

JESSE MORRELL (MORAL GOVERNMENT THEOLOGY) RESPONDS TO JOSEF URBAN (CALVINISM)

The words of Josef are in bold, my response to what he said comes after each quote.

Josef Urban is a man who believes that Charles Finney and John Wesley are in hell right now because they were “false teachers”. He also believes that Leonard Ravenhill, Albert Barnes, and Paris Reidhead were heretics. I do not take it too personally that he calls me a heretic, since it seems I am in good company. Josef himself is a five point Calvinist. He greatly misunderstands and misrepresents my theology. I have tried to correct this in the past but he has ignored my corrections. I have tried to reasonably dialog with him in the past, but he has refused to answer my questions and also results to harsh name calling. The impression that I have gotten from him over the years is that he is overly critical and harsh, and comes off as very mean spirited and even cruel, as best towards me.

You will notice that in his accusations against me, and in his attacks against my theology, he NOT EVEN ONCE provides a single quote of something I have said.

“Yet, despite the outward appearance of zeal in evangelism and devotion to theological subjects, there is reason to have grave concern about this man and the ministry he leads. Not only has he employed unscriptural and cruel tactics of “shock and awe” preaching where crude statements are shouted in the open air in the hopes of offending people so that a heckler will rise up and yell and then a crowd will gather,” quote

What are my “cruel tactics” or what are the “crude statements” that I have made?? He gives absolutely no quotes whatsoever. I have nearly 200 videos on YouTube people can watch to see what it is that I say and do. Anyone can judge my open air preaching by watching the videos.

While I do say, “The unrighteousness will not inherit the Kingdom of God. If you are sleeping with your girl friend you are on your way to hell”. I do not see this as crude or cruel. It is truth spoken in love.

Jesus Christ often said shocking statements like “unless you repent, you will perish”, “I am the way the truth and the life”, “unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood”, etc. The truth is often shocking. For me to say, “God is going to judge your life” or “God is angry with the wicked every day” might be considered “shock and awe” but it is completely biblical.

There is no doubt that I aim at dialoging with those who disagree with me. I go to a campus, not to talk to those who already agree, but with those who disagree. And so I will bring up controversial issues that I know others will get an opposing opinion about. Examples would be abortion, homosexuality, etc. I am not bringing up these topics in the “hopes of offending people” but in the hopes that those who disagree would vocalize their disagreement, so that we could discuss it. Crowds do gather when there is a public

debate, I use this for the advantage of the Gospel.

“and not only does he align himself with false evangelists who are known for their shockingly offensive and anti-biblical methods of ministry,” quote

He is talking about Ruben Israel, Kevin Farrer, JK, Jed Smock, Micah Armstrong, Dick Christenson, etc. These men are my friends and I believe they preach the truth. They are not “False evangelists”.

“I have already communicated with Jesse on numerous occasions pleading with him from God’s Word to recognize his error and to renounce the false doctrines he believes, and have communicated with him numerous times and even rebuked him sharply, all to no avail.” Quote

I once had to ban Josef from my message board because he was making false accusations and was not open to a discussion. He refused to answer any of my questions but just continued to rail on in his false accusations. I told Josef that he would be allowed back on if he would be willing to engage in reasonable dialog.

But I am not going to “repent” of what I believe is taught in the Bible. I am not going to “repent” and become a Calvinist.

“The doctrine of God’s Omniscience: Simply stated and summarized, Jesse does not believe that God immutably knows the future” quote

I believe that God is omniscient. Omniscient means “all knowledge”. God has all the knowledge that exists. God knows everything that there is to know. The parts of the future that are predetermined, God knows as predetermined, and the parts of the future that are undetermined, God knows as undetermined.

The future is partly settled, because God had made predeterminations. And the future is partly open, because God allows men to choose.

* God speaks of the future in terms of what may or may not be: Ex. 3:18, 4:9, 13:17; Eze. 12:3

* God changes His plans in response to changing circumstances: Ex. 32:10-14, Jer. 18:1-10

* God's willingness to change His plans is considered one of His glorious attributes: Jonah 4:2; Joel 2:12-13

* God tests people to see what types of decisions they will make: Gen. 22:12; Ex. 16:4; Deut. 8:2, 13:1-3; 2 Chron. 32:31

* God has had disappointments and has regretted how things turned out: Gen. 6:6; 1 Sam.

15:10, 15:35

* God has expected things to happen that didn't come to pass: Isa. 5:1-5; Jer. 3:6-7, 3:19-20

* God gets frustrated and grieved when he attempts to bring individuals into alignment with his will and they resist: Eze. 22:29-31; Isa. 63:10; Eph. 4:30; cf. Heb. 3:8, 3:15, 4:7; Acts 7:51

* The prayers of men have changed the plans of God: Ex. 32:10-14; Num. 11:1-2, 14:12-20, 16:16:20-35; Deut. 9:13-14, 9:18-20, 9:25; 2 Sam. 24:17-25; 1 Kin. 21:27-29; 2 Chron. 12:5-8; Jer. 26:19

* God is said to have repented (changed His mind) multiple times in the Bible: Gen. 6:6-7; Ex. 32:12-14; Num. 23:19; Deut. 32:36; Judges 2:18; 1 Sam. 15:11, 15:29, 15:35; 2 Sam. 24:16; Ps. 90:13, 106:45, 110:4, 135:14; Jer. 4:28, 15:6, 18:8, 18:10, 20:16, 26:3, 26:13, 26:19, 42:10, Eze. 24:14, Hos. 11:8, 13:14; Joel 1:13-14; Amos 7:3, 7:6; Jonah 3:9-10, 4:2; Zach. 8:14

* Prophecies are often God foretelling what He Himself will later bring to pass. So they have to do more with God's omnipotence than His omniscience: Gen. 3:15; 1 Kin. 8:15, 8:20, 8:24, 13:32 (with 2 Kin. 23:1-3, 15-18); 2 Kings 19:25; 2 Chron. 1:9 (1 Chron. 6:4, 10, 15); 2 Chron 36:21-22; Ezra 1:1; Isa. 5:19, 25:1-2, 37:26, 42:9 (with vs. 16); Jer. 29:10, 32:24, 32:28, 33:14-15, Lam. 3:37; Eze. 12:25, 17:24, 33:29, 33:33; Dan. 4:33, 4:37; Acts 3:18, 27:32-35; Rev. 17:17

* Scriptures that say God has a past, present, and a future: Rev. 1:4, 1:8, 4:8

* Scriptures that say God's eternity is endless time, that is, time without beginning or end: Isa. 9:6-7; Isa. 43:10; Isa. 57:15; Job 36:26; Dan. 4:34; Hab. 1:12 Ps. 23:2; Ps. 90:2; Ps. 102:24; Ps. 102:27; Lk. 1:33; Heb 1:12; Rev 1:4; Rev. 1:8; Rev. 4:8; Rev. 5:14;

* Scriptures that say man's eternity is endless time: Isa. 45:17; Eph. 3:21; Rev. 14:11;

* Scriptures that say eternity is endless time for Heavenly creatures: Rev. 4:8

* Scriptures that say there will be time in Heaven, or a distinction between the past and the present: Rev. 5:12

* Eternity is time without end (endless time instead of timelessness): Isa. 9:6-7; Isa. 43:10; Isa. 57:15; Job 36:26; Dan. 4:34; Hab. 1:12 Ps. 23:2; Ps. 90:2; Ps. 102:24; Ps. 102:27; Lk. 1:33; Heb 1:12; Rev 1:4; Rev. 1:8; Rev. 4:8; Rev. 5:14; Isa. 45:17; Eph. 3:21; Rev. 14:11

The future is not some eternal fixity. The future is flexible. The future is not entirely certain, the future is changeable. Examples of how the future can be changed is how God was going to destroy Israel but did not (Numbers 14:11-20), how Hezekiah was going to

die but God added years to his life (2 Kings 20:1-6), how Nineveh was going to be destroyed but was not (Jonah 3:10) and how Jesus Christ could have escaped the cross by being rescued by angels (Matt. 26:53). The future multiple possibilities which God and man can choose between. The future can be changed.

“but that God just makes really good guesses.” Quote

Prophecy is not God making “really good guesses”. There are four different types of prophecies:

1. ABSOLUTE PROPHECIES

These are prophecies of events that will inevitably come to pass. This relates to the omnipotence of God to bring about events predetermined by Himself. The matter is completely settled and certain.

Two example would be:

- God will crush the head of Satan:

"And I WILL put enmity between thee and the women, and between thy seed and her seed, and it shall bruise thy head." Gen 3:15

- The end of of the world:

"Declaring THE END from the beginning, and from ancient times, the things that are not yet done, saying MY COUNSEL shall stand, and I WILL do all MY PLEASURE... I have spoken it, I WILL also bring it to pass, I have purposed it, I WILL also do it." Isaiah 46:10-11

2. CONDITIONAL PROPHECIES

These are prophecies of contingent events. They relate to the freewill of men. The matter is completely open and contingent.

Two examples of this would be:

- The repentance of Judah:

"Perhaps they will hear and turn every man from his evil way, that I may repent of the evil which I purposed to do unto them because of the evil of their doings." Jer 26:3

- Blessings and wrath contingent upon obedience and disobedience:

"At what instance I shall speak concering a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck

up and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instance I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them." Jer 18:7-10

3. EXTRAPOLATIVE PROPHECIES

These are prophecies that are predicted, based upon God's exhaustive knowledge of the past and the present. Looking at the pattern of the past and the circumstances of the present, our Infinite God is able to make accurate and detailed predictions of the future behind our own finite comprehension:

Examples of this type would be:

- The future disobedience of Israel

"For when I shall have brought them into the land which I swore unto their fathers, that flows with milk and honey; an they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and waxen fat; then will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and provoke me, and break my covenant. And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that this song shall testify against them as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouth, of their seed: I KNOW THEIR IMAGINATION which they go about, EVEN NOW, before I have brought them into the land which I swore." Deut 31:20-21

- Peters denial:

Mark 8:31-34, Peters heart was revealed that he greatly feared the cross. He rebuked Jesus for talking about crucifixion and the Lord rebuked Peter for His cowardice.

Mat 26:34, Jesus knew Peter's heart had not changed. And Jesus knew all the circumstances Peter would face that night, since Jesus knew the devil was orchestrating Peter's circumstances (Lk. 22:31), and predicted Peters denial based upon his past pattern, present character, and present/future circumstances.

4. PARALLEL OR ANALOGOUS SCRIPTURE FULFILLMENTS

These are events found in the New Testament, which correlate with events found in the Old Testament. The scriptures used had an original meaning in the Old, yet are applicable to a situation in the New.

Examples would be:

- My Son called out of Egypt:

Hos 11:1 speaking of Israel in the Old Testament.

This is also applied to Jesus in the New Testament, Mat 2:15.

- The betrayal of a trusted friend:

Psa 41:9, David speaking of his trusted friend and counselor Ahithophel.

John 13:18, this is also applied to Jesus and his trusted friend and disciple Judas.

- The replacement of Judas, Acts 1:16:

Acts 1:20, Peter applies two Scriptures to the situation of Judas.

Ps. 69:25, talks about “their habitation” being desolate, but Peter modifies it so say “his habitation”, and “let none dwell in their tents”

Ps. 109:8, David curses his enemies, who treated him wickedly.

WHAT PROPHECIES DO NOT PROVE:

- That the future has already happened
- That God already lives in the future
- That God lives outside of time
- That God has determined everything
- That all events are foreknown as certain

WHAT PROPHECIES DO REVEAL:

- That the future is partly settled by God (absolute prophecies)
- That the future is partly open and contingent (conditional prophecies)
- That the future is partly predictable to the Divine Mind (extrapolative prophecies)
- That the future is repetitive and similar to the past (parallel or analogous prophecies)

“This is the result of exalting the free will of all “moral agents” to a Deified position, exalting free will even above God Himself.” Quote

Again, a false accusation. When have I ever exalted moral agents to a deified position, or exalted free will above God? Give me a quote.

God, man, and angels, have a free will. But God is above man. God not only has a free will, God is omnipotent. While we are free to will whatever we want, only God is free to do whatever He wills. Free will does not mean that we have the ability to do anything. Free will is the ability to will, not to do. Omnipotence is the ability to do anything, and only God is omnipotent.

Because God is above man's free will, God can take away man's free will whenever He chooses, and God also holds men accountable for the way that he uses his free will.

All of the Early Church taught that mankind has a free will. The only people who denied that man had a free will were the Gnostics.

“Therefore, Jesse thinks that even God has to submit to the free will of man” quote

God does not submit to the free will of man. God has graciously granted man a free will:

“Behold I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; a blessing if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God.... And a curse if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God” (Deut. 11:26-28).

Man is free to choose between obedience and disobedience. But God has freely determined to punish those who disobey.

“and doesn't know what any man will choose to do before that man actually makes the choice and does it.” Quote

See the above about prophecy and omniscience. If God predetermines what a man will do (like King Cyrus or John the Baptist) then God can know it because there is no free will involved. And if God knows a person's heart and character (like Israel and Peter) he can know what they will do in the immediate future. Again, see the above on prophecy.

“Because of this, Jesse believes that God doesn't know the future, but kind of just makes the best choices He can as He finds out what free moral agents decide. This is in direct contradiction to the teaching of the whole Bible! In Jesse's theology, God Almighty has been stripped of His Omniscience!” quote

See the above about prophecy and omniscience. I believe that God does know the future as it is, and God is omniscient.

“Yet the fact that God knows the future and declares it immutably is one of the glorious attributes of His character that distinguishes Him from false pagan gods and from every other being in creation:

Isaiah 42:9 – “Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.” Quote

This is talking about things that God has predetermined to do. Prophecies are often God foretelling what He will do. This does not mean that the far in the future free will choices of man are foreknown a head of time.

Remember:

* God speaks of the future in terms of what may or may not be: Ex. 3:18, 4:9, 13:17; Eze. 12:3

* God changes His plans in response to changing circumstances: Ex. 32:10-14, Jer. 18:1-10

* God's willingness to change His plans is considered one of His glorious attributes: Jonah 4:2; Joel 2:12-13

* God tests people to see what types of decisions they will make: Gen. 22:12; Ex. 16:4; Deut. 8:2, 13:1-3; 2 Chron. 32:31

* God has had disappointments and has regretted how things turned out: Gen. 6:6; 1 Sam. 15:10, 15:35

* God has expected things to happen that didn't come to pass: Isa. 5:1-5; Jer. 3:6-7, 3:19-20

* God gets frustrated and grieved when he attempts to bring individuals into alignment with his will and they resist: Eze. 22:29-31; Isa. 63:10; Eph. 4:30; cf. Heb. 3:8, 3:15, 4:7; Acts 7:51

Isaiah 46:5-10 – “To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like? They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship. They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove: yea, one shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble. Remember this, and shew yourselves men: bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors. Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”

The difference between the pagan idols and the God of the Bible is that God can say He will do something in the future, and then He will actually do it! This verse is not contrary to the open view of God, but is actually teaching it. In the open view, prophecies are often God foretelling a head of time what He plans on doing in the future.

