

BRYAN STATION BAPTIST CHURCH

THE PIONEER BAPTIST

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"Preaching the same truth since before Kentucky was a state"

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NO CONDEMNATION

BY: C. D. COLE

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," Romans 8:1.

Introduction: One aspect of salvation is to be free from condemnation. This is the aspect of personal safety. It is deliverance from danger; from danger of terrible punishment in the day of judgment.

It is a glorious aspect of salvation. To be safe from the eternal consequences of sin ought to be regarded by us as a blessed thing. I do not want others--I do not want anybody to suffer eternally in a lake of fire; but I am happy to know that even though many others will, I will not.

Condemnation here has to do with our standing before God. It means that we are not condemned by God, and if God does not condemn us, who else can? *"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth"* Romans 8:33. If God does not condemn us, then He will not punish us.

This is a present aspect of salvation. *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus,"* Romans 8:1. While under the law we were condemned, but in Christ, we are not under law, but under grace. Grace does not condemn; grace justifies and saves.

This is an eternal aspect of salvation. *"Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified,"* Romans 8:30. *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life,"* John 5:24.

Let us amplify further on what it means to be in Christ. It means to have our standing with God in the merits of Christ. Christ's standing is our standing. We have His righteousness credited to our account. He is made unto wisdom, which is righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. God accepteth no man's person. We are accepted in Christ. Our legal position to sin and the law is exactly what Christ's is.

"For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord," Romans 6:10-11. He is dead to the law; the law *"hath no more dominion over him,"* Romans 6:9. We died to the law by the body of Christ.

TWO-FOLD

There is a two-fold way of being in Christ.

Legally or union with Him before the law. The law of God can no more condemn us than it can condemn Him for we are one with Him. There is no condemnation to them that are in Him.

Vitally or as a matter of experience. This means that through repentance and faith I take the place of a sinner and put my trust in Him as Saviour and Lord. And if I do that I may be assured that I am in Him and in Him there is no condemnation. In Him we are dead to sin and the law in the legal sense and alive unto God, that is, we are accepted of God and justified.

In Christ we have what we could not have under the moral law. In Christ we are justified, but *"by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight,"* Romans 3:20. *"For what the law could not do,"* Romans 8:3. What is it the law cannot

do? It cannot justify the sinner. It is not the function of the law to justify any but the innocent and sinless. And since there are no sinless people the law could not justify any body.

But Paul is careful to find no fault with the law. The law would justify anyone who keeps it. The law is not to be blamed for its inability to justify. It is weak to save because of the weakness of human flesh; because of the corruption or sinfulness of human nature. The law is weak to save because the flesh is too weak to keep it.

"What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh," Romans 8:3. Because of our sins, not His, God condemned sin in the flesh; that is, in the flesh of Christ. Notice the expression, *"In the likeness of sinful flesh."* It is not in the likeness of flesh, but in flesh. Jesus Christ was no phantom; He was in flesh; God manifest in flesh. He was not in sinful flesh, but in the likeness of sinful flesh.

In Christ sin was condemned in the flesh, so that those who are in sinful flesh might be made righteous, or have right standing with God.

Paul rest this grand fact of "no condemnation" on a trinity of facts: *"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us,"* Romans 8:34.

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ETERNAL PUNISHMENT

BY: C. D. COLE

"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" Matthew 10:28. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" John 3:36. "Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee," Job 36:18.

No criminal will enjoy a lecture on time, place and nature of the punishment he is to receive for his crime. And no sinner will enjoy a sermon on the punishment he will receive for rebellion against God. When a certain pastor was speaking to a large crowd in denial of eternal punishment, a thoroughly worldly man gave him a liberal donation because as he said, it makes him feel so comfortable. But this sermon is not for the purpose of making any Godless Christ rejecter feel comfortable. I hope to make somebody miserable, not because I take personal delight in making anybody feel bad, but I want you to see how miserable you really are out of Christ, so that you will trust Him and find in Him cause for rejoicing. If sin never becomes bitter to you; Christ will never become precious.

Ingersoll was once railing against this solemn truth of eternal punishment when a drunkard staggered to his feet and said, "Make it mighty strong Bob for a lot of us fellows are depending on you." And of course every lost man hopes there is no such place as hell. What a vain hope!

