

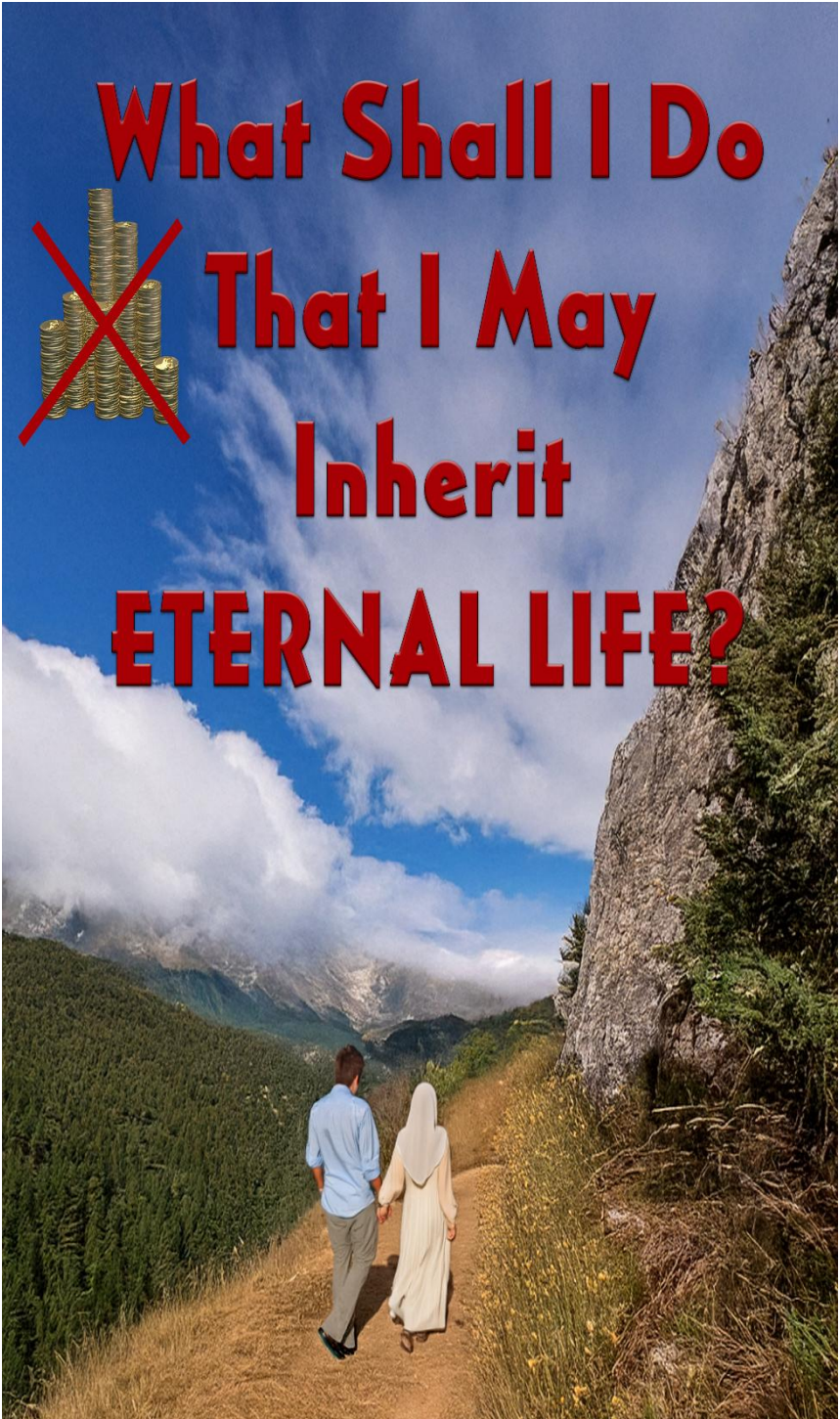
What Shall I Do



That I May

Inherit

ETERNAL LIFE?



What Shall I Do That I May Inherit Eternal Life?

This is the most important question ever asked, because its answer determines where you will spend eternity! Many will try to tell you their opinion of what you must do, but the One Who knows the answer is Jesus Christ, because He is the Author of eternal salvation. Jesus was asked this question of a rich young ruler, and here is what He answered him.

*“And, behold, one came and said unto Him [Jesus],
Good Master, **WHAT SHALL I DO***

THAT I MAY INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE?”

*“And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou Me good?
there is none good but One, that is, God.*

***Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery,
Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness,
Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.”***

Jesus said, *“Thou knowest the commandments.”* God gave “commands” or rules, by which to live our life, so that we might not sin against Him. The commandments of God reveal the thinking of God and tell us what sin is. Jesus told this man that the sin he practiced each day would keep him from inheriting eternal life. God gave us the definition of sin in His righteous law, which outlined for all men what is right and wrong. Sin is the breaking of God’s righteous commands. Here is the definition of “sin” found in 1 John 3:4,

*“Whosoever committeth [practices; does]
sin transgresseth [breaks; disobeys] also the law:
for sin is the transgression of the law.”*

This man came to Jesus thinking that he was “good enough” to inherit eternal life, for he claimed to already be keeping the commandments. Listen as Jesus exposes how he has broken the law of God that will keep him from inheriting eternal life.