**Acts 15:18 – “Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.”
Quote**

The context of this was the salvation of the Gentiles.

“That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world. Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God.” Acts 15:17-19

The Gentiles were not a “plan B” for God. God always planned on blessing all nations through the seed of Abraham. All of God’s purposes have been determined from the very beginning, and now He is finding ways to carry them out.

Romans 8:29-30 – ”For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” Quote

Who did He foreknow? He knew the Israelites in the Old Testament. “Foreknew” does not mean to know in the future, it means to have known in the past. An example of this is when Paul uses the same Greek word to say how the Israelites knew him when he was a Pharisee (Acts 26:5). That is what it means when it says that the Lord has not cast off his people whom he foreknew (Rom. 11:2). God, who knew the Israelites in the past, has not cast them off. The Greek word “foreknew” does not teach exhaustive foreknowledge, or that God foreknows the outcome of a contingency before it occurs.

“The doctrine of Substitutionary Atonement” quote

This is not true. I believe that the atonement of Christ substitutes our eternal punishment of hell. The six hours of Jesus’ suffering, and his death, is a substitute for our eternal torment in hell. Because an atonement has been provided, which substitutes our eternal penalty, God can remit our penalty by His grace and mercy.

“The real doctrine of the Atonement as taught in the Bible teaches us that Christ died as a literal Substitute for sinners; that Christ took our sin and was punished on behalf of our sin as our Substitute under the wrath of God so that the righteous demands of God’s holy Law could be satisfied and we could receive the forgiveness of sins and His righteousness and eternal life as a free gift of grace.” Quote

1. Christ suffered and died for our sins (Isa. 53:5; 1 Peter 3:18). Punishment implies sin and guilt. Sacrifice implies the sin and guilt of another. Jesus Christ was sacrificed for our sins.
2. The law demanded the eternal death of the guilty (Eze. 18:20; Prov. 17:15, 26; 2 Thes. 1:9) and therefore the atonement could not have satisfied the demands of the law. The

atonement rather satisfied the purpose of penalty, it honored the law as equally as the penalty would have.

3. The penalty for our sins is eternal hell (2 Thes. 1:9)
4. Jesus did not suffer eternal hell, He suffered six hours on a cross.
5. Therefore Jesus suffered a substitute for our penalty, not the penalty itself.
6. Jesus said that the disciples would drink the same cup that he drank (Mark 10:38-39), therefore Jesus did not drink the cup of God's wrath. The cup of God's wrath is still full after the atonement (Rev. 16:19).
7. God still has wrath after the atonement (Acts 12:23; Rom. 1:18; Rom. 2:5; Rom. 2:8-9; Col. 3:6; Rev. 6:17; Rev. 14:10, Rev. 14:19, Rev. 15:7; Rev. 16:1) and therefore the atonement did not satisfy God's wrath.
8. Nobody is saved from God's wrath until they forsake their sins (Isaiah 55:7; Jer. 26:13; Prov. 28:13; Acts 3:19; Acts 8:22).
9. The atonement is a substitute for our penalty (Heb. 9:22), so that God could remit our penalty (Matt. 26:28; Rom. 3:25) without dishonoring or weakening His law.
10. Forgiveness is the remission of penalty (Matt. 26:28; Rom. 3:25; Heb. 9:22). Forgiveness is when God turns away from His wrath (Ps. 85:2-3; Micah 7:18). But if Jesus took our penalty and satisfied God's wrath, there could be no real forgiveness. The atonement makes it possible for our penalty to be remitted, it makes it possible for God to turn away from His wrath when sinners repent.

We can see that the atonement does not automatically or unconditionally save anyone. Many of those for whom Christ died will ultimately perish for their sin (1 Cor. 8:11) because they choose to continue in their sin (Heb. 10:26-31). Though Christ died for all (Isa. 45:22; 53:6; 55:1; Eze. 18:30-32; Matt. 23:37; Mk. 16:15-16; Lk. 2:10-11; Jn. 1:29; 3:16; Rom. 2:11; 5:15; Heb. 2:9; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; 1 Tim. 2:11; 4:10; Tit. 2:11; Heb. 2:9; 2 Pet. 2:1; 1 Jn. 2:22; Rev. 3:20), many are on the broad road (Matt. 7:13). It's possible to deny the Lord that bought us and thereby fall into condemnation (2 Pet. 2:1).

“Simply put, He bore our sins and our punishment so we could receive His righteousness and reward. Any denial of this truth is a denial of the essential truth of the biblical Gospel. To deny that Christ literally suffered in our place on the Cross in order to bear the wrath of God which we deserve, as our Substitute, in order to avert God's wrath and condemnation from us and to purchase our redemption, is to deny the Gospel.” Quote

Jesus did not suffer our punishment (eternal hell) but Jesus provided a replacement for our punishment (his own blood shed on the cross) so that God could forgive us our sins by remitting our penalty and turn away from His wrath.

See the above 10 points.

“Jesse Morrell believes that Christ did not actually bear our sin on the Cross, that our sin could have never been imputed to Christ, and therefore Christ could have never been punished for our sin.” Quote

I do believe that Christ bore our sins on the cross, that He suffered and died for our sins, suffering the replacement for the penalty of the law, so that the eternal punishment for our sins could be withheld.

“This is heresy, and if this is true, we are all yet dead in our sins and there is no forgiveness in Christ since there can only be forgiveness if He actually bore our sin and took it away.” Quote

It is not heresy to say that our punishment is eternal hell and that God still has wrath after the atonement. It is not heresy to say that our penalty could be remitted and God could turn away from His wrath because of the atonement of Christ. If the atonement is not a substitute for our penalty, but was actually our penalty, then there can be no forgiveness of sins because forgiveness is when our penalty is remitted. Our penalty cannot be executed and remitted at the same time.

Many men have held to the view of the atonement that I am expounding, such as Leonard Ravenhill, Jonathon Edwards Jr, Albert Barnes, Gordon Olson, Harry Conn, Charles Finney, Catherine Booth, etc. Were they all heretics?

“The Christ of God offered Himself as a sacrifice for the sin of man. The Divine law had been broken; the interests of the universe demanded that its righteousness should be maintained, therefore its penalty must be endured by the transgressor, or, in lieu of this, such compensation must be rendered as would satisfy the claims of justice, and render it expedient for God to pardon the guilty... Christ made such a sacrifice as rendered it possible for God to be just, and yet to pardon the sinner. His sacrifice is never represented in the Bible as having purchased or begotten the love of the Father, but only as having opened up a channel through which the love could flow out to His rebellious and prodigal children. The doctrine of the New Testament on this point is not that ‘God so hated the world that His own Son was compelled to die in order to appease His vengeance,’ as we fear has been too often represented, but that ‘God so LOVED the world, that He gave His only begotten Son.’” Catherine Booth (Popular Christianity, p. 30, Published by Convention Bookstore)

“The very idea of atonement is something done, which, to the purpose of supporting the authority of the law, the dignity and consistency of divine government and conduct, is fully equivalent to the curse of the law, and on the ground of which, the sinner may be saved from that curse... a less degree or duration of suffering endured by Christ the Son of God, may, on account of the infinite dignity and glory of his person, be an equivalent to the curse of the law endured by the sinner.” Jonathon Edwards Jr. (The Necessity of the Atonement, p. 7)

“His sufferings were in the place of the penalty, not the penalty itself. They were a substitution for the penalty, and were, therefore, strictly and properly vicarious, and were not the identical sufferings which the sinner would himself have endured. There are some things in the penalty of the Law, which the Lord Jesus did not endure, and which a substitute or a vicarious victim could not endure. Remorse of conscience is a part of the

inflicted penalty of the Law, and will be a vital part of the sufferings of the sinner in hell - but the Lord Jesus did not endure that. Eternity of sufferings is an essential part of the penalty of the Law - but the Lord Jesus did not suffer forever. Thus, there are numerous sorrows connected with the consciousness of personal guilt, which the Lord Jesus did not and cannot endure.” Albert Barnes (Commentary on Galatians 3:13)

“He did not endure eternal death...eternal death was the penalty of the law...No man can possibly hold that the Redeemer endured eternal sorrow; and no man, therefore, who believes that the penalty of the law is eternal death, can consistently maintain that he endured the literal penalty of the law.” Albert Barnes (The Atonement, Published by Bethany Fellowship, p. 236-237)

“The atonement is something substituted in the place of the penalty of the law, which will answer the same ends as the punishment of the offender himself would. It is instead of punishment. It is something which will make it proper for the lawgiver to suspend or remit the literal execution of the penalty of the law, because the object or end of that penalty has been secured, or because something has been substituted for that which will answer the same purpose. In other words, there are certain ends proposed by the appointment of the penalty in case of violation of the law; and if these ends are secured, then the punishment may be remitted and the offender may be pardoned. That which will secure these ends is an atonement.” Albert Barnes (The Atonement, Published by Bethany Fellowship, p. 244-145.)

“The atonement is the substitute for the punishment threatened in the law; and was designed to answer the same ends of supporting the authority of the law, the dignity of the divine moral government, and the consistency of the divine conduct in legislation and execution. By the atonement it appears that God is determined that his law shall be supported; that it shall not be despised or transgressed with impunity; and that it is an evil and a bitter thing to sin against God. The very idea of an atonement or satisfaction for sin, is something which, to the purposes of supporting the authority of the divine law, and the dignity and consistency of the divine government, is equivalent to the punishment of the sinner, according to the literal threatening of the law. That which answers these purposes being done, whatever it be, atonement is made, and the way is prepared for the dispensation of pardon.” Jonathon Edwards Jr. (The Necessity of the Atonement, p. 5-6)

“The death of Christ manifests God’s hatred of sin and love of holiness in the same sense as the damnation of the wicked manifests these, namely, on the supposition that the divine law is just and holy. If it be allowed the divine law is just and holy, then every thing done to support and execute that law, is a declaration in favor of holiness and against sin; or a declaration of God’s love of holiness and his hatred of iniquity...By atonement I mean that which, as a substitute for the punishment which is threatened in the law, supports the authority of that law, and the dignity of the divine government.” Jonathon Edwards Jr. (Inferences and Reflections on Atonement, p. 3)

"If free pardon is to be extended to penitent sinners, some great measure must be substituted for the punishment of sinners that will uphold the moral government of God at

least equally as well as the pronounced consequences would have done." Gordon C. Olson (The Truth Shall Make You Free, Published by Bible Research Corp, p. 95)

"In his undertaking the work of redemption; in his manifested character on earth; in his teaching; in the spirit with which he bore his trials; in his readiness to meet death, and in the manner in which he actually met it; in the offers of salvation which he made to mankind on the ground of the sacrifice which he made for human guilt, no one who believes the Saviour at all can doubt that he was in all respects pleasing to God. Whatever were the sufferings which were brought upon him, they were not of the nature of punishment for his own offences; whatever was the reason why he was left in darkness and gloom on the cross, it was not because he had incurred for himself the wrath of God. In the very midst of those sufferings he was performing a work which, of all the works ever performed on the earth, was most acceptable to a pure and holy God." Albert Barnes (The Atonement, Published by Bethany Fellowship, p. 292-293)

"An atonement is, properly, an arrangement by which the literal infliction of the penalty due to sin may be avoided; it is something which may be substituted in the place of punishment; it is that which will answer the same end which would be secured by the literal infliction of the penalty of the law. It is not a commercial transaction, - a matter of debt and payment, of profit and loss. It pertains to law, to government, to holiness; not to literal debt and payment." Albert Barnes (The Atonement, Published by Bethany Fellowship, p. 230)

"Retributive justice, therefore, is not at all satisfied by the death of Christ. But the general justice to the Deity and to the universe is satisfied. That is done by the death of Christ which supports the authority of the law, and renders it consistent with the glory of God, and the good of the whole system, to pardon the sinner." Jonathon Edwards Jr. (Inferences and Reflections on Atonement, p. 8)

"The sufferings and especially the death of Christ were sacrificial, were not the punishment of the law but were equivalent to the meaning to it, were representative of it and substituted for it. The demands of the law were not satisfied, but the honor of the law was promoted by it as much as this honor would have been promoted by the infliction of the legal penalty upon all sinners." Gordon C. Olson (The Truth Shall Make You Free, Published by Bible Research Corp, p. 100)

"The death of Christ is not a substituted penalty, but a substitute for a penalty. The necessity of an atonement is not found in the fact that the justice of God requires an invariable execution of deserved penalty, but in the fact that the honor and glory of God, and the welfare of his creatures, require that his essential and rectoral righteousness be adequately declared. The death of Christ is exponential of divine justice, and is a satisfaction in that sense, and not in the sense that it is, as of a debt, the full and complete payment of all its demands." John Miley (The Governmental Theory of the Atonement, p. 9)

"Atonement is, properly, an arrangement by which the literal infliction of the penalty due

to sin may be avoided; it is something which may be substituted in the place of punishment. It is that which will answer the same end secured by the literal infliction of the penalty of the law... The atonement is the governmental provision for the forgiveness of sins, providing man meets the conditions of repentance and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.” Harry Conn (Four Trojan Horses, Published by Mott Media, p. 80-81)

“It [the atonement] provides a substitute for the penalty of the law”. Winkie Pratney (Youth Aflame, The Nature of Sin, Published by Communication Foundation Publishers)

“Yet the Bible clearly refutes Jesse’s (and Moral Government Theology’s) heretical doctrine of the Atonement:” quote

He hasn’t even stated what my doctrine of the atonement is. He said, or tried to say, what I do not believe. But he hasn’t even said what I do believe. This is probably because he doesn’t even know what I believe, or at least could not properly articulate it.

“2 Corinthians 5:21 – “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” Quote

I agree with Adam Clarke on this passage that it means Jesus was made a sin offering for us. A sin offering is something which God will accept on behalf of someone’s sins, so that He does not need to execute the penalty of their sins upon them.

I disagree with Martin Luther on this passage. Jesus was not turned into a sinner on the cross. Jesus did not become guilty of any sin. Jesus was offered as a spotless lamb to God.

I agree with Albert Barnes that the moral character of Jesus never changed. He never became a sinner. He was always sinless.

