

'I Owe, I Owe, So It's Off to Work I Go' Mark 1:14,15

I. The Problem:

A. One of the biggest problems atheists have is the problem of evil, the uniformity and universality of it. They like to criticize Christians for our view of evil but they themselves have no real answer or good answer for it at all. Nobody takes the issue of _____ in the world more seriously than Christians do.

B. I believe the Bible gives us the clearest and most accurate description of the human heart. God describes the heart this way: Jere. 17:9. Jesus said in Mk. 7:21-23. I believe that it gives us the taproot below all these other roots or sources of pain and suffering in our world.

C. The Bible has a one word definition for all this: sin. Sin is the taproot of every human heart. It is the source of all these other bad things going on in our world. Without a clear understanding of sin, then all the great doctrines of the Bible are just words, words without any real meaning. Wrong views of sin lies behind most of the great heresies, errors and false ideas of our day.

D. Sin is the vast moral disease that affects the whole human race. Sin is doing, saying, even imagining anything that is not in perfect harmony with the Word of God as Jesus points out in the Sermon on the Mount. John says sin is _____ 1 Jn. 3:4. Paul says that anything done not in faith is sin, Rom. 14:23. There are sins of omission and sins of commission.

II. The Solution

A. As in physical problems, if you diagnose the problem wrong, you will come up with a wrong remedy. Hinduism says you have to do something, you have to pay for your sins. Buddhism says you have to pay. Islam says you have to pay. Jesus is the only one who came along and said He will pay. His core message was what I read in the beginning: repent and believe in the gospel.

B. Repentance, *metanoia*, means to change your mind, a change of heart. I actually like what Martin Luther discovered when he said that he is happiest when he is at the foot of the cross confessing his sins and asking for forgiveness. Being forgiven brings such sweet relief. He said repentance is a lifestyle, not a once in a lifetime event. It is called for whenever we sin. 1 Jn. 1:5-2:3.

How do you spell relief? Not ROLAIDS but REPENTANCE!

C. What we see in this world, evil, and what we need: justice, love, forgiveness; all these 4 things converge in only one spot in all the earth, on a hill called Calvary. It was there that evil thought it had won. God didn't win in spite of evil, He won through evil. He didn't deny or ignore evil; He took its full onslaught and conquered it. It was there that He laid our _____ on His perfect, spotless Passover lamb.

D. In no other religion or belief system will you find a solution for the sin in the human heart, for something that can transform you from the inside out, for something that can give you a new heart. In no other religion does the benefactor take upon himself the problem and the wrong-doer becomes the beneficiary, while being totally undeserving of it. Jesus says to '*come unto Me*'. Have you come unto Him? Have you asked forgiveness for your sins? There is no salvation without repentance. Lk. 13:3

Conclusion: I titled this message from a song: '*I owe, I owe, it's off to work I go*'. You might have thought I was thinking about work, but I was thinking about how do we deal with our sin? Do we have to pay? How can you pay that debt off? I prefer a different song: '*He giveth more grace.*'