

# Salvation not Condemnation | John 3:17-21 | 7/21/2019

- Jesus came to save, not to condemn. | John 3:17-18
  - **Read John 3:17-18**
  - Scripture makes it clear why Jesus came into the world. He came to save, to give us a second chance. In contrast, He did not come to condemn.
  - Jesus having just stated God's love for the world by sacrificing Jesus certainly proves this. Jesus's actions were out of love and mercy, not punishment.
    - John 3:16a
      - “For God so loved the world...”
    - **What is condemnation?**
      - The definition of the word “condemn” is an act of pronouncing someone guilty after weighing the evidence.
      - In the biblical sense to be condemned speaks to one spending an eternity separated from Christ living in Hell.
      - We are condemned because of our sin.
    - **What does it feel like to be “condemned” in a worldly sense?**
    - As sinners, we are already condemned, Christ didn't come down to pronounce our guilt, but instead to save us from it.
    - **Christ came to proclaim a way of freedom from our condemnation.**
    - **Christ came to provide the only way that we could be forgiven of our sin and to remove the penalty of condemnation.**
      - Our sin condemns us
        - Romans 3:23
          - “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,”
        - Romans 6:23
          - “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
      - Belief and faith in Christ will save us
        - Romans 8:1
          - “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”
    - **Ironically, while Jesus came to save instead of to condemn, the world chose to condemn Him.**
      - Mark 10:33
        - “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, and **they will condemn him to death** and deliver him over to the Gentiles.”
      - Mark 14:64
        - “You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision? **And they all condemned him as deserving death.**”
      - “Condemned to death” is exactly what Jesus came to save us from.
    - **He saved us through His sacrifice for our sins on the cross. We all have a debt that must be paid, and He paid it on our behalf.**
      - Colossians 2:14
        - “by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.”
      - We all have a debt that must be paid.

- **That debt can be paid in one of two ways. Either with Christ's sacrifice as the substitute or with our own lives.**
- **Everyone has sinned and deserves condemnation. We all deserve to spend an eternity separated from God.**
  - **Why are we condemned in the first place?**
    - One might wonder why are we condemned in the first place? We certainly didn't ask for it. We didn't wake up one day and say, "you know I want to spend eternity in Hell."
    - We might even think that we certainly don't "deserve" to be, that we didn't do anything wrong.
  - **We have inherited our condemnation because of the sins of Adam.**
    - Romans 4:12
      - "Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned"
    - Romans 4:18
      - "Therefore, as **one trespass led to condemnation for all men**, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as **by the one man's disobedience, the many were made sinners**, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous."
    - **One trespass led to the condemnation for all. One act of disobedience resulted in us all being made sinners.**
      - **We didn't choose it**, but it is the inheritance that we all receive, which is known as "**original sin.**"
      - We are born with it and are condemned because of it, but Christ has provided us a way out.
    - **Therefore, it is not that we are good people who are born holy and righteous who then falter and sin. We are simply sinners who sin.**
    - **Sin is the result of our fallen condition, a natural consequence of who we are.**
  - **Do you recall what it felt like when you realized for the first time what it means to be a sinner? What did it feel like when you realized how your sinful actions affected Christ?**
- **But Christ paid the debt that we owe, freed us from the penalty of the law, and we are no longer condemned.**
  - Without Christ, we are all condemned. However, because of His sacrifice and love for us, this debt has been paid.
    - Colossians 2:13-14
      - And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross."
    - Romans 8:3-4a
      - "For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and

for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled. In us,..."

