

God's Simple Solution

We should first understand that the wages of sin is death. But so that we may not be separated from God eternally, God allowed the sacrifice of innocent blood on our behalf to be the payment portion for our sin. By God's New Covenant with us, He provided this required sacrifice for our sin through the death of His Son, Jesus, upon the Cross. That payment, God's portion of the New Covenant, which no one could do anything for or against, does not mean our sins ARE forgiven, it means our sins MAY BE forgiven. It is up to us whether our sins ARE forgiven, based on whether we keep our portion of the New Covenant with God or not.

And how do we do that ? We must believe what Jesus teaches us. It is not to be a belief of mere mental acknowledgement - even the devil knows who Jesus is and what He taught - but a belief based on Love for God that manifests in our thoughts, words, and actions. If we Love God, we'll accept His Son, and if we believe Jesus, we'll do our part in shedding sin out of our life, just as He teaches. That is our portion of the New Covenant with God - doing what Jesus teaches.

Therefore, if we want to be a Child of God, we must first understand that Jesus is both our Teacher and our Sacrificial Lamb, and it is by both that He opens the door to our relationship with the Father. We might well know about His Sacrifice on our behalf, but what about His teachings ? Well, if we sincerely pray and ask, God will send us the Holy Spirit so we may be guided into all Truth as we read His Word, the Bible. With the Holy Spirit's guidance as we read Jesus' teachings in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, we should come to a clear understanding of the sin problem... how sin separates us from God, and blocks the way to Heaven for us. Thankfully, Jesus also came bringing Good News, teaching us and showing us exactly how to get rid of the sin in our life, so we can keep the New Covenant and be with the Father and Son forever.

With that, here are the essentials of the sin problem, and God's solution:

The Problem

- (1) No one who continues in willful sin will be accepted into Heaven. (Matthew 7:21-23, 13:40-42, 13:49-50; Mark 9:42-48; Luke 13:24-28; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Revelation 14:12, 21:27, 22:14; and other verses as well)

God's Solution - the New Covenant

- (2) God's portion of the New Covenant:

By God's grace (graciousness), He has covered His portion of the New Covenant for us, to allow for forgiveness of sins, by Jesus' Sacrifice.

God has ALSO given us the Way to keep our portion of the New Covenant, that is, to get clean and stay clean of sin, by Jesus' teachings.

- (3) Our portion of the New Covenant:

First, to get clean, Jesus teaches we are to repent of our sins and forgive others for their sins – so that our sins may be forgiven by God.

Then, to stay clean, Jesus teaches we must stop sinning, by obeying God's Commandments (God's Law).

For our portion, if we have a True heart for God, we'll pray and read His Word (the Bible), beginning with the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John which contain Jesus' teachings from His earthly Ministry. Then, as we come to a knowledge of the Truth, we should be open to the Holy Spirit's convicting of any sin in our life, and from there any stumbling in sin should continually reduce realm-by-realm in volume, duration, and degree until all willful sin is out of our life. Once we get clean, and learn how to stay clean by being yoked with Jesus each day, the Bible warns us numerous times against the dangers of "backsliding" back into sin. It is God's Will that we persist in the Spirit and not live life driven by our "flesh" (our mental, emotional, and physical states), because God wants us in Heaven with Him, not kept out because of continued willful sin.

After all, is continuing in willful sin True repentance ? Of course not ! We cannot stay clean if we willfully continue taking on dirt. If we do happen to stumble on the way, we must repent of it to God right away and have it be cleansed, by Jesus' blood, and then move forward in forgiveness. (And of course, we must always forgive others their sins, not hating anyone in our heart or casting stones we have no right to, or else our own sins will not be forgiven.)

Can we do this without Love ? Of course not. No one will stop sinning for long out of obligation. No one. Unless we Love God and Jesus, and others as much as ourselves, there is no way we will stay clean. But the deal in plain terms is this: if we're not willfully clean, both on the inside and the outside, according to all the revealed Truth we have from God's Word, or we didn't care enough to bother with God's Word according to our capabilities (that He knows) to do so, then we didn't keep our portion of the New Covenant, and won't be going to Heaven. And if we can't stay clean of our sins unless we Love enough to see the good behind God's Truth, in order to keep His Law and not break it, then we have a choice to make. We can get our heart right for the right reasons, accept both Jesus' Sacrifice and teachings, and take an awesome Walk with the Lord for the rest of our lives... or sin away this life while giving up the next life.

