Believe in Christ Jesus or Remain Condemned

John 3:16-21

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Only the sacrifice of Christ Jesus can cancel the <u>condemnation</u> under which all humanity <u>already</u> <u>stands</u>.

I. Scholars are uncertain whether verses 3:16-21 are <u>Jesus'</u> own <u>words</u> or a divinely inspired summary by <u>John</u>.

All Scripture is God-breathed… (2 Timothy 3:16a)

For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:21)

II. God's <u>love</u> for the people He created was the motivating force to provide a <u>solution</u> for the world's <u>sin</u> <u>problem</u>. (v. 16a)

…God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. (1 John 4:8b-10)

"Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13)

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)

And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. (Ephesians 3:17b-19)

"I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you." (Genesis 12:2-3)

There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. (Galatians 3:28-29)

He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. (1 John 2:2)

III. There are <u>ONLY</u> <u>TWO</u> options for where one will spend <u>eternity</u>. (v. 16b)

Reality: The Bible teaches that hell is a real place where some beings will spend eternity.

"'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels…Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life." (Matthew 25:41, 46)

If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. (Mark 9:43)

…darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matthew 8:12).

Rebellion: According to Jesus, hell is a place for those who reject God, who rebel against His kingship and refuse His grace.

And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever. (Revelation 20:10)

Regret: Jesus does not portray hell as a pleasant place or even a neutral state.

The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew 13:41-2)

Relentlessness: Based on Jesus' teaching, hell is not temporary, but eternal. Those who suffer in hell will suffer forever.

"The fire never goes out," Jesus said (Mark 9:48, NLT)

A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: "If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives its mark on their forehead or on their hand, they, too, will drink the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. They will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment will rise for ever and ever. There will be no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image, or for anyone who receives the mark of its name." (Revelation 14:9-11)

Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small,

standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:11-15)

IV. Jesus first coming (His <u>incarnation</u>) was a <u>rescue</u> <u>mission</u>; at His second He will <u>judge</u> the world. (v. 17)

Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? declares the Sovereign LORD. Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live? Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? declares the Sovereign LORD. Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live? (Ezekiel 18:23, 32)

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people— for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. (1 Timothy 2:1-4)

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)

"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it." (Matthew 7:13-14)

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. Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.
"Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life. Very truly I tell you, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.
"Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done what is good will rise to live, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned. By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me. (John 5:21-30)

Then Jesus cried out, "Whoever believes in me does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. The one who looks at me is seeing the one who sent me. I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.

"If anyone hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge that person. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; the very words I have spoken will condemn them at the last day. For I did not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say." (John 12:44-50)

V. In the name of Jesus means belief in His <u>identity</u> as <u>God</u> in the <u>flesh</u> and the fullness of His <u>message</u>. (v. 18)

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. (Romans 8:1-3)

First: Inherited sin: we inherit a fallen sinful nature from Adam.

Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous. (Romans 5:18-19)

For I was born a sinner—
yes, from the moment my mother conceived me. (Psalm 51:5 NLT)

We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, <u>sold as a slave to sin.</u> I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is <u>sin living in me</u>. For I know that <u>good itself does not dwell in me</u>, that is, in my <u>sinful nature</u>. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. (Romans 7:14-18)

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned— (Romans 5:12)

…all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23)

For the wages of sin is death… (Romans 6:23)

All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. (Ephesians 2:3)

When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness,

which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. (Colossians 2:13-15)

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

VI. Christ, the <u>true</u> <u>light</u>, is rejected by most because they <u>love</u> their <u>sin</u>. (v. 19)

For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles. (Romans 1:20-22)

…we have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin. As it is written:
"There is no one righteous, not even one;
there is no one who understands;
there is no one who seeks God.
All have turned away,
they have together become worthless;
there is no one who does good,
not even one."
"Their throats are open graves;
their tongues practice deceit."
"The poison of vipers is on their lips."
"Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness."
"Their feet are swift to shed blood;
ruin and misery mark their ways,
and the way of peace they do not know."
"There is no fear of God before their eyes." (Romans 3:9b-18)

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. (Ephesians 5:8-13)

VII. <u>Truth</u> and <u>light</u> are repugnant to those who <u>love</u> their <u>sin</u>. (v. 20)

“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing.” (Luke 13:34)

VIII. When God saves us we increasingly <u>embrace</u> and <u>live</u> in the <u>truth</u> and the <u>light</u>. (v. 21)

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us. (1 John 1:8-10)

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. And He is the head of the body, the church; He is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything He might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through His blood, shed on the cross.
Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now He has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in His sight, without blemish and free from accusation— if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant. (Colossians 1:15-23)