Refusing The Pardon

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday November 12th, 2017

Text: John 3:14-17; Romans 8:1 Scripture Reading: Rom. 5:8-10

### Intro

1. The Supreme Court had to hear a case deciding on the legality of a man refusing a presidential pardon!
   1. During the presidency of Andrew Jackson (March 15, 1767 – June 8, 1845), George Wilson and James Porter robbed the U.S. mail and endangered the life of the carrier, and, in fact, committed the same crime several times (November through December 1829)
   2. The court convicted them and sentenced them to hang (May 27, 1830) and James Porter was executed July 2, 1830.
   3. Influential friends sought for a presidential pardon for George Wilson, and eventually Pres. Jackson intervened with a pardon for Wilson (June 14, 1830). Amazingly, Wilson refused it!
   4. Since this had never happened before, the Supreme Court was asked to rule on whether someone could indeed refuse a presidential pardon (January 1833).
      1. For details see United States v. Wilson, 32 U.S. 150 (1833) at <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/32/150/case.html>
      2. Chief Justice John Marshall handed down the court's decision: “A pardon is a deed whose only value must be determined by the receiver of the pardon. It has no value apart from that which the receiver gives to it. George Wilson has refused to accept the pardon. We cannot conceive why he would do so, but he has. Therefore, George Wilson must die.”
   5. “Pardon,” declared the Supreme Court, “must not only be granted, it must be accepted.”
      1. The decision was that if the prisoner does not accept the pardon, it is not in effect!
      2. Chief Justice John Marshall wrote, “A pardon is an act of grace…is not completed without acceptance. It may then be rejected by the person to whom it is tendered, and…we have no power in a court to force it on him.”
   6. George Wilson, as punishment for his crime and against the President’s will, was hanged!
2. God, through Christ, offers a pardon to all! (Unbelievers and Unfaithful) – Col. 2:13-14
   1. All have sinned and are worthy of death (Rom. 3:23; 6:23)
   2. The world with its temptations & lusts is “passing away” (I John 2:15-17; II Pet. 3:10-12)
   3. In the blood of Jesus there is pardon for sins and the hope of eternal life in Heaven! (John 3:16-18; Eph. 1:7; II Pet. 3:9: God doesn’t wish for any to perish but for all to repent! )
   4. Those in the world who love darkness and hate light refuse the pardon! (John 3:19-21)
3. Jesus has offered the pardon but it is up to mankind to accept or reject the pardon!

#### The Divine Pardon

* 1. Jesus pardons from the guilt of sin – Heb. 10:1-4, 22
     1. Guilt of sin is something that seems to be foreign to man today – A world that cannot blush *(Jer. 6:15; 8:12)!*
     2. King David expressed his guilt when he pleas for forgiveness *(Psalm 51:1-12)*
     3. The apostle Peter recognized his guilt when he denied Jesus just as Jesus told him he would *(Mt. 26:75)*
     4. The guilt of Judas, the one who betrayed Jesus *(Mt. 27:3-5),* led him to commit suicide!
     5. Heb. 10:22: The Lord Jesus Christ through His sacrifice offers forgiveness!
  2. Jesus pardons from the defilement of sin – II Pet. 2:20-22; 1:4
     1. Peter's graphic description of an erring saint’s state before God tells us the unfaithful also need the pardon of Jesus!
     2. *Mt. 15:10-20:* Jesus explains real defilement comes from within, and that it is our behavior, which stems from our choices, which defiles us!
     3. II Pet. 1:4: Jesus saves us from the defilement of sin – cleansing through His blood!
  3. Jesus pardons from the separation of sin – Is. 59:1-2 (I Pet. 3:12); Gal. 3:26-27
     1. Man is separated from God by sin and is Lost! (Luke 19:10)
     2. Sin separates us from God now and will for eternity (II Thess. 1:9)
     3. Gal. 3:26-27: It is through Jesus Christ that we become God's children and have redemption *(Eph. 1:7)* and reconciliation *(Eph. 2:13-16)!*
  4. Jesus pardons from slavery of sin – John 8:31-34 (Rom. 6:16); Rom. 6:22
     1. Jesus told the Jews they were slaves to sin and when they responded falsely, “We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone,” Jesus said, “whoever commits sin is a slave of sin” (John 8:31-34).
     2. Sinners imagine they are free (II Pet. 2:19) but are slaves to what they obey (Rom. 6:16)
     3. John 8:31-32; Rom. 6:17-18, 22: Jesus sets us free! *(Col. 2:13-14)*
  5. Jesus pardons us from the condemnation of sin – John 3:14-17; Rom. 3:24; 5:8-10; 8:1
     1. Jesus compared Himself to the brazen serpent set up in the wilderness to heal the people and said, “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:14-17).
     2. Sinners are condemned now (Eph. 5:6; Heb. 10:26-31) and will be condemned to an eternity away from the presence of God (Mt. 25:41; II Thess. 1:7-9)
     3. God has extended the pardon in Jesus so no one has to perish! (Jn. 3:16; II Pet. 3:9)
     4. Rom. 3:24; 5:8-10; 8:1: Jesus saves and justifies!
  6. The pardon has been extended but no one can force a soul to accept it!

