

## 164 Journeynings – Where did it go so horribly wrong?

So how on earth did we start from something so exciting, so universal, so world-winning, so Christ-centred as the faith of the early church, and turn it into something so negative, so self-focused, so moralistic, so pharisaic?

I think the key is how we view God. Is our God the loving heavenly (prodigal) father that Jesus portrayed?

I'm not sure if my table will help, but I offer it anyway. It seeks to track the changes as God has tried to draw humankind away from the negative view that Abraham and his contemporaries had, and to gradually lead them away from a retributive view to a restorative view.

	<b>Idea of God – our relation to God</b>	<b>Who thought that?</b>	<b>Did anyone disagree?</b>
2000 BC	God needs sacrifices in order to be placated	Everyone	Not really
1000 BC	God needs sacrifices in order to be placated	Most of the Jews, certainly	(Beginning to be hints in the Psalms and the prophets' writings of a different view)
0 BC	God rejects those who sin – sin leads to hell	Pharisees, certainly	
AD 30	Jesus: "God is like the prodigal father"	A tax collector, a prostitute and a few fishermen	Everyone else, especially the Pharisees
	<b>Death and Resurrection of Jesus</b>		
AD 40	<i>We are loved and accepted; but beware, because sin separates (e.g. Paul says to <b>Christians</b>: "The wages of sin is death")</i>	Original disciples + Paul + a growing movement called 'The way'	Everyone else, especially the Pharisees
AD 60–100+	<i>We are loved and accepted, but beware, sin separates</i>	All of Christendom	

~AD 1000	Things start going a bit awry? → Christians start killing Muslims → Christians start killing Christians! + Christian-based imperialism, killing the cultures of S America + Africa (historians help me!)		
AD 2000+	God is holy, so we are going to hell unless we believe in Jesus: (e.g. we say to <b>unbelievers</b> : “The wages of sin is death!”)	Most of Christendom	
AD 2000+	<i>New idea?! We are loved and accepted, but beware, sin separates</i> (Do you get a feeling of déjà vu?)	A small band of dissenters!	Most of Christendom

(For me, the nadir of modern Christendom is the (second millennium) doctrine of **penal** substitution: God is holy, we are evil, we deserve to be **punished**, but Jesus is **punished** in our place, to satisfy the wrath of God – we happily sing “on the cross, when Jesus died, the wrath of God [the loving prodigal father?] was satisfied”).)

Paul Bev. 31.8.21