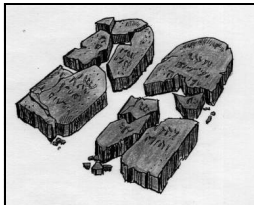


Justice For All (or, "God made a way!")

Man's predicament is not a good one. The Bible says, "*There is none righteous, no not one*" (Rom 3:10) and "*All have sinned and come short of the glory of God*" (**Rom 3:23**) Sin is like snowflakes - just one seems insignificant, but keep adding to it and soon you can stop all traffic on a major highway. 'Payday' is coming but nobody is going to want to cash their 'check' (**Rom 6:23**) Man needs a miracle and that miracle is in a man - Christ Jesus.



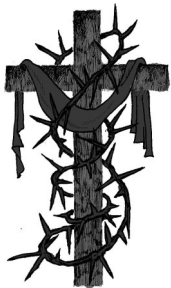
Once broken, God's Law needs to be avenged. If not, then God himself will be guilty of violating His own righteousness. A judge, no matter how compassionate he wants to be, cannot just dismiss a criminal's crime without doing an injustice to the laws he is sworn to keep. Even our own conscience has a sense of 'justice'. This is why a concept of right and wrong is universal, found in every culture of the world! We always want the 'bad guy' to get caught in the end, don't we?

Ask any skeptic who challenges your faith, "Do you really think that you and Hitler should spend eternity in the same place rather than one of you in heaven, the other in hell?" Just remind them of the horrible atrocities of that man (or of any mass murderer, rapists, child abuser, etc.) then ask, "Should your fate in the next life be the same as theirs?" They can't bring themselves to believe that because their spirit knows the truth, even if their mind [because of modern culture's influence] tries to deny it. And what about reward for people like Mother Theresa, who sacrificed so much to help the impoverished of India? Should she get nothing more than any common criminal? Justice, and consequent 'judgment', are very much a part of our nature. [Study Romans 2:11-16 about conscience!!]



Yes...the only Answer, just as he said of himself, "*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me.*" (**John 14:6**) Only through His perfect life could Jesus be for us the perfect sacrifice: taking our place in punishment [**substitution** - Isaiah 53:4-6], paying for our sins to 'buy us back' [**redemption** - Gal 4:4,5], satisfying the requirements of the Law [**propitiation** -

1John 2:2 & 4:10], and thereby breaking down the wall that separates us from God [**reconciliation** - 2Cor 5:18,19] Thus, with the penalty paid, we can be set free !!



If the whole thing seems like a neat little gift package...well...it is a 'gift', but there was nothing 'neat' about it: "*Despised and rejected...a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief...as a lamb to the slaughter*" (Isaiah 53:3,7) Yet Jesus did it "*...for the joy that was set before him...*" (Heb 12:2) What was that joy? It was seeing the day when you, me, and all those we help to bring to made "new creatures in passed away, all things of Jesus' joy is when the sheep (Luke 15:3-7) and son come home (Luke



that we, too, were like sheep gone astray and have returned to the "Shepherd" of our "*with joy*" we can "*draw water out of the* That is the invitation that Jesus gives to *thirst, let him come unto me...*" (John *me all ye that labor and are heavy*

rest...learn of me...and ye shall find rest for your souls." (**Mat 11:28-30**)

him are transformed by his grace, Christ" (**2 Cor 5:17**), old things made new!! The best illustration good shepherd found his lost when the father had his prodical 15:11-32). The Apostle Peter says but now are healed by his stripes "souls" (1Peter 2:24-25) So, now wells of salvation" (Isaiah 12:3) all when He says, "*If any man 7:37,38*) and also, "*Come unto laden, and I will give you*

Helpful Hint: Share one or both of the two stories above from Luke 15, using yourself as the 'lost' character.