

God Spoke - and God Speaks 
A Study Through The Epistle Called ebrews

5 Take Heed, Beloved!


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5.1 What Pattern Are You Following?

 focal verse Hebrews 3:10-12 (KJV) "Wherefore I was grieved¹ with that generation, and said, They do alway err² in their heart; and they have not known my ways. {11} So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) {12} Take heed³, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God."

Hebrews 3:17 (KJV) "But with whom was he grieved¹ forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcases fell in the wilderness?"

It is certain that the Christian *is not perfect* by any means. Though we have been *positionally sanctified* at the moment we accepted Jesus Christ as Savior, we are still creatures tainted by sin. Sin is in us, in our flesh, surely passed on from generation to generation, from Adam to son, in a single unbroken chain from the foundation of the world. We are *one and all* sinners, because Adam sinned, and brought death - sin's wages -



1. prosochthizo {pronounced pros-okh-thid'-zo}, Aorist Active Indicative, to loath, spew out, become disgusted with
2. aei + Present Passive Participle planao, {pronounced ah-eye' +plan-ah'-o} = perpetually fall away from the truth, stray off the path of righteousness or the leading of God, detouring into sin
3. Present Active Imperative blepo {pronounced blep'-o}, keep on looking


on every living soul. This is clearly illustrated in 1 Corinthians:

1 Corinthians 15:21-22 (KJV) "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. {22} For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

The bad news is "**in Adam all die**", but the good news is "**in Christ shall all be made alive**". Sin brings death, but the Son brings life, both extended temporal life as well as eternal life in God's Heaven. At the very moment you accepted Jesus Christ as Savior God *imputed* or *ceremonially and legally* credited *His righteousness* to your name. This is a *righteousness imputed* by faith alone in Christ alone:

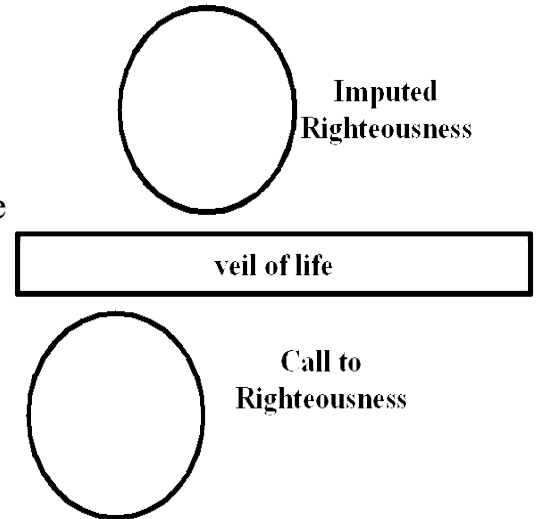
Romans 3:21-24 (KJV) "But now the righteousness of God without⁴ the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; {22} Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: {23} For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; {24} Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:"

This Heavenly righteousness is the "**righteousness of**

 4. *choris* {pronounced kho-rece'}, separate, apart from, without any, besides

God without⁴ the law". We are *positionally sanctified* or *set apart* in God's eyes as His children - and will one day live with Him in eternity.

The Christian is therefore a person who lives in two separate realities. If we were to look at the Christian way of life we could illustrate this with two circles. The top circle represents *your imputed*



righteousness. This imputation of righteousness has been given to *every believer of God in every age*. Abraham, for instance, believed in God, and God imputed righteousness to his Heavenly account *based on the yet future* Cross of Christ:

Romans 4:20-25, 5:1 (KJV) "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; {21} And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. {22} And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. {23} Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; {24} But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; {25} Who was delivered for our offenses, and was

raised again for our justification."

Romans 5:1 (KJV) "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:"

James 2:23 (KJV) "And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God."

We who believe, like *Abraham our father*, are justified by faith in Jesus. Faith alone in Christ alone saves,

1. Though righteousness _____ to our upper circle, in *God's courtroom*, we live out our daily, physical lives in the *bottom circle*. In this bottom circle, *our current state of being*, we have a body that is _____.

because faith alone in Christ alone *imputes righteousness* to that top circle:

Romans 3:28 (KJV) "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."

