



BIBLE STUDY SERIES

IS SIN FORGIVEN?

WAKE UP AMERICA SEMINARS

Proclaiming the Revelation of Jesus

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Is Sin Forgiven?

Many Christians believe Jesus died in our place, and this concept puzzles billions of non-Christians. They wonder what kind of God do Christians worship. Why would God require the death of an innocent man so guilty people may go free? Incidentally, the ancient idea that God required the death of an innocent person to avoid His wrath was the basis for sacrificing children to Molech in Bible times. No justice system on Earth advocates the idea that one man can take the place of another when punishment is involved. All just legal systems are based on accountability and personal responsibility. Nevertheless, many Christians improperly think the Father sent Jesus to the cross because, to redeem us sinners, an innocent man had to die in our place.

The Bible teaches that Jesus died for us, but He did not die as a substitute. That is, Jesus did not die in our place. Now, wait. Hear me out. I understand why the death of Jesus *seems* to be substitutionary, but the idea places the Bible in a state of internal conflict. This makes the concept unacceptable.

The Father does not conduct a government where the penalty for doing wrong is paid by the innocent so the guilty can escape. Instead, God has a legal system where each person is responsible and accountable for his own actions. God told Ezekiel: **“The child will not share the guilt of the parent, nor will the parent share the guilt of the child.”**¹ The Bible explains why Jesus died, and it may surprise you. It surprised me.

Two Types of Guilt

Many people are astonished to learn that the Plan of Salvation includes Lucifer and his demons. Not for salvation, but included nonetheless. Lucifer and his followers were often called to repentance but willfully refused every overture before being cast out of heaven. If the rebellious angels had repented, the Father would have also implemented a Plan of Salvation for them. After they committed the unpardonable sin by defying the Holy Spirit, there was nothing further the Father could do but cast them out of heaven.

When God implemented the Plan of Salvation for mankind, it involved Lucifer and his angels because they were responsible for the curse of sin

¹ Ezekiel 18:20

on Earth. Lucifer and his followers are predators and have preyed on mankind since the day Adam and Eve sinned. Each day, they continue to heap greater guilt on themselves in addition to what they had amassed in heaven.

The actions of Lucifer and his followers are recorded each day because the Plan of Salvation includes *third-party guilt*. If an adult causes a minor to commit a crime, in the eyes of the law, both are guilty, but the adult has greater guilt because he used his position of authority and influence to corrupt the minor.

When a predator causes the delinquency of a minor, the predator's guilt is sometimes called third-party guilt because three parties are involved: A victim, a predator, and a minor. Even though the minor and adult are both guilty of breaking the law, the adult will receive greater punishment because he has greater guilt.

Third-party guilt is essential in the Plan of Salvation because God sees everything the devil and his demons do. He observes them using their superior powers and abilities to prey on mankind. The demons are accumulating an enormous amount of guilt and will suffer unbearably in hell. Jesus stated

the *third-party guilt* principle in Matthew 18:6, “**If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.**”

When a person sins against his neighbor, he commits two sins. He sins against his neighbor and against God, who commands us to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. If the sinner repents and makes restitution to his neighbor, he still has *outstanding guilt* because he violated the second commandment of love. A sinner cannot make restitution for *outstanding guilt*. The penalty for sin is death. The law is unforgiving and changeless, but God has made a way to eliminate the guilt. I call this process the *Transfer Doctrine*. God illustrated this doctrine in the earthly temple services.¹

To eliminate *outstanding guilt* in ancient Israel, a person had to first restore his victim through restitution. After making amends for his wrongdoing, he had to present himself before the Altar of Burnt Offering² and confess his sin to God. Thus, through the blood of a flawless lamb, his *outstanding guilt*

¹ Hebrews 8:1–5; 10:4

² Matthew 5:23–24

was transferred to the horns of the altar. Once the lamb's blood was sprinkled on the horns, it served as a record of the transaction.

The *outstanding guilt* recorded on the altar's horns contaminated the temple. Therefore each year, God required the temple to be cleansed of all guilt and restored to a sinless condition on the Day of Atonement. At the end of the cleansing service, the temple's accumulated guilt was transferred to a goat, often called the *scapegoat*.

