

THE GREAT CHALKBOARD IN THE SKY

Some people picture God as sitting on His throne, watching what everyone is doing, and then marking down their deeds as debits and credits on a big “chalkboard in the sky.” It could look something like this:

YOUR NAME

DEBITS	CREDITS
x	x
x	x
x	

Most people would be honest enough to admit that their evil deeds outweigh their good deeds (more debits than credits), but some might think that they are doing pretty well in God’s bookkeeping scheme.

Question: How many credits does it take to outweigh all the debits on your chart?

Answer: You cannot have enough credits to outweigh even one debit.

You see, it just doesn’t work that way.

God has commanded us to love Him with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. The one commandment God has given

THE GREAT CHALKBOARD IN THE SKY

Some people picture God as sitting on His throne, watching what everyone is doing, and then marking down their deeds as debits and credits on a big “chalkboard in the sky.” It could look something like this:

YOUR NAME

DEBITS	CREDITS
x	x
x	x
x	

Most people would be honest enough to admit that their evil deeds outweigh their good deeds (more debits than credits), but some might think that they are doing pretty well in God’s bookkeeping scheme.

Question: How many credits does it take to outweigh all the debits on your chart?

Answer: You cannot have enough credits to outweigh even one debit.

You see, it just doesn’t work that way.

God has commanded us to love Him with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. The one commandment God has given

us requires **all** our effort **at all times**. So, we can **live up to** our responsibilities, or **we can fail** to meet them, but **we can never do more** than we ought to do. We cannot go beyond what God requires of us, because what He requires demands all our efforts to fulfill.

If you changed this very moment and lived perfectly the rest of your life, you would only be doing what you were expected to do in the first place. To put it another way, you cannot do more than you should and thus develop a moral plus sign (+) to cancel out the minus sign (-) of your selfish deeds.

This leaves you with one alternative. Either God forgives you for the selfish things you have done in the past, or you pay the penalty for them (i.e. separation from God). No matter how good you are, you cannot make up for the sins of the past.

Fortunately, God has provided a way for man to be forgiven for his sins. We have all rebelled against God and deserve to be separated from Him. But God, in His great love for us, became a man in Jesus Christ, died for us as a sacrifice for our sins, rose from the dead, and provided a way to restore the relationship with God we were originally intended to have. You can have this gift of relationship with God (what the Bible calls “eternal life”), if you meet these conditions:

us requires **all** our effort **at all times**. So, we can **live up to** our responsibilities, or **we can fail** to meet them, but **we can never do more** than we ought to do. We cannot go beyond what God requires of us, because what He requires demands all our efforts to fulfill.

If you changed this very moment and lived perfectly the rest of your life, you would only be doing what you were expected to do in the first place. To put it another way, you cannot do more than you should and thus develop a moral plus sign (+) to cancel out the minus sign (-) of your selfish deeds.

This leaves you with one alternative. Either God forgives you for the selfish things you have done in the past, or you pay the penalty for them (i.e. separation from God). No matter how good you are, you cannot make up for the sins of the past.

Fortunately, God has provided a way for man to be forgiven for his sins. We have all rebelled against God and deserve to be separated from Him. But God, in His great love for us, became a man in Jesus Christ, died for us as a sacrifice for our sins, rose from the dead, and provided a way to restore the relationship with God we were originally intended to have. You can have this gift of relationship with God (what the Bible calls “eternal life”), if you meet these conditions:

