

Isaiah 1:18-20

***"Come now, and let us reason together,"
Says the LORD,
"Though your sins are like scarlet,
They shall be as white as snow;
Though they are red like crimson,
They shall be as wool.
If you are willing and obedient,
You shall eat the good of the land;
But if you refuse and rebel,
You shall be devoured by the sword";
For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.***

So many people have prayed the sinner's prayer, not wanting to go to hell. However, so many have said the prayer, yet they have not changed at all from their sinful ways, nor do they desire to change. They think that just because they said a prayer that everything is all right and that they can continue to live the same sinful life that they used to.

It's like you tell your kid not to eat cookies before dinner, and they do it anyway. Then they come to you and say they are sorry for eating the cookies, and you say you forgive them. But then they go back and eat more cookies before dinner. Their words are empty, meaning nothing other than they want to eat cookies before dinner, and the reality is they don't want to get in trouble for doing something wrong, no matter how many times they say they are sorry, because if they are truly sorry, they don't go back and do the same thing again.

Just as we read today:

† ***If you are willing and obedient,
You shall eat the good of the land***

In our example, if your kid says they are sorry, and they don't eat cookies before dinner, then it shows that they truly are sorry, because they are being obedient to what you tell them to do (or not do), and you would also reward them by giving them cookies after dinner.

But for us and God, it's not just willing to say a prayer, but also being ***obedient*** to God's word. This means that you do say the prayer, but also that you want to change your life and live the way that the Lord wants you to live, and you were not just repeating a prayer someone told you to, but they were actual words from your heart.

But still so many have not done so, and God's word says to those who refuse to listen:

† ***"But if you refuse and rebel,
You shall be devoured by the sword."***

Maybe you are one of those who have prayed the sinner's prayer, but refuse to turn from your old sinful ways. Just remember that these words "***But if you refuse and rebel, You shall be devoured by the sword***" are not my words but: "***For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.***"

† ***Ezekiel 33:11 Say to them: 'As I live,' says the Lord GOD, 'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?'***