

marvelous ideal; but if we try to save ourselves simply by following them, the attempt is apt to lead only to despair. It is universally admitted that the Golden Rule sets a standard unparalleled elsewhere. "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you." Can any person expect to enter heaven on the ground that he has fully lived up to this standard? Let's be honest with ourselves. If we are to be judged by the degree in which we have followed the teachings of Jesus, no one of us can have any hope of entering heaven.

Jesus did not come simply to exhibit His peerless character, in order that we might follow in His steps. He set us a marvelous example. We ought to try to follow Him in all things. Yet if we base our hope of heaven on truly living up to the standard which He set, we might as well give up. If one of us is foolish enough to think that his own life is free from fault or flaw, he can be speedily disillusioned by getting a frank opinion from someone who knows him well. The teachings and the character of Jesus were unexcelled, but the purpose of His life was something else. Jesus came to this earth not merely to show us the character of God, important as that is. He came not merely to make it easier for us to understand that we have a God who can understand our sufferings and our difficulties, because He has entered into all the problems of human life. The supreme reason is stated in Mark 10:45, "...The Son of man came...to give His life a ransom for many."

Why should a ransom be needed? Because of the sin of mankind. What do we mean by sin? It is the attitude of looking out for number one and being unwilling to give proper attention to the needs of others. God, the righteous Judge, has established conditions under which all may live in peace and harmony together in the universe, but man has disregarded these conditions and turned aside and broken God's law.

It does not take a great deal of study of world conditions to see that the underlying cause of the trouble and difficulty in the world is man's greed and selfishness. Capital and labor would have no difficulty in solving their problems if it were not for the fact that each of them suspects the other of seeking to get more than its share of the profits, and this suspicion is often well founded. Nations would have no difficulty in getting along together if each did not often suspect the other of trying to get more than its share of the good things of the world. Each tends to blame others for all the trouble in his life. The thing which is to blame is human sin. We do not have to examine our own hearts very long to find that there is just as much sin in our own hearts as in those of any one else.

Many a person says, "If I do the best I can, surely I will be all right. I injure no one. I always try to treat people decently. I've lived a good life; certainly God will deal well with me." However, examination of the heart and the life of any one of us will speedily convince Him that this is not true; that no one of us can earn his own eternal salvation. As Romans 3:23 says, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." "There is none righteous; no, not one." Even if one of us were to begin this minute to live a life absolutely free from sin, that could not atone for the result of past sin. Some means must be found of washing away our sin if we are to inherit eternal life. In an impressive scene, Shakespeare describes Lady Macbeth as walking back and forth pretending to wash her hand. As she does it she says, "All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand." She had the sin of murder upon her hand, and she knew that it could not be washed off.

This which man could not possibly do to find an answer for cleansing him from his sin and bidding him to enter into eternal life God has done. God has sent His own son in the likeness of sinful flesh to become sin for us; to bear our