

Suspended Sentence

In the Justice System, a suspended sentence is one that has been handed down by the court but not yet put into effect. In such a case, if the end result is to be avoided, there must be solid evidence of good behaviour. Some people think it works like that with God as the Judge. But definitely not so!

All Have Sinned

In Romans 3:23, God declares: *"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"*. We easily concede that none of us is perfect; yet we have really all fallen well short of God's standard for righteous behaviour. The official sentence for that kind of life is perpetuity in hell. But most people live every day under that looming sentence and think it will never really happen. In God's courtroom, it is not sufficient to amend one's ways and live a perfect life from here on. The fact is, it only takes one sin on your record in God's courtroom to result in the sentence of eternal death, yet not to take effect until natural life comes to an end through accident, sickness or simply old age. But, make no mistake, it will certainly be activated some day.

Unless

God declares that good behaviour won't work in His court, but He does have a wonderful alternative, and here it is: Romans 10:9 *"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth, the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved"*. No matter how high their pile of accumulated sins, anyone who listens to and accepts God's message about Jesus Christ as Saviour, will be rescued from under that awful sentence. It suddenly changes from the promise of Eternal Death, to that of Eternal Life. No human could ever claim eternal life on the basis of good performance; our sins always get in the way, and God cannot ignore them. What He delights to do for one who repents of his sins and comes to Jesus, is to immediately view such a person through the perfect redemptive work of Jesus Christ, His Son.

Purchased at High Cost

Of course, a price had to be paid, but it was paid by Jesus on the cross when He died after suffering the judgment of a holy God upon your sins. And this is a price you could never pay. *"The blood of Jesus Christ, His son, cleanseth us from all sin"* 1 John 1:7.

Justice Tempered by Mercy

The bitter sentence of eternal death cannot be denied, but in His limitless mercy, God offers to have that sentence executed on someone else, His well-beloved Son Who paid the full price and afterwards rose from the dead. Approach Him feeling the weight of your past sins, and crying out for His Mercy. He is ready to assign a generous supply to your case, and grant you eternal life. It is something no one can earn, but can be received freely by faith and which provides a happy life, free from the eternal consequences of our sins.

Lorne for Vision 2020 (in 2021)

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