

JUST JESUS

Today, I want to look at two ways that you and I can approach God. And these two approaches can be summed up in two ways: *do better or become new*.

The *do better* approach says, “God, I’m sorry for what I’ve done. I’m going to try harder. Things will be different from now on. I promise to do *better*.”

The *new* approach says, “God, I’m sorry for what I’ve done. I need you. I’m broken, and there is no way in my own effort that I can please you. So Jesus, make me *new*.”

Now we’re using the words: better or new, but the Bible uses two different words: law or grace.

One approach is based on rules.

The other approach is based on relationship.

Here’s what I’ve learned in 33 years of following Jesus.

People who focus on the rules seldom keep them.

Christ did not come to make us better; He came to make us *new*.

Let’s talk about the ***better approach*** or the ***rules approach*** for a minute, remember Scripture uses the term ***the law***.

What is the law?

The law began with the 10 Commandments, but the law didn’t end with the commandments.

The law, in its entirety, contained 613 rules and restrictions. We find the law in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

Take the fourth commandment, ***“Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy.”***

That's one commandment.

But the law of Moses added 39 rules and restrictions to clarify what it meant to obey that commandment.

When Jesus came the Pharisees had added 1,521 rules to the 613.

That's 2,134 rules.

Did you know that during Jesus' time, a rabi's teaching was considered his "yoke."

When a rabi would recruit a disciple he would say, "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me." When you joined with a rabi, you agreed to live up to the rules and restrictions he gave you. Now consider what Jesus said. He said...

Matthew 11:28-29

Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for My yoke is easy and My burden is light, and you will find rest for your souls.

In other words Jesus was saying is, "You can follow those guys and work on being better, or you can follow me and I will make you new."

Did you know that the law was given 50 days after Passover? (Exodus 19:1)

What else came 50 days after Passover?

The day of Pentecost.

Israel celebrated the Day of Pentecost as the day God gave them the law.

Did you know that the day the law was given 3,000 people died. (Exodus 32:28)

And the day God gave the law 3,000 died.

The law always produces death.

Then Christ came, and on Passover He died for the sins of the whole world.

50 days later, when the Day of Pentecost had fully come, God gave the Holy Spirit and 3,000 were saved.

Wherever the law is preached, you'll find frustration, hidden sin, self-righteousness and death. But where Jesus is preached, you'll find grace, freedom, joy, peace, and life.

It's important that you realize, once you have received Jesus into your life, God no longer sees you as a sinner. You are now the righteousness of God in Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:21

He (God) made Him (Jesus) who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

All my sin was placed on Jesus and all His righteousness was placed on me. He made me just as if I had never sinned.

Now I can read your mind, you're thinking, "Now wait a minute. I still have my issues. How can I be holy and struggle with the same old thoughts and patterns?"

Hebrews 10:14 NKJ

For by one offering He has *perfected forever* those who are *being sanctified*.

Hebrews 10:14 AMP

For by the one offering He has *perfected forever and completely cleansed* those who are *being sanctified* [bringing each believer to spiritual completion and maturity].

Notice there's a part of you that's forever been perfected, completely cleansed, and there's another part of you that's being sanctified.

You and I are made up of three parts:

1. Body
2. Soul
3. Spirit

Your soul and spirit are not the same thing. Your soul is your mind, your will and your emotions.

Each of your three parts has its own redemptive process.

Your spirit is made perfect the day you received Jesus into your life.

One day you will receive a new glorified body.

Your soul...

From time to time I've heard people refer to Jesus as the second Adam. In the past, I have done the same thing. However, nowhere in Scripture is Christ referred to as **the second Adam**. In **1 Corinthians 15**, Paul refers to Jesus as the **"last Adam."**

1 Corinthians 15:45

And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

Now think about what that means. If I were the last of the Creech's and I passed away, my obituary would read, "He was the last of the Creech family. The family stopped with Jason."

On the cross, Jesus put to death the sin-cursed bloodline of Adam. He took on Himself the full weight of Adam's disobedience, and forever put to death that lineage of people. That cursed bloodline could not be cured, it had to be killed.

Then Jesus rose from the dead.

He rose as a new kind of man, the beginning of the Emmanuel (God with us) bloodline. Everyone born again through faith in Jesus, becomes part of this new family of people. Not a family cursed by sin, but a family blessed by God.

Jesus didn't come to make us better; He came to make us new.