

WHAT IS THE REMEDY FOR SIN?

Some of us remember a time when coming down with a particular sickness most likely meant that we would be given Mom's or Grandma's home remedy, which was almost guaranteed to make us feel better. Just what is a remedy? When dealing with sickness, a remedy is a therapy or medicine that cures or relieves a disease. In general, it means something that corrects an error or fault.

Some situations and some mistakes in life are certainly more serious than others. A coach may be frustrated when his players keep dropping the ball, but his players dropping a ball during a game is a problem of little significance compared to the agony that the same coach feels when he learns that his own son has an incurable disease that will take his life in less than a year. We all recognize that some problems in life are minor, while others are of much greater consequence.

Though it is not a popular topic, "sin" is a part of the Bible's message from its first book (*Genesis*) through its very last one (*Revelation*). We are convinced that there is nothing in life that is more *serious* than sin, there is nothing in life that is more *important* than finding God's remedy for sin, and there is nothing more *urgent* in life than using God's remedy to deal with and remove our sin!

My friend, sin is not a joking matter. There is nothing funny about sin or its awful consequences. Are you interested in God's remedy for the sins of mankind? We pray that you are, and we urge you to read on.

THE REALITY OF SIN

The Bible defines sin as "transgression" of God's law, "lawlessness," and "unrighteousness" (1 John 3:4; 5:17). Just who is guilty of sin? The Bible says, "*For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God*" (Romans 3:23).

Men and women of all nations and cultures break the law of God, and thus become sinners that stand in need of the Lord's salvation. That is why Jesus charged His apostles to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every person (Mark 16:15,16). Because of sin, all men need the gospel. Yes, the matter of sin is a universal dilemma. One

that will open his eyes and be honest about what he sees will have to admit that in our day, sin is running wild and out of control! The daily news is filled with items that reveal immorality and blatant violation of the Bible's teaching. But, we are not the first generation that has had to deal with widespread lawlessness. Near the end of the first century, God's messenger wrote, ". . . *the whole world lieth in wickedness*" (1 John 5:19). There is no denying it: sin is a reality in the world.

MAN'S REACTIONS TO SIN

Some see sin as "no big deal," yet the Bible shows that sin is the one thing that can separate a person from the God of heaven (Isaiah 59:2). Others will tell you that they find sinful activities to be "fun." The Bible does speak of "*the pleasures of sin*" (Hebrews 11:25), but it also declares that those pleasures are temporary and that "*the wages of sin is death*" (Romans 6:23).

Some make a mockery of sin. Such an attitude reminds us of what the Bible says in Proverbs 14:9: "*Fools mock at sin*" [NKJV]. On the other hand, there are those that realize the seriousness of committing sin, but their idea is, "I'll just do it for a little while, then I'll quit." This approach fails to really deal with sin at all, and casts aside the Bible's instruction that "*now is the day of salvation*" (2 Corinthians 6:2).

Then there are those stubborn folks who continuously deny that they have ever done anything wrong. Again, God disagrees, saying that one who denies sin in his life deceives himself and does not have the truth in him (1 John 1:8). Some readily admit their sin, but after they admit it, they go right back to it once more, never forsaking it. More than once the king of ancient Egypt, the Pharaoh in the Bible during the days of Moses, confessed, "*I have sinned*" (Exodus 9:27; 10:16). However, each time when he got relief from his suffering, he ran back into his life of sin.

Another popular way of approaching sin is for a person to point an accusing finger at someone else that has committed a sin. But really, friend, if I can somehow put the spotlight on someone else and that poor soul's mistakes, does that in any way lesson or

remove my own wrongdoing? Of course not! Some have gone so far as to attack the ones that point out their sin. But, again, if I can get rid of the messenger or do something to discredit his influence in the minds of others, does that somehow cover or take away my sins? Not one bit.

There is a final reaction to sin that deserves to be mentioned. That response is the one that we see when a person admits his/her mistakes and seeks for God's answer to the question of how to solve the problem of sin. At least three times in the Book of Acts we see people making such an inquiry, asking what the Lord wants them to do in order to have their sins forgiven (Acts 2:36,37; 16:30; 22:10). How refreshing it is to find a soul that is searching for God's remedy for sin!

