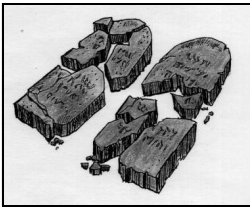


## Justice For All (or, "God made a way!")

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.



[<<Teacher: Have a student read Rom 6:23. Tell class that both of these passages in Romans should be memorized. Discuss the fact that God's wrath and eternal 'death' (separation from God) is not something God does 'to us' but something we 'earn' for ourselves. Many of the unsaved think it is an act of cruelty on God's part, but actually we leave Him 'no choice'. It is by our actions, not those of a loving God! >>]

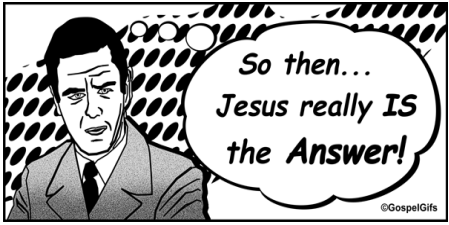


Once broken, God's Law needs to be avenged. [<< Read this to your class: "There is a point to be made here. Some people may argue, 'I only broke one law, not all of them...what I did wasn't really that bad!' But if you break a law then you are a 'lawbreaker'. A cup with a broken handle may still hold coffee but that doesn't change the fact that it is a broken cup. James 2:10 says, "*For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.*" >>]

So, 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. [<<Discuss the fact that the entire universe continues to function in a kind of 'balance' because of the laws that God placed into it. The laws that God gave to man were an extension of His own character. To break them Himself would be against God's own nature. >>]

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? [<< Read following to class: "This issue, that a 'conscience' is universal, is one of the proofs that man is a spiritual being, created in the image (moral nature) of God. Romans 2:15,16 says, "*Even Gentiles, who do not have God's written law, show that they know his law when they instinctively obey it, even without having heard it. They demonstrate that God's law is written in their hearts, for their own conscience and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right.*" (New Living Translation) Everyone should know God and what God expects from them. Problem is, they either don't care or have been following wrong teaching for too long. Romans chapter 1 gives us the history of man's 'turning away' from the truth. {Read v. 20 & 28}]

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!!] [>> These verses were already covered in the teacher's notes above. Mention, however, that the most 'natural' thing (in keeping with our spiritual 'nature') is to believe in the fundamentals of the Christian message. All other world religions or new age views actually run contrary to the logic (or reason) of own spirit. That there is a 'right' and 'wrong', and that 'justice' must be had, are foundational to our spiritual make-up. >>]



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**) [accomplishments of the cross’ (the reasons that Jesus willingly gave Himself for us at Calvary.) It is

important that your students understand that there was a purpose to our Lord’s death and that it was all a part of God’s plan (even from the “foundation of the world.” -Rev 13:8) >>]

Only through His perfect life could Jesus be for us the perfect sacrifice: taking our place in punishment [**substitution** - Isaiah 53:4-6] [suffering on our behalf! >>]

paying for our sins in order to ‘buy us back’ [**redemption** - Gal 4:4,5] [

satisfying the requirements of the Law [**propitiation** - 1John 2:2 & 4:10] [Romans 3:23-26 >>]

and thereby breaking down the wall that separates us from God [**reconciliation** - 2Cor 5:18,19] [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 him are transformed by his grace, made “new creatures in Christ” (**2 Cor 5:17**), old things passed away, all things made new!! [art that the ‘artist’ continues to improve upon!” >>]

[&ltlt If class time is limited, cover this section without trying to read the verses>>]

The best illustration of Jesus’ joy is when the good shepherd found his lost sheep (Luke 15:3-7) and when the father had his prodigal son come home (Luke 15:11-32). The Apostle Peter says that we, too, were like sheep gone astray but now are healed by his stripes and have returned to the “Shepherd” of our “souls” (1Peter 2:24-25) So, now “with joy” we can “draw water out of the wells of salvation” (Isaiah 12:3) That is the invitation that Jesus gives to all when He says, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me...” (John 7:37,38) and also, “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest...learn of me...and ye shall find rest for your souls.” (**Mat 11:28-30**)



[&ltlt In closing, remind students to re-study this lesson, reading carefully all scriptures to get the full benefit of God’s Word. Mention the ‘Helpful Hint’ below and suggest that they think it through as ‘homework’. If time allows, try to do one in class. >>]

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