*“The young man saith unto Him, All these things have I kept
from my youth up: what lack I yet?”*

*“Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect,
go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor,
and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow Me.”*

*“But when the young man heard that saying, he WENT AWAY
SORROWFUL: for he had great possessions.”*

*“But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them,
Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches
to enter into the kingdom of God!”*

Although this rich man with the obvious “blessings of God” appeared to be the “perfect” candidate for eternal life, Jesus showed that his riches were a curse, because they were more important to him than eternal life. Many allow their wives, husbands, children, relatives, things, money, churches, careers, jobs, and internet to keep them from obeying the gospel. They “trust in” those things allowing them to keep them from obeying God’s commandments. Just as this man put his riches before eternal life, so many today do not keep God’s commandments because they fear “losing” the friendships of this world. What is **more important** to you than obedience to God’s commandments? When you disobey God to keep your friends, relatives, or possessions, you cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Jesus warned in John 8:34 that those who commit sin are the servant of sin,

*“Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you,
Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.”*

The word “committeth” means to practice or do, as we are warned in James 4:17,

*“Therefore to him that knoweth to do good,
and doeth it not, to him it is sin.”*

A “sin” is knowing that something is wrong, but doing it anyway. There are many excuses to do wrong, and the most popular reason is “Everyone else is doing it!” Since Jesus said that few would be saved, it is important not to follow the crowd and do what everyone else is doing.

The things of this earth are not the blessings of God... they, as in this man’s life, can become a curse. Look around you at all the people “enslaved” to sin that’s killing them! They say that their wrong doing is a blessing, but they are actually enslaved to their sins. Things become “gods” that people put more important than obedience to God! Every person that will inherit eternal life must not put anything before God.

This is why Jesus tells you how hard it is for you, if you trust in riches to inherit eternal life. The rich man did not keep the first commandment of God...

“Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.”

Exodus 20:3

Though sin promises you a good time, the “fun in sin” is only for a very short time. Not only does sin cost you your eternal soul, but sin also has consequences on this earth as can be seen in the rat race of life filled with unfaithfulness, divorce, bitterness, hatred, murder, single parent homes, rape, incest, abuse, loneliness, lack of love, disease, drunkenness, drug addiction, child neglect, and all the other consequences of disobedience to God’s commandments that most people just consider a “part of life”! Where is the love, joy, and peace in this world? Where is the true happiness or security that this world promises, but cannot deliver? Read Isaiah 48:22,

“There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.”

As man refuses to obey God, he becomes selfish, self-centered, and hateful. People marry just for the pleasing of their flesh, treating one another like pieces of meat. They soon move on to the next carcass only to find no happiness! Man promises the “moon”, but because he lies with no care of being found out, he “gets through life” as a fraud... knowing exactly what to say to get his own way... at the expense of all that he steps on. Soon people become hardened and cold to each other being tired of being stepped on by those who “love them”! Man becomes “unfeeling” or lacks compassion and love for others, because of their sins. Jesus warned of this in Matthew 24:12,

*“And because iniquity [sin] shall abound,
the love of many shall wax [grow] cold.”*

People are seeking love, but they will never find true love as they continue in sin! Love is of God, and those who do not obey God only “lust” or crave “flesh” to fulfil their own desires. True love in any relationship is “doing what is best for each other”, but the world teaches “lust”, which is doing what pleases you!

In marriage, the two become one when they love the LORD with all their heart, soul, and mind by keeping His commandment to deny themselves of their own ways, taking up their cross by crucifixion of the flesh, and following Jesus in His steps. Listen to the true definition of love in I John 4:7-8,

“Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.”

True love is doing what is right for yourself and others, which is walking with God. Just as a farmer “sows” or plants corn and reaps or harvests corn; if you “sow” or practice sin, you will “reap” or receive the consequences of sin, which is eternal death. Read this in Galatians 6:7,

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

Would the farmer expect peas to grow in his field if he planted corn? Why do you think that you can do wrong and not receive the consequences of wrong? If you sow sin, you will reap the wages of sin, which is death. You will not inherit eternal life, no matter how loyal you are to your church, how much money you give to the church, how morally decent you are, or how much you believe the false teachers who promise eternal life to those who practice sin. Remember, it is God that will judge you according to your works as you stand before Him at the end of your life.

It is sin [the breaking of God’s law] that caused Adam to lose fellowship with God. It is your sin that you practice daily that will cause you to not inherit eternal life. The entire world is condemned by God and will be judged according to their works. Listen as Jesus speaks,

*“For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then **He shall reward every man according to his works.**”*

Matthew 16:27

The entire world is condemned already, because of their sins that break God's law. Here is a list of sins that will keep EVERY PERSON that practices them from inheriting eternal life:

*“But fornication [pornography; harlotry],
and all uncleanness [sexual impurity; adultery],
or covetousness [greediness],
let it **NOT BE ONCE NAMED AMONG YOU**,
as becometh saints [obedient children of God];
Neither filthiness [obscenity; sexual perversion],
nor foolish talking [filthy talk], nor jesting [filthy vulgar jokes],
which are not convenient [proper; suitable as a child of God]:
but rather giving of thanks.*

*For this ye KNOW, that NO whoremonger [womanizer; adulterer],
nor unclean person [sexually impure], nor covetous [greedy] man,
who is an idolater [puts anyone or anything before God],
hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.*

LET NO MAN DECEIVE YOU WITH VAIN WORDS:

*for because of these things cometh
the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.*

Be not ye therefore partakers with them.”

