

What Saith the Scripture?

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## The Love of GOD for Sinners All

(Note: Please read this. If you have ever sinned against GOD, and all have, you will find food for thought in these few lines. It won't take much of your time. And no matter what your opinion of GOD is, pro or con, there are some ideas here that you need to consider.)

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD"

(Isaiah 1:18)

by Charles G. Finney

(edited by Katie Stewart)

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You've probably heard this verse before:

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16

But have you ever considered that sin is the most expensive thing in all of creation. Nothing has ever, or will ever, cost more. Whether repented of, or not, the cost of sin is unremittingly consumptive.

For pardoned sin, the Heavenly Father gave His only begotten Son as a ransom in full; and the Sacrificial Son obeyed in love, and laid down His life, a ransom for many.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13

"For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. 5:7,8

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." 1 John 4:9-11

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." 1 John 3:16

"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour." Eph. 5:2

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." Matt. 20:28

Unpardoned sin must forever bear down on the heart and soul of the sinner, himself. A stiff-necked, self-sustaining, self-righteous sinner has only himself, or herself, to bear the price of their folly. Their blood will be required, irrevocably. Their eternity will be required, irrevocably.

What costs more than sin?

The reality of sin is easily acknowledged everywhere we look. Sin is practiced extensively and indulgently, in all corners of our planet. Sin is an aggravation which irritates the conscience until there is no conscience left.

No one likes to talk about sin. But sin is the violation of the most supreme law -- the law of love to GOD Almighty and also man.

"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. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Matt. 22:37-40

This Law was designed and intended to secure the purest good of all creation. Obedience to this Law is absolute. Without absolute obedience to this Divine Law, there will be no peace or hope to the individual first, then to man collectively, and then ultimately, all of creation suffers. The proportion of value to all concerned, in keeping the Law, is the necessity, in equal proportion, of enforcing the Law and punishing disobedience. The Law must be honored, and disobedience punished. If not, supreme benefit is lost forever. Sin despises the Law. Sin mocks the Law, and the Lawgiver. To vindicate His Law, the LORD Jesus must judge the sinner. This He does do, and will do even more in an especially severe way, very shortly.

Read the following except from a sermon by Charles G. Finney, a famous evangelist from the 1800s:

Take for example any human government. Suppose the righteous and necessary laws which it imposes are disowned and dishonoured. In such a case the violated law must be honoured by the execution of its penalty, or something else not less expensive, and probably much more so, must be endured. Transgression must cost happiness, somewhere, and in vast amount.

In the case of Gods government, it has been deemed advisable to provide a substitute -- one that should answer the purpose of saving the sinner, and yet of honouring the Law. This being determined on, the next great question was -- How shall the expense be met?

The Bible informs us how the question was in fact decided. By a voluntary conscription -- shall I call it -- or donation? Call it as we may, it was a voluntary offering. Who shall head the subscription? Who shall begin where so much is to be raised? Who will make the first sacrifice? Who will take the first step in a project so vast?

The Bible informs us. It began with the Infinite Father. He made the first great donation. He gave His only begotten Son -- this to begin with -- and having given Him first, He freely gives all else that the

exigencies of the case can require. First, He gave His Son to make the atonement due to law; then gave and sent His Holy Spirit to take charge of this work.

The Son, on His part, consented to stand as the representative of sinners, that He might honour the Law, by suffering in their stead. He poured out His blood, made a whole life of suffering a free donation on the altar -- withheld not His face from spitting, nor His back from stripes -- shrunk not from the utmost contumely that wicked men could heap on Him.

So the Holy Ghost also devotes Himself to most self-denying efforts, unceasingly, to accomplish the great object."

Very easy, indeed, it would have been for the Father to have handled this situation as He did when certain angels kept not their first estate. Lawlessness broke out among these celestial beings, and the Father did not tolerate it. He cast them out of Heaven, and down to hell, with swift and sure judgment. In like manner, He might easily have treated us in the same way. We do deserve it.

