

that we can enter into a harmonious and blessed relationship with God. In 1 John 1:9 we are told to confess our sins. The Greek word for "confess" means "to say the same thing." We are to agree with God that what he calls sin, we are to call sin. What we did was wrong. We are responsible for it, and we acknowledge that to God asking for His cleansing by the precious blood of Christ. God calls drunkenness a sin (1 Cor. 6:9,10 Gal. 5:19-21). What do we call it? Do we call it a weakness? Do we call it a disease? God calls sodomy a sin (1 Cor. 6:9,10; Rom. 1:24-32). What do we call it? Do we call it an alternative lifestyle? Do we say that a person who enters into a perverted physical relationship with someone of the same sex is only doing it because he was born that way -- that it is in his genes? We don't call sin by its' right name anymore. I had a psychology major tell me one time that all behavior is learned. The essence of what they were saying was that man is not responsible for his behavior. Man is a product of his environment -- the way he was raised, his opportunity for schooling, etc. If he turns out to be a criminal, we can't be too hard on him and hold him responsible for his behavior because after all look at all the unfortunate traumatic experiences he went through as a child. The assumption is that children are born innocent and sinless and only become corrupt because of their environment. The world's answer to man's problems and man's sin is education. How do we deal with the AIDS problem? How do we deal with the teenage pregnancy problem? Do we tell the teens that fornication and premarital sex is a sin, or do we distribute condoms and educate them in "safe" sex? How do we deal with the drugs and alcohol problem? Do we proclaim that wine is a mocker and strong drink is raging and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise (Prov. 20:1), or do we simply educate the public that "friends don't let friends drink and drive?" Do we say drinking is wrong, or do we try to educate people in so called "safe drinking?" Jesus made a clear precise statement about man's environment and whether or not it can corrupt him: "There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man... For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, {22} Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: {23} All these evil things come from within, and defile the man" (Mark 7:15, 21-23). How much clearer can it be put? Man is a result of what he chooses to be. Man's sin problem originates within not without. Think about Adam and Eve. They had a perfect environment in the Garden of Eden and yet still yielded to sin. When the prodigal son came to his senses in the pignen of sin, he returned to his father and confessed three very important words: "I have sinned." He didn't blame his friends, God, the devil, his family, or his environment. He admitted his personal responsibility for who he was and what he had done. That confession "I have sinned" is what allowed him to be brought back into favor with his earthly father and his heavenly father (Luke 15:11-24).

**ACCEPT NOW** The Bible says "choose you this day whom ye will serve" (Josh. 24:15). Will you take responsibility for your sin, or blame something else? You have now read the truth. Do you accept God's invitation to repent of sin and receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, or do you refuse? Don't think you have plenty of time. Jesus said "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). One of the last verses in the Bible is "let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17). Will you stop the excuses, turn from the cesspool of sin, and drink of the pure "water of life," Jesus Christ?

# The CORNERSTONE

BIBLICAL ANSWERS TO CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

## WITHOUT EXCUSE AT THE JUDGMENT



Cornerstone Booklets

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The Bible says, "every man's way is right in his own eyes" (Prov. 21:2). Man is a master when it comes to covering his sins and justifying his rebellion towards his Creator. We have the amazing ability to reason logically to the wrong conclusion concerning our sinfulness before God and our accountability to Him. Consequently, we continue to plunge on a collision course with our creator and His judgment. One day every thought (2 Cor. 10:4,5), every deed (2 Cor. 5:10), every word (Matt. 12:36,37), every attitude (Jer. 17:9,10), and every motive (1 Cor. 13:1-4) of our lives will be revealed by God as we stand before Him to be judged (Matt. 10:26; 16:27; Luke 12:1-3). In that day, the Bible says, every man will be "without excuse" before God (Rom. 1:20). In that day "every mouth will be stopped" (Rom. 3:19). No one will be able to justify what is "right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25). Everyone will face what is right in the "eyes of the Lord" (Heb. 4:13; Rev. 1:14). The only hope of a man to face the day of judgment without condemnation is to stand in that day in the righteousness of Christ (John 5:24). In heaven God will reward those who know Christ as Savior based on the quality of their labor for Him (1 Cor. 3:11-17; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10; Matt. 6:19-24; 2 Tim. 4:7,8). Those who have rejected Christ as personal Savior God will judge to determine the degree of condemnation in hell (Matt. 16:27; 25:14-30; Romans 2:5-10; 2 Thess. 1:8,9; Rev. 20:11-15). The purpose of this booklet is to help you discover the shallowness of man's excuses before God with the hope that each of us will humbly bow our hearts before our Creator realizing He sees right through us and our excuses (Heb. 4:12,13). Having honestly come face to face with God and His righteousness, we can rise from our knees with a genuine heart to obey Him and bring glory to Him in the life of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Once we truly recognize our sinfulness before God we will cast ourselves at the foot of the cross of Christ realizing that it is only through Him that we could ever please God (Rom. 7:24,25; 2 Cor. 5:17-21; Phil. 3:1-14).