WRONG REMEDIES – PSEUDO REMEDIES FOR SIN

In days gone by, some in the medical profession thought that "bleeding" a person was the way to deal with certain illnesses. As we now know, that approach was not a genuine remedy at all. So it is in the matter of dealing with sin. Through the years people have come up with a lot of so-called solutions for sin. They are, in every case, wrong remedies or pseudo remedies.

Time is not the remedy for sin. When it comes to the wounds that we encounter in our relationships with other people, it is true that the passing of time can help in the healing process. But in the matter of the guilt of sin, time has no power to remove sin. "But if men forget my mistake, maybe the Lord will, too." ". . . *but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment*" (Ecclesiastes 11:9).

Making confession of sin to a "priest" is not the remedy for sin. In the Bible there is no concept of a "confessional" in which a person can have sins forgiven by making confession to a church-appointed person. This quickie "fix-it" approach is simply not Bible teaching.

Contrary to what many seem to believe, good works are also unable to provide a remedy for sin. It is true that the Lord wants us to be "*zealous of good works*" (Titus 2:14), but doing good things, even an abundance of them, could never wash away one sin.

Salvation from sin is “*Not of works, lest any man should boast*” (Ephesians 2:9).

What about money? Some look at money as the “cure all” for any endeavor in life. Not so. Money cannot buy peace of mind, love, or true happiness. More to the point, it also could never be the remedy for sin. In fact, giving large sums of money to religious organizations with the intent of doing good deeds, could never cause the giver’s sins to be blotted out. The possession of money simply has nothing to do with the remission of sins. Nothing.

Here is another scenario to consider. If a person commits a sin, but moves away and acts as if nothing ever happened, can the distance that he puts between himself and “the scene of the crime” remove his wrongdoing? No, distance is not the remedy for sin. One can move to a place where no one knows of his past sins, but God knows, because all things are “*naked and open*” before His eyes (Hebrews 4:13). Whether it is here, or there, when sin is committed, “*be sure your sin will find you out*” (Numbers 32:23).

These pseudo remedies for sin, even in the religious world, are widely accepted. None of them, though, can get the job done when it comes to removing sin. What, then, is a person to do?

THE REAL REMEDY FOR SIN

Thank God that He provides a remedy for sin! Note carefully that according to the Bible, the Lord has “a” remedy for sin, not “many” of them.

The solution to sin is the cross of Jesus, as it is only by the death of Jesus that men can be reconciled to God (Romans 5:8-10). “*For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God*” (1 Corinthians 1:18). What can wash away a person’s sins? As the old hymn says, “Nothing but the blood of Jesus.” “*In whom (Jesus, rdc) we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace*” (Ephesians 1:7). Jesus’ blood has the power to wash away the sins of the whole world!

Is there something that man must do in order to receive the benefits of the remedy for sin that God offers through His Son Jesus? Just as the

medicine that remains in the bottle or packet is of no value to a sick patient – he must open it and use it, so the blood of Jesus will save no one that does not “take it and use it.” Time and again the Bible speaks of Jesus being “the Savior.” Indeed, He is. But whom does He save? Listen to the Bible’s answer: “*And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him*” (Hebrews 5:9). Jesus saves those that obey Him. Thus, our salvation from sin is conditional!

Put another way, the question would be: “Just when does the blood of Jesus save a person from sin?” According to the Bible, salvation is in the Christ (2 Timothy 2:10). Somehow a person must get into the death of the Christ for it was in His death that He shed His blood (John 19:33,34). The Bible says, “*Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?*” (Romans 6:3). So, one that is scripturally baptized is baptized into the Christ and into His death. It is at the point of scriptural baptism, then, that a person’s sins are washed away (Acts 22:16).

Prior to baptism in water, a person must believe that Jesus is the Son of God (Mark 16:16). He must also repent of his past sins (Acts 2:38), and make confession of his faith in Jesus (Acts 8:37). “But if a person has to do something in order to be saved, especially be baptized, wouldn’t that make man his own savior?” The truth is, it was *God* that set up the scheme of redemption, and that scheme or plan sets forth conditions for man’s salvation. Those are conditions that you and I must meet, but meeting those conditions or terms that God has revealed in the Bible does not make us the hero. It is by *God’s* grace that we are saved. In fact, it is by *His* word of grace (Acts 20:32) that we even have the chance to learn about *His* desire and plan to save us. Thank God for *His* wonderful remedy for sin! Friend, have You been to Jesus to be cleansed by His blood?

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(This booklet was written by Roger D. Campbell)