But in man's case, the LORD, the Merciful God, designed a method of procedure, profoundly painful to Himself, and to His dear Son, whereby He might gain mens hearts to Himself. He then offered this plan to the whole of mans race -- without exception. Only in that way would a man know that this offer really was made exactly to include himself. Only then would a man know that this amazing love was to extend to him also. Had there not been an offer to include all, then some would always doubt if God could love them, and thereby confound faith. No, the gift was, and is, extended to whosoever. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Now, Why? we might ask, would the LORD of Glory desire to do such an incredible thing as this? As the Supreme Law states, love is the motivation. But what a love this is! This is a love that no man has ever given, or received, in his own efforts. This is an unimaginably, generous love -- a love we cannot fathom. And, all the while, with this amazing gift of mercy and love, God is defending the Law, while fulfilling it. He is respecting the Law, upholding it, vindicating it, by requiring payment to be made for its having been broken.

Sin mocks the Law of God. Man's sin insults the Law, as well as the One who wrote It and gave It. The righteousness of God's Law is the righteousness of His own character. Our sinning mocks Gods character. Our sinning mocks the very essence of who God is. "God is love." 1 John 4:8 Our sinning scorns the most inner part of God's holy being. It scorns the gift of His Son as our substitutional payment to the Law. Our continued sinning counts His sacrifice as nothing. " ... seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame." Heb. 6:6

This offer of God's is not an empty one. His only, dear Son did come, and in human form, with bodily human feelings, and bodily human pains. Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God, in Whom "neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12 This obedient and loving Son, Jesus, did fulfill His Father's donation to the Law for our sins. It is a finished, completed fact.

This offer is freely given to anyone with a tender heart to receive it. Jesus suffered and bled for you, to pay the price of atonement, or "at-one-ment", with the demands of the Law and God. This price is paid fully, and in love. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Rom. 13:10

But it must be received by faith. Make no mistakes concerning this point. Acceptance of historical fact is not the same thing as receiving the sweet person of Jesus Christ as your own personal Savior. Intellectual assent is only the beginning. If Jesus doesn't mean enough to you to live by His Word, in pleasing Him -- not yourself -- then you don't love Him. He's proved His love to you. He gave His life for yours. If you can't give Him your life for His, then you don't love Him. Your faith must work by love, or its just dead works.

Make no mistake! Just believing historical facts about what Jesus did is not enough. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Rom. 10:10 Understand, that the atonement Jesus provided to man, allowed the Father God Almighty in Heaven to open His arms and embrace a repentant sinner like you, all the while knowing the Law wasn't being disgraced by such a relationship.

And this isn't just a matter of missing the punishment of hell, that you so richly deserve. This decision must be founded on love -- His love for you, and your love for Him. Only then will you be willing to give up your own ways, in exchange for His most excellent ways. Then Love can work His highest good in you. Love can work His highest good through you, for others. Only in love can you truly obey God, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Matt. 22:37-40

Real repentance is a life-changing action that lasts for eternity. Your heart will be impressed with the deep sense of His holiness and purity. True repentance will bring about the renouncing of all known sin, and a sincere zeal to live all your life to please Him. Always remember that it was **your own sin** that nailed Jesus to His cross, and you promise to never add more sin to it.

"Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: He preserveth the souls of His saints; He delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked." Ps. 97:10

"The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate." Prov. 8:13

"The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the LORD: but He loveth him that followeth after righteousness." Prov. 15:9

"By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil." Prov. 16:6

"A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident." Prov. 14:16

If you fail, and again sin, you may again ask for forgiveness.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9

" I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." Ps. 32:5

"He that covereth His sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Prov. 28:13

"Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Titus 2:14

"Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." Mic. 7:18-19

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." 2 Cor. 7:1

"But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." 1 Pet. 1:15-16

But if your **common habit is to knowingly disobey**, and therefore sin ( "to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." James 4:17), and if your heart does not truly desire the things of GOD, then He will know it, and He will not be mocked. "Be not deceived; GOD is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Gal.6:7 You must forsake sin. If you don't, then simply put, you don't love Him. It is absolutely impossible to love God and sin at the same time.