#### Conditions of the Divine Pardon

* 1. Many people rightfully teach “God is love” (I John 4:8), but then falsely teach that means the love of God accepts people as they are (in sin) and will never condemn to Hell!
  2. Jn. 3:17: The world is in need of saving, of rescuing, and that means it is in sin!
     1. Eph. 5:6: God’s wrath is coming on the “children of disobedience.”
     2. *Eph. 4:17-19:* There are those who don’t want delivered from the world!
     3. I Cor. 6:9-10: There are sinful practices people engage in that will keep them out of Heaven, thus nullifying the pardon of Jesus! (Rev. 21:8)
     4. Titus 2:11: “…the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men,” (conditionally), “instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires” (2:12)
  3. To accept the pardon one must obey the gospel!
     1. Hear the word of God *(not men!)* – John 5:24; Rom. 10:17
        1. Not enough to hear or know it but must also do it! *(James 1:21-25)*
     2. Believe in Christ (Jn. 3:16-18; Jn. 8:24; I Pet. 1:6-9)
        1. No other name can save! (Acts 4:10-12)
     3. Repent Of Sins (Lk. 13:35; Acts 2:38; 17:30; II Pet. 3:9)
        1. Must give up ungodly practices that will keep one out of Heaven (I Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-21; Rev. 20:11-15; 21:8)
     4. Confess Christ (Mt. 10:32; Rom. 10:10)
        1. Confessing Jesus as the Son of God prepares one’s heart for baptism (Acts 8:36-37)
     5. Be Baptized (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16)
        1. More than just belief (Js. 2:19: the demons), our faith must act! Neither the teaching of faith alone nor the “Sinner’s Prayer” will save!
        2. I Cor. 6:9-11: The Corinthians were “washed, sanctified and justified” in Jesus through His blood (Eph. 1:7; Acts 22:16)
        3. Gal. 3:27-29: Being baptized into Christ is what makes one an heir of the promise to Abraham!
     6. Remain Faithful (Jn. 8:31; Rev. 2:10)
        1. We must continually “deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age” looking forward to the return of Jesus! (Titus 2:11-14; II Pet. 3:10-12)
  4. For those who received the pardon but fell away:
     1. Repent (Acts 8:22), Confess (I Jn. 1:9), Pray (Acts 8:22)!)
  5. The pardon of Jesus has appeared to all but it is up to each individual to accept it!

## Conclusion

1. Those who refuse the pardon by rejecting it outright, or try to come up with their own terms for it (IE: “Sinner’s Prayer,” Faith Alone, etc.), and those who accepted it and then rejected it, also accept the consequences!
2. Like George Wilson who refused the Presidential Pardon and accepted the consequences of death, many people refuse the Divine Pardon of Jesus the Redeemer and will accept the consequences of eternal punishment, which is the second death! *(II Pet. 3:9: Against God’s will for mankind!)*
   1. *Mt. 25:41, 46; Rom. 6:23; II Thess. 1:7-9; Rev. 20:11-15; 21:8*
3. Only those who accept the pardon (with its terms) and overcome the trials of life will enter into eternal life with God Almighty!
   1. Rev. 21:3-7: Heaven, the home of the soul for the one “who overcomes!”
4. Have you accepted the Divine Pardon?
5. Or, have you rejected the Divine Pardon and accepted the eternal consequences?
6. If you are not a Christian, it is not too late! You are still in need of being pardoned from your sins! Repent and be baptized!
7. If a Christian in sin, don’t wait till it’s too late! He can pardon you if you repent and turn from your sins! Repent and be renewed!
8. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!