

# Are We All On “Death Row” Awaiting Execution?

**Romans 3:22-23** [NIV] “... *there is no difference, for all have sinned* [broken God’s law of love] *and fall short of the glory of God.*” [Being glorified by God by receiving eternal, spiritual life].

Some sins seem to us bigger than others because their obvious consequences are more serious.

Murder seems to us to be worse than hatred, adultery seems worse than lust.

But this does **not** mean that because we only do “lesser” sins we deserve the gift of eternal life from God.

**Isaiah 59:2** [NIV] “*But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.*”

All sins make us sinners, and all sin cuts us off from our holy Creator God.

Sin offends our holy Creator God and separates us from Him.

Because He is holy, God **cannot** ignore, excuse or tolerate sin as though it did not matter. Sin isolates God from the people He has created to love.

**2 Peter 3:9** [NIV] “*The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*”

The God of love wants all human beings to live with Him forever but He **cannot** take them into His holy presence unless their sin is removed.

All sin, therefore, leads us to be on “death row” awaiting execution.

**Romans 6:23** [NIV] “*For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*”

All we can earn for all the good we may do now is death because of all our previous sins.

**Psalms 51:5** [NIV] “*Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.*”

This is true because we were conceived by parents who had a rebellious human nature, and we were born into a society that is rebellious against its Creator God.

Why is this society so rebellious against God?

**2 Corinthians 4:3-4** [NIV] “*And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*”

Who is this “god of this age” who has blinded the minds of people to the existence of a Creator God?

**Revelation 12:9** [NIV] “*The great dragon was hurled down, that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.*”

The one who has blinded humanity to the existence of the Creator and led it astray is Satan, a very real spiritual being.

How then can we escape from “death row”?

**2 Corinthians 5:21** [NIV] *“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”*

Who is this person without sin?

When we read the context we see that it is Jesus Christ.

How can Jesus Christ who was sinless “become sin for us”?

First we need to establish Who Jesus Christ was and is.

**John 1:1-4** [NIV] *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men.”*

Who is this “Word” who is the Creator God?

**John 1:14** [NIV] *“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

We all in the western world have heard of Christmas even if we do not relate it to the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.

**Jesus Christ was sent by the Father to become a human being for a very important reason.**

**John 3:16-17** [NIV] *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”*

Save the world from what?

Save us from our being on “death row” because of our sins.

How can Jesus Christ do this?

**Hebrews 1:1-3** [NIV] *“In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.”*

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, not only created all things but sustains them.

**Therefore Christ’s sin-free life is of greater value than all the human beings who will ever exist.**

**1 Corinthians 15:1-4** [NIV] *“Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,”*

The death of Jesus Christ on the cross, when He became death for us, is the death that we deserve paid for in the eyes of the holy God the Father.

**Jesus Christ placed Himself on “death row” and was executed in our place so we could be freed.**

## How are we to react to this opportunity to be freed from eternal death?

**1 John 1:8-10** [NIV] *“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 has no place in our lives.”*

First we have to confess that we are sinners and not deceive ourselves or allow Satan to deceive us.

What next?

**John 3:16-17** [NIV] *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”*

Believe that the death of Jesus Christ can be a substitute for our deserved death.

Then something wonderful will happen.

**Isaiah 43:25** [NIV] *“I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.”*

God will blot out the record of our sins and remember them no more.

**Psalms 103:8-14** [NIV] *“The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will he harbour his anger for ever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.”*

It is the great love and compassion of our Creator God that causes Him to do this.

But notice one condition that God places on the loving transaction, *“for those who fear Him.”*

The Hebrew word translated *“fear”* is *“yare”* meaning to treat with reverence **not** terror.

**We must never take this loving act of God lightly or for granted.**

How should we react?

**Acts 20:28** [NIV] *“Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.”*

Every Christian in the Church of God has been purchased by the blood sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

The Greek word used is the same one as when a person was bought as a bond slave, one who had **no** personal rights, only duties towards his master.

**Romans 12:1** [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship.”*

This is the only way we can show our worshipful reverence towards our Saviour from eternal death, Jesus Christ, also respond to our new status in life as a bond slave of Jesus Christ.

By the way, we are in very good company, for all of Jesus Christ’s apostles introduced themselves in their letters to the Christian churches as servants [bond slaves] of Jesus Christ.

You may ask the very valid question:

**Is this the only way I can escape eternal death and receive eternal life?**

What about all the other religions of the world who do **not** recognise Jesus Christ as their Saviour?

Don't they also lead to a relationship with the Creator God?

**Acts 4:8-12** [NIV] *“Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: “Rulers and elders of the people! If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. He is “the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone.’ Salvation is found in no-one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”*

The answer is **no**.

When we look at all other religions they all have one thing in common.

All who practice them are seeking self-salvation, by performing certain rituals or “good” works.

None of which can save us from eternal death.

**Ephesians 2:8-10** [NIV] *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no-one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”*

We are saved by the grace, undeserved love of God, **not** by any works we can do.

But after accepting salvation as a gift, there are certain things God wants us to engage in that will assist us in maturing as a Christian and created child of God.

That is explained in many other articles but is outside the scope of this one.