Ephesians 5:3-7

Any of these sins that are committed by anyone, no matter how religious or morally decent they are, will keep that person from inheriting eternal life. Notice the command of “...*let it not be once named among you.*” God loves you so much that He has taught you what is right, so you do not have to die eternally. Just as a father teaches his children not to eat poison, God has outlined the “poison” of sin. Sin is so “poisonous” that you are warned to not even talk of it; let alone, laugh at it in a movie, on television, or in a book! The children of God seeking to inherit eternal life will not partake in these sins, if they wish to escape the wrath of God. Read Romans 1:18,

*“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against
ALL UNGODLINESS AND UNRIGHTEOUSNESS OF MEN,
who hold the truth in unrighteousness.”*

Take heed to the second warning, “*Let no man deceive you with vain words...*”, because the churches are full of false teachers “*who hold the truth in unrighteousness*”.

They claim to be “saved”, but they continue in their sins! Sin will keep you from inheriting eternal life; and by practicing sin, you will receive the “wrath of God” as one of the children of disobedience. God’s wrath will come upon ALL sin that is practiced and not confessed and forsaken. Jesus also warned us very sternly in Matthew 18:8-9,

*“Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee,
cut them off, and cast them from thee:
it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed,
rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.
And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee:
**it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having
two eyes to be cast into hell fire.**”*

This teaching is so important that Jesus taught it two times during His ministry on earth and recorded it two times in the gospel [also Matthew 5:29-30]. He said if you can’t stop your hand or your foot from sinning against God, it would be better for you to cut off the hand or foot and throw it away than to continue to practice sin and receive the wrath of God! This dramatic parable shows you the drastic comparison of allowing sin to rule your life, and turning from sin as Jesus commanded that you might inherit eternal life and not receive the punishment for sin.

*“For the wages of sin is death [eternal separation from God];
but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

Romans 6:23

WHAT YOU MUST DO FIRST

Jesus commanded all men to repent or change their thinking about sin in Matthew 4:17,

*“From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say,
REPENT: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”*

Repentance is a change of mind that leads to a change of action, which means to rethink or think again about your actions. Jesus taught of the eternal kingdom and commanded all to rethink their actions to see if they were in obedience to God. His teaching was consistent as He begged man to turn from their sins that they might again walk with God. He commands you to repent from your sins and believe the gospel.

*“And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand:
repent ye, and believe the gospel.”*

Mark 1:15

Jesus taught the gospel, so that all men might know how to walk with God. He commands you, saying, *“Follow Me.”* If you choose to follow Him, you must first repent of your sins and believe the gospel. It is your faith or faithfulness to the gospel that delivers or saves you from the wrath of God. Jesus outlines the gospel in Luke 9:23,

*“And He said to them all, **If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.**”*

This is the path to eternal life or the way to follow Jesus. This takes faith or faithfulness that is so strong that it changes your life. We will study later that Jesus calls this “path” the strait and narrow way. Remember, you are following Jesus; not a religious organization or a not-for-profit business as the “churches” of today are! Jesus commanded, *“Follow Me,”* and then He told you how to follow Him.

Let’s learn the three commands that Jesus gave to all who would come after Him:

FIRST: *“...If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself...”*

Jesus commands any man that will *“come after Me”* to *“deny himself.”* What does God want you to deny yourself of that keeps you from coming after Jesus? It is sin! Since sin is the breaking of God’s law, Jesus says that you must deny yourself of anything that causes you to break His law. Deny yourself of your own desires, dreams, and plans for your life that keep you from being pure, honest, and obedient to God. Each person has something or someone different that they refuse to “give up” that keeps them from walking with God. They may say with their mouth that they love God, but just as in “lustful” relationships, talk is very cheap; for men show their true feelings by their actions, not their speech. This includes religion and religious lies that deceive you into disobeying God. Those who keep the commandments of God love God as these verses teach us:

“If ye love Me, keep My commandments.”

John 14:15 [said by Jesus]

**“He that hath My commandments,
and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me:
and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father,
and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him.”**
John 14:21 [said by Jesus]

**“...If a man love Me, he will keep My words:
and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him,
and make our abode with him.**

**He that loveth Me NOT keepeth NOT My sayings:
and the word which ye hear is not Mine,
but the Father’s which sent Me.”**
John 14:23-24 [said by Jesus]

**“If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love;
even as I have kept My Father’s commandments,
and abide in His love.”**
John 15:10 [said by Jesus]

“Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”
John 15:14 [said by Jesus]

**“For whosoever shall do the will of My Father which is in heaven,
the same is My brother, and sister, and mother.”**
Matthew 12:50 [said by Jesus]

**“For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments:
and His commandments are not grievous.”**
I John 5:3

**“And this is love, that we walk after His commandments.
This is the commandment,
That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.”**
II John 1:6

SECOND:

Jesus commands those who desire to come after Him to *“take up his cross daily.”* Just as Jesus took up the cross to die as the penalty for your sins, Jesus commands you to “die daily” or crucify your fleshly desires.

Galatians 5:24 teaches this also,

*“And they that are Christ’s have crucified **the flesh** with the **affections** [love of] and **lusts** [desire to do wrong].”*

The “flesh” is your sinful desires that break the commandments of God. If you have truly repented or changed your thinking about sin, you look at those actions as the death causing “pleasures” that they are. Jesus warns of the temptation to continue in sin that will keep you from walking with God in the parable of the sower [planter] in Matthew 13:22,

*“He also that received seed [heard the gospel] among the thorns [things that keep you from obeying the gospel] is he that heareth the Word; and **care of this world**, and the **deceitfulness of riches**, choke the Word, and he becometh unfruitful.”*

Jesus said that the rich man was covetous and loved his money more than God. Materialism and the pride of riches were the “god” of this young man. His faith or trust for “security” in this world was in his riches. Jesus could clearly see the covetousness and idolatry within him. He had broken the most important commandment of them all known as the “greatest commandment” from Matthew 22:37,

