

Mr. Harvey helped Braxton understand that his behavior could change.

THE SOLUTION

LESSON 93 → Romans 5:15-21; 1 Peter 1:17-25

Braxton closed his *Biology* textbook with a thud and tossed it beside his notebook on the bed. At least his assignment was done, even if he wasn't any closer to resolving the problem he had discussed with Mr. Harvey this afternoon. Their conversation echoed through his mind once more: "You have inherited this tendency to do wrong, but not directly from your natural father."

*What did Mr. Harvey mean? He had said something about a solution. But it was clear after reading this chapter in his *Biology* book that he couldn't change the physical traits he'd inherited from his parents. Mr. Harvey had said that because of Adam's sin, everyone was born with a sinful heart. Then, could that be changed?*



JESUS IS MY REDEEMER!

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.
— 1 Corinthians 15:22

Braxton's eyes fell on the stolen pen that triggered the questions in his mind. Again that feeling of helplessness washed over him. He would be so glad if he could get rid of whatever it was that made him want to steal!

A few minutes after three o'clock the next afternoon, Mr. Harvey pulled a chair over to Braxton's desk and sat down. "Now . . . where were we, Braxton?"

Braxton fiddled with a pencil for a moment, then answered, "Well, we talked about whether I could have inherited a desire to steal. You told me that because of Adam's sin, everyone was born with sin in his heart. You said there was a solution, but I don't see how there can be. I can't change the color of my eyes, or the size of my ears. So how can I change what's in my heart?"

"You can't, Braxton," Mr. Harvey replied quietly.

Braxton glanced up at him quickly. "But you said here was a solution!"

"You can't change your heart, but God can. He provided a remedy for sin. I mentioned Adam to you. Through one man sin came into the world, and through one Man, sin can be taken away."

"What do you mean?" Braxton questioned with a troubled frown.

Mr. Harvey pulled a Testament from his pocket. "It says here in 1 Corinthians 15:22, 'For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' The Bible teaches that the penalty for sin is death. So each one of us is deserving of death.

"But God sent His own Son, Jesus, to this earth in the form of a human being. Since He was God's Son, He was born without sin. Jesus was the only One who could take the penalty for another's sin, because His own heart was free of any wrong. He died on a Cross one day, paying sin's penalty for you and for me, Braxton. In

John 3:16 we read, 'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'

Braxton still looked puzzled. "You mean just believing in God will take the sin out of my heart?"

"You have to be sorry for the wrongs you've done, Braxton. You have to be willing to turn your back on them and make them right." Braxton looked down at the floor. He thought about the pen . . . and all the other things he had taken in the past months. How glad he would be if he could be free of whatever it was that made him want to steal.

Mr. Harvey went on, "You must give the rest of your life over to Jesus. When you ask Him to forgive you, He will take the sin out of your heart. Then you'll want to go back and straighten out all the things you've done wrong."

Braxton sat quietly for a few minutes. Then he looked back at his teacher. "It's a little hard for me to understand just why God would send His Son, Jesus, for me. I mean, I'm just a kid with a dad in jail and a bunch of problems. Why should He send His Son to get me out of this mess?"

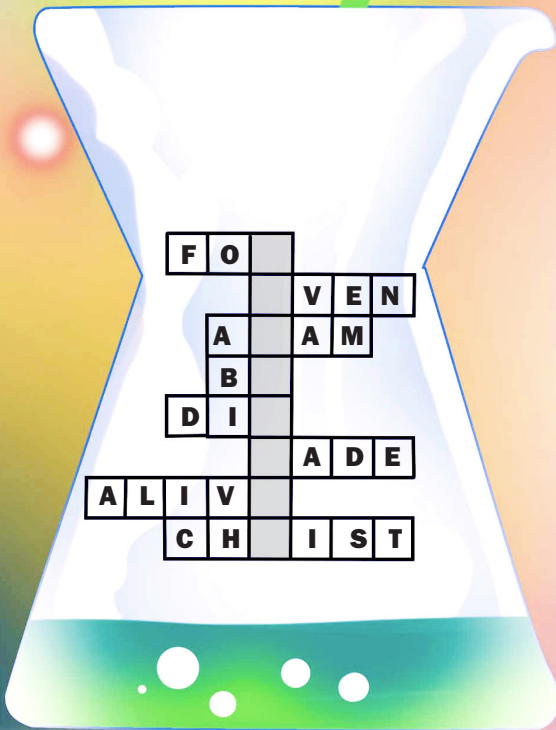
Mr. Harvey answered without hesitation. "Because He loves you, Braxton. He wants you to have your sins forgiven and to have real peace inside."

At last Braxton nodded, "I think I'm starting to understand, Mr. Harvey. Thanks a lot for taking the time to talk to me." Getting to his feet, he gathered up his books and slung his jacket over his shoulder. "You've really given me something to think about, Mr. Harvey. I won't forget what you've said. I think you know that I am sorry for the things I've done wrong, or I wouldn't have talked with you about them. Now I know I need to talk to Someone else."

THE RIGHT FORMULA

Read 1 Corinthians 15:22, and fill in the missing words of the verse. Next, complete the Stack-a-word with the words you filled in. The name in the shaded area is what Jesus came to be for us.

_____ as in _____
all _____, _____ so in
_____ shall all _____



PARDONED,
PREPARED, AND
POWERFUL