**THE INTELLECTUAL EXCUSE** Many claim they don't believe the Bible and won't submit their life to Christ because it does not satisfy their intellectual questions. They are trying to REASON THEIR WAY TO SALVATION. But no man has ever come to know Christ in a personal way through the pathway of human reasoning. The pathway to salvation is through faith (Heb. 11:6). This is not a leap of faith in the dark. It is a faith that has substance to it. A Christian is able to give a "reason of the hope" of their faith in Christ (1 Peter 3:15). The evidence concerning Jesus Christ and the need for all men to believe on Him for salvation is given with "many infallible proofs" (Acts 1:3). There is so much evidence of God's existence and man's accountability to Him that only a fool would say "no," to God and refuse to bow before Him in obedience (Psalm 14:1). Men who reject God are justly deserving of His wrath because of the witness of creation and conscience (Rom. 1:19,20; 2:15). God clearly informs us that the reason men reject Him is not a head issue, but a heart issue. Men don't reject God because they need more INFORMATION. They reject God because of a PRIDEFUL SELF-WILLED DETERMINATION. They will not have Jesus Christ, the Lord, to reign over them (Luke 19:14). They love the darkness of their sinful life and refuse to come to the light of Christ because they know it means they must repent of their sins and yield their life in obedience to Christ. "And this is the condemnation, that light [Jesus] is come into the world, and men loved darkness [sinful life] rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19). On judgment day all men will be without excuse before God (Rom. 1:20). No one will be able to say, "God didn't provide enough evidence for me to believe."

life and never seek to read their Bible or pray asking for God's direction. Read these following verses very carefully to see what happens to the person who proudly disregards God in His life. "Because I (God) have called, and ye refused; I (God) have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; {25} But ye have set at nought all my (God's) counsel, and would none of my reproof; {26} I (God) also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; {27} When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. {28} Then shall they call upon me, but I (God) will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: {29} For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: {30} They would have none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. {31} Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. {32} For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. {33} But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil" (Prov. 1:24-33). God is not a fire escape! He refuses to allow us to only call upon Him when we bring trouble upon ourselves. These troubles are because of our own stubbornness -- going our own way with our life (Is. 53:6). We must confess this to the Lord and realize how prideful we have been with our time and how much we have taken our lives for granted. God will show mercy to those who are truly humble and sincerely now can pray "Lord, teach me to number my days and apply my heart to wisdom" (Psalm 90:12). I have been wasteful and prideful with the life you have given me. I realize now every healthy day I enjoy, every financial blessing, every meal I partake of, every hour I can see with my eyes etc. is a gift of grace from you. I realize now I am to redeem (make the most of) the time you have given me" (Eph. 5:16). Have you ever gone up to someone using a chain saw and tried to talk with them? They can see your lips moving, but they can't hear you because of the noise. That's our condition before God many times. He's trying to speak to us, to guide us, to bless us, to protect us with the truth of His word and the salvation of His Son; but we have so much noise in our life that we don't hear God's voice. We need to turn off the Radios, the TVs, the VCRs. We need to stop hurrying about with our busy plans and take time to be still before God and listen to Him (Psalm 46:10). It will save much destruction to our lives. I believe that many times God allows something to come into our lives that is such a major trauma that it slows us down or puts us on our back for the purpose of us giving our attention to Him. In our stillness we discover how we have been wasting our lives away, wasting the precious time God has granted. God speaks in a still small voice (1 Kings 19:12). If we don't take time out of the hustle and bustle of life to enter our prayer closet (Matt. 6:6), we will never hear the voice of God who so lovingly wants to direct us into His blessings in Christ (Eph. 1:3).