“Though innocent, he was treated in his death as if he had been guilty; that is, he was put to death as if he had personally deserved it...He was suspended on a cross, as if he had been a malefactor. He was numbered with malefactors; he was crucified between them; he was given up by God and man to death as if he had himself been such a malefactor.” Albert Barnes (The Atonement, Published by Bethany Fellowship, p. 296)

“Standing for the sinner, he must, in an important sense, bear the curse of the law—not the literal penalty, but a vast amount of suffering, sufficient, in view of his relations to God and the universe, to make the needed demonstration of God’s displeasure against sin, and yet of his love for both the sinner and all his moral subjects. On the one hand, Jesus represents the race; on the other, he represented God.” Charles G. Finney (The Oberlin Evangelist; July 30, 1856; On the Atonement, p. 4)

“The Savior identifies Himself with sinners so intimately that He is treated as if their sins were His, if the seemingly insurmountable problems of reconciliation were to be solved. He must be the great High Priest who voluntarily places the sin of mankind, not upon the head of an innocent animal, but upon Himself, with dreadful heart-broken solemnity,

until it crushes out His holy and spotless life.” Gordon C. Olson (The Truth Shall Make You Free, Published by Bible Research Corp, p. 33)

“Christ was treated as though he had been a sinner – and as his sufferings answered the purpose of the sinner’s punishment, and are the ground of his pardon, it may be said with respect to all believers, that their sins were imputed or reckoned to Christ, and his righteousness imputed or reckoned to them. That is, Christ was treated as sinners deserve, and sinners are treated as Christ deserves.” Nathan Beman (Four Sermons on the Doctrine of the Atonement, p. 39)

“Jesus was not sinful, or a sinner, in any sense. He did not so take human guilt upon him, that the words sinful and sinner could with any propriety be applied to him. They are not applied to him any way in the Bible; but there the language is undeviating. It is that in all senses he was holy and undefiled. And yet language is often used on this subject which is horrible and only a little short of blasphemy, as if he was guilty, and as if he was even the greatest sinner in the universe. I have heard language used which sent a chill of horror to my heart; and language may be found in the writings of those who hold the doctrine of imputation in the strictest sense, which is only a little short of blasphemy. I have hesitated whether I should copy expressions here on this subject from one of the greatest and best of men (I mean Luther) to show the nature of the views which people sometimes entertain on the subject of the imputation of sin to Christ. But as Luther deliberately published them to the world... and since similar views are sometimes entertained now; and as it is important that such views should be held up to universal abhorrence, no matter how respectable the source from which they emanate, I will copy a few of his expressions on this subject... “If thou wilt deny him to be a sinner and accursed, deny, also, that he was crucified and dead.” “But if it is not absurd to confess and believe that Christ was crucified between two thieves, then it is not absurd to say that he was accursed, and of all sinners, the greatest.” “God, our most merciful Father, sent His only Son into the world, and laid upon him all the sins of all people, saying, be thou Peter, that denier; Paul, that persecutor, blasphemer, and cruel oppressor; David, that adulterer; that sinner which did eat the fruit in Paradise; that thief who hung upon the cross; and, briefly, be thou the person who has committed the sins of all people; see, therefore, that thou pay and satisfy for them” – Luther on the Galatians, Gal_3:13. (pp. 213-215. London edition, 1838).

“Luther was a great and holy man. He held, as firmly as anyone can, to the personal holiness of the Redeemer. But this language shows how imperfect and erroneous views may warp the language of holy people; and how those sentiments led him to use language which is little less than blasphemy.” Albert Barnes (Commentary on Galatians 3:13)

1 Peter 3:18 – “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.”quote

I completely believe in the substitution of “the just for the unjust”. The death of the innocent (Jesus Christ) substitutes the eternal death of the guilty (sinners). This verse is

teaching substitution, and the moral government view of the atonement teaches substitution.

“the atonement is the governmental substitution of the sufferings of Christ for the punishment of sinners.” Charles Finney (Lectures on Systematic Theology, p. 281)

Romans 3:23-26 – “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” Quote

The atonement is a declaration of God’s righteousness so that He could remit our penalty. Now that the atonement has been made, God can remit our penalty and still be just to Himself, just to His law, and just to His universe. He is just to Himself because He has made a public declaration of His righteousness and His regard for His law. He is just to His law because the value of the law is declared through the atonement of Christ as equally as it would have been through the penalty being executed. And God is just to His universe because the atonement of Christ maintains the authority and influence of God’s law, just as equally as the penalty would have, and therefore the rights and well-being of the universe are protected even though God withholds our punishment or remits our penalty.

Galatians 3:13-14 – “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” Quote

The curse of Jesus Christ hanging on the tree saves us from the eternal curse of the law (hell fire). Because Jesus Christ suffered and died on the cross, we can be saved from eternal hell if we repent and believe.

Isaiah 53:4-6 – “Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” Quote

Because all men have been sinners by choice, “all we like sheep have gone astray” we need the atonement of Christ “the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all”.

The wounding and bruising and whipping of Jesus Christ was done on behalf of our sins, so that the penalty for our sins, or the eternal punishment of hell, could be remitted. God does not need to send sinners to eternal hell, in order to maintain his law, because Jesus

Christ has suffered for the sins of the whole world.

Isaiah 53:10 – “Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.” Quote

God sacrificed His son, by giving him into the hands of wicked men, and it pleased the Lord to make such a sacrifice, because through the sacrifice of the atonement God will be able to pardon mankind without dishonoring or weakening His law, without encouraging sin, without endangering His universe.

“The doctrine of Original Sin: This core Christian belief states that all men enter this world with an inherently sinful nature and all men possess an inherent moral corruptness in their own flesh.” Quote

Josef, I know for a fact, teaches Gnosticism which says that our flesh is sinful. Some of his friends have confronted him on this but he has not repented. In Gnosticism, sin is not a choice of the will but a substance of the body. That is why Josef believes that we are sinners because of the type of body we inherit, and why he believes we cannot be morally perfect until we get a glorified body.

But the Bible does not teach that it is a sin to have flesh, or that our flesh is sin. It is sinful to live after the flesh (Rom. 8:13), or to live selfishly (Rom. 8:7). But it is not sinful to have flesh, since Jesus Christ had flesh (John 1:14; Luke 24:39; 1 Tim. 3:16). Nor do you need a glorified body to be morally perfect, because Jesus Christ was morally perfect (2 Cor. 5:21) before He had a glorified body (Luke 13:32).

The Gnostics denied that Jesus Christ came in the flesh because they believed that the flesh was sinful:

“And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist...” 1 John 4:3

“For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.” 2 John 1:7

Sinfulness is not a substance of matter. Our flesh is not a sin in and of itself. We could use our body for sinfulness or we could use our body for righteousness:

“Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.” Rom. 6:13

“I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh, for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.” Rom. 6:19

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” Romans 12:1

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Thes. 5:23

Sin is when we choose to gratify our flesh in an unnatural and forbidden way. Jesus Christ was tempted in the wilderness, not because he had a sinful nature or because his flesh was a sin, but because he had a natural desire for food (Matt. 4:3). Eve was tempted because of her natural God given desires (Gen. 3:6). Eve choose to gratify her God given flesh in a forbidden way. She had a natural desire for food and wisdom, but it was forbidden for her to gratify that desire by eating of the fruit.

God is the one who forms us in the womb (Gen. 4:1; Ex. 4:11; Isa. 27:11; 43:7; 49:5; 64:8; Jer. 1:5; Ps. 95:6; 139:13-14, 16; Ecc. 7:29; Job 10:9-11; 31:15; 35:10; Jn. 1:3) and that is why God is responsible for the condition of our flesh when we are born (Exodus 4:11). Men are not sinful because God has created us with a flesh. Men are sinful because they have chosen to violate God’s law. Sin is not a substance of matter, sin is the choice to transgress God’s law (1 Jn. 3:4).

“Now temptation is not sin. Temptation is the proposition presented to the mind that you can satisfy a good appetite in a forbidden way. Temptation leads to sin.... Sin is the decision of the will.... sin is the decision to gratify a good appetite in a bad way.” Paris Reidhead (Finding the Reality of God, pg 141-142)

“Don’t mistake temptation for sin. Temptation is a suggestion to gratify a desire in an illegal way or amount. Temptation is not sin. Jesus was tempted.” Winkie Pratney (Youth Aflame, Bethany House, pg. 83).

“God created us to exist in a constant state of desire and appetite... The infant cannot think of terms of duty, responsibility, or moral choice.... The self-centeredness of infants has all the appearances of a vice. But they are acting on natural, God-given impulses to survive and seek their own pleasure.... They do not have the intellectual and moral capacity to say “No” to appetites and impulses. They cannot yet be held responsible. They begin life in innocent self-centeredness.... But the growing child or adult who doesn’t rise above self-indulging desires has fallen from God’s intention and design. The root of all sin is founded in runaway indulgence of God-given desires... Drives which are not in themselves evil, nonetheless, form the seedbed on which sin will assuredly grow... When does this innocent, natural selfishness of a child become sin? In other words, when is a child to blame? Keep in mind that a child will not come under condemnation until his moral faculties are fully operative... When a child goes against his conscience, however limited and incomplete his understanding may be, he is then guilty. The degree to which his understanding has developed is the degree to which his actions can be called sin....

As the body of flesh was the medium of Eve's sin and of Christ's temptation, so it is the implement of your child's development into selfishness – which, at maturity, will constitute sinfulness." Michael & Debi Pearl (To Train Up A Child, No Greater Joy, pg. 15-20)

"The bodily appetites and tendencies of body and mind, when strongly excited, become the occasions of sin. So it was with Adam. No one will say that Adam had a sinful nature. But he had, by his constitution, an appetite for food and a desire for knowledge. These were not sinful but were as God made them. They were necessary to fit him to live in this world as a subject of God's moral government. But being strongly excited led to indulgence, and thus became the occasions of his sinning against God. These tendencies were innocent in themselves, but he yielded to them in a sinful manner, and that was his sin." Charles Finney (You Can Be Holy, published by Whitaker House, p. 215).

"We have a nature that is capable of being perverted from legitimate to illegitimate, from the natural to the unnatural, from the pure to the polluted." Sin is to "pervert... natural, legitimate, human desires." F. Lagard Smith (Troubling Questions for Calvinists, page 134-135).

The Bible does not teach that men are born sinners. The Bible teaches that men are sinners by choice (Gen. 6:12, Ex. 32:7, Deut. 9:12, Deut. 32:5, Jdg. 2:19, Hos. 9:9, Ps. 14:2-3, Isa. 53:6, Ecc. 7:29, Rom. 3:23.) It is their own fault because it is their own choice, and therefore they deserve punishment and therefore they need Christ's atonement and God's mercy.

Infant children are morally innocent (2 Kng. 21:16; 24:4; Jer. 13:26-27; Ps. 106:37-38; Matt. 18:3) and have not yet "done anything" morally "good or evil" (Rom. 9:11) until the age of accountability, which is the age of reason, when they know right from wrong (Deut. 1:39; Isa. 7:15-16), and choose to do wrong (Jas. 4:17). Jesus said that if you were blind, you would have no sin. Since infants are morally blind, they have no sin.

Children do not inherit the guilt or sin of the parent: Deut. 24:16, 2 Kng. 14:6, 2 Chron. 25:4, Jer. 31:29-30, Eze. 18:2-4, Eze. 18:19-20.

Sinners are separated from God for their own sin: Isa. 59:2; Lk. 15:24; Rom. 5:12; Rom. 7:9, Col. 2:13.

"If a man were created evil, he would not deserve punishment, since he was not evil of himself, being unable to do anything else than what he was made for." Justin Martyr (First Apology Chap. 43)

"Those who do not do it [good] will receive the just judgment of God, because they had not work good when they had it in their power to do so. But if some had been made by nature bad, and others good, these latter would not be deserving of praise for being good, for they were created that way. Nor would the former be reprehensible, for that is how they were made. However, all men are of the same nature. They are all able to hold fast

and to go what is good. On the other hand, they have the power to cast good from them and not to do it.” Irenaeus (A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs by David Bercot, p. 287, published by Hendrickson Publishers)

“If man is in fault for his [supposed] sinful nature, why not condemn man for having blue or black eyes? The fact is, sin never can consist in having a nature, nor in what nature is, but only and alone in the bad use which we make of our nature. This is all. Our Maker will never find fault with us for what He has Himself done or made; certainly not. He will not condemn us, if we will only make a right use of our powers – of our intellect, our sensibilities, and our will. He never holds us responsible for our original nature... since there is no law against nature, nature cannot be a transgression... man’s nature is not a proper subject for legislation, precept, and penalty, inasmuch as it lies entirely without the pale of voluntary action, or of any action of man at all.” Charles Finney (Sermons on Gospel Themes, p. 78-79, published by Truth in Heart)

“And lest, on the other hand, it should be thought to be nature's fault that some have been unrighteous, I shall use the evidence of the scripture, which everywhere lay upon sinners the heavy weight of the charge of having used their own will and do not excuse them for having acted only under constraint of nature.” Pelagius (The Letters of Pelagius and his Followers by B. R. Rees, p. 43, published by The Boydell Press).

"If anyone is truly religious, he is a man of God; but if he is irreligious, he is a man of the devil, made such, not by nature, but by his own choice." Ignatius (Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume One, p. 61)

“The Scriptures...emphasize the freedom of the will. They condemn those who sin, and approve those who do right... We are responsible for being bad and worthy of being cast outside. For it is not the nature in us that is the cause of the evil; rather, it is the voluntary choice that works evil.” Origen (A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs by David Bercot, p. 289, published by Hendrickson Publishers)

“All men are therefore sinners by nature” quote

Ephesians 2:2-3 says that we are by nature children of wrath, but in context this is talking a lifestyle of living for the flesh. Those who are selfish, those who live for the gratification of their flesh, are children of wrath. “By nature” simply means that they are choosing to live for their flesh, instead of living for God, instead of subjected their flesh to its proper place and presenting it to God for His service. The “natural man” is someone who lives for his flesh, instead of for God.

Charles Finney said, “To represent the constitution as sinful, is to present God, who is the author of the constitution, as the author of sin.” (Finney’s Systematic Theology, Bethany House, p. 261).

An unknown writer in the Early Church said, “... it is impious to say that sin is inherent in nature, because in this way the author of nature is being judged at fault.” (The Letters

of Pelagius and his Followers by B. R. Rees, p. 168, published by The Boydell Press).

“To equate humanity with sinfulness is to make God the Author of His own worst enemy; to make God responsible for the thing that has brought Him unhappiness.” Winkie Pratney (Youth Aflame, Bethany House, pg. 78).

“The next dogma deserving attention is the position, that mankind derived from our first progenitor a corrupt nature, which renders obedience to the commands of God impossible, and disobedience necessary, and that for the mere existence of this nature, men ‘deserve God’s wrath and curse, not only in this world, but in that which is to come.’ If the above dogma is true, it is demonstrably evident, that this corrupt nature comes into existence without knowledge, choice, or agency of the creature, who for its existence is pronounced deserving of, and ‘bound over to the wrath of God.’ Equally evident is it, that this corrupt nature exists as the result of the direct agency of God. He proclaims himself the maker of ‘every soul of man.’ As its Maker, He must have imparted to that soul the constitution or nature which it actually possesses. It does not help the matter at all, to say, that this nature is derived from our progenitor: for the laws of generation, by which this corrupt nature is derived from that progenitor, are sustained and continued by God himself... If, then, the above dogma is true, man in the first place, is held as deserving of eternal punishment for that which exists wholly independent of his knowledge, choice or agency, in any sense, direct or indirect, He is also held responsible for the result, not of his own agency, but for that which results from the agency of God.” Asa Mahan (Doctrine of the Will, published by Truth in Heart, p. 115).

