

Ezekiel 18: 21-28

Matthew 5: 43-48

In the Reading and Gospel today God, speaking through Ezekiel and Jesus, once again presents us with choices. God says (In the passage from Ezekiel), What! Am I likely to take pleasure in the death of a wicked man.....and not prefer to see him renounce his wickedness and live?" 'When an upright man renounces his integrity to commit sin, he dies because of the evil that he himself has committed. But: when a sinner renounces sin to become law-abiding and honest, he deserves to live.' God wants us to live good lives, yes. But when we fail, as we humans often do, and 'choose to renounce all our previous sins,' He is always ready to forgive and forget, and our lives are renewed.

This is the essence of Jesus' teaching to his disciples in the Gospel passage. He says, 'If anyone kills, he must answer for it before the court.' Here he is talking about the choice and effect of sin in our lives. There are many ways to kill the body (ie. Sin); Being angry with your brother. Calling your brother "Fool" or "Renegade." These are but examples given to show the profound effect of sin on our fellow men and women and, if not reconciled, will result in our being, "Thrown into prison" where, " we will not get out till we have paid the last penny."

Fortunately, we have a redeemer who was, and is, ALWAYS prepared to cancel out that debt. All we have to do is ask!