After the guilt was transferred to the scapegoat, the temple was free of guilt, and the goat was led far into the wilderness to slowly die of starvation. This scapegoat represents Lucifer. He is the father of sin and responsible for it; therefore, he has third-party guilt. He led Eve to sin and set up circumstances so Adam would also. Thus, the curse of sin came through the devil; worse still, Lucifer and his demons have been actively deceiving all people ever since influencing Adam and Eve.

Mankind was created inferior to the angels;¹ therefore, when it comes to angelic predators, humans are considered minors in God's sight. Of course, humans can sin without demonic influence because

¹ Psalm 8:5

we have free will and a natural predisposition to sin. The carnal nature causes everyone to sin sooner or later.¹ The devil and his demons are not directly involved in every willful sin. James wrote, **“Each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”**²

However, the devil and his demons indirectly have guilt in each sin because man’s sinful nature stems from the fall of Adam and Eve. Remember, if an adult leads a child to commit a crime, both are guilty in the eyes of the law, but the adult has greater guilt. If a child commits a crime on his own, he is guilty in the eyes of the law. His standing as a minor or juvenile is considered, and a judge often grants leniency which an adult would not receive. Jesus is a righteous judge. He understands these matters and deals with guilt accordingly.

Jesus will save³ all children and people having diminished intellectual abilities because God does not acknowledge guilt for those who do not know right from wrong. His grace and assignment of

1 Romans 7:17

2 James 1:14–15

3 For more information on the age of accountability: <https://wake-up.org/who-is-jesus/the-untold-story-of-jesus.html>

third-party guilt ensure Christ's righteousness and eternal life will be transferred to these individuals. Condemnation is only attributed after a person knows right from wrong and chooses to do wrong. **"If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them."**¹

Notice how judicial equilibrium functions. Justice demands the following: The father of sin must bear the penalty for creating sin. Further, the creator of sin must also bear the guilt of sin which was transferred away from sinners to the temple.

Grace offers the following: Sinners under the penalty for sin can have their sins transferred to the temple by presenting a perfect substitute. Here we see the perfect balance between justice and mercy. The Lord's goat represents the mercy God has extended to sinners: Jesus, the Lamb of God. The scapegoat represents the justice that God demands of sinners: restitution and death.

Confirmations of Truth

The Day of Atonement ceremony confirms several essential truths that harmoniously coexist within the Plan of Salvation. The Old Testament tabernacle service confirms that the demands of God's law do

¹ James 4:17

not eclipse the offer of God's grace, nor does the operation of God's grace make the law void.

Law and grace function harmoniously within the tabernacle parallels. The law condemns a sinner to death, but grace provides a way for the sinner's guilt to be transferred so that the sinner may go free. Jesus had to die to save man because God's law could not be changed.

God did not have the option of just *forgetting* that Adam and Eve had sinned because their sin began a series of unchangeable events. For example, man became carnal by nature. Also, death came upon all men through Adam. Therefore, Jesus was required to live a perfect life before He could die on our behalf.

The guilt of our sins could only be transferred to the altar through the One who was above condemnation.

This may sound like a broken record, but it is a critical point. The tabernacle service confirms that sin is neither forgiven nor forgotten until the scapegoat is led away to die. The tabernacle service also confirms that Jesus does not bear the responsibility for sin.

Sin cannot be justified. Instead, Jesus is our reconciliation with God; through His perfect blood, our guilt can be transferred to the Altar of Burnt Offering. We have also learned that the temple is cleansed of guilt at an appointed time, and the consequence of sin is transferred to the one responsible for sin.

The suffering of the scapegoat provides restitution. Bottom line: The life of every sinner will be examined. Solomon wrote, **“For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.”**¹

If our sins are transferred to the altar through Christ’s blood, we are not under condemnation.² If our sins are not transferred to the altar, God’s vengeance requires the wicked to provide restitution for their sins and suffer the penalty for sin.

Who Is A Repentant Sinner?

The Bible defines a repentant sinner as a person who appropriately loves God and his neighbor. Before Jesus began His ministry on Earth, the Father sent John the Baptist to tell Israel what a repentant sinner was: **“John the Baptist came, preaching in**

¹ Ecclesiastes 12:14

² Romans 8:1–10

the wilderness of Judea and saying, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near. *Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.*’”¹ Genuine sorrow for sin requires action beginning with love for God and neighbors. It produces faith, humility, and restitution. The experience of Zacchaeus, a chief tax collector, is included in the Bible because his testimony is a perfect example of a repentant sinner! Jesus said so! ²

A repentant sinner is humble, loves honesty, obeys the prompting of the Holy Spirit, lives by faith, and does what is right in God’s sight without regard for the consequences; shows sorrow for sins by providing restitution as needed and forsakes sin as the Holy Spirit convicts; confesses sins and, through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, overcomes them. Such a person is a repentant sinner in God’s eyes.

A person can become a repentant sinner within a few minutes. The Holy Spirit knows the thoughts and motives within each heart. One thief became a genuine repentant sinner while hanging on the cross. Jesus assured the thief that he would be saved based on his repentance and faith in God.

¹ Matthew 3:1-2, 8, italics mine

² Luke 19:1-10

If you want the assurance of salvation, you can have it right now by becoming a repentant sinner. **“In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.”**¹

Repentant sinners commit two types of sin: accidental and willful. Accidental sin occurs when the sinful nature suddenly entices us, and sin happens without premeditation. After more than twenty-five years of living as a repentant sinner, Paul wrote about this phenomenon. He said, **“Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me [the sinful nature] that does it.”**²

James provides an excellent description of willful sin: **“When tempted, no one should say, ‘God is tempting me.’ For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone [to do evil]; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”**³

1 Acts 17:30

2 Romans 7:20, insertion mine

3 James 1:13–15, insertion mine

John speaks about both types of sin: **“If you see any brother or sister commit a sin that does not lead to death [accidental sin], you should [remember your weaknesses and] pray [for them] and God will give them life. I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death. There is a [willful] sin that leads to death. I am not saying that you should pray about that [because God will not override anyone’s free will. Willful sin separates us from the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit and destroys a life of faith]. [Of course,] All wrongdoing [whether accidental or willful] is sin [and the penalty is death], and there is sin that does not lead to death [because repentant sinners are quick to provide restitution and humbly confess their failure for accidental sin].”**¹

The Godhead loves all sinners equally.² There are no favorites.³ They love rebellious sinners as much as they love repentant sinners. After all, repentant sinners were first rebellious sinners. **“For God does not show favoritism. All who sin apart from the law [who do not know God’s laws and willfully disobey the Holy Spirit] will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law [who know**

1 1 John 5:16–17, insertions mine

2 Romans 5:10

3 Acts 10:34

God's laws and willfully disobey the Holy Spirt] **will be judged** [condemned] **by the law.**"¹

Jesus taught: **"But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. *He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the un-righteous.* If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? **Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect** [guiltless regarding the second law of love], **therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.**"**²

The Angels' Question

Now that we have briefly discussed two types of guilt and the biblical definition of a repentant sinner, let's address one question that may have puzzled the holy angels. If God's fifth law is unforgiving and unchangeable, how does he justify sparing Adam and Eve from death when the law required it on the day they ate the forbidden fruit? The solution is found in the *Transfer Doctrine*.

¹ Romans 2:11–12, insertions mine

² Matthew 5:44–48, insertion and italics mine

The *Transfer Doctrine* teaches that starting with Adam and Eve, the curse of sin is transferred to succeeding generations through the contaminated blood of sinful ancestors. Cain, the firstborn of Adam and Eve, became a murderer because the curse of sin was transferred to him through the blood of his parents. The Father foreknew all of this, so He based the salvation of repentant sinners on the sinless blood of Jesus.

One reason the Father sent Jesus to Earth was to produce the holy righteousness sinners need for salvation. Therefore, the Father required Jesus to experience and overcome every temptation sinners would face.¹ Furthermore, He required Jesus to overcome temptations far beyond what any human being would experience to eliminate future questions and doubts about the standard of righteousness Jesus had achieved. If Jesus attained the standard of righteousness the Father required, the Father could legitimately “justify” a repentant sinner by transferring the righteousness of Christ to him. A justified sinner is a sinner who the Father considers as though he never sinned. This is what justification is all about.