Men are sinners because they choose to sin, not because of the flesh that they inherit from their parents. Sinners are criminals because of their choices, they are not victims of their circumstances.

It should also be noted that sin is contrary to our design, and our conscience demands obedience to God, and in this way sin is contrary to human nature. Our body naturally coughs when it first smokes a cigarette. Our body throws up and suffers a hang over when consuming alcohol. These sins are contrary to our design and are therefore against our nature. Men also naturally feel guilt and shame when they sin, which shows that our nature is against sin. The Bible says that homosexuals do that which is against nature (Rom. 1:26-27) and our conscience, which demands obedience to God, is part of our nature (Rom. 2:14-15).

“Homosexuals often cover and excuse their evil acts of perversion by saying that they were born homosexual. And if the teaching is true that men are born with a sinful nature, homosexuals are right to say they were born homosexuals. For they were born homosexuals if they were born sinners. Also they are right to excuse their evil actions of perversion. For if they were born sinners, they were born homosexuals; and if they were born homosexuals they can no more be blamed for their evil acts of perversion than the brute beasts can be blamed for being born brute beasts. Likewise the alcoholic cannot be blamed for his drinking if it true that he was born with the ‘disease of alcoholism’. In fact the murderer, the rapist, and all other sinners have a perfect and legitimate excuse for all

their sins if they were born with a sinful nature. But God never excuses the murderer or the drunkard or the rapist or the homosexual or any other sinner for his sins. For God created all men with a good nature. All sin is a corruption of man's nature, it is a perversion of man's nature. It is rebellion against our nature – it is rebellion against the 'law of God written in our hearts' and against the God who has written his law in our hearts. No man is born a sinner. No man is born with the 'disease of alcoholism'. No man is born a homosexual." Alfred T. Overstreet (Over One Hundred Texts From The Bible That Show That Babies Are Not Born Sinners, pg. 8).

"Sin is never natural. It is horribly un-natural. Sin is never 'human'. It is horribly in-human. Sin creates remorse, guilt, and shame; every time a man feels these three witnesses in his soul, they tell him sin is not natural. Even the simple lie-detector can tell us this. The whole body reacts adversely when a man sins... God never planned sin for man. It is the most un-natural thing in the moral Universe... Do not dare say sin is 'natural'! God hates sin with perfect hatred; He loves humanity." Winkie Pratney (Youth Aflame, Bethany House, pg. 78).

"The nature we are born with teaches us to reject evil and choose good.... Men must go against their nature to sin." Alfred T. Overstreet (Over One Hundred Texts From The Bible That Show That Babies Are Not Born Sinners, pg. 6-7).

“and apart from redemption through the grace of Christ, are under the curse of the Law” quote

Agreed. But the law commands us to make certain choices, therefore those who choose contrary to the law are under the curse of the law. Men are not under the curse of the law because of the body or flesh that they have, since the law does not demand us to have a certain type of flesh neither does it forbid us from having a certain type of flesh.

“abide under the wrath of God” quote

Agreed. Those who are sinning are under the wrath of God, notwithstanding the atonement of Christ. While the atonement of Christ made it possible for God to turn away from His wrath without dishonoring or weakening His law, no man is actually saved from God's wrath until they are converted. Men, after the atonement, are still under the wrath of God while they are sinning.

“are by nature children of wrath” quote

Agreed. Those who are choosing to live after their flesh, who are living for their own selfish gratification, are children of wrath. Anyone who chooses to be a sinner, who chooses to live for their flesh, is under God's wrath.

“are dead in trespasses and sins” quote

Agreed. Sinners do not have a relationship with God, but are separated from Him,

because they have personally chosen to sin. To be dead in sin means that you do not have a relationship with God (Luke 15:24). Sinners are separated from God for their own sin: Isa. 59:2; Lk. 15:24; Rom. 5:12; Rom. 7:9, Col. 2:13.

“do nothing that pleases God” quote

Agreed, because sinners are entirely selfish, they are living supremely for themselves, and God is not pleased with this. Sinners are carnally minded, which means that their purpose is to gratify their flesh, and this is violation of God’s law and does not please Him (Romans 8:6).

“and sin continually against God as a manifestation of the wicked sinful nature in their own hearts.” Quote

Sinners sin continually because of their own sinful character, not because of the nature, flesh, or body that they inherit. Sinners sin because of their own sinful hearts. The term “heart” in the Bible is a symbolic word used to describe man’s will. All sin comes out of the heart Jesus said (Matt. 15:19). The root of man, which brings forth fruit, is his own heart or will (Luke 6:43-45). God commands sinners to make unto themselves a new heart (Eze. 18:31), which means that He wants them to change the state of their will. God command men to change from having a disobedient will to an obedient will.

“The Bible teaches that we (commit acts of) sin because we’re sinners (by nature), not that we are sinners only because we (commit acts of) sin” quote

Disagree. Men are sinners because they sin. The definition of a sinner is someone who sins. Until you sin, you are not a sinner. Adam was not a sinner until he sinned. Eve was not a sinner until she sinned. Lucifer was not a sinner until he sinned.

Likewise, the Bible does not teach that men sin because they are servants of sin. The Bible teaches that men are servants of sin because they sin (John 8:34, Romans 6:16). Nobody serves sin until they choose to sin.

“that outward acts of sin are manifestations of the moral depravity of our own hearts.” Quote

Sin is not merely an action, sin is a state of the will. Men are sinners when they choose to have disobedient hearts, when they choose to have rebellious wills.

Outward actions of sin are the manifestations of the disobedient will or rebellious hearts of men. This is what Jesus taught in Luke 6:43-45. If our will (heart) is good, our life (fruit) will be good. But if our will (heart) is sinful, our life (fruit) will be sinful. Actions are the fruit of the will. The will is the cause, the actions are the effects. Good trees have good fruit, bad trees have bad fruit. Sinful actions are manifestations of sinful hearts. A sinful life is proof that a person is choosing to be selfish, that they have a selfish heart.

“Moral Government Theology and Jesse Morrell deny that this is true, and believe that all come into this world in a morally neutral state” quote

We inherit physical depravity from Adam (1 Cor 15:22), that is, we all physically die as a consequence of Adam’s sin because he was removed from the tree of life (Gen. 3:22).

But while physical depravity is hereditary, moral depravity is not, because moral depravity has to do with the will.

Infant children are morally innocent (2 Kng. 21:16; 24:4; Jer. 13:26-27; Ps. 106:37-38; Matt. 18:3) and have not yet “done anything” morally “good or evil” (Rom. 9:11) until the age of accountability, which is the age of reason, when they know right from wrong (Deut. 1:39; Isa. 7:15-16), and choose to do wrong (Jas. 4:17).

“and deny that all of Adam’s posterity died spiritually in Adam’s original sin in the beginning.”

Children do not inherit the guilt or sin of the parent: Deut. 24:16, 2 Kng. 14:6, 2 Chron. 25:4, Jer. 31:29-30, Eze. 18:2-4, Eze. 18:19-20.

Sinners are separated from God for their own sin: Isa. 59:2; Lk. 15:24; Rom. 5:12; Rom. 7:9, Col. 2:13.

Men are not born dead in sins, they become morally depraved and relationally separated from God when they voluntarily choose to sin: Isa. 59:2, Lk. 15:24; Rom. 5:12, Rom. 5:14, Rom. 7:9, Rom. 7:11, Col. 2:13.

“Further, they declare that all sin is a choice and only a choice, and therefore all must make the choice to “stop sinning” and become morally perfect in order to be accepted by God.”

Repentance is the choice to stop sinning, it is a change of mind about breaking God’s law. Until a sinner repents, until they make this choice, they are not accepted by God. True repentance is not forsaking some sin, it is forsaking all sin. If a person does not forsake all sin, they do not forsake sin at all.

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from Heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7:14).

“Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruin... Cast away from you all of your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die... For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves and live ye” (Ezekiel 18:30-32).

“wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved” (Jeremiah 4:14).

“Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon” (Isaiah 55:7).

“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy” (Proverbs 28:13).

“Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee” (Acts 8:22).

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent.... For the remission of sins...” (Acts 2:38).

“Repent, ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out...” (Acts 3:19).

“Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life” (Acts 11:18).

The Bible talks about “repentance to salvation...” (2 Corinthians 7:10).

“he believes that when a man chooses to stop sinning” quote

The Bible says that it is a choice to sin or not sin (Deut. 30:19; Isaiah 1:16; Rom. 6:13; Rom. 6:19; 1 Cor. 10:13; 1 Cor. 15:34; Eph. 4:26) Repentance is a change of mind about sinning. This change of mind results in a change of life. That is called the fruit of repentance (Matt. 3:8; Acts 26:20). If a person changes their mind about sinning, they will stop sinning. But they are later free to change their mind again and begin to sin again (Matthew 21:28-30; Ezekiel 3:20; 18:26-27; 33:18-19).

“that man can enter a state of sinless and moral perfection” quote

We cannot have physical perfection in this life (Php. 3:12) but we can have moral perfection in this life, or have a perfect heart (1 Kings 8:61; 1 Kings 11:4; 1 Kings 15:4). Since sin is not having a certain type of body, we do not need a new body to be free from sin. But sin is the intention of the heart, and therefore to be free from sin we simply need a new heart. Moral perfection is not getting a glorified body, moral perfection is having a pure heart of love (Matt. 5:48, Rom. 13:8). Since sin is transgression of the law (1 Jn. 3:4), but love is the fulfillment of the law (Gal. 5:14; James 2:8), the person who has a loving heart does not have any sin in their life, they are morally perfect. We cannot have glorification in this life, but we can be sanctified in this life (Acts 20:32; Acts 26:18; 1 Cor. 1:2; Hebrews 2:11; Heb. 10:10; Heb. 10:14; Jude 1:1).

“and must keep his right-standing with God based on his own works by maintaining such a state of sinless perfection.”

God only forgives those who turn away from their sin, and therefore we remain forgiven

as long as we stay away from sin. If we return to our sin, we are returning to the broad road the leads to destruction. If anyone is sinning, they are on the broad road to destruction.

The Bible says that if a believer sins, they are not covered by the cross and are under the wrath of God (Heb. 10:26-31), but they can be restored through repentance. If backsliders repent (Lk. 13:3; Jas. 5:19-20) and seek forgiveness (Matt. 6:12; 1 Jn. 1:9), they can be restored (Ps. 51:9; Jer. 3:22; 4:1; Lk. 15:20; 22:32; Rom. 11:23; Jas. 5:19-20) unless they are apostates (Heb. 6:4-6; 2 Cor. 13:5; 2 Tim. 3:8; Titus 1:14-16), having grieved away the Spirit (Matt. 12:31-32; Eph. 4:30), having resisted (Acts 7:51) all possible influence (Heb. 6:4-6; 2 Tim. 3:8).

The Bible tells believers to pray for forgiveness if they sin (Matt. 6:12). Charles Finney said, "if Christians are not condemned when they sin, they cannot be forgiven, for forgiveness is nothing else than setting aside the penalty. And therefore, if they are not condemned, they cannot properly pray for forgiveness. In fact, it is unbelief in them to do so." (Oberlin Evangelist, Justification, July 19, 1843)

The wrath of God is impartial (Ex. 32:33; Deut. 10:17; Rom. 2:9; 2 Cor. 10:6; Col. 3:25; 2 Pet. 1:17; 1 Jn. 3:15; Rev. 21:8; 22:15), so anyone who consciously or knowingly sins or rebels is under condemnation (Jn. 3:19; Rom. 1:18, 2:6-11; Heb. 10:26-31; 1 Jn. 3:8, 3:15, 3:20; 2 Jn. 1:9).

The notion of being positionally righteous but still practicing unrighteous is absolutely contrary to scripture (1 Jn. 3:7; 3:10). Such a concept is false doctrine and damnable heresy (2 Pet. 2:1; Jude 1:4-5). Jesus is the author of salvation to all them that obey Him (Heb. 5:9),

The Bible says that those who are going to Heaven are sanctified (Acts 20:32, 26:18; 1 Cor. 6:9-11).

The Bible says that those who are breaking God's law not enter the Kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-21) but only those who keep God's commandments will enter into Heaven (Matt. 7:21; Matt. 19:17; Rev. 22:14).

There is no salvation or forgiveness apart from repentance. If a believer sins, they must repent or perish (Luke 13:3, 5).

"if Christians are not condemned for one sin, they would not be for ten thousand, and that the greatest apostates could be saved without repentance. But what kind of a gospel is that? It would overthrow the entire government of God." Charles Finney (Oberlin Evangelist, Justification, July 19, 1843)

"Now when any individual sins, he must be condemned till he repents, or forsake his sin.... Repentance is a hearty and entire forsaking of sin, and entrance upon obedience to God.... when one has truly repented, he is justified, and remains so just as long as he

remains obedient, and no longer; and that when he falls into sin, he is as much condemned as any other sinner, because he is a sinner." Charles Finney (Oberlin Evangelist, Justification, July 19, 1843)

The entire Bible repeatedly and abundantly teaches the doctrine of probation or conditional security for believers, or that salvation could be lost or forfeited by sin (Eze. 3:20-21; 18:18-31; 33:12-20; Matt. 6:14-15; 10:22; 24:13; 24:48-51; 25:1-13; Mk. 4:16-19; 13:13; Jn. 6:66; 8:31; 15:6; Acts 1:25; 11:23; 13:43; 14:22; Rom. 8:13; 11:20-23; 1 Cor. 3:16-17; 6:9-10; 9:27; 10:5-13; 15:1-2; Gal. 5:4-9; 5:19-21; 6:7-9; Col. 1:21-23; 1 Thes. 3:5; 3:8; 2 Thes. 2:3; 1 Tim. 1:5-6; 1:18-20; 3:6; 4:1; 4:16; 5:15; 2 Tim. 2:12; 4:9-10; Heb. 2:1; 2:3; 3:6; 3:8-15; 3:18-19; 4:1; 4:11; 4:14; 6:1; 6:8; 6:11-12; 6:15; 10:23; 10:26-31; 10:35-39; 12:14-15; 12:25; Jas. 1:13-16; 5:19-20; 2 Pet. 1:9; 2:20-22; 3:17; Rev. 2:4-7; 2:10-11; 2:17; 2:25-26; 3:2-5; 3:10-12; 3:16; 3:19; 3:20; 21:8; 22:15).

The Bible speaks of Christians who have departed from the faith (Matt. 18:21-34; 24:10; Mk. 4:17; Lk. 8:13; Jn. 6:66; Acts 1:25 w. Matt. 19:28; 2 Thes. 2:3; 1 Tim. 1:19; 4:1; 2 Tim. 3:8; 4:10; Heb. 3:12-15; 4:1-11; 6:6; 10:29; 2 Pet. 2:20-22; Jud. 1:5).

We have the example of the unforgiving servant who was forgiven of his unpaid debt, but then later had his debt reinstated because of his immoral conduct (Matt. 18:23-35). This parable clearly shows how the Lord can graciously pardon an individual and then later execute the punishment that they deserve.