*“Jesus said unto him,
Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with ALL thy heart,
and with **ALL thy soul**, and with **ALL thy mind**.”*

If the cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things in this world are more important to you than obedience to God, how can you expect to inherit eternal life? What have you placed before God that keeps you from walking with Him? What is the thing that keeps you from surrendering all to God? Whatever it is, you have made that thing more important than walking with God. What in this temporal world could be so important that you reject God for the worthless things of this world? Jesus also asks you this question in Matthew 16:26,

*“For what is a man profited,
if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?
or **what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?**”*

What in this world is worth “losing” eternal life with God? Jesus teaches this in Mark 8:35,

*“For whosoever will save his life shall lose it;
but whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the gospel’s,
the same shall save it.”*

Those who “save” their life by holding onto their sinful ways will lose eternal life, but those who lose their sinful life, by taking up their cross to follow Jesus in obedience to the gospel, will inherit eternal life. Think! The things you thought were so important last year, you cannot even remember today! Where are they? Listen to the description of how worthless the things of this world are from II Peter 3:10-11,

*“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night;
in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise,
and the elements shall melt with fervent heat,
the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.
Seeing then that ALL THESE THINGS SHALL BE DISSOLVED,
what manner of persons ought ye to be
in all holy conversation and godliness...?”*

This earth and the heavens will pass away, the elements shall melt; and all the things that you desire will be burned up, because they are so worthless! Your life is so very short! The things which you don’t want to give up for God do not truly make you happy! You must make your choice... the things of this world or eternal life! God desires to reward you with eternal life, but that reward is not given to those who are not “worthy”. Listen as Jesus praises those of the church at Sardis for their obedient life from Revelation 3:4,

*“Thou hast a few names even in Sardis
which have not defiled their garments;
and they shall walk with Me in white:
FOR THEY ARE WORTHY.”*

These brethren in the church at Sardis had not defiled themselves with the world; therefore, God said that they will walk with Him in white, for by His grace they are “worthy” of eternal life. They “lost” [gave up] their sinful lives on this earth, so that they might inherit eternal life with God. Their self-denial shows God that they love Him more than their sins.

After all these things are gone and destroyed, those who have “lost” their sinful lives on this earth will HAVE “SAVED” their eternal lives with God! By turning from sin, they will escape the wrath of God that He is going to bring upon **ALL sin**! Listen to Jesus’ warnings and how you can escape the coming wrath of God upon ALL SIN from Luke 21:36,

*“Watch ye therefore, and pray always,
that ye may be accounted worthy to escape
all these things that shall come to pass,
and to stand before the Son of man.”*

THIRD:

Jesus commands all that would come after Him, “...*come, follow Me.*” How He lived on this earth is the perfect example for us to follow. He perfectly kept all the commandments of God as the perfect example for all men to know how to please Him! The Lord commands, “...*walk before me, and be thou perfect.*” Jesus said in John 13:15,

*“For I have given you an example,
that ye should do as I have done to you.”*

We are commanded to follow in His steps in I Peter 2:21-23,

*“For even hereunto were ye called:
because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example,
that ye should follow His steps: Who did NO SIN,
neither was guile found in His mouth:
Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again;
when He suffered, He threatened not;
but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously.”*

How Jesus looks at the worthlessness of this world is how we must think. We are tested every day by God to see if we will put the things of this world before Him. This mind or “thinking” must be “in you” or so much a part of your life that you don’t think any other way! You see sin or disobedience to God as what it truly is “death causing actions”. This form of thinking and new lifestyle is the very purpose for which you now live.

I John 1:5 verifies that Jesus was sinless and perfect in all His actions while on this earth,

*“This then is the message which we have heard of Him,
and declare unto you, that God is light,
and in Him is **NO DARKNESS AT ALL.**”*

What freedom to walk in the light with no darkness at all in our lives. You will receive no punishment for the life that you live, because you are walking in obedience to His gospel! Freedom to talk with God and be heard by Him! Freedom from the enslavement of sin that has the rest of this world bound in bitterness, hatred, jealousy, greed, envy, perversion, and deceit! Listen as John continues in verse 6,

*“If we say that we have fellowship with Him,
and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:
But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light,
we have fellowship one with another,
and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.”*

Walking in darkness means that you daily disobey the commandments of God. Walking in the light is walking with God in obedience to the gospel, which fulfils or causes us to keep the righteous law of God. If you say that you love God; yet you practice these sins, you lie and do not the truth! All who truly love the LORD and walk with Him in obedience will not receive of the wrath of God, for we are keeping the commandments of God or “sinning not” as John explains in I John 2:1,

*“My little children, these things write I unto you, **that ye sin not.**”*

Jesus taught us that we are saved by our faith or faithfulness to His gospel. If we truly believe His words, we will obey them by denying ourselves, putting to death the works of the flesh, and following Him in His steps. If we continue in His word, then we will inherit eternal life. Jesus explains this in John 8:31-32,

*“Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him,
If ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed;
And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”*

What did Jesus want His followers to be “free” from? He tells us in verse 34,

*“Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you,
Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.”*

Those who continue by faith or faithfully to obey the gospel will inherit eternal life by the grace of God shown in the death and resurrection of Jesus for your sins. Jesus promises this even in these end times, for He promised this in Revelation 2:10,

*“Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer...
be thou faithful unto death,
and I will give thee a crown of life.”*

IMPOSSIBLE!!! YOU SAY!

