

## The Best News You Ever Heard

*If you are ready for some good news, here it is, but first **The Bad News.*** The hunger of every soul is to know God personally, whether we are willing to admit it or not. We were created by Him to have fellowship with Him. The heart of mankind yearns for something more, something beyond ourselves. We long to know the one who created us. This is evident in the fact that every human culture, no matter how remote, has some form of religion, and worships some kind of "god." Animals don't do this. Some species of animals in the wild have very sophisticated societies. But none of them seek to worship a creator, or some Divine being they cannot see. Yet this is ingrained into the fabric of humanity. Why? *"Because He hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring."* (Acts 17:26-28). Animals were created by God. But humanity alone is God's "offspring," having been created in His image.

The problem is, there is a huge obstacle between us and the Creator. It is called "sin." Sin is a transgression of the law of God. Sin is everything we do of our own free will that is contrary to God and His nature, which is entirely good. God is the source of all "goodness." Without Him, there is nothing but chaos and evil. Our sin separates us from God. *"Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear,"* (Isaiah 59:1-2). The Apostle Paul wrote, *"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God,"* (Romans 3:23). The immediate result of our sin is that God has withdrawn from us. A holy God can't have fellowship with unholy people. God's nature demands truth, righteousness, and justice. Yet, we willingly choose what is contrary to these things. In doing so, God allows us to experience the natural consequences of our choices, and His withdrawing from us. He does this so that we will come to our senses, yearn for His goodness, and seek Him with all our hearts.

Even in spite of our rebellion, God still demonstrates His goodness toward man from a distance, through His creation, and often through direct intervention in our lives. He is calling us through both our circumstances, as

well as that inner need to know Him that He has placed in every human being. We have a choice to make. We can begin to seek Him as we experience the contrast between His goodness and the results of our sin. Or, we can resist Him, deny Him, and even learn to hate Him.

Death is a consequence of our sin, *"For the wages of sin is death,"* (Romans 6:23). If we continue to reject God's ongoing efforts to bring us to our senses, so that we seek Him with all our hearts, He will eventually give up. In the end, we will be raised from the grave to face the final judgment, where the permanent sentence of death will be pronounced. This is what the Bible calls "the second death." *"Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire,"* (Revelation 20:15).

We also know from experience, and from the Bible, that we are incapable of living a life consistent with God and His nature. Therefore, we are incapable of pleasing God by our own merits. Mankind is in an utterly hopeless situation unless God takes the initiative to rescue us. And that is precisely what He wants us to realize. Once we have come to terms with our dire situation, we are ready for the "good news."

### **The Good News**

The Bible is not a book about hopelessness and condemnation. It is God's message of love to mankind. Its core message is the "good news" (Gospel). The Apostle Paul summarized the Gospel like this: *"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (in our place)"* (Romans 5:8).

The Apostle John explained the core message of the Bible this way: *"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. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God,"* (John 3:16-18).

The Apostle Peter concludes: *"Christ also suffered for us.... Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.... Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed,"* (1 Peter 2:21-25). The essence of the Gospel is God's rescue mission for those who are doomed and hopeless.

God has provided the means of our salvation, the death of His Son in our place. That once for all sacrifice provided the legal basis for our pardon from sin. But, each and every person needs to receive God's forgiveness through a personal encounter with Him. In this encounter, by means of His Spirit, God not only pardons all our sins, He also fundamentally changes the heart of the individual. The old life, which is contrary to God, is put to death and a new life begins. Jesus called this transformation the "new birth." When a very religious man named Nicodemus came to Jesus he was told by Jesus, *"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,"* (John 3:3). Nicodemus was puzzled by Jesus' words, not knowing what He meant and so Jesus explained: *"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water (First birth) and of the Spirit, (Second Birth) he cannot enter into the kingdom of God,"* (John 3:5). His race, religion and genealogy was not good enough. Being born of water which is the first birth was not enough, he needed to be born again by the Spirit of God which is something God alone can do in the human heart.

### **The Gift Of God Is For You**

God loved you so much, He sent His only Son to take the judgment and penalty for your sins. Jesus loved you so much, He volunteered to suffer in your place, to satisfy the penalty due for your sins and the sins of the whole world. He did this in order to offer you:

- \*Complete forgiveness and pardon of all your sins no matter how bad they may be.
- \*Adoption into the family of God, making God your own Father, and you His son or daughter.
- \*A new start, what the Bible calls being "born again," free from all guilt.
- \*His Holy Spirit to live within you, to guide you, comfort you, and help you live right.
- \*Peace, joy, and contentment in this life even in difficult circumstances.
- \*The resurrection of your body to immortality (eternal life) at Jesus' second coming.
- \*An eternal inheritance in His coming Kingdom.

### **How To Respond To God's Gift Of Love**

The Bible calls salvation "the gift of God." You cannot earn it. You cannot do anything to deserve it. You must simply receive God's gift in the manner

He prescribes. If you are tired of the life of sin, and desire God's free gift of salvation, here is how He said to receive it: *“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved, “* (Romans 10:9-13). Simply put your full and complete trust in Christ alone to save you and keep you saved and call on the Lord and ask him to save you. It is as simple as that. When you meet these conditions, God takes care of the rest according to His promises. You will become His child. Your relationship with God will instantly change, from His being your judge, to being your Father.

If the Spirit of God has been prodding you to obey the good news, if you believe the Word of God presented in this article, then right now where you are, as you are, receive Christ as your Savior and allow him to save you and change your life today. Call on the Lord in prayer and ask him to save you for he has promised that: *Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.* Then you should seek fellowship in a Bible believing local church that teaches you how to follow the Lord in your new life.

This world system is coming to an end rapidly. We see it crashing down around us now. Jesus is coming back, as He promised. And when He does, He will purge the earth of the wicked, and establish His Kingdom. Those who have been reconciled to God through the death of His Son will inherit his Kingdom. The curse will be removed from creation, and there will be peace on earth, as God Himself will live among men. Don't wait to be reconciled to God. Procrastination could spell your doom.