We also see the example of the Apostle Judas who lost his salvation. Judas was a disciple of the Lord and therefore he left all to follow Jesus (Lk. 14:33). He picked up his cross (Lk. 14:27) and even loved Jesus more than his own family (Lk. 14:26). Judas was picked by Jesus specifically to cast out devils, heal, and preach (Matt 10:1-27). Judas was a friend Jesus trusted (Ps. 41:9; Jn 13:18), so Judas kept the money (Jn. 12:6; 13:29). Jesus told Judas that He was shedding His blood for him (Lk. 22:14-20), and previously said that His name was written in the Lamb's book of life (Lk. 10:20). Jesus even said that Judas was one of His sheep (Matt. 10:1-4, 16), who received His truth (Matt 10:1-4, 8), who's Father was God (Matt 10:1-4, 20), who even had a throne in Heaven upon which he would judge Israel (Matt. 19:28; Lk. 22:30). But then later we see that Judas became a devil (Jn. 6:70) and therefore it would have been better for him to have never been born (Mk. 14:21). He even began to steal money from the group (Jn. 12:6). Judas fell from his apostleship by his transgression (Acts 1:25) because He failed to do what Jesus picked him for. His name was blotted out of the book of life (Ex. 23:33; Rev. 3:5).

"Judas was sincere, when Christ chose him to the apostleship." John Fletcher

"Judas was at first a child of the kingdom and heard it said to him with th disciples, 'You shall sit upon twelve thrones' but at last he became a child of hell" St. Chrysostom

"For both Saul and Judas were once good...Sometimes they are at first good, who afterward become and continue evil; and for this respect they are said to be written in the book of life, and blotted out of it." St. Ambrose

Genesis 6:5 – “And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” (See also Gen. 8:21) quote

This is talking about the unconverted. This is not talking about those who have been changed and transformed by Jesus Christ. This verse is not saying that sanctification is not attainable in this life, or that moral perfect or purity of heart is not possible on earth.

Likewise Romans 3:10-18 is talking about the unconverted. Many apply these passages to everyone, but they are specifically talking about those who are not saved because it says they do not have the fear of God and they do not know the way of peace.

It is interesting that right after Genesis 6:5, in verse 6, it says that God repented of making mankind because he saw their wickedness. This implies that God did not know mankind was going to sin and that mankind was not created for the purpose of sinning. God created mankind to obey Him, not to disobey Him, which is why he sent the flood. This is a great text used for open theism.

Psalms 51:5 – “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.” quote

A. This scripture is talking about David and his mother. It is not referencing all of humanity. It says nothing about Adam.

B. The event spoke of is the conception of David, not the birth of David. He is not saying that he was born a sinner, he is saying that his mother was in sin when she conceived him.

C. A strong case can be made that Ps. 51:5 is talking about the defilement of David’s mother, because of a previous marriage to another man – a heathen.

(1.) David had two half-sisters named Zeruiah and Abigail (1 Chron. 2:13-16).

(2.) The father of David’s half sisters was not Jesse but Nahash (2 Sam. 17:25).

(3.) Nahash was an Ammonite king (1 Sam. 11:1; 1 Sam. 12:12).

(4.) David’s father was Jesse, not Nahash. But the Father of David’s half sisters were daughters of Nahash. This could explain why Nahash showed kindness towards David (2 Sam. 10:2).

(5.) David’s mother was most likely the second wife of Jesse. The first wife of Jesse would have been considered superior to his second wife which had been either the concubine or wife of a heathen king.

(6.) This would explain why David’s half brothers viewed themselves as superior to

David, and why David was considered prideful for thinking he was as good as them (1 Sam. 17:28-30).

(7.) This may explain why David was not called before Samuel the prophet amongst the other sons (1 Sam. 16:11).

(8.) David's mother apparently had a good relationship with the Lord (Ps. 86:16; 116:16). But she would have been, in the eyes of Jewish law, considered defiled by her previous relationship with an Ammonite (Num. 25:1,2; Deut. 7:3,4; 1 Kings 11:2-4, Ezra 9:2; Neh. 13:23,25; 2 Cor. 6:14-17).

D. The context of David's prayer of repentance is not consistent with David making an excuse for his adultery, "I was born this way". In true repentance, an individual takes full responsibility for their sin, offering no excuses for justification. David was not blaming his sin on his birth. David was simply stating that even the circumstances of his birth were surrounded by sexual sin.

E. David said that he was "wonderfully" and "marvelously" made by God in the womb (Ps. 139:13-14). Therefore, he could not have been sinfully made by his mother in the womb. It is not wonderful to be born sinful or marvelous to be created evil.

Ecclesiastes 7:20 – "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." Quote

This might have been true in the days of Solomon, but it was not true of all generations. And this might be true of the unsaved, but it is not true of the saved. The Bible says that Joseph was a "just man" (Matt. 1:19), that those who are born of God "doeth good" (3 John 1:11), and the Bible says that whosoever abides in Christ "sinneth not" (1 John 3:6; 5:8). So in the New Testament "There are men that are just upon the earth, that doeth good, and that sinneth not".

Romans 5:12-19 – "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Quote

“For as by one mans disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” Romans 5:19:

A. If we are going to apply the first section of the passage unconditionally and universally, we must also apply the second section of the passage unconditionally and universally, since the language for both is the same. If the first section means mankind is universally and unconditionally condemned in Adam, then the second section would mean that mankind is universally and unconditionally justified through Jesus.

B. By Adam’s disobedience of eating from the tree, Adam provided all mankind with the opportunity of choosing to be sinners, since moral knowledge has been granted to all men. A sinner is an individual who voluntarily chooses contrary to their moral knowledge. The result of one man’s disobedience (eating from the tree of knowledge) was that many were made sinners (men have chosen to be sinners).

C. By Christ’s obedience of hanging on the tree, Christ has provided all mankind with the opportunity of choosing to be saved, since remission of sin has been offered to all men upon condition of their repentance and faith.

D. The word “made” used in these passages is not referring to a constitutional change, but referring to a conditional position which requires the consent of the will. Being a sinner is conditional upon choosing to sin. Likewise, being justified is conditional upon choosing to repent and believe.

You can read my entire commentary on Romans 5 at LibraryofTheology.com in the writing section, in the original sin section, called “The Fall of Mankind”.

Ephesians 2:1-3 – “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.” Quote

A. The word nature can describe a man’s God given constitution: (Rom 1:26; 1:31; 2:14; 2:27; 2 Tim 3:3). But this is just dirt and it is created by God. Therefore it cannot be sinful in and of itself.

B. The word nature can describe a man’s self chosen character, custom, habit, or manner of life: (Jer. 13:23; Acts 26:4; 1 Cor 2:14; Eph 2:2-3; Gal 2:14-15; 2 Tim 3:10; 2 Pet 1:4). This is voluntary and has to do with the heart. Therefore moral character, or sinfulness, can belong to this type of nature.

C. The context of this particular passage is talking about a former manner of life, addressing a previous lifestyle. "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course

of this world... among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind..." Eph. 2:2-3

D. To say that they are "children of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2, 5:6) and "by nature children of wrath" is to say the same thing.

E. That which brings the "wrath" of God is voluntary moral character, not involuntary constitutions.

F. A sinful nature is moral not physical, it is a person's self chosen character and not his God given constitution. A man's heart (will) can be sinful, but a man's body can only be an occasion of temptation. Though continual choices of self-gratification, man has developed a habit of sin.

1 John 1:8 – "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Quote

1. This passage must always be looked at in context. The entire book of John must be consulted, especially verses 1:7-10, 2:1. Those who isolate this passage usually twist its meaning to be contrary to the rest of the epistle which is about moral perfection. The meaning of a verse is always lost or misunderstood when scripture isolation is practiced. The immediately surrounding context gives us much clarity into this verse.

2. The phrase, "have no sin" in verse 8 could mean two things. It could mean "have no sin" in your present conduct, or it could mean "have no sin" on your record. Verse 10 is very clear that John is talking about those who deny having any disobedience on their record by saying "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." None can deny that they have sinned or disobeyed in the past, but Christians can say that they presently obey God.

3. Verse 7 and 9 promise, not merely the pardon of sin, but also cleansing from sin. There is a proper distinction made between forgiveness and cleansing, "to forgive us our sins, AND to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." These passages promise not only forgiveness of sin but also freedom from sin. They promise freedom, not merely from some sins, but freedom from "all" sins, "to cleanse us from ALL unrighteousness".

4. The man spoken of in verse 8 is the man who had not yet experienced verse 9. That is, the deceived man who denies having any sin is the one who has not yet confessed their sins, been forgiven of their sins, and has had their sins cleansed out of their life. Verse 8 is directed to, or specifically talking about, the man who has not yet been forgiven and cleansed as described in verse 9. Verse 9 is written as the solution to the sin described in verse 8. The man in verse 8 is the one who denies his need for what is offered in verse 9, that is, he denies instead of confesses his sins, and therefore says he needs no forgiveness or cleansing, he denies his need of being converted and denies his need of Jesus Christ.

5. If 1:8 means that nobody can state that Jesus Christ has cleansed them from all sin,

then saying that you have experienced 1:9 makes you a liar. This interpretation of 1:8 would mean that believing 1:9 would make you "deceived".

6. If "have no sin" means that no Christian can state as Paul did that we are presently "free from sin" (Romans 6:22), then John immediately contradicts his purpose as stated in 2:1, "these things write I unto you, that ye sin not." This interpretation would mean that John was writing this epistle so that we would "deceive ourselves" and so that "the truth" would not be "in us". Why would John write them so that they "sin not" if when they believe that they "sin not" they are simply "deceived" without "the truth"?

7. If 1:8 means that you are a liar if you claim to presently keep God's commandments, then 2:3-4 is a total contradiction. These passages state that "we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." Such an interpretation would amount to this: if you claim to keep God's commandments, you are a liar and the truth is not in you (1:8), but if you claim to know God but do not keep His commandments, you are a liar and the truth is not in you (2:4). So the truth would not be in the one who claims to keep God's commandments, and the truth would not be in the one who says they know God yet breaks His commandments. Then the only logical conclusion would be that nobody knows God, if the Bible teaches that everyone presently breaks God's commandments and you cannot know God if you presently break His commandments.

8. If 1:8 means that we all always have sin in our lives, then we do not "abideth in him" and have "not seen him, neither known him" according to 3:6, we are all "of the devil" according to 3:8, and we have njesseot been born of God according to 3:9.

9. If 1:8 means that you are a liar if you state that you no longer break God's commandments, then the Apostle John is a liar because he says "we keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" in 3:22. According to the popular interpretation of 1:8, this would make the Apostle "deceived", it would mean that the Apostle was without "the truth" because he claimed to "keep his commandments".

10. The difference between the children of God and the children of the devil, is that the children of God do what is righteous, but the children of the devil commit sin, according to 3:8-10. This could not be a proper or accurate distinction if 1:8 means that everyone converted or not has present disobedience in their life.

11. The meaning of this passage is clear: If anyone claims that they have never sinned, that they "have no sin" on their record, they are deceived. But if they confess that they have sinned, their sin can be both forgiven and cleansed out of their lives, so that they will walk in holiness and righteousness.

Regarding 1 Jn 1:8 Charles Finney said, "This verse is immediately preceded by the assertion that the "blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." Now it would be very remarkable, if immediately after this assertion the apostle should mean to say, (as they

suppose he did,) that it does not cleanse us from all sin, and if we say it does, we deceive ourselves; for he had just asserted, that the blood of Jesus Christ does cleanse us from all sin. If this were his meaning, it involves him in as palpable a contradiction as could be expressed.... This view of the subject then represents the apostle in the conclusion of the seventh verse, as saying, the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin; and in the eighth verse, as saying, that if we suppose ourselves to be cleansed from all sin, we deceive ourselves, thus flatly contradicting what he had just said. And in the ninth verse he goes on to say, that "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness;" that is, the blood of Jesus cleanseth us from all sin; but if we say it does, we deceive ourselves. "But if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Now, all unrighteousness is sin. If we are cleansed from all unrighteousness, we are cleansed from sin. And now suppose a man should confess his sin, and God should in faithfulness and justice forgive his sin, and cleanse him from all unrighteousness, and then he should confess and profess that God had done this; are we to understand, that the apostle would then affirm that he deceives himself, in supposing that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin? This then appears to me to be the meaning of the whole passage. If we say that we are not sinners, that is, have no sin to need the blood of Christ; that we have never sinned, and consequently need no Saviour, we deceive ourselves." (Finney's Systematic Theology, Lecture LXX)

Adam Clarke said, "If we say that we have no sin - This is tantamount to 1Jo_1:10 : If we say that we have not sinned. All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; and therefore every man needs a Savior, such as Christ is. It is very likely that the heretics, against whose evil doctrines the apostle writes, denied that they had any sin, or needed any Savior." (Commentary)

THESE ARE SOME OTHER VERSES EXPLAINED WHICH ARE USED FOR THE IDEA OF BEING BORN A SINNER:

I. "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies." Ps. 58:3:

A. This is a poetic book which verses can be taken figuratively or literally.

B. The context of this passage requires a figurative interpretation.

(1.) The entire chapter is figurative; the surrounding verses are all poetic. It talks of men being like serpents and deaf adders (vs. 4), of God breaking the teeth of the young lions (vs. 6), men melting away like running water (vs.7), God bending his bow to shoot arrows (vs. 7), men passing away as a snail which melts (vs. 8), and God destroying like a whirlwind (vs. 9).

(2.) It says that children speak lies from the womb.

(3.) Infants do not know how to speak as soon as they are born.

(4.) Therefore, this passage is poetic not realistic; it is figurative not literal.

C. The obvious meaning of this passage is that individuals choose to sin at a very early age, from the dawn of their moral agency, and the first sin which children usually commit is lying.

II. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." Jeremiah 13:23

A. This passage is talking about Israel during a certain period of time in their history. This passage is not talking about all sinners of all time. To apply this passage to all sinners of all time is to ignore the proper rules of hermeneutic interpretation, particularly context.

B. This passage is not talking about the way Israel was born. This passage is talking about the way Israel had become through their self-chosen habitual manner of life. The unchanging state of these people was a moral condition by choice, not a constitutional condition by birth.

C. Israel had resisted God for a long time. These men disobeyed God continually, after God had been reaching out to them time and time again. But despite all of the efforts of God, they were still wicked and evil. In fact, they were worst than when they started, because they had to continually harden their hearts as God was reaching out to them. They were well accustomed in doing evil.

D. They were so accustomed to do evil that their reformation would be comparable to a leopard changing his spots or an Ethiopian changing his skin. Through their habitual choice of disobedience, they made themselves reprobates. They resisted the influence of God to the point of no return. It was as likely to see an Ethiopian changing his skin, or a leopard changing his spots, as it would be to see these hardened reprobates changing their moral ways.