Consider these verses.

"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 ... Jesus answered and said unto him, 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." John 14:21-23

"If ye love Me, keep My commandments." John 14:15

"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

"But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him." 1 John 2:5

"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous." 1 John 5:3 (grievous=burdensome)

"And this is love, that we walk after His commandments." 2 John 1:6

"And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments." Deut. 5:10

"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." Matt. 6:24

"Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh." James 3:12

"Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" Matt. 7:16

From this point on, with the knowledge you now have, you are under the greatest responsibility to obey the Light He has shown you. "Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have." Luke 8:18 To go against this Light is to trample beneath your feet, the very Son of God, whose blood was freely offered for you. "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" Heb. 10:29 You will add, to all of your other sins, the greatest insult to a most loving and holy LORD. Love works to the highest good of all. Since love is what God is, then He wishes to work to your highest good. And He has already paid all that He could for you. The One and Only True God has paid the most expensive and excessive price that He could possibly pay. He couldn't have paid more! He died for you! What will you do with this beautiful gift? He offers you an eternity in Heaven, with joy unspeakable, and a close relationship of His love, forever. All He asks of you is **everything** -- your all -- your total heart, life, possessions -- all that makes you who you are. Is that too much? He has given, and will continue to give for eternity, His all for you! Is it too much for you to forsake your own evil ways, for His infinitely good ways? Does He deserve anything less than your all? If it's too much for you to give, then you shall have to pay for your own sin. It is your burden, and you shall bear it alone.

But if you can't bear to live without His precious love and care, then you may be asking, "How can I have this faith?" You can receive faith to believe by praying for it. This wondrous sacrificial gift, given by the LORD Jesus Christ, has already been offered. Just receive it.

"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." John 1:12

"Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark 11:24

"She saith unto Him, Yea, LORD: I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." John 11:27

"These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His Name." John 20:31

"And by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Acts 13:39

"Be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me." Acts 27:25

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the LORD Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Rom. 10:9

"In whom the god of this world [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." 2 Cor. 4:4

"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." 1 Thess. 2:13

Hear Rev. Finney:

Many take each forward step most carefully, with fear and trembling, as if there were the utmost doubt whether there could be any mercy for them. So with myself. I was on my way to my office, [Mr. Finney was a lawyer before he came to Christ, and then later became an evangelist.] when the question came before my mind, What are you waiting for? You need not get up such an ado. All is done already. You have only to consent to the proposition, give your heart right up to it at once. This is all. Just so it is. All Christians and sinners ought to understand that the whole plan is complete, that the whole of Christ -- His character, His work, His atoning death, and His ever-living intercession -- belong to each and every person, and need only to be accepted. There is a full ocean of it! There it is. You may just as well take it as not. It is as if you stood on the shore of an ocean of soft, pure water, famishing with thirst; you are welcome to drink, and you need not fear lest you exhaust that ocean, or starve anybody else by drinking yourself. You need not feel that you are not made free to that ocean of waters; you are invited and pressed to drink -- yea, to drink abundantly! This ocean supplies all your need. You do not need to have in yourself the attributes of Jesus Christ, for His attributes become, in practice, yours for all possible use. As saith the Scriptures, He is of God made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. What do you need? Wisdom? Here it is. Righteousness? Here it is. Sanctification? Here you have it. All is in Christ. Can you possibly think of any one thing needful for your moral purity, or your usefulness, which is not here in Christ? Nothing. All is provided here."

"The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in Him." Lam. 3:24

As we said at the start, sin is the most expensive thing in this universe. You are now aware what a price has been paid for you, and that you may be redeemed and made an heir of God and of Heaven. Oh, what an expensive business for you to indulge in sin! Turn to the One who has destroyed the works of the devil, and He will make you free.