

Have you accepted the pardon?

In 1830, a man named George Wilson was sentenced to death by hanging for mail theft. President Andrew Jackson gave Wilson a pardon, but he refused to accept it. This puzzled the authorities who did not know whether Wilson should be freed or hanged. Finally, the Supreme Court ruled that a pardon is an act of grace which must be received to be completed. Without that acceptance, it is of no effect. Therefore, George Wilson was ordered to be hanged.



Aaron Erhardt Village church of Christ

All of us have sinned and fallen short of God's glory. The sentence for this crime is eternal death. Yet Jesus Christ came to earth, lived a perfect life, and was sacrificed on the cross so we could be pardoned. It is being freely offered as an act of grace. However, we must accept the pardon for it to be completed. We do that through an obedient faith.

Just as Noah was pardoned from death by flood when he built the ark (Genesis 6) and the Israelites were pardoned from death by snakebite when they looked on the bronze serpent (Numbers 21), we are pardoned from eternal death when we repent and are baptized, just as the Jews did on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). "Repentance" is a change of mind that results in a change of life. "Baptism" is an immersion in water for the forgiveness of sins. By doing this, we are simply receiving what has been freely offered by God. *So, have you accepted the pardon?*