

SHEDDING LIGHT ON BIBLICAL CONTRASTS

#4 – Christ Paid for Our Sins / We Pay for Our Sins?

Introduction

Ralph, a wealthy Christian businessman, became romantically involved with his secretary. He often took her to lunch & gave her expensive presents. Mary enjoyed these favours, soothing her conscience by telling herself that she was being unjustly cheated of the better life because of the small salary her husband made as a Christian worker. Ignoring the warnings of their church leaders, Ralph & Mary divorced their mates & married each other.

Within 2 years, Ralph developed physical problems. He cries when he talks about what he did, and says he remembers the warning of a friend who told him he would suffer consequences for his sin. But he had gone ahead, confident that all the punishment for his sins had been paid for by Christ.

His new wife is also quite unhappy. The things money can buy don't produce the pleasure she expected from them. She feels trapped – caring for a sick man she doesn't really love.

Are both of these people paying for their sin? If so, how does this square with the idea that Jesus Christ paid for all of our sins on the cross?

Christ Paid for Our Sins

1. Christ died to take away our sin (**John 1:29**) and to release us from condemnation (**Romans 8:1**).
2. Christ's death is the basis on which our sins are paid for, once & for all (**Hebrews 9:25-28; 10:10-18**) and through which we are given a completely new standing before God (**Romans 4:25**).
3. Christ's blood was shed so that our sins could be forgiven & not held against us (**Matthew 26:28; Romans 3:20-26; Romans 5:6-11**).
4. Christ's death makes it possible for us to stand before God as "*holy*" & "*blameless*" (**Colossians 1:21-22**).

We Pay for Our Sins

1. Moses paid for his sin of anger & disobedience by being forbidden to enter the Promised Land (**Deuteronomy 32:48-52; 34:1-12**).
2. The Bible warns both believers & unbelievers that sin has bad consequences (**Galatians 6:7-8**).
3. Careless observance of the Lord's Supper was the cause for sickness & death among believers in Corinth (**1 Corinthians 11:27-30**).

Cont... P.2

4. People who have been forgiven through faith in Christ will stand before Him for judgement (**2 Corinthians 5:10**).

Explanation

The full penalty for all our sins has been paid by Christ. **Hebrews 9:27-28** tells us that just as Christ was once sacrificed to bear the sins of many (i.e. all who trust Him), He will return to complete the salvation of those who look for Him.

Paul in **Colossians 1:20-22** declared that Christ made peace between sinners & God through His death on the cross. This truth is reiterated throughout the Scriptures. Christ met the full requirements of God's just anger against sin. Therefore, God can forgive & accept us without violating His holy nature. At the moment we place our faith in Christ, God as our Judge declares us righteous & accepts us into His family.

The forgiveness of **1 John 1:9** relates to our new relationship with God. As our Father, He removes our daily sins so that they will not be barriers to our fellowship with Him.

Yes, Christ died for our sins. But Paul warned believers against fooling themselves into thinking they can sin with impunity. He said that we will reap what we sow (**Galatians 5:7**).

God may allow sin to work out its natural consequences – a broken home, venereal disease, financial difficulty, a diseased liver – in the life of a Christian. Furthermore, He will chasten us like an earthly father does a disobedient child (**Hebrews 12:6**).

In some cases, for example, He will bring pain, distress, or even physical death (**1 Cor. 11:30-32**) to a Christian who refuses to turn away from a sinful lifestyle.

Ultimately, He will deal with unconfessed & unforsaken sin at the judgement seat of Christ. Every Christian will stand there to “*receive the things done in the body... whether good or bad*” (**2 Cor. 5:10**). But this will not be punishment. Rather, it will be an evaluation of the quality of our lives for the purpose of determining rewards.

Resolution

God as Judge views us as guiltless because Jesus Christ has paid the full penalty for our sins. But as righteous Father He chastens us when we are disobedient & lets us reap the natural consequences of our transgressions.

Application

When we as believers fall (through deliberate transgressions) or fail (through weakness), we need not despair & think we will be condemned to hell. Christ Jesus paid the complete price for all our sins – past, present and future.

We mock God and will reap sad consequences if we presume on His grace by living sinful lifestyles (see **Galatians 6:7, 8**).

We must always bear in mind that Christ knows our every thought, hears our every word & observes our every deed, and that the quality of our lives will be evaluated at the Judgement Seat of Christ (**2 Corinthians 5:10**).