E. This passage was given to show Israel that they were without excuse, not with excuse. If they were born evil, or had no choice, they would have an excuse for being evil. God was revealing to them the justice of their punishment (Jer. 13:21-22). They rightly deserved punishment because of their continual disobedience, because of their voluntary and well established custom in doing evil.

“The doctrine of Justification by Faith alone: The Bible teaches that salvation is by grace through faith alone, apart from works, based not on what we do, but solely on what Jesus Christ did for us.” Quote

The Bible teaches that God forgives, by His grace and mercy, those who turn from their sins and trust in Christ. Only those who decide to repent of their sins and believe the

Gospel are saved by God's grace and mercy through the atonement of Jesus Christ.

“Since all have sinned, there is therefore no difference between men and all are sinners deserving of God's just punishment, but since Jesus Christ purchased our redemption, we can be saved by believing in Him with a true saving faith in our hearts and upon believing, have our sins forgiven and receive the perfect righteousness of God.” Quote

All men can be saved through the atonement of Jesus Christ, if they will repent (turn from sin) and believe (trust in Christ). Those who turn from sin and trust in Jesus are forgiven, which means they are imputed or treated as righteous (Romans 4:6-8).

“Furthermore, the Bible teaches that God doesn't justify those already righteous, but that He justifies the wicked, the sinner, the rebel, while that person is still a sinner.” Quote

God does not justify us while we are still sinning, God justifies those who repent, those who forsake their sin, those who turn from their sins. Only those with repentant hearts are granted the remission of sins. God does not pardon those who have not had a change of mind about crime, whose heart is still planning on rebellion.

“Of course, with this justification of the sinner comes regeneration, which gives that sinner a new heart and a new nature which will choose to hate sin and love the holy things of God, and this will be evident in his life by a radical change of life.” Quote

Nobody is justified (forgiven) until they are regenerated by the Holy Spirit (brought to repentance and faith).

“Nevertheless, the Gospel is that through Christ, God justifies the ungodly and makes them Godly, that God transforms the sinner into a saint by His free unmerited grace.” quote

God justifies or forgives those who have sinned, when they turn from their sins, and transforms their moral character by bringing them to repentance through the influence of the Holy Spirit. Through repentance and faith, sinners are turned into Saints. We are forgiven by God's unmerited favor, by God's grace and mercy, and not because our repentance and faith has earned it.

“Since our sin was imputed to Christ and He bore the punishment in full, now His righteousness is imputed to us as a free gift by faith in Him.” Quote

A term in the Bible which is used to describe forgiveness and justification is “imputed righteousness”. King David and the Apostle Paul described in detail what imputed righteousness is. Their description is the clearest presentation of imputed righteousness in the Scripture. According to these inspired writings, imputed righteousness consists in being considered righteous, having your transgressions forgiven, having your sins

covered, and as not having your iniquities imputed or accounted against you (Ps. 31:1-2; Rom. 4:7-8). In other words, to be imputed righteous is when God pardons our crimes, not giving us the governmental treatment that we deserve, but rather treating us as if we were righteous, that is, giving us the treatment of law abiding citizens. God considers us righteous by treating us as righteous.

The New Testament word “logizomai” is translated as “think” (2 Cor. 3:5; 10:2; 10:7; 10:11; 12:6; Phi. 4:8), as “imputed” (Rom. 4:11; 4:22-24; Jam. 2:23), as “counted” (Rom. 2:26; 4:3; 4:5; 9:8), as “reckoned” (Lk. 22:37; Rom. 4:4; 4:9-10), as “accounted” (Rom. 8:36; Gal. 3:6), as “reckon” (Rom. 6:11; 8:18), as “suppose” (2 Cor. 11:5; 1 Pet. 5:12), as “account” (1 Cor. 4:1), as “accounting” (Heb. 11:19), as “conclude” (Rom. 3:28), as “count” (Phi. 3:13), as “esteemeth” (Rom. 14:14), as “impute” (Rom. 4:8), as “imputeth” (Rom. 4:6), as “imputing” (2 Cor. 5:19), as “laid” (2 Tim. 4:16), as “numbered” (Mk. 15:28), as “reasoned” (Mk. 11:31), as “thinkest” (Rom. 2:3), as “thinketh” (1 Cor. 13:5), and as “thought” (1 Cor. 13:11). When an individual is imputed righteous, it simply means that their sins are forgiven and they are thought of as righteous, esteemed as righteous, counted as righteous, reckoned as righteous, or considered as righteous. When a person is imputed as righteous they are treated as if they were righteous, treated as if they were never unrighteous, being treated as law abiding citizens.

The Old Testament equivalent word is “chashab” and it is translated as “counted” (Gen. 15:5-6; 31:15; Lev. 25:31; Num. 18:30; Jos. 13:3; Neh. 13:13; Job 18:3; 41:29; Ps. 44:22; 88:4; 106:31; Prov. 17:28; 27:14; Isa. 5:28; 40:15; 20:17; Hos. 8:12), as “thought” (Gen. 38:15; 50:20; 1 Sam. 1:13; 18:25; 2 Sam. 14:13; Neh. 6:2; Ps. 73:16; 119:59; Jer. 18:8; Mal. 3:16), as “think” (Neh. 6:6; Job 41:32; Isa. 10:7; Jer. 23:27; 29:11; Eze. 38:10), as “accounted” (Deut. 2:10-11; 2:20; 1 Kin. 10:21; 2 Chro. 9:20; Isa. 2:22), as “imagine” (Job 6:26; Ps. 140:2; Hos. 7:15; Zec. 7:9-10), as “esteemed” (Isa. 29:16-17; Isa. 53:3; Lam. 4:2), as “reckoned” (Num. 18:27; 23:9; 2 Sam. 4:2; 2 Kin. 12:15), as “count” (Lev. 25:27; 25:52; Job 19:15), as “reckon” (Lev. 25:50; 27:18; 27:23), as “counteth” (Job 19:11; 33:10), as “imagined” (Ps. 10:2; Ps. 21:11), as “imputed” (Lev. 7:18; 17:4), as “account” (Ps. 144:3), as “considered” (Ps. 77:5), as “esteem” (Isa. 53:4), as “esteemeth” (Job 41:27), as “imagineth” (Nah. 1:11), as “impute” (2 Sam. 19:19), as “imputeth” (Ps. 32:2), as “reckoning” (2 Kin. 22:7), as “regard” (Isa. 13:17), as “regardeth” (Isa. 33:8), as “thinkest” (Job 35:2), and as “thinketh” (Psa. 40:17). To be imputed righteous is to be counted as righteous, to be thought of as righteous, to be esteemed as righteous, to be reckoned as righteous, to be considered as righteous, to be regarded as righteous, etc.

The word “imputed” does not mean transferred. It is a theological error to say that “the righteousness of Christ is transferred to our account”. If imputed means transferred, when God imputed an uncircumcised individual as circumcised (Rom. 2:26), it means that someone else’s circumcision is transferred to them! The obvious meaning is that they are simply considered circumcised, reckoned as circumcised, or thought of as circumcised, but not that someone else loses their circumcision so that it could be transferred to another. Some have represented the doctrine of the imputed righteousness “of Christ” as the Gospel itself. But if this is the Gospel, neither Jesus nor the Apostles ever preached it! The Scriptures abundantly talk about imputed righteousness, but it never talks about the

imputed righteousness “of Christ”. Rather, the truth is that we have imputed righteousness through Christ!

When a person is imputed righteous God considers them righteous and governmentally treats them as righteous. It is not that the righteousness of Christ is transferred to them. To say that we need the perfect obedience that Christ rendered to the law to be transferred to our account in order to be justified is to say that we are in fact justified by the works of the law. Christ needed to perfectly obey the law in order to be a spotless sacrifice and qualify as a sin offering (Exo. 12:5; 2 Cor. 5:21; Php. 2:8), but justification is by Christ’s blood (Rom. 5:9) and by faith (Rom. 3:28; 5:1; Gal 3:24), but not at all by the works of the law (Acts 13:39; Rom. 3:20; 3:28; Gal. 2:16; 3:11; 5:4). Christ was under obligation to obey the law of love for Himself (Matt. 5:17; Gal. 4:4), just as God is under obligation to His own conscience (Gen. 3:22; 18:25; Job 34:10, 12), so Christ’s obedience to the law cannot be a work of supererogation, there can be no “extra” obedience to be transferred to another. So if Christ was under obligation to the law, His obedience to the law cannot be transferred to another. And if Christ was not under obligation to the law, there would be no obedience to be transferred. It was not His obedience to the law, but His suffering on the cross, which is credited to us. He suffered and died for us and His suffering was a work of supererogation since He was not obligated to do it. That is the means of justification.

Some have supposed that when God looks upon a Christian who is sinning that God doesn’t see the Christian sinning but “see’s the righteousness of Christ” instead. But God clearly saw the bad works of the Christians in Revelations (Rev 2:2, 2:9; 2:13; 2:19; 3:1; 3:8; 3:15), not “the righteousness of Christ”. Imputed righteousness is not some scheme that fools or blinds God so that He no longer knows reality as it is, or no longer see’s individuals as they are. That would mean God is no longer omniscient. Whenever anyone is in sin, our omniscient God sees it clearly and perfectly (Prov. 15:3; Eze. 8:12; 9:9; Jer. 32:19; Mal. 2:17; Heb. 4:13).

Imputed righteousness is a gift of God (Rom. 5:17), it comes from God (Isa. 54:17; 2 Cor. 5:21) by His grace and mercy, not earned or deserved by anything that we have done. It is “the righteousness of God” as opposed to the righteousness of man, since it comes from God and not from man. It is a gift from God, through Christ, to man. Christ is our righteousness (Jer. 23:6; 1 Cor. 1:30) because it is only through Him, what He did for us on the cross, that God is able to treat us as if we were righteous, treating us as if we were never unrighteous. Imputed righteousness is not the transfer of Christ’s righteousness, neither is it a scheme that blinds God the Father so that He does not see our true condition, but it is rather the same thing as forgiveness and justification, it is when God set’s aside the punishment that we deserve for our unrighteousness and treats us as if we had always been righteous, when God reckons or considers us as righteous, because Christ shed His blood for our sins. Forgiveness, justification, and imputed righteousness are expressions of the same event, when God forgives our sins and remits our penalty, letting our iniquities go as if they had not been committed (forgiveness), thus treating us as if we were just (justification), treating us as if we were righteous (imputed righteousness), because of the blood of Jesus.

But let it be clear that forgiveness, justification, or imputed righteousness is conditional upon an attitude of heart repentance (Isa. 55:17; Eze. 18:32; Mk. 1:4; Lk. 13:3; 13:5; 24:47) and faith from the heart (Jn. 3:18; Acts 16:31; Rom. 10:9; Eph. 2:8-9). And final salvation is ultimately conditional upon perseverance unto the end (Matt. 10:22; 24:13; Mk. 13:13; Acts 13:43; Acts 14:22; Heb. 3:6; 3:14; 2 Pet. 2:20). Repentance is when a person changes their mind about sinning and makes up their mind to sin no more (Isa. 1:16; 55:7; Jn. 5:14; 8:11; 1 Cor. 15:34; Eph. 4:22-28), and faith is the hearts embrace and obedience to the truth (Lk. 24:25; Acts 8:37; 15:9; 26:18; Rom. 10:10; 1 Pet. 1:22). The notion of being righteous in our position but unrighteous in our practice is absolutely contrary to scripture (1 Jn. 3:7; 3:10), and it overlooks the conditions of forgiveness and the nature of saving faith. Such a concept is false doctrine and damnable heresy (2 Pet. 2:1; Jude 1:4-5). Jesus is the author of salvation to all them that obey Him (Heb. 5:9), the Gospel must be obeyed (Rom. 2:8; 6:17; 10:16; Gal. 3:1; 5:7; 2 Thes. 1:8; 1 Pet. 4:17). Christians are those who keep God's commandments (1 Jn. 2:3; 3:22; 5:2-3). Only those who keep God's commandments will enter through the gates into the Heaven (Matt. 7:21; 19:17; 25:21, 23, 46; Lk. 10:28; Heb. 12:14; Rev. 22:14), while all sinners will be left outside the Holy City (Matt. 7:23; Lk. 13:27; Rev. 22:15). God will kill and destroy all sinners and rebels (Amos 9:10; 2 Cor. 10:6; 2 Thes. 1:8; Heb. 10:27; 1 Pet. 4:8; 4:17). Remember, the wrath of God is impartial (Ex. 32:33; Deut. 10:17; Rom. 2:9; 2 Cor. 10:6; Col. 3:25; 2 Pet. 1:17; 1 Jn. 3:15; Rev. 21:8; 22:15), so anyone who consciously or knowingly sins or rebels is under condemnation (Jn. 3:19; Rom. 1:18, 2:6-11; Heb. 10:26-31; 1 Jn. 3:8, 3:15, 3:20; 2 Jn. 1:9). God is utterly against all those who sin every day (Isa. 52:5; Hos 13:2; 2 Pet. 2:14). God must condemn all those who do not stop sinning since God is absolutely benevolent and therefore always enforces His laws which protect the well-being of all. And remember, Christians are those who were formerly disobedient (Tit. 3:3; 1 Pet. 3:20) but are no longer disobedient (Rom. 6:17; Php. 2:12). Christians make the daily choice to obey God (Lk. 9:23; 1 Cor. 15:31). Christians are not sinners (Ps. 66:18; Jn. 9:31; 2 Cor. 6:14; 1 Tim. 1:9; Jas. 5:16; 1 Pet. 3:12; 4:18; 1 Jn. 3:22) unless they backslide (Jas. 4:8; 5:19-20), all Christians are saints (Acts 9:13; 9:32; 9:41; 26:10; Rom. 1:7; 8:27; 12:13; 15:25-16; 15:26; 15:31; 16:2; 16:15; 1 Cor. 1:2; 6:1-2; 14:33; 16:1; 16:15; 2 Cor. 1:1; 8:4; 9:1; 9:12; 13:13; Eph. 1:1; 1:15; 1:18; 2:19; 3:8; 3:18; 4:12; 5:3; 6:18; Php. 1:1; 4:22; Col. 1:2; 1:4; 1:12; 1:26; 1 Thes. 3:13; 2 Thes. 1:10; 1 Tim. 5:10; Phm. 1:5; 1:7; Heb. 6:10; 13:24; Jud. 1:3; 1:14; Rev. 5:8; 8:3-4; 11:18; 13:7; 13:10; 14:12; 15:3; 16:6; 17:6; 18:24; 19:8; 20:9). As saints, Christians are sanctified (Acts 20:32; 26:18; 1 Cor. 1:2; 6:11; Heb. 2:11; 10:10; 10:14; Gal. 5:24; Jud. 1:1), that is, Christians are free from deliberate rebellion or intentional sin (Jn. 8:34-36; Rom. 6:2; 6:6-7; 6:11; 6:18; 6:22; 8:2; Gal. 5:24; Eph. 6:6). Christians have pure hearts (Matt. 5:8; Rom. 6:17; 1 Pet. 1:22), so they keep God's commands (1 Jn. 2:3; 3:22; 5:2-3).

