



GLOBAL GRACE NEWS

GGN is a teaching resource for ministers and churches all over the world. We advocate the gospel of the grace of Jesus Christ - Jesus alone, grace alone, faith alone. Our purpose is twofold: to help the Church rediscover Jesus and to take this message to the world.

JULY-AUGUST 2011

## Jesus invites everyone to **COME TO HIM**

The Gospel is all about God coming to us, incarnated in a human body, to redeem us forever - for us to spend all eternity together with him. His heart goes out to everyone, and he desires a loving relationship with all mankind.

The way to a restored relationship with him is so simple: all one need to do is to believe and respond to his loving invitation. Jesus said "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matth. 11:28) He also said, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." John 7:37-38.

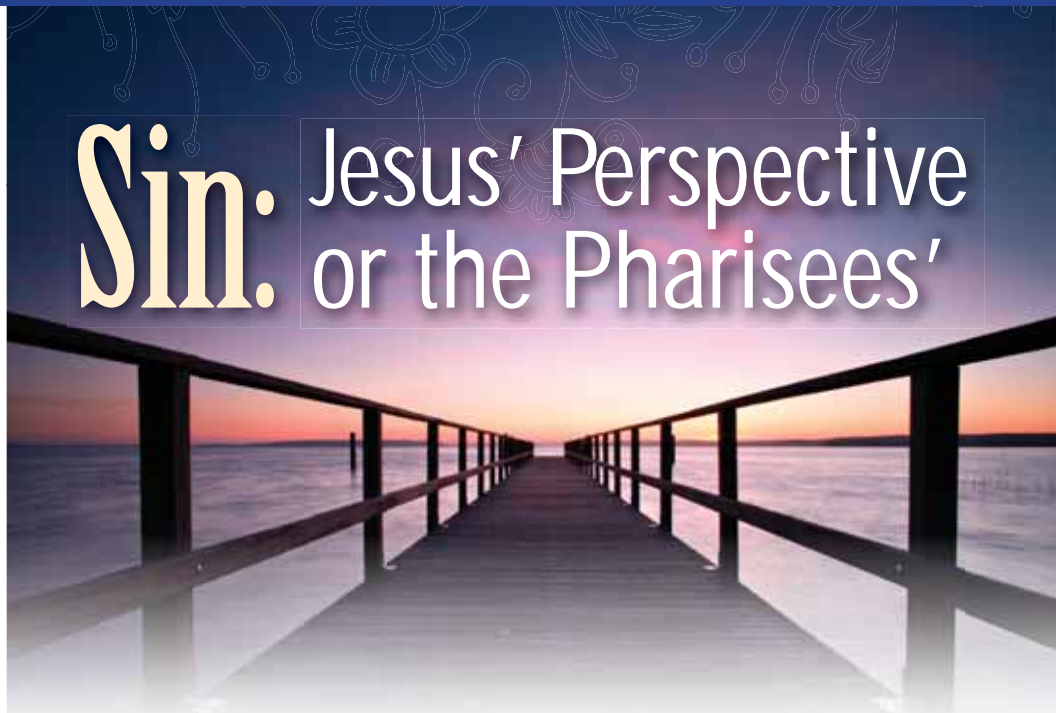
Jesus spoke to people who were in a religion full of commandments and requirements. He knew it was a burden for them and now offered them a new *life of rest*. We can rest in the finished work of Jesus Christ. We can be refreshed by the living waters installed in our hearts. We can minister at rest assured that He who lives in us will produce the results.

Today we bring you two articles, by Peter Youngren and Steve McVey. They speak about our love relationship with God and how God desires us to *trust* him. We believe you will be blessed as you study the teachings.



Mary Felde  
Editor

# Sin: Jesus' Perspective or the Pharisees'



Part 2 of a series from Luke 15.

What is actually sin? Is it to break the Law of Moses  
– or has Jesus a different view?

The word "sin" means to "miss the mark." That's a rather vague definition, which leads to an immediate follow up question: What is the mark?

### The "god police"

For the Pharisees the mark was the Law of Moses, plus all the other rules they had added on. To them, sin was to break the Law. The Pharisees saw themselves as God's representatives with a twofold task: informing society at large about God's commandments and seeking to enforce obedience to the Law and judgment on those who were considered lawbreakers. The Pharisees were a "god police" dutifully condemning sinners and

being angry with tax collectors. The older brother in Luke 15 is a picture of the Pharisees. He describes the rules his younger brother has broken, while the father never mentions them.