Now there are plenty of people who do not have a True heart for God. Flatly, they love their pride and sins more than Him. Out of these are many who simply don't believe or care about God at all, and never will, so they'll be lost forever. Others, however, still fear going to Hell, so they try to invent ways to keep their sin now, and scheme to somehow get clean before the judgement later. Perhaps they consciously pre-plan a deathbed repentance, or to "put God off" until old age; but that's not True repentance OR Love for God. In that condition, they'll suffer the exact same fate as the next category of folks - those who want just a half a relationship with God now, worshipping Him with their lips while their hearts are far from Him. Obviously, this is easily seen by God for the bad-hearted hypocrisy it is, and God will not be mocked. For these folks, the Bible tells us God will send them strong delusion, that they will continue believing the lie, that of "having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof." It means they'll act sincere on the outside, perhaps even participating in some "form of" religious services, but they'll still keep on willfully sinning. The Bible goes on to tell us that all the folks in that condition will be condemned, because they did not have a Love of the Truth that they might be Saved, but instead found pleasure in unrighteousness.

Now, "God sending them strong delusion" means He will stop restraining their desired lie from deceiving them, since they'd rather be in the devil's hands. And once there, there are basically two such "forms of godliness" that deny God's power. That is to say there are two basic categories of fraudulence perpetrated against God by the half-hearted, both of which doom the still sin-wanting perpetrators to eternal separation from Him.

The first fraudulence is perpetrated by folks who attempt to accept God's portion of the New Covenant, His grace, without keeping their portion of the New Covenant, getting clean and staying clean of sin through Jesus. It's nothing but cheap, empty religion. They say "love, love, love" in their attempt to ignore the Truth, and "grace, grace, grace" in their attempt to use God's grace as a license to sin. Yet Jesus Himself - the Way, the Truth, and the Life - teaches the rich young ruler in Matthew 19, Mark 10, and Luke 18 that to inherit eternal life, we are to keep the Ten Commandments. And Jesus has MANY such teachings and exhortations, ALL of which these so-called "Christians" ignore as they sadly twist and distort some things from the Letters of Paul in their desperate attempt to continue in sin (to their own destruction). But is it safe to cherry-pick and then twist verses in ways that disagree with Jesus ? Absolutely not ! Paul does not disagree with Jesus, as he knows God's Love for us is not the approval of sin, but the opposite. Even a small child knows that it isn't Love when a person willfully continues doing something wrong or bad ! In fact, Jesus repeatedly tells us the exact same thing in John 14, that those who Love Him keep His Commandments. And that same small child ? He also knows that disagreeing with Jesus isn't Love either. Real Love is married to the Truth, and according to Jesus, the Truth is that no one gets to Heaven by willfully skipping out on the Commandments... either in refusing to know, or refusing to keep that which they do know. We are not merely saved by Jesus' Sacrifice on the Cross.

Again, we are in a covenant - the New Covenant - with God. God did His part, that is, grace, by offering His Son as our sin payment. He was also kind enough to give us the Way to do our part, that of learning and DOING what Jesus teaches, to get clean and stay clean of sin. So what about us ? Shall we claim to partake of the New Covenant, essentially marriage to God, and yet steal His grace and daily Blessings while keeping a divided heart that cheats on Him with willful sins ? Our sins pierce the One who Loves us jealously !

If both parties do not agree or keep their part, the Covenant is broken. Well certainly God is not disagreeable, nor is He unable to keep His part, for He already has. For our part, just as the prophet Jeremiah tells us, and as the New Testament Book of Hebrews repeats, a person keeping the New Covenant with God will have His Law written on their heart and mind; that is, they will know and keep His Law, the Ten Commandments. Jesus not only teaches the same, but also that a person will only do their part if they truly Love God and others.

Now, the second fraudulence against God is committed by folks who attempt to keep their portion of the New Covenant, being clean of sin, without accepting God's portion of the New Covenant, His grace and Way. But with little desire to marry God's Way, they remain children of the world, even as they try to cover themselves by professing God, going to church, or "doing good works", all in a vain effort to build a fire escape to Heaven. Yes, they speak and do things to "show their decency", but it's according to their self-righteousness. At heart, they do not truly desire to know God's Word or His True Righteousness, or what Jesus teaches. By using pride as the driver of their actions instead of Love, they blaspheme the work of the Holy Spirit, and also the cleansing Power of Jesus' blood, and they fail. Like the Pharisees of Jesus' day, many people today believe they're "good" because they do *some* good things (and very often like to casually mention those things publicly). But with little or no True Love for God, His Word, His grace, or His Way, one cannot overcome their love of the world ! As such, it's their still-continued willful sin that exposes them. A crafted "self" image will never fool God.

Let's face it, it's impossible to keep the New Covenant with God if we reject His side of it ! To believe we are "good enough" to get to Heaven without Him is no different than the devil, Satan, wanting to exalt himself above the Most High. God knows the heart ! It is only by surrender to God's Love through Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and God's Word that a person can stop living by such pride and fears, and start living by humility and Faith, the only means to Peace and Joy in a life. As Jesus tells us, apart from Him we can do nothing.