Jesus said, “*Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!*” When the disciples of Jesus heard that the rich man was not worthy of eternal life, they were “*astonished out of measure.*” Listen to what they said in Matthew 19:25,

*“When His disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying,
WHO THEN CAN BE SAVED?”*

Perhaps you are saying the same thing. Perhaps you think, “I could never be delivered from sin and keep the commandments of God.” Listen to what Jesus said to His disciples **and to you** in verse 26,

*“But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them,
WITH MEN THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE;
BUT WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE.”*

Though it may seem impossible, Jesus said, “*But with God ALL things are possible.*” God loved you so much that He made it possible for you to be forgiven for your sins. Though you are condemned in your sins, Jesus took the condemnation and punishment for you by humbling Himself and dying in your place that you might live... if only you would repent of your sins by denying yourself, taking up your cross by crucifixion of the flesh, and follow Him in His steps!

God desires to dwell within you, which is the “Kingdom of God” within you! Jesus taught this in Luke 17:20-21,

*“And when He [Jesus] was demanded of the Pharisees,
when the kingdom of God should come,
He answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not
with observation [it cannot be seen]:
Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there!
for, behold, **the kingdom of God is within you.**”*

When God dwells within you, the “*kingdom of God is within you*” leading, guiding, and speaking to you to help you strive to enter in at the strait gate! The Holy Spirit of God empowers you to walk with God if you yield or obey His “still small voice” within you. With God ALL things are truly possible if only you would repent of your sins, deny yourself of your own ways, take up your cross by putting to death your sins, and following Jesus in His steps or how He walked on this earth! Read I John 2:6,

*“He that saith he abideth in Him ought [must; is under obligation]
himself also so to walk, even as He walked.”*

A COMPLETE CHANGE OF LIFE

Jesus taught that those who would come after Him must have a complete change of life. When talking with one of the rulers of the Jews, He outlined this change of life that comes by walking in the Holy Spirit that God gives to all who repent and turn to Him with all their hearts.

*“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee,
Except a man be BORN AGAIN, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”*

The ruler, named Nicodemus, could not understand this complete change.

*“Nicodemus saith unto Him, How can a man be born when he is old?
can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born?”*

But Jesus was not speaking of natural child birth again, He was teaching of the complete change that comes upon those who turn from sin as if they are completely new people. Jesus said that unless a man is born physically of the water of the womb and Spiritually by repentance of sins, they could not enter into the kingdom of God.

*“Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee,
Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit,
he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”*

This was, of course, very hard for this ruler to understand, but Jesus continues to explain the difference between the flesh and the Spirit of God that God gives to all who repent of their sins and turn to Him with all their hearts. He explains that there is a huge difference between living in the flesh fulfilling your own desires and living in the Spirit of God putting to death your fleshly desires.

*“That which is born of the flesh is flesh;
and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”*

If you have repented of your sins, then you have a change of thinking, which by the grace [mercy] of God leads you to a complete change of life. You must put to death the “old man” that is within you, so that the new man that is led by the Holy Spirit of God might live for God being victorious over sin. This is explained very well in Ephesians 4:22-24,

*“That ye PUT OFF concerning the former conversation [lifestyle]
the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;
And be renewed in the Spirit of your mind;
And that ye put on the NEW MAN, which after God is created
in righteousness and true holiness.”*

This explanation of what happens when we come after Jesus help us understand the complete change that God brings upon our lives when we deny ourselves of our own ways, crucify our flesh of the lusts and pleasures that used to control our lives, and follow Him in His steps walking as He walked. We have a completely new “lifestyle” with new friends, relatives, goals, and a new purpose for which we live and breathe each day. We are completely changed being devoted to the eternal life promised us by faith!

This complete change causes us to purify ourselves, so that we are now seeking to be like or go after the “image” of Jesus Christ, Who is the perfect example for us to follow!

We are not continuing in sin, for in Jesus is no sin as Colossians 3:9-10 explains again the new life that those seeking eternal life live,

*“Lie not one to another,
seeing that ye have put off the OLD MAN with his deeds;
And have put on the NEW MAN, which is renewed in knowledge
after the image of Him that created him.”*

If you truly love God, the love of God within you which is His Holy Spirit will compel or drive you to keep His commandments. We must understand that when Jesus died, just as all who will follow Him must die to ourselves and our lusts also that we might live for Him on this earth.

Paul explains this in II Corinthians 5:14,

*“For the love of Christ constraineth [compels; drives; urges] us;
because we thus judge [think; understand],
that if One [Jesus] died for all, then were all dead.”*

Again, this verse speaks of “dying” to your own fleshly lusts that you might “live” in newness of life. If you do not “die daily” to your own sinful desires as He “died” on the cross to wash away those sins, then you are condemned because of the sins that you daily practice. He continues in verses 15,

*“And that He died for all [the world], that they which live should not
henceforth [no longer] live unto themselves, but unto Him
which died for them, and rose again.”*

The entire world is living “unto themselves”, but those who desire to inherit eternal life must live “unto Jesus” or in obedience to His commandments. It is this change of life that makes you the “new person” or “new creation” in Jesus Christ through denying yourself, taking up your cross daily, and following Him. Read verse 16 to see what you are to do from “now on”,

*“Wherefore henceforth [**from now on**] know we no man after the flesh
[according to the thinking of the world]: yea, though we have known
Christ after the flesh [according to the thinking of the world],
yet now henceforth [no longer] know we Him no more [after the flesh].”*