**THE "I'M NOT TO BLAME" EXCUSE** Do you remember what Adam said when God questioned him about eating of the forbidden fruit? Did Adam acknowledge his responsibility for what He had done, or did he try to blame others? He responded "the woman...! Lord, it's her fault. She's to blame" (Genesis 3:12). And furthermore, He said "the woman ... you gave me." "It's your fault Lord. You're the one who brought her into my life." This is the classic example of the nature of man to pass the buck, blaming someone or something for whom he is or what he has done. When Samuel confronted Saul with his disobedience, Saul blamed the people (1 Sam. 15:21). God warns in His Word if we cover our sins by rationalizing, justifying, or blaming; we will not prosper (Prov. 28:13). It is only as we accept responsibility for our own behavior

before Him and the iniquity we have committed against Him.

**THE "I'M NOT READY TO MAKE A DECISION" EXCUSE** Many try to claim they are in neutral on spiritual issues or decisions. They just haven't made up their mind yet. If we refuse to yield our lives to Christ, we have made a decision to reject Christ. Jesus said that if we are not for him we are against him (Matt. 12:30). To refuse to humble yourself before God your creator and to submit yourself to Jesus your redeemer is to be in an active state of rebellion towards God. God commands all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30). Those who refuse to repent are rebelling against the command of God. You cannot ride the fence with God. Jesus said no man can serve two masters (Matt. 6:24). You can't be for God and for the world at the same time. He who would be a friend of the world is an enemy of God (James 4:4). You have to choose which side you are on. You can't be in the middle of the road. Those who try to stay in the middle are greatly warned by God in Revelation 3: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:15,16). Those who say they are not ready to receive Christ as their Savior are really saying I refuse to submit my will to the will of God. What does a man have to do to spend eternity in hell? The answer is nothing --remain in a state of unbelief. "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:18). Refusing to believe on Christ as your Savior renders you justly condemned before God and worthy of His judgment. You can't ride the fence on moral issues! Either you are for capital punishment or against it, for abortion or against it, for sodomy or against it, etc. God separates light from darkness (2 Cor. 6:14; Gen. 1:3- 5). There are no gray matters with God when it comes to moral issues. "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (I John 1:5). Please note that in God is no darkness at all. The deeper our fellowship with Christ and our understanding of His holiness the more we will understand that we can't be in the middle on moral issues.

**THE "I'VE GOT PLENTY OF TIME" EXCUSE** I never will forget the time in my life when I was reading the biography of Robert Murray Mccheyene. I was greatly inspired in my faith as I read how mightily God was working through him. But then a chapter later I read of his sudden death at the age of 29. At the time of my reading I was about that age. It made a profound impression upon me that time is very precious, and that we need to use time in a fruitful way. We are told in the Scriptures "boast not thyself for tomorrow for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Prov. 27:1). We are admonished to seek God in such a way that He would "teach us to number our days" (Psalm 90:12). Much precious time is wasted away in our lives because we don't realize the value of each day. We don't realize how quickly and abruptly our whole life could be changed by a major handicap. Through a car accident, a stroke, a natural disaster, a discovery of cancer, or something else, our lives could be completely changed overnight. Our values, how we use our time, the places we go, the people we spend time with, the conversations we carry on with people, the way we spend our money, the pursuits we give our energy and effort to could all take on a drastically new perspective overnight. God warns us in Proverbs about those who continually go about their lives disregarding the prompting of the Lord, His counsel, His law, His Word and His principles. They are too busy to give their attention to the Lord. They are too self-willed to surrender their will to His will. They think they know what is best for their