¹ Hebrews 4:15

Additionally, the Father required Jesus to forfeit His eternal life for three days so Christ's eternal life could be transferred. The Father needed to transfer Jesus' righteousness and eternal life to all repentant sinners. Since the curse of sin is transferred through blood, the Father ordained that guilt, righteousness, and eternal life are also transferred through blood. Keep the following in mind:

- Everyone, except Jesus, has sinned.¹
- All created beings since Adam and Eve have inherited this sinful nature through the blood of their parents.²
- The curse of sin is transferred from generation to generation like a fatal virus.³
- Sinners die because the consequence of sin is the first death. Unrepentant sinners are also condemned to die the second death⁴ at the end of the 1,000 years because the penalty for sin is eternal death.⁵

Consider these passages: **“Therefore, just as [the curse of] sin entered the world through one man,**

1 Romans 3:23

2 1 John 1:10

3 Jeremiah 13:23; Exodus 34:7

4 Revelation 20:6, 14

5 Romans 6:23

and [the penalty of] death through [his] sin, and in this way death came to all people [Jew and Gentile alike], because all [who have a sinful nature will sin or have] sinned. . . .There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. . . . For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. . . .For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed [a righteousness which no sinner can produce] – a righteousness that is [given to repentant sinners who are willing to live] by faith from first to last [from beginning to end], just as it is written: ‘The righteous [in God’s sight are those who] will live by faith.’”¹

Jesus as Judge

Each Christian should know that the Father does not judge sinners. He has assigned this task to Jesus, who has walked in our shoes and been tempted in all points as we are.² Jesus knows all about pain and suffering. He has also been tempted in ways beyond the human experience; therefore, we have a judge who knows all about the curse of sin and what life on Earth is like.

¹ Romans 5:12; 3:22–23; 6:23; 1:17, insertions mine

² John 5:22–23; Hebrews 4:15; 2:18

When Jesus judges a sinner,¹ He cannot transfer His righteousness and eternal life simply because He loves the sinner. Instead, He has to follow a legitimate process the Father established. Jesus is the focus of great attention. Millions of angels and twenty-four elders (people who formerly lived on the earth) are sitting silently around Jesus in a spectacular courtroom.² They are watching Jesus as He thoroughly and carefully examines each life's record. The angels and twenty-four elders observe and expect Him to be fair and consistent because the universe's future is at stake. The angels do not want a repeat of Lucifer's rebellion nor sin existing in heaven again, so they carefully watch Christ's deliberation of whether a sinner was rebellious or repentant.

Suppose there is evidence in the record showing a person was a repentant sinner after Jesus presents the evidence to the angels and elders. In that case, He transfers the sinner's outstanding guilt to the scapegoat. Jesus does not condemn anyone for being contaminated with a sinful nature. Lucifer is the father of sin. This is why he receives third-party guilt.

1 2 Corinthians 5:10

2 Daniel 7:9–10; Revelation 4

The phrase *outstanding guilt* indicates that even after a repentant sinner provides restitution and makes all known wrongs right, he still has guilt in God's eyes because a condemned person cannot provide restitution for breaking one of God's laws. If restitution for outstanding guilt were possible, Adam and Eve would have made restitution to save themselves from the consequences and penalty of sin. Each sinner has outstanding guilt, which is transferred to the one responsible for sin through the sinless blood of the Lamb.

After transferring both the repentant sinner's outstanding guilt and third-party guilt, Jesus' righteousness is transferred to the repentant sinner through His perfect blood. Jesus' perfect blood makes the transference of guilt and the cloaking of His righteousness possible. Only after a repentant sinner is declared free of guilt can he be clothed in the righteousness of Jesus. At this point, the sinner is fully justified in the Father's eyes. Then, the eternal life that formerly belonged to Jesus is transferred to the sinner. To God be the glory!

The *Transfer Doctrine* explains how God resolved the angel's question. He justifies repentant sinners

through the blood of the Lamb, transferring their guilt to Lucifer and giving Christ's righteousness to them. Paul explains it beautifully:

“But the gift [of salvation] is not like the trespass [which Adam committed]. For if the many [people who lived on Earth since Adam] died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! Nor can the gift of God be compared with the result of one man’s sin: The judgment [that came upon Adam] followed one sin and brought [immediate] condemnation [on him and his offspring], but the gift [of God] followed many trespasses [after the fullness of time] and [through the righteousness of Jesus, God] brought justification [to all repentant sinners who lived before and after the cross]. For if, by the trespass of the one man [Adam], death reigned [over all mankind] through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ! Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people [Jew and Gentile alike], so also one righteous act resulted

in justification and life for all people [Jew and Gentile alike].”¹

The Angels’ Next Question

The second question that puzzled the angels was, “Once a sinless nature is transformed into a sinful nature, how does the reverse occur?” The Father’s solution is a two-step miracle. The first is called *re-birth*, and the second is called the *sealing*. Whenever the Father can draw a sinner close to himself through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and that sinner realizes his actual condition before God and his desperate need for the righteousness of Jesus, the Holy Spirit will perform a miracle and give that repentant sinner a new nature and a new life.