Though righteousness *has been imputed or credited* to our upper circle, in *God's courtroom*, we live out our daily, physical lives in the *bottom circle*. In this bottom circle, *our current state of being*, we have a body that is *literally infused with the Old Sin Nature*. The Christian is called, just as God's people of old were called, to *believe God and allow God* to work through us. We are

called to *surrender to Christ*:

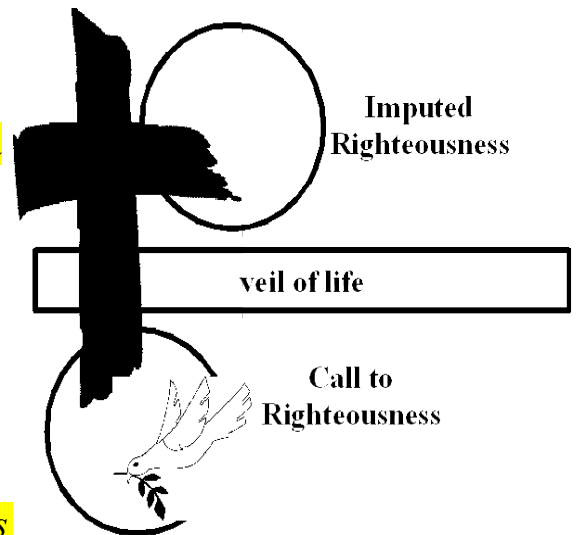
Galatians 2:20-21 (KJV) "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. {21} I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."

Colossians 1:27 (KJV) "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:"

1 Corinthians 3:16 (KJV) "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

The Christian is not sinless, but is a sinner saved by Grace. The Christian does not order his life according to the Law of God, but surrenders his life to God's Holy Spirit who *indwells* him. By surrendering our *moment by moment* life to God

the Holy Spirit, we begin to *naturally* fulfill God's Law
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without having to *mechanically* force ourselves to follow

2. The Christian is not sinless, but is a _____. The Christian does not order his life according to the Law of God, but surrenders his life to God's Holy Spirit _____.


it. When we live by the Spirit of God, we do those things which the Spirit of God, Who gave man the Law, wants us to do.

Romans 8:4-5 (KJV) "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. {5} For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit."

The Cross of Christ becomes *a bridge* that promises the believer passage from this life, across the veil, and into eternal life. Faith in the Cross and in His resurrection from the grave causes the believer to be *born again*. The Holy Spirit of God enters our lives to *empower us* to live for God while in this life (the bottom circle).

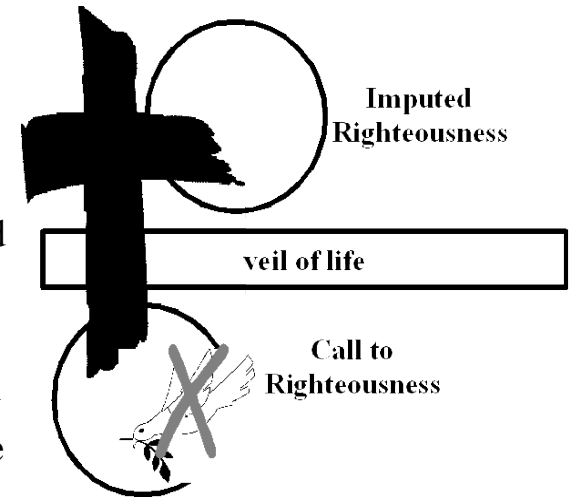
5.2 Habitual, Perpetual Sin Instead of Obedience Leads to Physical Death

God loved Israel, His Old Testament people, every bit as much as He loves His New Testament Church. But Israel, and many Christians today, become confused when they think about the love of God. Israel thought that the Creator Who loved them would keep turning a blind eye to their sin. Wrong! The Bible tells us:

 *focal verse* **Hebrews 3:10-12 (KJV)** "Wherefore I was grieved¹ with that generation, and said, They do always err² in their heart; and they have not known my ways. {11} So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) {12} Take heed³, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God."

God uses *very strong* language in this section of Scripture. The Israelites continued to follow a *pattern of unrighteousness* and disbelief. God literally says "**they became loathsome in My mouth, so**

much so that I had to spew them out. They kept walking off the path I laid out for them, and refused to follow the pattern I established". God as our Father knows that we are infused with an inclination to sin. This is why, in this *dispensation*, that God Himself came to dwell inside of us. **When we keep stepping off the path of God's leading, when we forsake the Christian Dynamic of letting Christ live through us, then we quench the Spirit**



1 Th 5:19 Quench not the Spirit.

and we grieve the Spirit.


