

## The “Box Score” Defense By Paul R. Blake

“My good works outweigh my misdeeds.” Sophistry? Obfuscation? It is little more than an old fashioned cop out. People have been saying it for years. They believe that on Judgment Day, God will take tally is taken of the acts they committed or omitted, and if it is found that the number of their good works exceeds the number of their sinful actions, then God will judge them to be “good people” and let them into heaven. This philosophy has no scriptural basis. Therefore, in order to get to heaven and to avoid perdition, one must know the truth about how God will judge him.

Even in Old Testament times, it was known that what one did counted for more than what he said or intended. Ezekiel wrote: “The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself... But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die.” (18:20, 24). The inspired prophet makes it clear that when one sins, it invalidates his righteous deeds. His sin becomes the grounds for his judgment and the cause of his punishment. His un-repentant sin voids all earlier good deeds. Punishment for sin is not reduced, even though the sinner has done many more good deeds than sins.

In addition, one's words and intentions do not outweigh his deeds. A man may intend to do good, but if he omits it, he has sinned (James 4:17). One may say that he wants to do what is right, but if he sins, his good words do not count in the Judgment. The world today believes in symbolism over substance. That is, most people believe that if one intends to do good, or speaks good things, or performs a token good deed, it is the same as if he lived a moral life filled with good works. It is not the same thing. The symbol of good intentions is not equal to the substance of moral living and right doing.

The apostle Paul stated: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.” (2Cor. 5:10). He has said, beyond a question of doubt, that one will be judged and punished based on what he has done or not done, not what he intended to do or purposed not to do.

Jesus preached that the symbolism of good religious intentions are not a substitute for the substance of obeying God's will. “Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name? And then I will declare to them, I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!” (Matt. 7:21-23). The Lord made it clear that simply talking about do it isn't enough; merely intending to do it will not work; only doing the will of the Father in heaven is the only acceptable basis for reward.

There will be no balance scales before the Lord on Judgment Day; that's a pagan, Egyptian myth. God will examine our lives, and if there is un-repentant, unforgiven sin in our “box score,” we will be lost.

An excellent example of the fashionable belief in “box score” justification was exhibited by former President Clinton. After acknowledging that even Presidents pay a price for lying, he said that when the legacy of his presidency was written, there would be “this one negative in the box score of history, but hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of instances where I did not abuse my power.” A sophistry, an obfuscation, a cop out. What if a rapist should offer this defense to a judge in criminal court: “Yes, I did assault that innocent woman; but your Honor,

just think of all of the hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of women I have had contact with over the years and did not molest them.”

The word of God says: “For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.” (James 2:10). Amen. The Chief Executive's defense will not work on God in the Day of Judgment. Let us embrace righteousness and “Abstain from every form of evil” (1Thes. 5:22).

### **Five Reasons Why Your Children Should Attend Bible Classes**

(Adapted from an article by Terry Bell)

1) It will help them educationally. Children who attend Bible classes will have a better chance to learn how to read and to communicate their thoughts. Not only will their reading and verbal skills be improved by the practice they get in class, but they will also be better equipped for more advanced learning experiences elsewhere.

2) It will help them socially. Children must learn how to get along with others in an acceptable way. Our Bible class teachers are well-trained and experienced in helping to teach your children how to get along with others. In Bible class, your children are exposed to children from many different walks of life. That in itself is a valuable experience.

3) It will help them psychologically. It is not at all uncommon today to read about depression, anxiety issues, emotional disorders, etc. People are not born with the ability to cope with life's problems. They must be taught how to adjust to changes and stress. Bible class is a great help in this area.

4) It will help them be better citizens. It is not hard to see that there is a breakdown in respect in this country. Old-time values like honesty and purity are rapidly becoming relics of the past. If this nation is to survive, if your children are to become decent, law-abiding citizens, they must be taught these virtues. Our Bible teachers want to do everything possible to help your children learn these values.

5) It will help your children spiritually. This is the most important purpose of all. What does a person gain if he has all of the aforementioned values but loses his soul in hell? Our Bible study is un-denominational. It teaches your children the Bible, and the Bible only. We have no book but the Bible and no creed but Christ when it comes to teaching you and your children.

### **Churches: Dead or Alive?**

Live churches have space problems—parking, class rooms;

Dead churches have no worry about space.

Live churches are constantly improving things;

Dead churches never change anything.

Live churches have noisy children and young people;

Dead churches are very quiet and somber.

Live churches have more work than they do workers;

Dead churches usually have a surplus of workers.

Live churches are always overspending their budgets;

Dead churches maintain large bank accounts.

Live churches struggle to remember new names;

Dead churches have known everybody for years.

Live churches work to develop new leaders;

Dead churches just use the same ones over and over.

Live churches are filled with givers;

Dead churches are filled with tippers.

Live churches function primarily on faith;

Dead churches operate solely by sight.  
Live churches Evangelize;  
Dead churches Fossilize.