There is worldwide spread denial of this Bible truth. I expect more literature is being circulated against this truth than against any other truth of the Bible. I have been stigmatized as unreasonable, cruel, and God-dishonoring. And those who preach eternal punishment are called bigots, Pharisaic dogmatists and heartless theologians. You can hardly name a modern sect that does not either deny outright or else eviscerate the Bible doctrine. Besides such groups as Christian Science, Jehovah Witness, Seventh Day Adventists and Modernists of all stripes, there are individuals in evangelical churches who boldly deny this truth; and many others soft pedal it. We acknowledge that no Bible truths should be rejected because heretics may hold it, but when such an array of them is on one side of a question, there is certainly need for

serious reflection. And we are charged to "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good," I Thessalonians 5:21.

Those who preach the truth as eternal punishment need to be warned against preaching it in a cruel, harsh, and blatant manner. We must have no vengeful spirit, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord," Romans 12:19. Robert McCheyne said that the preacher should never preach on everlasting punishment without tears. "Did you do it with compassion?"

We are to preach on this solemn theme, first of all because it is a part of the once delivered faith. Whatever God has revealed is to be our study and proclamation. This truth should be preached, not only as a warning to the lost, but to arouse gratitude in the saved. To believe we have been saved from something terrible as well as to something glorious.

Donald F. Ackland says, that we need to recover the capacity to wonder. We are all too prone to take our salvation for granted, as if it were a small thing, or something deserved. When we sing "Amazing Grace" there should be amazement in our heart as well as on our lips. We ought to be literally swept off our feet in wonderment at the very thought of God delivering up His Son in shameful death to keep us out of hell.

Isaiah must have been filled with wonder when he wrote "...Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel," Isaiah 7:14. And with excitement he must have written: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace," Isaiah 9:6. Pray that God may use this message to put fear in the hearts of the lost and cause them to cry out; "What must I do to be saved?" Acts 16:30. "Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee," Job 36:18. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment," Hebrews 9:27. "...But except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish," Luke 13:3.

The doctrine of eternal punishment is inseparably connected with that school of theology which own God as a Lawgiver, man as a rebel under the curse of violated law, and salvation through the substitutionary death of Christ.

To surrender the doctrine of eternal

punishment is to give up the whole system of Scriptural redemption. Theodore Parker acknowledged that eternal punishment was taught in Scripture, but rejected it and said, "That school of doctrine sneers at common sense, spits upon reason, and makes God a devil." And in rejecting eternal punishment Parker rejected the whole system of blood atonement.

Consider these arguments: If there is no eternal punishment, there can be no necessity for the sacrifice Christ made. If there is no eternal punishment Christ saved us from nothing. It is obvious He did not die to save us from temporal effects of sin, for believers experience all temporal effects of sin. We do not claim that this earth is our home. We have no continuing city here, but seek one to come. "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God," Hebrews 11:10.

The North American Review, years ago, engaged Dr. Shedd to write an article in vention of eternal punishment and also engaged Henry Ward Beecher to answer it. The proof sheets of Shedd's article were sent to Beecher. After reading them, Beecher wired the Review from Denver as follows: "Cancel engagements, Dr. Shedd too much for me. I half believe in eternal punishment myself, get somebody else." An old man railing against the doctrine of hell said, "I have lived 75 years and have never seen the place they call hell." His little grandson said in all somberness, "Grandfather, you have never been dead yet, have you?"

A STUDY OF WORDS

Those who oppose eternal punishment make a show of wisdom and confuse the unwary by their use of Hebrew and Greek words. However, the doctrine offers no injury by a study of words in original. Anybody who can use Young's or Strong's concordance can study these words for himself. Scholarship is not as important in this study as an honest and humble heart.

QEBER AND SHEOL

Qeber is the Old Testament word for grave and is always used in connection with the body. It is translated grave or its equivalent in every place in the Old Testament. It is never used in connection with the soul. Sheol is the Old Testament word for "the unseen world or state." In the King James Bible it is translated "hell" 31 times and "grave" 31 times. The word never means

grave or place for the body but always the state of the soul. In death the soul goes into the unseen realm (Sheol) and the body goes into the grave (Qeber). The two words are not interchangeable. Qeber, the grave refers to locality; Sheol, the state of disembodied souls is a condition of existence. Qeber, the grave occurs 27 times in plural; Sheol never occurs in plural. The burial of 100 bodies in a cemetery would mean 100 qebers or graves; but the entrance of 100 souls in Sheol would not mean 100 Sheols, but one state of disembodiment. Qeber (grave) is referred to as the exclusive grave of an individual.