Ephesians 4:30 (KJV) "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."


If we continue in a state of *willingly disobeying God* then the same thing that happened to the first generation of Israel can happen to us. Though the Israelite was not

3. When we keep stepping off the path of God's leading, when we *forsake the Christian Dynamic of letting Christ live through us*, then we _____.

indwelt by the Spirit of God, God preceded that nation as a pillar of fire and a pillar of cloud (**Exodus 13:21**). The LORD God Jehovah *visibly manifested* Himself in the Temple of God (**Psalms 48:9**). Israel, as God's people, were expected to follow God as they walked through this life. They refused to follow Him, and brought an *early death* on themselves. This is why God tells us through the Book of Hebrews to *take heed*³ or, literally, to *keep on looking out for*³ unbelief.

5.3 Sin Not Only Kills, It Wounds and Cripples And Robs of God's Blessings


 *focal verse* **Hebrews 3:13 (KJV) "But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened⁵ through the deceitfulness of**

 5. Aorist Passive Subjunctive skleruno {pronounced sklay-roo²-no}, to make hard or harden, be stubborn, self willed, sinfully opposed to God

sin."

Many local churches today turn a blind eye to sin among its members in order to increase the *size of the assembly*. Yet the Scripture warns us that we are to *encourage* one another to *avoid sin* and thus avoid its consequences. Sin is like poison. As you absorb it, and willingly turn away from God toward it, it slowly *scars the soul* of the believer through a process called *hardening*⁵. This is what happened to Israel. God willingly *partnered* with Israel, giving them undeserved blessing and prosperity as they traveled through this life. Israel failed to *appreciate* what God did. Though God forgave them time after time, eventually there came a point where God saw this first generation as *incorrigible and unrepentant*. At that time God refused to allow any of that disobedient generation to possess the Promised Land.

Sin not only kills, but it both wounds and cripples. This is *one of the reasons* why God calls His people to join together for fellowship in that union we call "Church". God has given the Church various spiritual gifts that *teach* the assembly, leading it to live a Spirit empowered life (**Ephesians 4:11-15**). Besides the gifts that God has given, the members themselves are to *exhort or encourage one another in love* (**Hebrews 10:25**).

 *focal verse* **Hebrews 3:14-18 (KJV) "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning**

**of our confidence steadfast unto the end; {15}
While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice,
harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. {16}
For some, when they had heard, did provoke:
howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. {17}**

4. God has given the Church various spiritual gifts that _____ the assembly, leading it to live a Spirit empowered life (**Ephesians 4:11-15**). Besides the gifts that God has given, _____ are to *exhort or encourage one another in love* (**Hebrews 10:25**).

But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? {18} And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?"

God repeats this same verse, nearly word for word, in the Psalms. He says:

Psalms 95:6-11 (KJV) "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker. {7} For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice, {8} Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: {9} When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. {10} Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: {11} Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest."

How does one avoid the hardening of sin, with its accompanying loss of blessing? The Psalm says:

Psalm 95:6b-7 ... worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker. {7} For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

by worship and humble submission to God as our Shepherd. We are to go where our Great Shepherd leads, to follow Him, knowing that He will never lead us to bad pastures. **We must recognize that the One Who saved us is also the One Who sustains us. The One Who led us out of Egyptian bondage is also the One Who will protect us as we move away from Egypt.** Jesus told us:

John 10:11-15 (KJV) "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. {12} But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose

5. We must recognize that the One Who saved us is also the One Who _____ us. The One Who led us out of Egyptian bondage is also the One Who will _____ us as we move away from Egypt.

own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. {13} The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. {14} I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. {15} As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay
12

down my life for the sheep."

that He was the One Who was going to lay down His life for us, His sheep.

