

After living a “decent” life, my time on Earth came to an end. The first thing I remember is sitting on a bench in the waiting room of what seemed to be a courthouse. The doors opened, and I was instructed to come in and have a seat at the defense table.

As I looked around, I saw the prosecutor. He was a villainous-looking gent who snarled as he stared at me. He definitely was the most evil person I have ever seen. I sat down and looked to my left and there sat my lawyer, a kind and gentle-looking man whose appearance seemed strangely familiar to me.

The corner door flew open, and the Judge appeared. He was an awesome figure, in full, flowing robes, as He moved across the room. I couldn't take my eyes off of Him. As He took His seat behind the bench, He said, “Let us begin.”

The prosecutor rose and said, “My name is Satan and I am here to show You why this man belongs in Hell.” He proceeded to tell of lies I had told, things

Hell. He is guilty of all that I have charged, and there is not a person who can prove otherwise.”

When it was His turn, my lawyer first asked if He might approach the bench. The Judge allowed this, over the strong objection of Satan, and beckoned Him to come forward. As my lawyer got up and started walking, I was able for the first time to see Him in His full splendor and majesty. I realized why He seemed so familiar. This was Jesus representing me—my Lord and Savior!

He stopped at the bench and softly said to the Judge, “Hi, Father.” Then He turned to address the court: “Satan was correct in saying that this man has sinned. I won't deny any of these allegations. And yes, the payment for sin is Hell, and this man deserves to be punished.”

Jesus took a deep breath and turned to His Father with outstretched arms and proclaimed, “However, I died on the cross as payment for this man's sins, and so that this person might have eternal life. He has accepted Me as His Savior. He is Mine.”

My Lord continued by saying, “His name is written in the Book of Life, and no one can snatch him from Me. Satan still does not understand. This man is not to be given justice, but rather mercy.”

As Jesus sat down, He quietly paused, looked at His Father and said, “There is nothing else that needs to be done. I've done it all.”

The Judge lifted His mighty hand and slammed the gavel down. The following words echoed in the chamber: “This man is free. The penalty for him has already been paid in full. Case dismissed.”

As my Lord led me away, I could hear Satan ranting and raving, “I won't give up, I'll win the next one.”

As Jesus gave me my instructions about where to go next, I asked, “Have You ever lost a case?”

Christ lovingly smiled and said, “Everyone who has come to Me and asked Me to represent them has received the same verdict as you—‘Punishment paid in full.’”

MY ATTORNEY

I had stolen, and times I had cheated others. Satan told of other horrible perversions that were once in my life. The more he spoke, the further down in my seat I sank.

I was so embarrassed that I couldn't look at anyone, even my own lawyer, as the Devil told of sins that even I had completely forgotten about. As upset as I was at Satan for telling all these things about me, I was equally upset at my representative who sat there silently, not offering any form of defense at all.

I knew I had been guilty of those things, but I had done some good in my life. Couldn't that at least compensate for part of the harm I'd done? Satan finished with a fury and said, “This man belongs in

From the very beginning, God decided that whoever would come to Him (and from the very beginning He knew who that would be), He would transform to be like His Son. In effect, His Son would be the firstborn, with many brothers.

So when we came to Him, He declared us “not guilty,” filled us with Christ's goodness, and promised us glory like our Savior's.

What can we ever say to such wonderful things as these? If God is on our side, who can work against us? God didn't spare even His own Son, but gave Him up for us all. Won't He also surely give us everything else?

—The Apostle Paul, *The Bible (Romans 8:29–32, paraphrased)*