The world says they “know Jesus”, but they think of Jesus as a long haired hippie that spoke only of “love”! They reject His righteous words while claiming to love Him. Those seeking eternal life know Jesus as our Deliverer from the bondage of sin, because we have repented and turned to Him with all our heart! We know Him as the Judge of those who will continue in their sins. We know Him as our entire life, for His words have changed us from the inside out! This is explained in verse 17,

*“Therefore if any man be **in Christ**, he is a **NEW CREATURE**:
old things **ARE PASSED AWAY**; behold,
ALL THINGS are become NEW.”*

We are in Christ, if we have come after Him by denying ourselves, taking up our cross of putting to death our fleshly desires, and following Him in His steps. We become a new creation or a completely new person. All of our past sins have been forgiven, so that we can now walk with Him in newness of life. Everything has become new in our lives, since we have repented and turned from sin. We now have new friends, brothers, sisters, mothers, and fathers who desire to endure unto the end faithfully. Everything in our lives has changed, and we must become like Jesus Christ. Read Romans 8:29,

“For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate [predetermine] to be conformed [become like; do the same] to the image [likeness] of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

Those who abide in Jesus do not practice sin, for they KNOW Him. Those who sin may say that they know Jesus, but they have not known Him. Read this in I John 3:6,

*“Whosoever abideth in Him **SINNETH NOT**:
whosoever sinneth **HATH NOT SEEN HIM, NEITHER KNOWN HIM.**”*

“Peer pressure” will cause you to fear what your family, friends, or others will think of you, but you already learned above that people will try to deceive you into thinking that “sinning” is natural or justified. They will twist and distort the scriptures to persuade you to sin. You know within yourself that disobedience to God’s law is wrong. When you disobey God in order to please your wife, husband, pastor, mother, or father, you love them more than you love God!

You must stand for the truth, for this is faith or faithfulness to God. Read this division in I John 3:9-10,

*“Whosoever is born of God **DOTH NOT COMMIT SIN;**
for His seed remaineth in him: and he CANNOT SIN,
because he is born of God.
In this the children of God are manifest [revealed],
and the children of the devil:
whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God,
neither he that loveth not his brother.”*

If you are truly “born again”, then you will strive to obey Jesus. God’s seed which is the Holy Spirit of God is within His children who deny themselves, take up their cross daily, and follow Jesus. You cannot practice sin and continue to be God’s child, for if you are disobedient to God you become one of the children of disobedience! Those that “commit sin” do so, because it is in their hearts to do wrong, no matter what they say with their mouth. If you are born of God, the Holy Spirit dwells within you convicting you of sin [the breaking of the commandments of God].

You have a daily choice to either yield to the Holy Spirit and remain a child of God or disobey the Holy Spirit and become one of the children of disobedience or children of the devil. It is always your choice to make! Listen as Jesus explains this division that must come in your life if you desire to walk with Him in Matthew 10:34-37,

*“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth:
I came not to send peace, but a sword.
For I am come to set a man at variance against his father,
and the daughter against her mother,
and the daughter in law against her mother in law.
And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household.
He that loveth father or mother **more than Me** is not worthy of Me:
and he that loveth son or daughter **more than Me** is not worthy of Me.”*

Your decision shows who you really are. Jesus explained this in Matthew 7:16-18,

*“Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns,
or figs of thistles? [no they do not]
Even so every GOOD TREE bringeth forth GOOD FRUIT;
but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.
A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit,
neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.”*

This parable that Jesus uses comparing a GOOD tree and a CORRUPT tree makes it very easy to understand that what you do [your fruit] shows what you are. Talk is very cheap as people freely lie one to another and boast about it, but the proof is in their daily denial of self, taking up their cross, and following Jesus in His steps as He walked! Will you make mistakes or fail? Yes, you will, for you are human, but there is a difference between making mistakes and practicing sin. Practicing sin is done by those who justify their wrong and do it anyway! Notice that Jesus said, “Strive...” This labor or striving is a daily battle to put to death our flesh by yielding to the Holy Spirit of God within us! What is the difference between obeying and disobeying the commandments of God?

*“Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down [cut],
and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”*

You become whom you hang around. It is human nature to want to please your “friends”, but you cannot love your friends more than you love God. You must take a stand against all sin, because you show your faith and love of God by separating yourself from sin and from those who would persuade you to do wrong. Listen as Paul commands this in Ephesians 5:11-12,

*“**And have no fellowship** with the unfruitful works of darkness,
but rather **reprove them**.
For it is a shame even to speak of those things
which are done of them in secret.”*

Listen as Jesus tells you of His coming judgment, and how the entire world shall be “resurrected” to receive in their bodies the punishment for their sins.

This is found in Matthew 13:41-42,

*“The Son of man shall send forth His angels,
and they shall gather out of His kingdom
ALL THINGS THAT OFFEND, and THEM WHICH DO INIQUITY;
And shall cast them into a furnace of fire:
there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”*

This is the “reward” of the wicked that rejected the commandments of God. Unfortunately, this will include those claiming to be “saved” who with their mouth “claimed” to “follow” Jesus, but they were liars that did not the truth. The next verse records the “reward” of the righteous [those who kept the commandments of God faithfully].

*“Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun
in the kingdom of their Father.
Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.”*

God, your Creator, has commanded you to obey Him, but you refuse to obey Him because you fear your wife, husband, relatives, friends, or the loss of the fun of this world. Jesus explains your disobedience and exposes for you the judgment that He will bring upon such “religious liars” that put others before Him in Mark 8:38,

*“Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and of My words
in this adulterous and sinful generation;
of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed,
when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”*

You show that you are ashamed of Jesus when you fear the consequences of obedience to Him! When you care more about what the people in your “church”, your wife, husband, relatives, or friends will think than what Jesus has commanded in the gospel. This is the sin of idolatry or putting something before God!