For example, in Genesis 50:5 we read of Jacob's Qeber or grave; "...my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan..." In II Samuel 3:32, "...and the king lifted up his voice, and wept at the grave [qeber] of Abner..." Sheol is never spoken of as the exclusive Sheol of anyone. The unseen realm is the state of the disembodied. Sheol is associated with pain and sorrow. "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell [sheol] gat hold upon me:...", Psalm 116:3. "The sorrows of hell [sheol] compassed me about...", II Samuel 22:6. Qeber (grave) is never associated with suffering for the body does not feel pain or sorrow in the grave.

HADES AND MNEMENION

These two Greek words are identical in New Testament with Sheol and Qeber in Old Testament. Hades, like Sheol means the unseen state, and Mnemenion like Qeber means the grave. "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell;" [sheol] Psalm 16:10. "Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, [hades] neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption," Acts 2:27.

GEHENNA

There is another Greek word translated hell: Gehenna. This is the word for eternal punishment and coincides with the lake of fire. It belongs almost exclusively to the vocabulary of Christ. Only other place it is used is "And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity; so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell" [gehenna] James 3:6. Gehenna is not the word for grave; the place of the dead body, nor hades, the place of the departed soul; but the place where both soul and body will spend eternity if the person is not saved by faith in Christ. This is the word used by Christ. "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, [gehenna] into the fire that never shall be quenched," Mark 9:43. "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy

both soul and body in hell," [gehenna] Matthew 10:28.

ETERNAL PUNISHMENT

The annihilationists try to make a distinction between eternal punishment and eternal punishing. A man once said to me that he believed in eternal punishment but not in eternal punishing. He took the position that annihilation; extinction of being; would be eternal punishment, but not eternal punishing. I reminded him that in the expression eternal punishing the participle is used as a noun and means the same as eternal punishment. When A. J. Pollock was once told by two adventists that eternal punishment does not mean eternal punishing, he asked why: "Does three months punishment mean three months punishing?" They admitted that it does. Then said he, eternal punishment is eternal punishing.

HOW TO ESCAPE

ETERNAL PUNISHMENT

"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house," Acts 16:31.

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him," John 3:36.

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THE DEATH OF CHRIST

Christ died for sinners and he who is willing to plead guilty and trust Christ as Saviour, may be sure Christ died for him.

Christ dying for us means that He was condemned for us; that God punished Christ for our sins. To condemn the believer would be to say that Christ was not sufficient. It would be the same as condemning two for the sins of one. If Christ was condemned for my sins, then I am not condemned for them. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Romans 8:32.

I cannot be saved by keeping the law because in sinful flesh I cannot keep it. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be," Romans 8:7. Under law, I would be condemned, but in Christ "there is therefore now no condemnation."

THE RESURRECTION

"If we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification," Romans 4:24-25. The resurrection of Christ is

God's receipt to us that what Christ did in His death was sufficient for our salvation. If Christ had not satisfied justice, he would still be in the grave. His being alive is our guarantee that our sins were condemned in Him, and there is no more condemnation for us.

INTERCESSION

No condemnation to the believer who rests on the ground of intercession. "Jesus made a surety of a better testament...wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them," Hebrews 7:22, 25.

Christ as High Priest prays for none but His own. "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine...Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word...Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world," John 17:9, 20, 24.

In the Old Testament the High Priest acted only for the children of Israel, the people of God. It is a mistake to think Jesus Christ is High Priest for all people. In fulfillment of the type, He is before God only on behalf of those given Him by the Father. No man can take any comfort that he has been given to Christ by the Father except those who trust Christ.

No condemnation, says the blood of Christ; no condemnation, says the mighty grave of Christ; no condemnation, says the opened heaven where Christ sits at the right hand of God making intercession for us.

What a happy people we ought to be. Our past has been settled for, our present is as safe as God can make it. Our future is provided for and when He comes we shall be like Him. We ought to be a thankful people. We had no goodness of our own to cause it.

"O to grace how great a debtor,
Daily I'm constrained to be;
Let thy goodness like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee."

We ought to be a loyal people; loyal to Him who has been as loyal to us.