I have heard many pastor-teachers preach this section in Hebrews in a vengeful manner, inferring a picture of God as One Who was joyously satisfied as He executed the first generation of Israel in the desert. Nothing could be farther from the truth. God is love (1 John 4:8, 16), and this quality of God makes Him long suffering with all humanity. As God explained His character to Moses He said,

(Exodus 34:6-7 KJV) And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, {7} Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin

The *love of God* drives His mercy, His graciousness, and His longsuffering. Many people hear the passage that states **God is love**, and when hearing that assume that He is love and love only. Yet love is not all that composes the complex character of our Creator. God also told Moses,

(Exodus 34:7 KJV) and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.

You see, God is not just *love*, but He is also *just and pure*. God could have destroyed all of Egypt when Pharaoh refused to let Israel go. Instead of immediate destruction, God sent a series of *ten plagues*, each greater in destruction, until Pharaoh consented to Israel's release. In fact, I could be so bold as to say that Pharaoh *killed himself and his army*, because he foolishly pursued Israel into the waters of the Red Sea. **God's love demands of Him that He be longsuffering, but God's justice demands that He be consistent as Judge. The Christian needs to remember this balance, and neither presume God to be purely love, nor purely just.** He is both, in perfect balance and sinless majesty.

Moses' only response, and the only response anyone can make when confronted with the purity that is God, is to do as Moses did.

(Exodus 34:8 KJV) And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped.

God gave Israel *every chance* to do as He asked. Israel repeatedly rejected His loving direction. Israel, just like

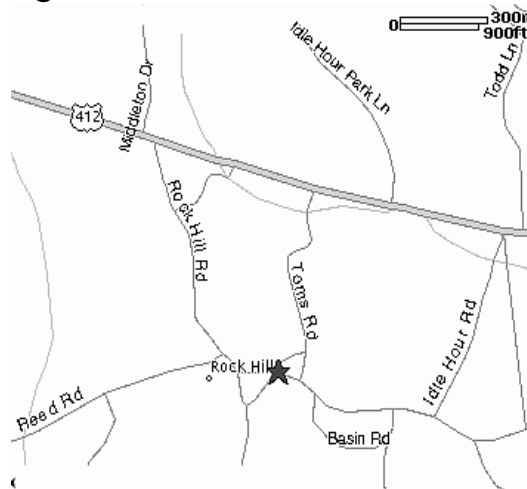
6. God's love demands of Him that He be _____, but God's justice demands that He be _____ as Judge. The Christian needs to remember this balance, and neither presume God to be purely _____, nor purely _____.

Pharaoh whom God delivered that nation from,, became incorrigible and implacable. They would not change, and died in the wilderness.

(Hebrews 3:19 KJV) So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

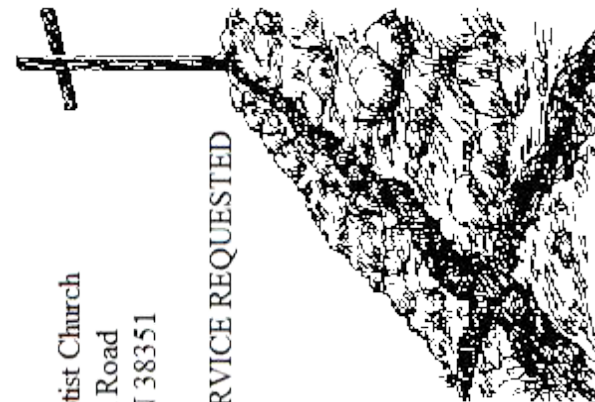
Who destroyed Israel? *Israel destroyed Israel*. God may have removed His power from them, but they themselves continued to reject His power until it was removed. The last verse of Hebrews chapter three is an indictment - not against God, but against a people who refused the *love* of God until the *justice* of God demanded their punishment.

Rock Hill Baptist Church is located between Parsons and Lexington, Tennessee, on Highway 412. Look for our sign!



and children's Bible studies) at 7:00 PM, Sundays at 10:00 AM and 6:00 PM. Rock Hill is a family oriented Bible believing Church - Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever! Our Pastor, Brother David Buffaloe, will

answer any questions you have about our Church if you contact him at 731-845-6104, or through his website at bibleteacher.org; or e-mail him by writing webmaster@bibleteacher.org. Rock Hill is an independent Church affiliated with the Tennessee Baptist Convention, the Southern Baptist Convention, and is a regular contributor to missions through the Cooperative Program.



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