The sinner will suddenly begin to hunger for God’s Word and thirst for spiritual matters, and God will give him insight and understanding. The sinner will become a completely different person with a life he never knew existed, loving God and his neighbor and abandoning his past ways to seek a life that is pleasing to God, studying and cherishing the Bible, and discovering the peace and joy of humility and service. He will view the world’s material possessions as of little value and regard spiritual activities

¹ Romans 5:15–18, insertions mine

as precious and eternal.

The Bible teaches that our natural propensity toward God is hostile. If a person is far from God, he will not notice the hostility. He will think that all is well. However, once a person attempts to come close to God, he will discover that the hostility within himself is huge. Paul wrote, **“Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so. Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.”**¹

God gives a natural propensity for righteousness to every born-again person, and this is when the trouble begins. A born-again person is not just a good neighbor; he is a repentant sinner. He will quickly discover he has two natures constantly warring against each other for supremacy, and his sinful nature will ambush the spiritual as often as possible.

¹ Romans 8:5-8

Even though the sinful nature remains within born-again believers, we must and can overcome temptation. **“For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live. For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.”**¹ Jesus will give each repentant sinner the power to overcome temptation as He overcame temptation. If you question the need to overcome temptation, read the testimony of Jesus sent to the seven churches in Asia Minor.²

Because every born-again Christian has two natures, he has to live and remain a repentant sinner. The problem is, sooner or later, all born-again Christians will sin: sometimes accidentally and sometimes willfully.³ The curse of sin is so deep within us that it is impossible to live without sinning. Therefore, born-again Christians have to live in a perpetual state as a *repentant sinner*, which is humbling and contrary to the carnal nature. When a repentant sinner falls short, he makes restitution as needed. When he does wrong, he makes it right as quickly as possible.

1 Romans 8:13–14

2 Revelation 2 and 3; For more information on the seven churches: <https://wake-up.org/who-is-jesus/the-untold-story-of-jesus.html>

3 Romans 7

Whenever the Holy Spirit brings guilt, the person recognizes the problem, confesses his sin to those he wronged, and remedies it. He then confesses his sin to God, and Holy Spirit-driven guilt disappears. This continuous cycle in a Christian's life is called *sanctification*. The word describes a developmental process—the process of becoming like Jesus. **“Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.”**¹

To keep repentant sinners on track and living with the challenge of being and remaining a repentant sinner, which is contrary to our flesh, the Father has provided a wonderful gift. **“Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a *deposit*, guaranteeing what is to come.”**² Paul indicates that each repentant sinner receives the Holy Spirit **“as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.”**

¹ 1 Peter 2:1–3

² 2 Corinthians 1:21–22, *italics mine*

Jesus will judge the living during the Great Tribulation. The judgment of the living is unlike the judgment of the dead because the living are still living! So, they continue to have free will and the power of choice. Judging the dead is different since they have been sealed by death. The Father has provided a wonderful solution to this problem because He knows that as long as the sinful nature remains within a repentant sinner, he will eventually sin. The penalty for sin will condemn him to death.

What Fulfills the Deposit?

When a sinner becomes repentant, God gives a deposit of the Holy Spirit, guaranteeing what is to come. Paul describes this phenomenon in Hebrews 8: “[God says a time is coming when] **I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.**”¹

¹ Hebrews 8:10–12, insertion mine

God revealed to Paul that a time was coming when He would remove the sinful nature of repentant sinners. This would happen by writing His laws in their hearts and minds. When God does this, repentant sinners will be restored to a state like Adam and Eve before they sinned. Until that time arrives, the Holy Spirit is given *as a deposit*. To keep repentant sinners from growing weary and discouraged by the unrelenting war between their two natures, Paul wrote, **“So Christ himself gave [His people] the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, *attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*”**¹

You will see that the Christian community has not arrived at **“unity in the faith”** or **“in the knowledge of the Son of God.”** Christians are more divided than ever. You will also notice that the Christian community has not attained **“the whole measure of the fullness of Christ”** because each born-again person still sins when his carnal nature gets the best of him. Thankfully, this sad condition is not permanent.