Read Jesus’ words in Luke 14:26,

*“If any man come to Me, and hate not his father,
and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren,
and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.
And whosoever doth not bear his cross,
and come after Me, cannot be My disciple.”*

Is Jesus actually commanding you to “hate” your father and mother, etc.? No! It may look like you hate them, because you no longer live the way that they live or do wrong as they want you to do. The new life that you have chosen in Christ is so pure and different from the life that you used to live that you appear to the world to hate your friends, because you will no longer practice sin with them. You must make sure that you hold to that firmly unto the end! This is the complete change of life that Jesus came into the world to teach in Matthew 10:21-22,

*“And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death,
and the father the child: and the children shall rise up
against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.*

*And ye shall be hated of all men for My name’s sake:
BUT HE THAT ENDURETH TO THE END SHALL BE SAVED.”*

YOU MUST MAKE THE DECISION whether you will be ashamed of Christ by continuing in sin or if you will repent and turn from your sins by daily denying yourself of your own desires, crucifying the flesh of the sins that you daily practice, and turning to Jesus. Jesus uses a parable about the two ways or choices that you have in Matthew 7:13-14. He commands you...

*“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for WIDE is the gate,
and BROAD is the way, that leadeth to destruction,
and MANY there be which go in thereat:*

*Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way,
which leadeth unto LIFE,
and FEW there be that find it.”*

IMPOSTERS!

Jesus said, “...few there be that find it.” Jesus knew that “many” would claim to be “saved”, but they are “imposters”! They refuse to turn from sin, and they formed their own “religion”, which is the god that their tax-exempt not-for-profit businesses [churches] have “invented” through twisting the scripture to justify their sin. They are “lovers of their own selves” and “lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God”! In Matthew 7:21-23, Jesus tells us that these “imposters” will claim to be “saved”!

*“Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord,
shall enter into the kingdom of heaven;
but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven.*

*Many will say to Me in that day,
Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name?
and in Thy name have cast out devils?
and in Thy name done many wonderful works?
And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you:
depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.”*

The truth is not taught in the sin-laden not-for-profit businesses called churches of today who are “lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God”. Their lives are just a “form of godliness” as they talk about Jesus, but they do not know Him which is shown by their disobedience to His commandments. Do not listen to these false teachers, for you are warned in I John 3:7-8,

*“Little children, **LET NO MAN DECEIVE YOU:**
he that **DOETH** RIGHTEOUSNESS IS RIGHTEOUS,
even as He is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil:
for the devil sinneth from the beginning.
For this purpose the Son of God was manifested,
that He might destroy the works of the devil.”*

Those who follow Jesus strive to be righteous as He is righteous. They that commit sin show what is in their hearts. Their lives daily blaspheme God [cause God’s name to be slandered] as the world sees their wicked lives! The scriptures warned 2,000 years ago of their sinful lives, and their sins that these not-for-profit businesses called churches practice and are listed as a warning in II Timothy 3:2-4,

*“For men shall be lovers of their own selves [selfish],
covetous [greedy], boasters, proud [stubborn],
blasphemers [slandorous; insulting], disobedient to parents,
unthankful [ungrateful], unholy [wicked],
Without natural affection [hard-hearted toward kindred],
trucebreakers [break promises], false accusers,
incontinent [no self-control], fierce [bad tempered],
despisers of those that are good, Traitors [not loyal],
heady [think they’re the “center of the world”],*

*highminded [better than others],
lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.”*

Look in the churches... on the television... on the radio... on the internet... where are the godly, upright, honest, and compassionate followers of Jesus Christ? You will not find them there for sure! Listen to John explain in I John 2:3-5,

*“And hereby we do **know** that we know Him,
if we keep His commandments.
He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth NOT His commandments,
is a LIAR, and the truth is NOT in Him.
But whoso **keepeth His Word**, in Him verily is
the love of God perfected: hereby **know we that we are in Him.**”*

You just read the truth! You must strive to keep the commandments of God in order to walk with Him. The liars are exposed by their sinful lives showing that the truth is not in them. If you are seeking to inherit eternal life, you are under obligation to walk or live your life as Jesus lived His life and commanded you to live in the gospel! This will take a complete change of life by the power of God, which is His Holy Spirit upon you. Listen to the outward signs of those who do not walk in the Spirit of God and will receive the wrath of God upon them.

*“(For many walk, of whom I have told you often,
and now tell you even weeping,
that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:
Whose end is destruction [eternal judgment],
whose God is their belly [their own lusts],
and whose glory is in their shame [boast of their sinful lives],
who mind earthly things.)” [They are concerned with the immediate]
Philippians 3:18-19*

It is so easy to follow the crowd or hide in a church on its way to hell while boasting of “morality” that contradicts the righteousness commanded by God! “Everyone is doing it!” is no excuse!

*“There is a way that seemeth right unto a man,
but the end thereof are the ways of death.”
Proverbs 16:25*

ARE THERE FEW THAT WILL BE SAVED?

Jesus knew that **very few** people would give up this world and all its lustful pleasures in order to inherit eternal life. The grace of God was shown to man when Jesus died for their sins, if they would only repent of their sins, deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Jesus in His steps. It is only if you seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness that all these things shall be added unto you [Matthew 6:33]. Jesus is asked this question in Luke 13:23-27,

*“Then said one unto Him, **Lord, are there few that be saved?***

And He said unto them...”