When men turn from all their sins and put their faith in the blood of Jesus Christ which was shed for them, God forgives them of their sin by remitting the penalty they deserve. God considers them righteous, governmentally treating them just as if they had never sinned.

“This is, if I understand it, the true doctrine of ‘imputation;’ not that there is any transfer

of moral character from us to the Redeemer, or from him to us, and not that God literally 'reckons' or imputes our sins to him as his, or his righteousness to us as ours, but that his work may be estimated as performed in the place and on the account of sinful men, and that in virtue of that we may be regarded and treated as if it had been performed by ourselves." Albert Barnes (The Atonement, Published by Bethany House, p. 315)

"God imputeth righteousness. Whom God treats as righteous... forgiven, and whose sins are not charged on him, but who is freed from the punishment due to his sins. Being thus pardoned, he is treated as a righteous man. And it is evidently in this sense that the apostle uses the expression 'imputed righteousness' i.e. he does not impute, or charge on the man his sins; he reckons and treats him as a pardoned and righteous man." Albert Barnes (Commentary on the Romans, p. 105)

"This passage [Rom. 4:5-8] deserves special attention, as it explains all those text that seem to favor, and have been construed to support the theory of the imputation of Christ's active and passive righteousness to the sinner. Here it is manifest that justification, imputation of righteousness, forgiving iniquities, covering sins, and the non-imputation of sin, are phrases substantially of the same import, and decide positively that the Scripture view of the great doctrine under consideration, is an actual deliverance from the guilt and penalty of sin: from which it follows, that the phrases so often occurring in the writings of Paul – the righteousness of God and of Christ – must mean God's righteous method of justifying the ungodly, through the atonement and by the instrumentality of faith – a method that upholds the rectitude of the Divine character, at the same time that it offers a full and free pardon to the sinner." Asbury Lowrey, (Positive Theology, Published by R. P. Thompson, 1854, pg. 211-212)

"In theology, the remission of sin, and absolution from guilt and punishment; or an act of free grace by which God pardons the sinner, and accepts him as righteous, on account of the atonement of Christ." Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary

"Holiness isn't something you can borrow – you either have it or you don't. The theological doctrine of 'imputed righteousness' has been grossly distorted in our day. We are told that God looks at us through the blood of Christ and see's us as righteous, regardless of our actual state... Let's stop kidding ourselves. God sees us exactly the way we are. If we are living in obedience, He sees it. If we are living selfish, unholy lives, we can be sure he sees that too." George Otis Jr. (The God They Never Knew, Published by Mott Media, p. 40)

"As one 'made under the law' (Ga. 4:4-5), Christ was obliged to obey and keep the law. Since He had to obey for Himself, He could not obey for others in the sense that His obedience could be literally imputed to them... while Christ could not obey for us, He could die entirely in our behalf since there was not the least guilt charged against Him for which He must die." Gordon Olson (The Kindness of God Our Savior, Published by Revival Theology Promotions, p. 91)

"Forgiveness of sin, such that the penalty is not carried out, is sufficient to qualify as a

definition of 'imputed righteousness'... How could the Holy Spirit convict us of sin if he did not know we were sinning? How could we grieve the Spirit of God if he never saw us as anything other than righteous? God has a very good sense of reality, he knows when we sin, and he sees us exactly as we are." Michael Saia (Understanding the Cross, Published by Xulon, p. 132).

“Moral Government Theology and Jesse Morrell deny the biblical doctrine of justification by faith and believe that salvation is conditional upon abiding in a state of sinless perfection, that one has to completely stop sinning in order to be justified before God.” Quote

Justification is synonymous with forgiveness and it is conditional upon repenting and believing. True faith includes both repenting and believing.

We are forgiven if we turn away from our sin, if we change our mind about sinning. If we turn back to sin, or if we make up our mind to disobey God, we are no longer under His grace but are under His wrath.

“Jesse denies that Christ’s righteousness could be imputed to us as a free gift” quote

Imputed righteousness, according to Romans 4, is synonymous with forgiveness. Those who repent and believe are imputed righteous, that is, they are forgiven and treated as if they had never sinned. Forgiveness is a free gift granted to those who repent and believe. Turning from sin and turning to Jesus does not earn or merit forgiveness.

“and states that we must earn our own salvation by offering our own righteousness to God.” Quote

This is a blatant false accusation. When we repent and believe, we have no righteousness at all. God forgives us when we repent and believe, not after we perform works of righteousness. Nothing we do can ever earn our salvation. God offers salvation by His grace and mercy to those who forsake their sin and trust in Christ.

“This is salvation by works, not by grace, and is condemned with an “Anathema” in the book of Galatians for adding works to the Gospel of grace, and is refuted by the entire Bible’s teaching on the plan of salvation.” Quote

Repentance (turning from sin, forsaking your sin) is NOT salvation by works, it is NOT contrary to grace, and it is NOT condemned in the Bible! Jesus Christ preached repentance. John the Baptist preached repentance. The holy prophets and apostles taught repentance!

When the Bible talks about justification by works, it is not talking about repentance preachers, it is talking about Judaizers who say that you must be circumcised and obey the Torah (Acts 15:1; Rom. 2:25-29; Rom. 3:28-30; Rom. 4:4-10; 1 Cor. 7:19; Gal. 2:3-7; Gal. 5:2-4). Read these passages in context and you see that Paul’s point was that

Gentiles do not need to be circumcised or obey the Torah. He was not saying that you can be forgiven without repenting of your sins!

“Galatians 1:9 – “As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”quote

This is talking about Judaizers who say that you must be circumcised and obey the Torah (Acts 15:1; Rom. 2:25-29; Rom. 3:28-30; Rom. 4:4-10; 1 Cor. 7:19; Gal. 2:3-7; Gal. 5:2-4). It is not condemning those who say you must repent of your sins (turn from them, forsake them) as a condition of forgiveness or pardon.

“Romans 3:20-22 – “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference.”

Romans 4:5 – “But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” Quote

This is talking about Judaizers who say that you must be circumcised and obey the Torah (Acts 15:1; Rom. 2:25-29; Rom. 3:28-30; Rom. 4:4-10; 1 Cor. 7:19; Gal. 2:3-7; Gal. 5:2-6). It is not condemning those who say you must repent of your sins (turn from them, forsake them) as a condition of forgiveness or pardon, otherwise the Apostle is condemning the prophets and Jesus Christ.

“Romans 5:1 – “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Quote

What kind of a faith? An easy believism? No. Faith that turns from sin, a living faith, a loving faith, and love is the fulfillment of the law.

“Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God” 1 Cor. 7:19

“For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, not uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love.” Gal. 5:6

“and though I have all faith... and have not love, I am nothing” 1 Cor. 13:2

“What doth is profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?... Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone... ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.” James 2:14, 17, 24

Romans 5:6-10 – “For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us,

in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” Quote

AMEN! I do not see Josef’s point in using this passage.

Ephesians 2:8-9 – “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” Quote

AMEN! We are not saved because we deserve it or earn it by our works. We are saved by God’s grace and mercy when we choose to repent and believe.

“The doctrine of Biblical Regeneration: The Bible teaches that regeneration, or in other words, the New Birth, is a supernatural miracle of God’s sovereign grace that imparts to us a new nature by the power of the Holy Spirit and changes us and transforms us by God’s power to create in us the very nature of Christ Himself and thereby imparts to us the ability to please God. It involves receiving a new heart and a new spirit and being given the ability by God to habitually glorify God and take pleasure in the commands of Christ in the Gospel. Jesse Morrell teaches that regeneration is not a miracle which gives one the ability to obey God (since he believes that all sinners have this ability in and of their own selves), but Jesse teaches that regeneration is simply a change of life that is effected by the sinner’s own willpower. This is a denial of one of the most glorious and essential truths of the Gospel and what it does, essentially, is turn Jesse’s “gospel” into one that calls sinners to exercise their own ability, willpower, and morality in order to change their own selves and make their own selves holy and acceptable to God. This is not in accordance with God’s Word and equates to “another gospel”. Quote

Men are created with the ability to obey God. Regeneration is when the Holy Spirit influences us and brings us to the place where we actually start to obey God. A sinner’s problem isn’t that he can’t obey God, but that he won’t obey God:

We see this in Luke 19:14, “But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, we WILL NOT have this man to reign over us.” They had rebellious hearts, that is, they had disobedient wills. Their problem was not their nature (their constitutional abilities). Their problem was their will. It is not that they could not obey God, but that they would not obey God. It was a moral not a constitutional problem. Men are sinners through the liberty of their will, not through a necessity of their nature.

We also read in Luke 19:27, “But those mine enemies, which WOULD NOT that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.” Jesus said that their problem was their will, not their nature. Their problem was not inability, but how they were using their ability. Jesus didn’t say that they “could not” but that they “would not”. That is precisely why it is just for Jesus to slay them. They could submit to his reign, but refuse to. Therefore they rightly and justly deserve punishment. But if they could not

obey, it would not be right or just to command them to obey or to punish them for not doing so. It would be as cruel as punishing the lame for not walking, or the blind for not seeing. Sinners are objects of God's wrath for sinning, because they choose to sin when they don't have to. "As the nations which the Lord destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye WOULD NOT be obedient unto the voice of the Lord your God" (Deut. 8:20). Sinners are punishable, not because they were not capable of obeying God, but because they were not willing to obey God.

Justin Martyr said, "We have learned from the prophets, and we hold it to be true, that punishment, chastisement, and rewards are rendered according to the merit of each man's actions. Otherwise, if all things happen by fate, then nothing is our own power. For if it is predestined that one man be good and another man evil, then the first is not deserving of praise and the other to be blamed. Unless humans have the power of avoiding evil and choosing good by free choice, they are not accountable for their actions – whatever they may be ... for neither would a man be worthy of praise if he did not himself choose the good, but was merely created for that end. Likewise, if a man were created evil, he would not deserve punishment, since he was not evil of himself, being unable to do anything else than what he was made for."

Theodorite said, "For how can He punish [with endless torments] a nature which had no power to do good, but was bound in the hands of wickedness?"

Irenaeus said, "Those who do not do it [good] will receive the just judgment of God, because they had not work good when they had it in their power to do so. But if some had been made by nature bad, and others good, these latter would not be deserving of praise for being good, for they were created that way. Nor would the former be reprehensible, for that is how they were made. However, all men are of the same nature. They are all able to hold fast and to go what is good. On the other hand, they have the power to cast good from them and not to do it."

John Fletcher said, "As to the moral agency of man, Mr. Wesley thinks it cannot be denied upon the principles of common sense and civil government; much less upon those of natural and revealed religion; as nothing would be more absurd than to bind us by laws of a civil or spiritual nature; nothing more foolish than to propose to us punishments and rewards; and nothing more capricious than to inflict the one or bestow the other upon us; if we were not moral agents."

Consider God's dealings with Israel. "But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people" (Romans 10:21). Why would God do this if they were not capable of obedience? Why would God make the effort of reaching out to them unless they were capable of doing what He wanted? Their problem was not that God didn't want them to obey, or that God didn't give them the ability to obey, but that they were choosing to be disobedient out of the freedom that God had granted them. Disobedience is not the fault of someone's nature (inability). God determines what type of nature we have. Disobedience is the fault of someone's will (unwillingness). They determine what type of choices they make. Rebellion is not a

constitutional problem, caused by a fault in our design. Rebellion is a moral problem, caused by our own will.

We see this all throughout God's dealings with Israel. He does not ever say, "They disobey me because they cannot obey me". Neither does He say, "They cannot obey me because I took away their free will when Adam sinned." God never says that Israel could not obey, but that they would not obey. He accuses them of not being willing to obey, which is the nature of rebellion.

"Notwithstanding ye WOULD NOT go up, but rebelled against the commandment of the Lord your God" (Deut. 1:26).

"So I spake unto you; and ye WOULD NOT hear, but rebelled against the commandment of the Lord..." (Deut. 1:43)

"As the nations which the Lord destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye WOULD NOT be obedient unto the voice of the Lord your God" (Deut. 8:20).

"And yet they WOULD NOT hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the Lord: but they did not so" (Judges 2:17).

"Notwithstanding they WOULD NOT hear, but hardened their necks, like the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God" (2 Kings 17:14).

"Because they obeyed not the voice of the Lord their God, but transgressed his covenant, all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded, and WOULD NOT hear them, nor do them" (2 Kings 18:12).

"That whosoever WOULD NOT seek the Lord God of Israel should be put to death..." (2 Chronicles 15:13).

"Yet he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the Lord; and they testified against them: but they WOULD NOT give ear" (2 Chronicles 24:19).

"And the Lord spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they WOULD NOT hearken" (2 Chronicles 33:10).

"And testifiedst against them, that thou mightest bring them again unto thy law: yet they dealt proudly, and hearkened not unto thy commandments, but sinned against thy judgments, (which if a man do, he shall live in them;) and withdraw the shoulder, and hardened their neck, and WOULD NOT hear. Yet many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy spirit in thy prophets: yet WOULD they not give ear: therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands" (Nehemiah 9:29-30)

“Because they turned back from him, and WOULD NOT consider any of his ways” (Job 34:27).

“But my people WOULD NOT hearken to my voice; and Israel WOULD none of me” (Psalms 81:11).

“To whom he said, this is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they WOULD NOT hear” (Isaiah 28:12).

“For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye WOULD NOT” (Isaiah 30:15).

“Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? Did not the Lord, he against whom we have sinned? For they WOULD NOT walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his law” (Isaiah 42:24).

“For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah, saith the Lord, that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory: but they WOULD NOT hear” (Jeremiah 13:11).

“Because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the Lord, which I sent unto them by my servant the prophets, rising up early and sending them, but ye WOULD NOT hear, saith the Lord” (Jeremiah 29:19).

“But they rebelled against me, and WOULD NOT hearken unto me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt...” (Ezekiel 20:8).

“Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they WOULD NOT hear, so they cried, and I would not hear, saith the Lord of hosts” (Zechariah 7:13).

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye WOULD NOT” (Matthew 23:37).

“To whom our fathers WOULD NOT obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt” (Acts 7:39).

It could not be any clearer that the problem God has with sinners is not that they could not obey Him, but that they would not obey Him. God wants men to obey Him, but men do not want to obey God. My point is that a sinner's problem is not constitutional; otherwise he could blame God who forms us in the womb. The sinner's problem is moral. Sin is his own fault because it is his own choice. God has given us the ability to obey or disobey Him. That is our own choice and therefore it is our own fault if we do not use our

ability to obey Him. If the sinner's problem is constitutional, he would be a cripple – someone who cannot obey God. But if the sinner's problem is moral, he is a criminal – someone who doesn't want to obey God. If sinners are cripples, they deserve pity. If sinners are criminals, they deserve punishment. It is abundantly clear from the Bible that God views sinners as criminals who are worthy of eternal punishment. Therefore God must view sinners as moral beings who are capable of obeying His law, but who refuse to do so.