**THE RELIGIOUS EXCUSE** There are many religious people who will be greatly surprised on judgment day to discover, to their utter dismay, that their souls will spend eternity in hell. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. {22} Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? {23} And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:21-23). Religion can not save anyone. Nicodemus was a religious man who came to Jesus, but he wasn't a saved man. Jesus said to him "You must be born again" (John 3:3-7). Going to Church, reading your Bible, getting baptized, and saying prayers will not gain you one foot into heaven. Unless you have experienced a spiritual rebirth you will not be able to enter the kingdom of heaven (John 3:5). **IF YOU HAVE ONLY BEEN BORN ONCE YOU WILL DIE TWICE.** The day will come when you experience physical death (Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 6:23). But worse, the day will come when you will experience the second death (Revelation 2:11,20:6,20:14,21:8). Death is not ANNIHILATION! Death is SEPARATION! Through physical death we are separated from those who have life on earth. But the judgment of the second death (spiritual death) is the separation of the soul from God for all eternity. **IF YOU HAVE BEEN BORN TWICE YOU WILL ONLY DIE ONCE.** Jesus promised: "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die (the second death). Bellevest thou this?" (John 11:26). A man is spiritually born again when he receives Christ as His Savior (John 1:12). If I said to you, "when did you become a Christian" and you said, "I've always been a Christian;" that would not be an accurate answer. If I said to you, "when were you married" and you said, "I've always been married;" we both know that is not the truth. There is a point in time when you say, "I do take this man/woman to be my wedded spouse." In the same way there must be a point in time when each of us personally receive the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. It is at that moment that we become born again. Growing up in the Church and being faithful to all the traditions of the Church will not gain a man entrance into heaven. Every man must be born again and come to know Christ in a personal way (John 17:3). **THE SINCERE EXCUSE** Many think that as long as they are sincere in what they believe God will surely let them into heaven. But many will discover they were sincerely wrong. Every day a man walked past a Jewelry store on his way to work. He admired an expensive clock in the window and always made sure he set his wristwatch by the time on the expensive clock. It was his responsibility to blow the twelve o'clock whistle at the factory every day so that the workers would take their lunch break at the correct time. One day he decided to stop in and talk to the man that owned the jewelry store about the clock. As they were talking he expressed to the owner how much he admired the expensive clock in the window and the accuracy of its time. The owner replied, "As a matter of fact it does seem to keep good time. Only on rare occasions do I have to reset it, and when I do, I always wait for the twelve o'clock whistle to blow at the factory, and then I set it to the correct time. You can clearly see how both of these men were sincerely but inaccurately determining the correct time. If you sincerely think you can drink a bottle of poison and it won't hurt you and you go ahead and drink it even though many are warning you not to do it, you will surely suffer the consequences. The important question is not **WHETHER YOUR FAITH IS SINCERE**, but rather whether the **OBJECT OF YOUR FAITH IS CORRECT**. The only true faith

that brings salvation is faith that has as its object the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

**THE "ALL ROADS" EXCUSE** One day a lady walked into the post office and was talking to the clerk who happened to be a Christian man who took every opportunity to witness of Christ's salvation. As he sought to persuade her that Christ was the only way of salvation she responded with the following answer. "It's like this," she said. "There were many people that came to this post office today. Not all of us took the same road to get here and yet through the many different roads we chose to take to reach our destination, we all reached the same destination. It doesn't matter what road of religion you choose to believe, they all lead to the same destiny." The Christian clerk responded: "Madam, there's a problem with your reasoning. When we die we're not going to the post office, we are either going to heaven or hell." According to Christ's own words there is only one way to heaven. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; No man comes unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). All religions don't lead to the same place because not all religions acknowledge Jesus Christ as the only way of salvation. According to the Bible religion is not the mediator between God and man. Christ is the only mediator between God and man. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5). Be not deceived! The true gospel that will save your soul from hell is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ to give you forgiveness of sins and eternal life (1 Cor. 15:1-4). Any religion that doesn't preach that salvation is only through Christ crucified is a false gospel that leads us into damnation (1 Cor. 2:2; Gal. 1:8).