¹ Ephesians 4:11–13, insertion and italics mine

Paul wrote to the new believers in Ephesus, saying, **“When you believed [in Jesus], you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who *is a deposit* guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession – to the praise of his glory.”**¹

Just before the Great Tribulation, Jesus will judge the 144,000 and remove their sinful nature. Jesus will select and empower these individuals as His servants.² They will consist of men and women.³ Thereby, the deposit of the Holy Spirit will be made whole. They will be first to **“reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.”**⁴ For this reason, they are called *firstfruits* of the coming harvest in Revelation 14:4.

Each member of the 144,000 will begin their service having natures like Adam and Eve before they sinned with no propensity for sin. The deposit of the Holy Spirit will be given to them in full measure, and their lives of struggling with the two natures will be over.

1 Ephesians 1:13–14, insertion and italics mine

2 Revelation 7:1–8

3 Joel 2:28–29

4 Ephesians 4:13

Their new condition will be sealed,¹ and they will be in perfect unity in their knowledge of the Son of God; they will have attained the full measure of the fullness of Christ through the fulfillment of His promise to write His laws in their minds and hearts. The 144,000 as firstfruits will be a living demonstration of what Jesus is preparing to do for all repentant saints during the Great Tribulation! When Jesus appears at His second coming, a miraculous event will occur: **“Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.”**²

Note, the saints **“shall be like him.”**

God promised Ezekiel that He would transform His people. **“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.”**³ The deposit of the Holy Spirit has been a foretaste of what is coming.

¹ For more information on the sealing: <https://wake-up.org/who-is-jesus/the-untold-story-of-jesus.html>

² 1 John 3:2, italics mine

³ Ezekiel 36:26–27

One point needs to be made. Paul explains how Jesus judges billions of repentant sinners who have died prior to the Great Tribulation. When the dead in Christ are resurrected at the second coming, **“This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory.’”**¹

This is how God resolves the angels’ second question, “Once a sinless nature is transformed into a sinful nature, how does the reverse occur?” God performs a miracle in every repentant sinner in two phases. First, there is the miracle of rebirth, and second, the deposit of the Holy Spirit. For those who live during the judgment of the living, there will be a sealing: the removal of the sinful nature, so all of God’s children rise to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Jesus Severely Tested

Jesus was born with a sinless nature, the exact nature given to Adam and Eve when they were cre-

¹ 1 Corinthians 15:53–54, NKJV

ated. As the *second Adam*,¹ Jesus had to face temptation and succeed where Adam failed. Moreover, the Father foreknew Lucifer would claim Jesus had a huge advantage over people having a sinful nature. So, to make Christ's victory over sin and to create the righteousness needed to save repentant sinners, the Father substantially raised the bar! He required Jesus to face temptations far beyond any temptation human beings will ever face.

Jesus grew up as an ordinary child. He had to grow into the realization that He was the Son of God.² He had no visions or dreams we know of. Through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the Scriptures, and His parents, Jesus discovered His identity and declared His faith at the age of 12.³ Scripture shows that memories of His preexisting life as a member of the Godhead likely were kept from Him while on Earth.

According to the Bible, the first time the Father acknowledged Jesus as His Son was at His baptism at 30.⁴ Immediately following, the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to contemplate His mission. There was no food, and it was late

1 1 Corinthians 15:45

2 Luke 2:52

3 Luke 2:42-49

4 Matthew 3:17

November. After Jesus fasted forty days, the devil appeared before a physically weakened Jesus. The devil is no fool. Lucifer knew his life and the lives of his fellow demons were at stake. If Jesus did not succumb to one of his three temptations, Lucifer knew his assured future was torture and death by fire.¹ Therefore, he put much thought into his approach with his first temptation for Jesus.

The devil began an assault that, on the surface, appeared harmless by tempting Jesus to use a *tiny bit* of divine power. The devil knew this was forbidden but wanted Jesus to prove to himself that He was a member of deity by turning a few stones into bread. After all, Jesus was cold and weak from hypothermia and starvation.

I think the devil created the first temptation knowing self-preservation is one of the strongest motives for human beings. He knew King David and his men ate the holy bread in the tabernacle without incurring guilt² and thought Jesus might justify turning stones into bread to keep from dying. The devil knew Jesus could have easily turned the stones into bread by speaking the word. Lucifer hoped Jesus might use this as an excuse

¹ Matthew 8:29

² 1 Samuel 21:6; Mark 2:25–26

to briefly and innocently step outside the human limitations that the Father had imposed on Him to prove to himself that He was indeed a member of deity.

