

From Less Than to More Than Enough  
September 17, 2017

It's Back to Church Season! Our country currently has 4 Back to Church seasons. Can you guess the first two seasons in which people make their way back to church? Christmas and Easter! But there are also 2 more, January, think New Year's resolutions, and September, which coincides with the Back to School season. These are the 4 seasons in which those here in America try to get back in church.

Sadly, the number of those seeking out a church during these "Back to Church" seasons are diminishing. I believe there are many reasons for this decline, but one reason I hear a lot is that church is too judgmental. Church can be a place where people feel condemned, "Less Than."

Religion does a good job of exposing our flaws, but it has a hard time reforming them.

A homosexual man once told me that he stopped going to church because every time he went people would tell him that he was going to go to hell because of his homosexual lifestyle. So, he finally quit going to church. How about you? Is the church a place where you feel, "Less than?" A place where you feel judged or condemned? It may be that you're only hearing half the story!

Colossians 1:18-23 tells us how we can go from "Less than" to having "More Than Enough" to live a life that pleases God!

First, let's look at what most churches get right.

### **1. Sin separates us from God – "And you that were some time alienated..." (21).**

Genesis 2:16-17 "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: **for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.**"

Did Adam and Eve die the moment they ate the fruit? Physically, no. Spiritually, yes. The moment they ate of the fruit, they were spiritually alienated, separated, from God. Scripture calls this spiritual death.

Romans 5:12 "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:"

Because of Adam and Eve's sin, we are all born with a sin nature, separated from God.

We sin because we're sinners. No one had to teach us how to sin. We do it by nature.

### **2. Sin sets us against God – "and enemies in your mind by wicked works..." (21).**

We further alienate ourselves from God by opposing Him with our "wicked works."

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

Matthew 5:21-22 "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment...but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."

Matthew 5:26-27 "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."

We also oppose God through "religious works." (Romans 1:18, 21-25; Matthew 23).

When we trust our own religious performance we oppose God.

The bad news is that without Christ, we are condemned!

John 3:16-18

### **3. Christ has provided all we need to please God (21-23).**

Christ died in our place to reconcile us to God (21-22).

The penalty for sin is death, infinite separation from God (Revelation 21:8).

When Jesus was crucified, Jesus was separated from God for our sins (Matthew 28:46).

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

Christ died in our place to make us **Holy**: This is the same word translated "saints." This does not refer to our conduct, but our position as God's own peculiar treasure, as one with Christ in His regards forever.

Christ did in our place to make us **Without Blemish**.

This phrase proves that he is not referring to conduct. No one is without blemish!

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."

1 John 4:17 "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world."

Christ died in our place to make us **Unblameable (Uncharged)**.

This does not refer to our conduct, but instead to our judicial standing before God.

Jeremiah 31:34 "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

Psalms 103:12 "As far as the east is from the west, *so* far hath he removed our transgressions from us."

We still must daily confess our sins, but our relationship has changed. Before salvation, we had no relationship to God. He was our Judge. The moment we were reconciled, we became saints and sons. Now we confess our sins as a child to his Father. We have confidence that we've been accepted in the Beloved!

We access all of this by faith in Christ (23).

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."

Conclusion:

1. How do you measure up? Are you still trying to please God in your own strength?
2. Are you willing to stop trusting what you're doing for Christ, and start trusting what Christ has done for you?
3. Today can be the day you leave church with more than enough to please God!