### A Broken Relationship

Jesus viewed sin in a completely different way. To Him, sin was not a broken rule but a broken relationship – a refusal to enter the fellowship of love we were created for. When the prodigal son insisted on his part of the inheritance now, it was as if he had wished for his father's death, and in the Middle-Eastern culture this was a scandal beyond compare. To add further insult to injury, the son then

spent his inheritance in a “far off country,” thereby demonstrating before the entire village that he wanted nothing whatsoever to do with his father. He was creating his own life as far away from home as possible. What was the sin of the prodigal? A broken relationship.

This is a mirror picture of Adam’s sin, the original sin. Adam wanted to find his own way instead of trusting the God who loved him. He listened to the serpent, took matters in his own hands, tried to lift himself to a higher level to improve his own situation, and become “more like God.” This is the essence of sin: distrust. Adam trusted his own ability rather than His loving God.

After Adam fell into sin, he pulled himself away from God once more. There are those who claim that God is so holy that He cannot look upon sin. This is an outright lie. God graciously and immediately approached Adam after he had sinned. God did not pull away - Adam withdrew from God.

**God graciously and immediately approached Adam after he had sinned. God did not pull away**

A couple of chapters later in the Book of Genesis, after Cain had murdered Abel, God comes to Cain and protects him. Again it is Cain who withdraws from God’s presence, not vice versa, because God has never turned His back on a sinner – God is the friend of sinners.

Finally, and inevitably, things turned to the worse for the prodigal son, because the wages of sin is always death. He found himself in a famine, and then among the pigs – the very

worst that can happen to a Jew. When he called out, “I’m no longer worthy to be called your son,” these were not words of repentance. He was merely stating the obvious. The prodigal knew very well the customs of the day – the village considered him unworthy and could not accept his return. Furthermore, the father could not welcome a son who had

humiliated his own dad before all the people. The inhabitants of the village would spit on the prodigal and demand penance. According to custom, their duty and the father’s duty was to keep him accountable for his actions.

To the prodigal son, sin was a matter of wrong behaviour, and now he wanted to correct his prior actions. “Let me become as one of your servants,” he said. Notice, he did not want closeness to his father. No, the same sin that pulled him far away is still keeping him back at a “safe” distance from his father. The prodigal still wants to take matters in his own hands, pay back what he owes, work as a servant, live among the servants, and slowly make right what he has wronged – one step at a time. He is still a self-made, self-righteous man ready to fix his failures by trying again.

“He came to himself.” But that does not mean salvation, because repentance does not happen when we come to ourselves. It only happens when we come to the Father; back to the love we were created for. The father saw sin for what it really is – a broken relationship. The son had broken relationship and removed himself from the father’s house to find an alternate purpose for his life.

## A Restored Relationship

If sin is merely breaking rules and commandments, then the Christian life becomes our attempt at keeping the commandments. On the contrary, if sin is a broken relationship with God, then the Christian life is a restored relationship with God, a new life in Christ.

**if sin is a broken relationship with God, then the Christian life is a restored relationship with God**

If our religion is about rules, our God will be a judge who decides who is doing best, who gets second place, third place, and who is completely disqualified.

Sin is something much deeper - a broken relationship between God and people. Jesus came to be the world’s Saviour; to restore every person into this fellowship of love.

What happens then with sin in people’s lives? Human attempt to keep the commandments eventually only leads to hypocrisy. Victory over sin, real holiness, and true sanctification is the result of a life and relationship with the God who has always loved us.

Sin can never stop the flow of God’s grace - it is God’s grace that stops sin and brings true holiness.



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# Jesus Is Looking Forward To Your Coming

By Steve McVey

Most people think about how happy we will be to see Jesus Christ face to face, but have you considered how anxious He is to see you?

It was in the month of December and I was in the countryside, three hours outside Beijing, China. Temperatures were hovering around ten below zero degrees Fahrenheit. I could see my own breath in the cold air of the unheated storage room in the abandoned factory where I both slept and taught the Bible during my time in this poverty stricken community.

Fifteen people sat around me in a circle, having sneaked into the room one at a time in order to avoid detection by the police. "Aren't you afraid of going to jail?" one of the believers asked me. "Are you?" I asked. It is illegal for Christians in China to meet together as we were doing and we all knew that. However, these believers were so hungry for Bible teaching that they would risk their very lives to attend this Bible study.

## An old lady singing to Jesus

I had taught for thirteen hours that day. Now it was the end of the day. We

had been praying and the Christians with me had been singing Chinese hymns, offering praise to God for His goodness. There was a lull in the room as people prayed silently when an 87 year old woman began to sing alone.