**THE "DO THE BEST I CAN" EXCUSE** Many people falsely believe that one day God will judge all men to determine if they have lived a good enough life to go to heaven. If they have done more good than bad, (they think) they will go to heaven. If they have done more bad than they have good, (they think) they will go to hell. This is a SALVATION THROUGH WORKS doctrine. Listen to the following Scriptures. They plainly state that doing good works can save no one. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us" (Titus 3:5). "For by grace are ye saved; through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8,9). "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal. 2:16). In order for a man even to begin to consider being justified by works and by keeping the law, he would have to obey the whole law and not ever commit a sin in his life. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2:10). Suppose I had one end of a chain hooked to my tractor and the other end hooked to the wagon I wanted to pull. As I begin to pull the wagon the middle link of the chain breaks and the wagon remains motionless not moving at all. The rest of the chain is in perfect condition, but that one weak link hinders the pulling of the wagon. It really doesn't matter how many links would break or where the breaks would occur. Fifty weak links that break or one weak link that breaks both have the same result. If I miss heaven by one sin or fifty sins the result will be the same -- the torments of hell (2 Thess. 1:9; Luke 16:19-31). All men who seek to justify themselves before God by the works of the law are under the curse of the law (Gal. 3:10). They are cursed because they who enter heaven must be perfect as the Father in heaven is perfect (Matt. 5:48).

No man is able to perfectly keep all of God's law: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Some have sinned more than others have, but the fact is that all have sinned. How many sins does it take to keep a man out of heaven? The answer is one. How many sins did Adam and Eve commit that separated them from God? -- Just one. The great news is that "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. 3:13). When we receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, we are clothed in His perfect righteousness (Phil. 3:9). This is the only hope any man has of being made right with God. It is only the "righteousness which is of God by faith in Jesus Christ" which makes us acceptable before God (Eph. 1:6; Phil. 3:9).

**THE "I'M NOT SUCH A BAD PERSON" EXCUSE** Many don't see their need of Christ because they fail to recognize the depravity of their sinfulness before God. Do we become sinners when we sin, or do we sin because we are sinners? Does a dog become a dog when he barks, or does a dog bark because he is a dog? Does the bark make the dog, or does the dog make the bark? Does the sin make the sinner or does the sinner make the sin? We need to realize that before God we are not only sinners by action but we are sinners by our very nature. We sin because we are sinners. We are conceived and born into this world with a bent towards sin: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalm 51:5). "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies" (Psalm 58:3). "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6). "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God" (Romans 3:10,11). We conclude that we are not such a bad people because we are looking at the FRUIT OF SINS and not the ROOT OF SIN. We need to realize not only the problem of "SINS" before God, but the problem of "SIN" singular before God. The root of sin is me being the boss of my own life and refusing to yield my life to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. We have turned ever one to "his own way" (Isaiah 53:6). The Bible says we are "by nature children of wrath" (Eph. 2:3). Even the good we choose to do ("self righteousness") is filthy rags before God (Isaiah 64:6). It is important to understand the word "iniquity." Christ bore in His body the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:6). Iniquity is me imposing my will over and above God's will even in the doing of something that is right. If God prompts me to go through Samaria because he knows there is a lady prepared and ready to hear the gospel message and I decide to stay at home and meditate on Scripture, I have committed iniquity. Meditating on God's Word is certainly an activity God desires for my life in His leading and timing, but to give myself to one righteous deed at a moment when God has led me to accomplish a different righteous deed is a work of iniquity (Matt. 7:21-23). This is why Jesus said, "I must needs go through Samaria" (John 4:4). Every miracle Jesus did, every teaching Jesus gave, every conversation Jesus entered into with others was at the bidding of His Father's will. He said, "I do always those things that please Him" (John 8:29). When Jesus died on Calvary's cross, He not only died for sins we have committed against God, He died for the repeated acts of iniquity in our lives (Isaiah 53:6). That's why self-righteousness is filthy rags to God (Isaiah 64:6). Self-righteousness is the act of me imposing my will over God's will even in the doing of some righteous deed. To obey is better than sacrifice (1 Sam. 15:22). When I offer my sacrifices of righteousness to God at my own bidding, according to my own will, it is iniquity in the sight of God. May God give us the grace to see our sinful condition