*“[YOU] **Strive** to enter in at the strait gate:
for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in,
and **shall not be able**.*

*When once the Master of the house is risen up,
and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without,
and to knock at the door, saying,*

Lord, Lord, open unto us; and He shall answer and say unto you,

I KNOW YOU NOT WHENCE YE ARE:

Then shall ye begin to say,

*We have eaten and drunk in Thy presence,
and Thou hast taught in our streets.*

*But He shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are;
depart from Me, **ALL YE WORKERS OF INIQUITY.**”*

In answer to the question, “*Are there few that be saved?*” Jesus would say to you, “Strive” with all your heart to serve Him, and He will by His grace deliver you from your sins. He knows that few will come after Him, for they love the world, their flesh, and the devil more than they love God! All whose sin is more important to them than inheriting eternal life will receive the wrath of God upon them... “...*depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity.*”

The Broad easy road is the way most trodden as all want to “fit in” and please others. Those who are seeking to inherit eternal life ARE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT from the world, for they are **NOT of this world.**

Those seeking to inherit eternal life do not love the world or the things that are in the world as we are commanded in I John 2:15,

*“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.
If any man love the world, the love of the Father is **not** in him.”*

You cannot serve God and this world! You cannot serve God and the false teachings of the not-for-profit businesses called churches of today! Jesus said this in Matthew 6:24,

*“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one,
and love the other; or else he will hold to the one,
and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”*

Read Jesus’ prayer for you in John 17:14,

*“I have given them Thy [God’s] word;
and **THE WORLD HATH HATED THEM**,
because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.”*

Since your obedient actions will make the world feel uncomfortable, the world will hate you. Just as Jesus is not of this world, so if you become one of His children, you must not be of the world. He prayed for this in verse 15-16,

*“I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world,
but that Thou shouldst **keep them from the evil**.
They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.”*

Jesus left His followers in this world, so we could be a shining example of holiness in this dark world of sin. Just as He was not of this world, so our lives must not be consumed with the things of this world. He separated Himself from sin and sinners.

*“Sanctify [separate; set apart unto God] them through Thy truth:
Thy word is truth. As thou hast sent Me into the world,
even so have I also sent them into the world.
And for their sakes **I sanctify** [separate; set apart unto God] **Myself**,
that they also might be sanctified [separated; set apart unto God]
through the truth.”*

Jesus sanctified [separated] Himself from sin as an example that we might sanctify [separate or set apart unto God] ourselves from sin.

He did not practice “a little sin”... He did NO sin as an example for us to strive to be like Him. As Jesus continues His prayer in John 17:20-23, He prays for those in the future [which is you and me] that will hear the truth. He teaches us that we must be “one” with Him and others that follow Him. This is done through daily fellowship, scripture reading, and prayer time together with others who are striving to inherit eternal life. This is how we are to “endure” the temptations of this world... and where we must be strengthened to continue on the strait and narrow way.

*“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them [US]
also which shall believe on Me through their word;
That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me,
and I in Thee, that **they also may be one in Us**:
that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.
And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them;
that **they may be one**, even as we are one:
I in them, and Thou in Me, that **they may be made perfect in one**;
and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me,
and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.”*

This shows us how much Jesus cared for the entire world, including those not even born yet! He prays that His children might be one with God and with Him as He is One with God. He also includes the true church of Jesus Christ in His prayer that we might be one in agreement with each other and one with God. The first church that gathered in Acts 2 fellowshiped daily, just as Jesus daily fellowshiped with His disciples. Their lives had been completely changed, so that they now had a completely different outlook and a new purpose for which to live. They had new friends, which were spiritual brothers, sisters, mothers, and fathers all seeking to be one in Christ with God and each other. With compassion and true love, they taught the world to repent and turn from their sins to escape the wrath of God. They were honest, compassionate, pure, and were seeking to walk with God and their spiritual brethren in righteousness.

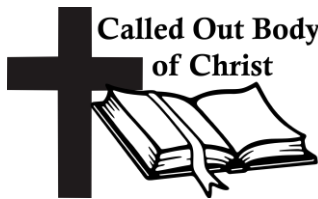
*“And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you,
There is no man that hath left house, or brethren,
or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands,
for My sake, and the gospel’s,
But he shall receive an hundredfold NOW in this time, houses,
and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands,
with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.”*

Listen as Jesus begs you to turn to Him from your sins in which you labor and are in heavy bondage that He might give you eternal rest in Him. You think that you are “controlling” your sin, but your sin is “controlling” you! It is your sin that keeps you from inheriting eternal life with God. It is your sin that causes you to not have the peace of God in your heart and mind. It is your sin that keeps you from fulfilling the purpose for which God created you... that is to walk with God in love, joy, and peace forever!

*“Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden,
and I will give you rest.
Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me;
for I am meek and lowly in heart:
and ye shall find rest unto your souls.
For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.”*

Matthew 19:28-30

Please repent of your sins and turn from them. Deny yourself of your own way, take up your cross of crucifixion of your sinful flesh, and follow Jesus in His steps. Yes, it is a complete change of life, but what a blessing it is to truly walk with God forever! God will dwell within you helping you to walk with Him! This is the grace of God that shows His love for you as you strive to enter in at the strait gate!



**Called Out Body
of Christ**

**Called Out Body of Christ in Gary, IN
1 (219) 883-5475**

truth@calledoutbodyofchrist.com

www.calledoutbodyofchrist.com