This temptation suggests that Jesus did not have memories of His preexisting life in heaven. Of course, the devil knew who Jesus was, but Jesus only knew that He was the Son of God through faith. All in all, this was a very clever temptation that Jesus immediately perceived.

The first temptation Jesus faced in the wilderness proves He was not and is not a human being like us. Jesus is a member of deity who had the form and limitations of humanity for thirty-three years. **“So it is written: ‘The first man Adam became a living being’; the last Adam [Jesus], a life-giving spirit. The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. The first man was of the dust of the earth; the second man is of heaven.”**¹

Just before His crucifixion, Jesus willingly endured a cruel beating when He could have easily *broken out* of the limitations of humanity and *turned the table* on His enemies. He could have escaped the

¹ 1 Corinthians 15:45–47, insertion mine

cross because He had the power within himself to stop the torture and destroy His enemies.

I believe the greatest temptation Jesus faced happened almost every day of His adult life. Would He stay on Earth and remain within the limitations of humanity? In a careless moment of righteous indignation, would He use divine power for personal benefit? Would He endure ridicule and loneliness? What friend could understand the thoughts and feelings of Jesus? Have you noticed that when Jesus chose His disciples, not one was a childhood friend? At all times and under all circumstances, the Plan of Salvation required Jesus to remain submissive to the will of the Father, and incredibly, He did! The life and faith of Jesus is a profound study. His life and teachings show us how patience, love, faith, grace, and God's laws work together perfectly. The life of Jesus also reveals the great gulf between being filled with the Holy Spirit and being controlled by sinful nature.

The Cross

Before His death, Jesus told His disciples, **“The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and**

on the third day be raised to life.”¹ Jesus went to the cross, believing He would be resurrected on the third day. This thought, I am sure, was of great comfort. However, while Jesus was hanging on the cross, the Father disconnected himself from Jesus as though Jesus were a wicked man and it shocked him. **“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become [have] the righteousness of God.”**² When the Holy Spirit withdrew the Father’s presence from Jesus, Jesus was shaken to His core. He cried out, **“In a loud voice, ‘Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?’ (which means, ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’).”**³

The Father sent Jesus to the cross to test Him: Would Jesus fulfill the first law of love? Did Jesus love the Father with His heart, mind, and soul? Would He do what the Father wanted Him to do? This was the greatest temptation Jesus faced. The Father wanted Jesus to perish on the cross so His blood would transfer the divine righteousness of Jesus and the eternal life that formerly belonged to Jesus to repentant sinners. As Jesus hung on the cross, He proved to the Father and the holy angels

1 Luke 9:22

2 2 Corinthians 5:21, insertion mine

3 Mark 15:34

that He loved the Father with all of His heart, mind, and soul and was willing to experience eternal death.

The Father also sent Jesus to the cross because He wanted to know if Jesus would fulfill the second law of love. Did Jesus love sinners as much as He loved himself? Would Jesus be willing to perish forever so repentant sinners could have His eternal life? The Father tested Jesus with this law when Jesus was at His weakest. When Jesus was about to perish, the Father unexpectedly and suddenly transferred the guilt of sinners to Jesus. The Father made Jesus a sinner, and Jesus was traumatized by the process! Immediately, Jesus realized He was about to die the death of a wicked man—the penalty for sin is the second death—from which there is no hope of resurrection.

True, Jesus had predicted His resurrection on the third day; however, while He was on the cross when the Father and the Holy Spirit separated themselves from Him, Jesus entered a state that He had never known. Abruptly, He faced the second death, the same death that will be imposed on Lucifer and all wicked people at the end of the thousand years. According to the Father's infinite wisdom, this

extreme test was inflicted on Jesus during His final moments because it was the ultimate way to know how much Jesus loved sinners. Jesus cried out to the Father with anguish in His voice, **“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”**

The Father sent Jesus to the cross for a third reason. He wanted Jesus to experience the horror of the second death from which there is no hope of resurrection. If Jesus is to serve as a judge of mankind, the Father wanted Him to experience this before condemning anyone to the second death. When Jesus cried, **“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”** I am sure all of heaven stood still amidst a suffocating silence. The holy angels did not understand what was happening. Even Lucifer and his demons paused to see what the Father was doing. After a few moments, **“Jesus called out *with a loud voice*, ‘Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.’ When he had said this, he breathed his last.”**¹

Notice that Jesus cried out **“with a loud”** voice. Given the horrible beating and trauma He had endured and the inability to carry His own cross, how could He speak with a loud voice at the last minute

¹ Luke 23:46, italics mine

of His life? Jesus cried out with His divine voice, the same voice that days earlier had raised Lazarus from the dead.¹ The Father had approved the use of divine power to raise Lazarus so everyone would know Jesus had the power of life within himself.