To be born again, or regenerated, means that the Holy Spirit brings you to repentance and faith. Regeneration is not a change of our constitution, it is a change of our character. And regeneration is not by force, regeneration is by gracious influence.

"Regeneration is a moral change wrought in the hearts of men by the Holy Spirit. This change is neither physical nor intellectual, although both the body and the mind may be affected by it. It is not a change in the substance of the soul, nor is it the addition of any new powers. Regeneration is not a metamorphosis of human nature. Man does not receive a new ego. His personal identity is the same in essence after regeneration as before. He has the same power of intellect, feeling and will, but these are given a new direction. God does not undue in the new creation what He did in the first creation. The change is, therefore, not in the natural constitution of man, but in his moral and spiritual nature. Furthermore, it is important to believe that the whole man, and not merely certain powers of his being, is the subject of this spiritual renewal." H. O. Wiley (Christian Theology, V.2, p. 419)

"The work accomplished is a change of choice, in respect to an end or end of life. The sinner whose choice is changed, must of course act. The end to be chosen must be clearly and forcibly presented; this is the work of the third person, and of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit takes the things of Christ and shows them to the soul. The truth is employed, or it is truth which must necessarily be employed, as an instrument to induce a change of choice." Charles Finney, Systematic Theology, pg 275

"Truth; this must, from the nature of regeneration, be employed in effecting it, for regeneration is nothing else than the will being duly influenced by truth." Charles Finney, Systematic Theology, pg 275

"Regeneration is nothing else than his embracing the gospel." Charles Finney, Systematic Theology, pg 276

2Pet 2:20 "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world THROUGH THE KNOWLEDGE of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ"

1Pet 1:22 "Seeing ye have PURIFIED your souls in OBEYING THE TRUTH through the Spirit"

2Pet 1:2-3 "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you THROUGH THE KNOWLEDGE of God and of Jesus our Lord, according as His divine power hath given unto us all things

that pertain unto life and godliness, THROUGH THE KNOWLEDGE of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.”

John 6:63 “It is the SPIRIT THAT QUICKENETH; the flesh profiteth nothing: THE WORDS that I SPEAK unto you, they are SPIRIT, and they are LIFE.”

John 6:44-45 “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all TAUGHT of God. Everyman therefore that hath HEARD, and hath LEARNED of the Father, cometh unto me.”

John 8:32 “And ye shall KNOW the TRUTH, and the TRUTH shall make you FREE.”

Titus 2:11-12 “For the grace of God that BRINGETH SALVATION has APPEARED unto all men, TEACHING US that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.”

1Tim 2:4 “Who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the KNOWLEDGE of the TRUTH.”

1Cor 4:15 “For though ye have ten thousand INSTRUCTORS in Christ, yet have yet not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have BEGOTTEN you through the GOSPEL.”

Ps 17:7 “SHOW thy marvelous loving-kindness, O thou that savest”

James 1:18 “Of his own will BEGAT he us WITH THE WORD OF TRUTH, that we should be a king of firstfruits of his creatures.”

1Pet 1:23 “BEING BORN AGAIN, not of corruptible seed, but of the incorruptible, BY THE WORD OF GOD, which liveth and abideth forever.”

James 1:21-22 “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted WORD, WHICH IS ABLE TO SAVE YOUR SOULS. But be ye DOERS OF THE WORD, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.”

Rom 2:8 “But unto them that are contentious, and DO NOT OBEY THE TRUTH, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath.”

2Thes 1:8 “In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that KNOW not God, and that OBEY NOT THE GOSPEL of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

John 15:3 “Now ye are CLEANED THROUGH THE WORD which I have SPOKEN unto you.”

1Pet 4:17 “For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it

first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that OBEY NOT THE GOSPEL of God?"

John 17:17 "SANCTIFY them THROUGH THY TRUTH: thy WORD is TRUTH."

Rom 6:17 "But God be thanked, that ye were servants of sin, but ye have OBEYED from the heart that form of DOCTRINE which was DELIVERED unto you."

Ps 25:8 "Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he TEACH sinners in the way."

Ps. 51:13 "Then will I TEACH transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be CONVERTED unto thee."

"The Bible teaches that regeneration is a supernatural miracle performed by God apart from human willpower, ability, or morality" quote

This is monogism vs. synergism. Monogism says that God repents and believes for us, it is not our free choice. Synergism says that God brings us to repentance and faith by the influence of the Holy Spirit. I believe in synergism. Man's will and the Holy Spirit is involved in conversion. God commands men to make the choice to repent of their sins, and God brings men to repentance by the influence of the Holy Spirit.

Ezekiel 36:25-27 – "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Quote

Yes God does give us a new heart, but not against our will. Our own will is involved:

"Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die..." Ezekiel 18:31

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double minded." James 4:8

"Let your heart therefore be perfect with the Lord our God" 1 Kings 8:61

John 1:12-13 – "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Quote

It says that we must make the decision to "receive him". Our will, or choice, is involved.

To be born of blood, or the will of flesh, or the will of man, is talking about our natural birth. The Jews thought that they were saved because they were children of Abraham. But

Jesus told them that they must be born again. We are not born saved because of who our parents are (like we are not born condemned because of who our parents are). Neither condemnation nor salvation is hereditary, but both require personal choice. That is why we must “receive him”.

John 3:3-8 – “Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” Quote

To be born again is not some involuntary miracle that happens to us. To be born of the Spirit means that we yield to the Holy Spirit and allow Him to change and transform us.

2 Corinthians 5:17-18 – “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.” Quote

How does this teach that regeneration does not include man’s free will??

Titus 3:5 – “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” quote

We are not saved because we deserve it. But we are transformed by the influence of the Holy Spirit. This again is not without our free will consent. This verse doesn’t say anything against our will being involved in regeneration.

“The heresy of Pelagianism: This is a historically recognized heresy and has been universally recognized as such since the 5th Century A.D. This heretical system of theology comes from the early monk named Pelagius who lived in the 4th and 5th centuries A.D. Pelagius taught that no man is tainted by the sin of Adam but that all sin is only a choice, and therefore since Adam’s since didn’t taint us then Christ’s death doesn’t literally save us but instead provides a good example to us. Thus the cross of Christ is made of none effect in this theology. Thus Adam set a bad example to us and Christ set a good example for us, and now it’s up to us to save ourselves by our own ability and morality. In Pelagianism, salvation is of man, and not of God, and therefore not all of grace.” Quote

While Pelagius did teach that Jesus gave us an example (), He also taught in his commentary on the Romans that we are “justified by faith alone”. Pelagius taught that we

need the grace of God. He taught three specific graces. 1. The grace of creation, where He graciously gave us a free will. 2. The grace of revelation, which includes the law and the work of the Holy Spirit. 3. The grace of redemption, the atonement of Christ through which we can have our sins forgiven by God's grace and mercy. Pelagius specifically taught in his commentary on Romans that we cannot earn salvation, but that it is a gift from God.

I agree with the Pelagians that:

1. Mankind has a free will
2. Men are sinners by choice
3. Sin is a choice, not a hereditary substance
4. Infants are morally innocent because they haven't sinned yet.

“The heresy of Sinless Perfection: This is a teaching that Christians can enter and abide in a state of absolute sinlessness, being just as sinless as Adam before the Fall of man, or just as without sin as Jesus Christ Himself as He walked this earth.”

Quote

I believe that it is possible to live the rest of your life without sinning (1 Cor. 10:13). But we can never be as sinless as Adam before the fall, because we have all sinned and therefore are forever guilty of sin. And we can never be as sinless as Jesus since Jesus Christ never sinned! But we certainly could forsake all of our sins in this life.

“Many of those who hold to sinless perfection also believe that it is essential to attain to this state of sinless perfection in order to be “sanctified” and even saved.” quote

To be sanctified is to be set apart from sin and to the service of God. What is moral perfection except being free from sin? Romans 6 teaches that Christians have been free from sin. No man is sanctified while he is sinning!

We do not need to live free from sin for a certain period of time before God will forgive us. God will forgive us as soon as we repent (change our mind about sinning), and then after we have been forgiven, our change of mind will result in a change of life.

“This is heresy according to 1 John 1:8” quote

1 John 1:8 does not say that you cannot have victory over sin in this life. That would contradict the rest of the Bible, like Romans 6 and the rest of 1 John. This verse, as I said early, is saying that those who are not saved cannot deny having sin on their record.

“and those who believe this only deceive themselves” quote

Those who say that they know God, but do not keep His commandments, are liars and the truth is not in them. (1 John 2:4)

“furthermore, they don’t understand the grace of God” quote

The grace of God teaches us to live a holy life (Titus 2:11) and the grace of God means that we do not need to live a sinful life (Romans 6:14). The grace of God changes us.

“While it is true that no real Christian will want to sin and will desire perfect holiness, the Bible teaches that all Christians still carry around a corrupt flesh that is affected by sin and therefore needs to be crucified, denied, and put to death all the time” quote

Here Josef’s Gnostic view of the flesh comes out again. Since Josef believes that we are sinners because we are born with sinful substance (flesh) he says that we cannot be free from sin in this life, not until we get a new substance (glorification). This is straight up Gnosticism.

“The heresy of Legalism: This is a teaching that we need to attribute to our salvation by our own works and that there is merit before God in our own works.” Quote

No man is justified by the works of the law, and our works cannot merit salvation! We are saved by God’s grace and mercy, if we repent, believe, and persevere unto the end.

“This is the heresy that is refuted by the Apostle Paul in his epistle to the Galatians.” quote

The heresy that Paul addressed in Galatians was that of the Judaizers who said that Gentiles needed to be circumcised and obey the Torah. He was not coming against those who say you must forsake your sin to be forgiven. It was not that the Galatians were repenting of their sins and Paul thought to himself, “I better put a stop to this!” The Galatians were Gentiles who started to believe that they must be circumcised, become Jewish and obey the Torah, to be saved.

How was Nineveh, the Gentile city, saved? Were they circumcised? Did they convert to Judaism? Did they start to obey the Torah? No! They believed God (Jonah 3:5) and they turned from their sins (Jonah 3:8-10). That is how Gentiles are saved.

“As one Moral Government Theologian stated, “There can be no justification in a legal or forensic sense, but upon the ground of universal, perfect, and uninterrupted obedience to law.” [Finney’s Systematic Theology]. Quote

This quote is taken out of context and its meaning is being twisted. Finney said that the law can only legally justify those who have never sinned, therefore we cannot be legally justified! Finney taught that we need Gospel justification, which is synonymous with forgiveness or pardon. Legal justification is when a person is declared innocent because they have never sinned. Gospel justification is when the guilty are pardoned by God’s grace and mercy.

Finney said, Legal justification, consists in pronouncing a moral agent innocent of all violation of the claims of the law, so that it has no charge against him. Gospel justification, consists in pardoning a sinner for whatever transgressions he may have committed, that is, in arresting or setting aside the execution of the penalty which he has incurred... Legal justification is out of the question, as all the world has become guilty before God.” (Oberlin Evangelist, Justification, July 19th 1843)

“The heresy of Open Theism: As already stated above, this is a denial that God knows the future, and a belief that God changes His mind regularly and reforms His own decisions and judgments as He learns new things. This is a denial of the Omniscience of God, and leads to tons of other practical theological errors.” Quote

This is what I stated above:

I believe that God is omniscient. Omniscient means “all knowledge”. God has all the knowledge that exists. God knows everything that there is to know. The parts of the future that are predetermined, God knows as predetermined, and the parts of the future that are undetermined, God knows as undetermined.

The future is partly settled, because God had made predeterminations. And the future is partly open, because God allows men to choose.

* God speaks of the future in terms of what may or may not be: Ex. 3:18, 4:9, 13:17; Eze. 12:3

* God changes His plans in response to changing circumstances: Ex. 32:10-14, Jer. 18:1-10

* God's willingness to change His plans is considered one of His glorious attributes: Jonah 4:2; Joel 2:12-13

* God tests people to see what types of decisions they will make: Gen. 22:12; Ex. 16:4; Deut. 8:2, 13:1-3; 2 Chron. 32:31

* God has had disappointments and has regretted how things turned out: Gen. 6:6; 1 Sam. 15:10, 15:35

* God has expected things to happen that didn't come to pass: Isa. 5:1-5; Jer. 3:6-7, 3:19-20

* God gets frustrated and grieved when he attempts to bring individuals into alignment with his will and they resist: Eze. 22:29-31; Isa. 63:10; Eph. 4:30; cf. Heb. 3:8, 3:15, 4:7; Acts 7:51

* The prayers of men have changed the plans of God: Ex. 32:10-14; Num. 11:1-2, 14:12-

20, 16:16:20-35; Deut. 9:13-14, 9:18-20, 9:25; 2 Sam. 24:17-25; 1 Kin. 21:27-29; 2 Chron. 12:5-8; Jer. 26:19

* God is said to have repented (changed His mind) multiple times in the Bible: Gen. 6:6-7; Ex. 32:12-14; Num. 23:19; Deut. 32:36; Judges 2:18; 1 Sam. 15:11, 15:29, 15:35; 2 Sam. 24:16; Ps. 90:13, 106:45, 110:4, 135:14; Jer. 4:28, 15:6, 18:8, 18:10, 20:16, 26:3, 26:13, 26:19, 42:10, Eze. 24:14, Hos. 11:8, 13:14; Joel 1:13-14; Amos 7:3, 7:6; Jonah 3:9-10, 4:2; Zach. 8:14

The future is not some eternal fixity. The future is flexible. The future is not entirely certain, the future is changeable. Examples of how the future can be changed is how God was going to destroy Israel but did not (Numbers 14:11-20), how Hezekiah was going to die but God added years to his life (2 Kings 20:1-6), how Nineveh was going to be destroyed but was not (Jonah 3:10) and how Jesus Christ could have escaped the cross by being rescued by angels (Matt. 26:53). The future multiple possibilities which God and man can choose between. The future can be changed.

“These are doctrines that deny the essential truth of the Bible and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore anyone who holds to them dogmatically must not be considered a brother in Christ, but treated as a false believer or false teacher, pleaded with in love to repent, and shunned from Christian fellowship until they come to be ashamed of their false doctrines and repent. We cannot tolerate false teachings that deny the core truth of the Gospel of Christ but must stand firm and earnestly contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.” Quote

I could just as easily say that to teach a limited atonement, when the Bible clearly teaches an unlimited atonement, is a false Gospel and anyone who teaches such is a false believer and a false teacher, and must be shunned unless they repent and are ashamed of their doctrine.

I could also say that anyone who teaches that sinners do not need to forsake their sin to be forgiven, when the prophets, apostles, and Jesus Christ himself taught repentance, is preaching a false Gospel and anyone who teaches such is a false believer and a false teacher, and must be shunned unless they repent and are ashamed of their doctrine. Anyone who teaches a view of grace and the atonement, which makes repentance unnecessary, is teaching false grace and a false atonement.