [medieval castles.](#) Their high walls keep them safe from being hurt. They protect themselves emotionally by permitting no exchange of feelings with others. No one can enter. They are secure from attack. [However, the occupant finds him or her lonely, rattling around his castle alone.](#) The castle dweller is a self-made prisoner. He or she needs [to feel loved](#) by someone, but the walls are so high that it is difficult to reach out or for anyone else to reach in."

Do you know what it is like to live behind such walls? [The good news is that Christ has come to destroy all the walls that separate us from one another and from God no matter where or what those walls may be.](#)

A deeply touching, life-changing incident took place in the mid-East, some years ago! Two young men were on the brink of death in an Israeli hospital. One was Palestinian and the other Israeli. The Israeli was already brain-dead. He was a soldier shot by Arabs in an ambush in the Gaza strip. The man who needed the heart was a Palestinian. The Israeli family gave consent, and the transplant took place in a Jerusalem hospital. When the news broke, there was a storm of protest. Israelis were in a rage that the heart of one of theirs should be in the body of a Palestinian. Ironically, the man who actually received the heart went into

hiding to escape Arab rage. The widow of the dead Israeli, however, [understood the words of Jesus](#). She was satisfied. She said, "If a person can be saved, I feel I have done God's will. [One more wall tumbled down!](#)

There are other walls still to go. The love of God revealed in Jesus Christ [offers](#) an axe - A hammer - A bulldozer - to break down the walls of hate and separation. Have you built a wall around your own heart? Allow Christ to break down that wall - there may be someone waiting, hoping and praying for your call - your visit - your forgiveness. A new humanity was born in Jesus Christ!

**Into my heart, into my heart, come into my heart, Lord Jesus.  
Come in today; come in to stay. Come into my heart, Lord Jesus.**

AMEN