Therefore, to review, the first fraudulence is attempting to accept (2) above without doing (3). And the second fraudulence is attempting to do (3) above without accepting (2). One is self-righteousness and the other is no righteousness at all ! Both are destruction to a person because without (2) AND (3) above, the New Covenant is broken and we remain in sin, subjected to (1) above, thereby having no path to our God in Heaven.

So, for all the powerless, unbelieving, and deceitful religion we see today over this simple matter for which God has given us a simple solution, it is not grace OR God's Law, and thus it is not Jesus dying on the Cross OR our keeping God's Commandments that saves us. It is BOTH, married together, as Love and Truth, because it is a covenant - the New Covenant - and either we keep it with God or we reject it. To keep it, we accept His part AND do our part. To reject it, we either reject His part OR do not do our part, OR both. It's that simple.

It's also this simple: Those who Love God will read His Word and have Faith in Jesus. They will accept God's grace into their heart, and embrace the indwelling power of Christ through the Holy Spirit to help them shed the sin and hypocrisy from their lives (John 14:15-24, Romans 8:1-17). Only by accepting God's grace and Way may we have Real Love, by which we embrace the Truth of repentance, forgiveness of others, and obedience to God's Law, thereby valuing and living Life through the Son – in this age, and then eternally - as a Child of God.

If we're not a Child of God, we're an instrument of the devil, and without repentance won't be going to Heaven, no matter what we or anyone else believes, says, or “feels” about it. And we won't be able to blame God, for He has given us the Gift, the Way, and the choice, with no middle ground in the battle of good versus evil.

Satan is a crafty adversary, but there is always a tell-tale sign if given person or a given church is an instrument of the devil – willful sin will always be the defining mark of evil. Regardless of the religious words a person or a church might speak, it is their actions that show who they are. Yes, it's easy to think that churches are all fairly similar, and all somewhat trustworthy, but let us not be ignorant here. The devil, fighting God, does his best to make sure sin exists everywhere on this Earth, in churches or out. Do we not know Satan worked through the so-called “religious leadership” of Jesus' day to have Him crucified ? Have the devil's motives changed ? No !

Now there is no doubt Satan felt the sting of that mistake, because in his bloodlust to kill God's Son, he actually helped God and Jesus fulfill Their plan of Salvation for all those who would accept God's Way. In his humiliation, Satan also knew that his eventual demise was sealed by Jesus' Sacrifice. His final defeat in mind, the only evil option he had left was to ruin the fate of as many people as possible before the end. In his rage, in the decades after Christ's death, the devil worked through people to persecute and kill as many saints in the new Christian movement as he could. But every time outsiders killed the early Christians, even more grew up in their place. Satan, not to be outdone, finally conceded in deviousness, and actually joined *himself* to the Christian church over the early centuries A.D. Embedding himself further over time and through subsequent church councils, he found it an efficient means to destroy people, with outright violence for many centuries, and by a misleading doctrine and system of pagan-influenced counterfeit worship that is still a toxin in many churches even today.

Should this surprise us, since Jesus tells us the devil is the father of lies and a murderer from the beginning ? It should not. Nor should it surprise us that Satan's cohorts do whatever they can to infiltrate and wear down *any* church that is not completely founded on the Rock. Even if it takes years of persistence against the Truth, Satan and his demons will lead many church leaders to lie to people, in total disagreement with Jesus yet while claiming Christ, for the devil knows that almost all people will listen to the words, but will not read God's Word for themselves, and will not hold the church up to the Light of Jesus' teachings and God's Commandments.

Again, Satan's sole purpose is to fight God by making sure people do not get to Heaven. The devil's influence is in many churches, even today, but he always leaves a mark, and that is continued willful sin among much of a church's leadership and many of its members. Acting no differently than the rest of the world, they are even worse in their hypocrisy because they supposedly know what Jesus says and yet refuse to listen to Him, and will be judged accordingly. They are lost, having a "form of" godliness by the mere fact that they meet in a building called a church, but denying the power of God given through the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They are just one of Satan's victories in the battle of good versus evil, yet he himself despises them for being hypocrites.

Yes, God allows it to happen, because if we don't even Love God enough to read His Word for ourselves, but instead take another person's or a given church's doctrine as a substitute, even as sin abounds there, then we better be prepared for the same eternity they're going to get. But if we read God's Word for ourselves, and see what Jesus teaches, then we can know if a given person's or given church's actions are in line with the Truth. We need not accept the eternity of the fraudulent, for God has given us the Gift, the Way, and the choice.

Let's close with Jeremiah 29:11-13 (NKJV): "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart."

Amen.