Hanging on the cross, deity did what only deity could do. A member of deity perished because another member of deity required it. Jesus' last words were words of incredible faith, **"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit."** When we consider Jesus willingly went to the cross, was unexpectedly separated from the Father by the guilt of sin, and felt sure there was no hope of resurrection, it is mind-boggling to realize He refrained from using divine power to save himself immediately. His love for the Father and sinners vetoed that temptation.

Even though Jesus did not understand what the Father was doing, He did not become angry, retaliate, or accuse the Father of misconduct. As the darkness of eternal death hopelessly closed in, Jesus maintained complete faith in the Father. He knew the Father was watching every twitch He made and accepted the Father's will by putting His life into the Father's hands. A member of deity per-

¹ John 11:43

ished that day. One member of the Godhead—the Creator himself—willingly died on a cross.

Jesus infinitely demonstrated the first and second greatest commandments.¹ No wonder Paul would later write, **“Therefore God [the Father has] exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”**²

Can Deity Die?

For centuries, Christians have argued, “Did deity really perish on the cross?” Catholics and many Protestants believe deity cannot die. They believe Christ’s humanity died but cannot accept that deity died because they do not believe Jesus is a distinct, equal, and coeternal God who existed with the Father from the beginning.³ Their explanation for the Trinity puts the Bible in an internal conflict. This is unacceptable.

Before we proceed, consider this question. **“Which death makes salvation more expensive:**

¹ Matthew 22:37–39

² Philippians 2:9–11, insertion mine

³ Fact 4 in Appendix A: <https://wake-up.org/who-is-jesus/the-untold-story-of-jesus.html>

The death of a human being or the actual death of a deity?" I have framed this question to highlight an important point. Before His birth and living in the form of a man, an infinite and coeternal member of deity lived as an archangel, Michael.¹ The Bible says mankind was created lower than the angels.² Therefore, even if Christ's humanity was all that died on the cross, the death of a volunteer angel would have had greater value than Christ's humanity.

The Father designed the salvation of repentant sinners to require an unimaginable price—the life of a self-existing member of deity. No one took Jesus' life; He gave it up willingly.³ This elevates the Plan of Salvation to the highest possible price and makes the *Transfer Doctrine* unassailable. The death of a deity elevates the love of the Father and Jesus to a higher plain than finite beings will ever comprehend. As eternity unfolds, the infinite price paid for repentant sinners will grow in understanding as everyone sees more of the greatness and largeness of the Godhead. The voluntary and willing death of a member of deity proves Jesus wholeheart-

1 For more information on Jesus/Michael: <https://wake-up.org/who-is-jesus/the-untold-story-of-jesus.html>

2 Psalm 8:5

3 John 10:18

edly agrees: the Father's laws are unforgiving and changeless.

The death of a member of deity is in complete harmony with the whole of Scripture which teaches Tritheism (the existence of three separate Gods).¹ Jesus said, **“For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it.”**² Jesus also said, **“The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life – only to take it up again. No one takes it from me [men may attempt to kill me, but they cannot because I am deity], but I lay it down of my own accord [I can do this and am willing to do this]. I have authority [permission from the Father] to lay it down and authority [permission] to take it up again [if I want to]. This command I received from my Father.”**³

Sixty-five years after His ascension, Jesus appeared to John on the isle of Patmos. He spoke as God⁴ and said plainly of himself, **“Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades**

1 For more information on the Trinity: <https://wake-up.org/who-is-jesus/the-untold-story-of-jesus.html>

2 John 5:21

3 John 10:17–18, insertions mine

4 Revelation 21:7

[the grave].”¹ He clearly states that He was dead! True to His word, the Father not only restored Jesus to life,² but He also restored everything Jesus once had and more. Jesus prayed, **“I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word.”**³

1 Revelation 1:17–18, insertion mine

2 Romans 6:4; Acts 10:40

3 John 17:6

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