- Romans 7:6a
  - "But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive,..."
    - This way, the penalty of the law was satisfied through Christ.
    - Our debt has been paid, we are no longer condemned, but we have been saved.
  - **Think of the most significant debt that you currently owe or have owed, like a house, car or medical, etc. How would you feel if someone made a considerable sacrifice to pay that debt for you?**
  - **Now think of the debt and obligation that you owe because of your sins, transgressions, and what that penalty is (death). Reflect on how you feel knowing of Christ's sacrifice and payment of that debt, which is infinitely beyond any worldly obligation. That you are now no longer condemned but made righteous.**
- However, His death and the subsequent gift of salvation that comes through belief does not mean that everyone will automatically be saved. We must still believe.
  - John 3:18
    - "Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God."
  - **While Christ made an atoning sacrifice for our sin, if we do not believe and have faith in Him and what He did, then we will not be forgiven.**
    - We will continue to be condemned and will spend an eternity in Hell because of our sins.
    - **Using human reasoning, we might think of this as being "unfair." We might think, well, Christ should have just saved everyone regardless if they believed or not.**
    - **One might even go as far as to say that God enjoys seeing the sinners punished and receiving their justice.**
      - The Scriptures tell us that God does not enjoy the death of a sinner.
        - Ezekiel 18:23
          - "Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord GOD, and not rather that he should turn from his way and live?"
        - Ezekiel 18:32
          - "For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord GOD; so turn, and live."
      - God does not enjoy seeing anyone sent to Hell. Instead, God desires that all would come to Him.
        - 1 Timothy 2:4
          - "who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."
        - 2 Peter 3:9
          - "The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance."
    - **But in truth, God would be perfectly just not to have saved anyone.**
      - We have all broken God's laws and deserve the punishment for doing so.

- God isn't obligated to save us. He would be perfectly just not to have saved anyone.
    - However, out of His great love for us, he has provided us a way to be justified by being the propitiation for our sins.
      - Romans 3:25
        - "whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance, he had passed over former sins.
    - **God has then given His children, the Christians, a responsibility to share the knowledge and truth about Him to the world.**
      - We are called to share this truth of the Gospel with the whole world so that they too can come to Christ.
      - Luke 24:47
        - "and that repentance and forgiveness of sin should be proclaimed in his name to all nations beginning from Jerusalem."
      - Mark 16:15
        - "And he said to them, Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation."
    - **Is salvation about "fairness," or instead justice and grace?**
    - **How important is "our part" in God's plan of redemption?**
- Light and darkness | John 3:19-21
  - **Read John 3:19-21**
  - **People loved the darkness more than the light**
    - This certainly sums up our world today.
    - You have a world that would rather live and breathe the darkness, the sin, life in disobedience to Christ than to come to the light.
      - Christ came, bringing a beacon of hope to the world. The world instead either turns it back or treats Him with hostility.
      - They would rather continue in their sins and travel on the path of destruction.
    - **The reason for this is because our sins keep us in the darkness, the more we sin, the more are attracted to the dark.**
      - The Scripture says they loved the darkness more than the light because of their evil works.
      - Those who do wicked things are not attracted to the light because those sinful deeds are exposed.
      - They would rather instead stay in the darkness and continue in their sin.
    - **Our sinful nature desires the dark**
      - Our sinful nature draws us into the darkness because it wants to oppose God.
      - It desires to keep and to stay in the dark.
      - This why it can be difficult for one to come to the light, and for one who is saved to keep themselves from sinning again. The darkness is quite attractive.
    - **This is also why there is such hostility towards the Gospel, and it can be difficult to witness to others.**
      - There is no question the world is hostile to the Scriptures, to anything about Jesus Christ.
      - Those who reveal in the darkness want nothing to do with the light and therefore will oppose it with every chance they get.

- This can make it challenging to share the Gospel when we continuously run into this opposition.
  - **For one to come into the light is to allow their deeds to be exposed for what they are.**
    - To come to the light also implies that our sins are exposed, and they must be confessed.
    - The world resists this. They do not want to be told that their desires are sinful. Yet this is what must happen for one to receive forgiveness.
    - One must open their hearts and allow their sins to be made known, to repent and then receive forgiveness.
- **The light is also attractive**
  - While there is certainly an attraction to the darkness, there is also an attraction to the light.
  - **When one has seen the light of Christ and has decided to put aside their sin and walk in obedience, they will feel an overwhelming and attractive desire to the light.**
    - 1 John 1:7
      - “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.”
  - When you have experienced the power of forgiveness and living your life righteously it changes your complete outlook on life.
  - No longer are here to serve yourself, but now you are here to serve Christ, and you are glad.
- **Have you experienced the pull of living in the darkness, have you experienced how it causes you to want to stay away from the light?**
- **Have you experienced the pull of living in the light, have you experience how it causes you to want to stay away from the darkness?**