I had spoken to her earlier through my translator and knew her personal story. She and her husband had been separated during a war in China over thirty years earlier. As Japanese and Chinese soldiers fought all around her, she hid in the corner of a building. Friends around her were being killed, but the soldiers all brushed past her, seeming not to notice she was there.

Finally the shooting stopped and the soldiers all left. She said that her immediate thought was, "There must be a God because there is no other explanation for why I survived what just happened. I want to know this God." Ten years passed before she

heard about an underground church service near where she lived. Taking her daughter by the hand, she said, "Let's go to this church where we can meet this God who spared my life ten years ago." They did go to the house church that day and there she met Jesus Christ.

Now here I was, twenty years later, sitting in an abandoned factory where one family had

# “Every day He is looking forward to my coming,”

secretly taken up residence. I had been teaching about intimacy with Christ, but this 87 year old lady was about to make the lesson I taught even more real to me. She closed her eyes and began to sing.

It was a soft and sweet sounding song, in the Mandarin language. As she sang, tears began to stream down her wrinkled cheeks and over her radiant smile. I couldn't understand the words she sang but I was aware that she was literally exuding the love of Jesus Christ. Suddenly, I sensed the manifest presence of God in a powerful way.

I couldn't hold back my tears and, as I looked around the room, I saw the others were crying too. I looked back at this saint who now appeared to be in a world of her own, seemingly oblivious to our presence in the room. It was obvious – she was not singing for us. She was singing to Jesus.

In a few moments, she finished her song and a holy hush lingered in the room. She paused for a moment and then opened her eyes and looked at me. “Every day He is looking forward to my coming,” she said with wet

cheeks and an angelic smile. I felt like a little boy who was being taught a lesson that he had never heard. Looking through teary eyes, I smiled and simply nodded.

**Jesus is anxious to meet His bride**  
“He is looking forward to my coming.” Have you ever thought of

# “He thought it better to die than to live without you.”

it in those terms? Most people think about how happy we will be to see Jesus Christ face to face, but have you considered how anxious He is to see you? We are called the bride of Christ in the New Testament. One day He will come again and we will be united with Him in an eternal marriage. Jesus said,

*I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also* (John 14:2-3).

One day we will hear a resounding invitation echoing through the

universe, “The Bridegroom is coming! Come out to meet Him!” (See Matthew 25:6) In that moment, you will see the One whose passion for you was so great that He thought it better to die than to live without you.



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# GLOBAL GRACE NEWS

## AFFILIATED BIBLE SCHOOLS



### **Celebration Bible College**

190 Railside Road, Toronto, Ontario M3A 1A3, Canada

Language: English

Coming school year begins Sept. 7, 2011

Founder and President: Dr. Peter Youngren

[www.CelebrationBibleCollege.com](http://www.CelebrationBibleCollege.com)

E-mail: [info@celebrationbiblecollege.com](mailto:info@celebrationbiblecollege.com)

Call: +1 416.497.4940



### **Bibelskolen Oslo Kristne Senter**

Fetveien 1, N-2007 Kjeller, Norway

Language: Norwegian

Coming school year begins Aug. 22, 2011

Founder and principal: Åge M. Åleskjær

[www.bibelskolenoks.no](http://www.bibelskolenoks.no)

E-mail: [bibelskolen@oks.no](mailto:bibelskolen@oks.no)

Call: +47 64 84 64 30



### **Sekolah Alkitab Celebration (SAC)**

Medan, Sumatra Utara, Indonesia

Coming school year starts Oct. 3, 2011

Language: Indonesian

Founder: Peter Youngren. Director: Susan Hoover

E-mail: [medan@gmail.com](mailto:medan@gmail.com)

[www.sacindonesia.com](http://www.sacindonesia.com)



### **World Impact Bible Institute**

Komarock sector one, Nairobi, Kenya

Coming school year begins Aug. 8, 2011

Language: English, Kiswahili

President: Peter Youngren. Principal: Mary Felde

E-mail: [info@GospelRevolutionBC.org](mailto:info@GospelRevolutionBC.org)

Call: +254 727 616 400



### **To The Nations Bible College**

5073 E. Post Falls, Idaho U.S.A. 83854

Coming school year starts Sept. 11, 2011

Language: English

Founder and director: Mike Walker

[www.ttnbc.net](http://www.ttnbc.net)

E-mail: [ttn\\_ft@hotmail.com](mailto:ttn_ft@hotmail.com)



### **Centro Ensenanza Biblico Oasis**

Honduras

Language: Spanish

Founder: Mike Walker, Dean: Walter Huevo

E-mail: [walterah@hotmail.com](mailto:walterah@hotmail.com)