

## God's Perfect Plan

by Dennis Lange

God's plan of salvation, as revealed in the Bible, is a proof that the Bible is from God. The Bible reveals God as both just and merciful. Concerning law, those things don't mix very well. The judge who is merciful in letting someone go without paying the penalty is no longer just. The judge who is just and rightly condemns every single person in his court with the full penalty is never merciful.

The Bible says that God is not willing that any should perish, that He desires all men to be saved (I Tim.2:3). But He is a righteous judge. The plan of salvation that God planned before the foundation of the world makes it possible for all men to be saved. God is at once merciful AND just.

Jesus died on the cross, paying the penalty of sin for all mankind. He gave Himself as a ransom for all (I Tim.2:6). His sacrifice was a propitiation not only for Christians, but also for the whole world (I John 2:2). "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

1. If Jesus had been guilty of sin, He would have had to pay the penalty for HIS sins, and thus could not die for the sins of others. But He was without sin. "...one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15).
2. God's plan required a sufficient sacrifice. One man may die for another. But who can die and pay the penalty of sin for the whole human race? Only the Creator can die for all His creation. The Word was God and the Word became flesh (John 1:1,14).
3. God's plan makes it possible for all men to be saved. The sins of all were paid for. He gave Himself as a ransom for all (I Tim.2:6)
4. God's plan shows how horrible sin is, that Jesus His Son had to die upon the cross in order to pay for the sins of the world. Thus, the cross helps men turn away from sin.
5. God's plan shows how great His love is, that He was willing to go that far that men might be saved. Thus, the cross helps men turn to God in love.

### **Notice some plans that would not work.**

1. **God could simply forgive everybody because He is loving and merciful.** Then, He would no longer be just. It would also cheapen sin. What motivation is there to stop sinning? Keep on. He's going to forgive everybody anyway. Such a plan would diminish the horribleness of sin and even encourage it.
2. **God could simply condemn everybody and not save any sinner.** Then, God would be just, but He wouldn't be loving and merciful. Also, God doesn't want ANY to perish.

3. **God could have set a standard (let's say 51%) and if people reach that standard of doing good, of being righteous, then they would be saved. They would then be good enough.** This is actually the plan most people think is going to get them into heaven. It is the most discussed subject in consecutive verses in the NT, that works cannot earn one's salvation (Romans and Galatians).

What's wrong with that plan?

- A. It means that men can sin freely up to 49%. It encourages sin. It is not just, overlooking 49% sinfulness. That's easily understood by this example: Suppose I run a red light, get a ticket, and have to appear in court three weeks from now. But during those 3 weeks, I drive very carefully. I don't break ANY speed limits. I stop and stop completely at every stop sign. I yield. I use my blinker. I follow every traffic law perfectly during those three weeks and that is my plea before the judge. What's he going to say? Pay the fine. I still broke the law. Keeping the law after one breaks it does not make up for breaking it. The writer of Hebrews said that about the Law of Moses - it made nothing perfect (Heb.7:18).
  - B. Also, suppose a person was horribly wicked in his early years and by the time he came to his senses (that his life was a waste and eternity gaped before him), he had done so much that if he was perfect during the rest of his life, he could never reach 51% for his whole life span. God is not willing that any should perish, and there is no provision in this flawed plan for such a person.
  - C. Such a plan would foster boasting on the part of those who were "good enough". It would thus encourage men to sin in that respect.
  - D. Such a plan would mean that the person with 51% goodness and 49% sin would be saved. But the person with 50/50 would be lost. Thus, a person with 49% sinfulness would be saved while the one at 50% sinfulness would be lost over the 1% difference.
4. **God could have set a standard where one would go to heaven as long his sins weren't bad sins.**
    - A. One standard: people could go to heaven just as long as they didn't murder two people. Murdering one is ok, but two is suddenly bad? Oh, I've not murdered anyone yet, so I can use my quota of one on somebody? Such would encourage sin.
    - B. It would also mean that there is no justice concerning the one murder that all are allotted.
    - C. It would also mean that not everyone could be saved.

D. Ah, you don't like where I set the standard. Let's change it and say that one can go to heaven just as long as he doesn't murder any one. NO murders. Oh, I can beat and torture someone to within an inch of his life and THAT is ok? Shall we keep moving the standard down? We'd simply have another set of problems with justice and mercy. Sin would still be encouraged.

God's plan of salvation as revealed in the Bible is perfect, giving further evidence that the Bible is from God. Men cannot come up with another way that will encompass all the above.