

# What is the Gospel? Are you Saved?

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The Bible says in the book of James, “For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then it vanishes” (James 4:14). Your life is like a puff of steam. Here for a moment, and then it’s gone. What are you living for? Let me ask you, what is your life? You see, Jesus said, “For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Mark 8:35-37).

And most people sell their soul, their eternal soul, so cheaply. No sin is worth holding onto to spend an eternity in hell. Anything that keeps you from Jesus Christ is not worth holding on to. You see, even if someone makes it big in this life - a famous sports star for instance who makes the top of his career; who has lots of money, fame and fortune - in 200 years time when he is dead, who will care that even lived? And the answer is, in reality, no one will. My point is this: most people are living worthless and pathetic lives. Just wasted.

You see, Jesus offers you a life with a purpose and meaning; true life that lasts for eternity. We all ask those questions at some point in life. “Why are we here? What happens when this life is over?” Well, in the book of Colossians, the Bible tells us that you were created by Jesus Christ, and for Jesus Christ, to live for Him. (Colossians 1:16). Eternal life, Jesus said, is knowing God through the person of Jesus Christ. (John 17:3) You see, Jesus, if you look at His sayings, how radical He is, many people reject Him today and say, “He is just a good teacher.” Or, “He is just a prophet.” But if you look at what He said, I mean, Jesus claimed to be God. (John 8:58). He claimed to be the only way to heaven. (John 14:6).

Now, if I came up to you in the street today and claimed I was God, you would either think I was a liar or a lunatic. And my point is this: Someone that claimed to be God like Jesus did, someone who claimed the things that Jesus did, either He is God and He is the only way to heaven, or he is a liar and a lunatic. And yet, Jesus, there was no deceit in Him (1 Peter 2:22). He was love. He told us to love our enemies (Matthew 5:44). On the cross, He prayed, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” (Luke 23:34). He was love itself. (1 John 4:16). And Jesus Christ, He came on a cross to die for you. Why? Because you are not good enough. (Romans 3:10-12). You are not good enough to get into heaven.

You see, most people wrongly think that they are good enough to get into heaven. People are determined to think they are good people (Galatians 2:16), and they will end up in hell for it.

Let me ask you this: If your thought life was put on TV tonight, if a scientist came to you and told you he had recorded your thought life for the last year, how comfortable would you be if that thought life of yours was shown on TV? How comfortable would you be if your mother, your friends, workmates and neighbors could see your thought life? And the answer is, if our thought lives were on TV, you would be ashamed. You would be ashamed that other people could see your thought life. Why? Not because it

would show you were a good person, but because, as the Bible says, “The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked above all things; who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9). You see, your thought life reveals your heart and God judges our hearts.

On judgment day when we stand before a holy and righteous God, all our secret sins will be made known (1 Corinthians 4:5). Every thing done in darkness, Jesus says, will be made light (Luke 12:3). And many people wrongly think, “Well, if God is God, if God is love, yes I have done lots of bad things, but if He is love, then He will just forgive me.” But no, it doesn’t work like that.

Let me ask you this: If a rapist was before a human judge, and the judge says to him, “Hey! I am a loving and merciful judge, I am a good judge, you are free to go.” What would you think of a judge like that, who just let off a rapist without the penalty being paid? That judge would be corrupt. You see, the mystery of the Bible is, if we have all sinned before God; if we, as Jesus said, none of us are good enough to get into heaven; all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23); if this is the case, then how can a good God forgive sinners? And the answer is, through Jesus Christ on a cross, paying for our sin (Isaiah 53:5, Galatians 3:13), being punished in our place, because He loved us (1 Peter 2:24, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 3:21-26).

Two thousand years ago, the God who made this universe, He became a Man (John 1:14). You see, Jesus is everlasting from everlasting. He is without beginning and without end. And He so loved us that He entered into His own creation and became one of us. He felt as we feel. “He was tempted in all things,” the Bible says, “but yet without sin.” (Hebrews 4:15). He did miracles. Jesus walked on water. He made the blind see. He made the deaf hear. He cured incurable diseases of leprosy. And He is able to cure the incurable disease of our desperately wicked hearts. Jesus is able to cure the disease of our sin.

How does He do this? Well, on a cross our sin was placed upon Jesus Christ. The Bible says, “By His stripes, we are healed.” (1 Peter 2:24). He was pierced for our transgressions, not His own transgressions. He didn’t have any transgressions. He didn’t have any sin. He was perfect. And the chastisement, the punishment for our peace - for us to have peace with God - was placed upon Jesus Christ. On the third day, Jesus rose from the grave. Death and the grave could not hold Jesus Christ. And if you would come to Him, death and the grave would have no hold on you.

I do not fear death. I do not fear the judgment of God. Why? Because Jesus Christ has already paid for my sin 2,000 years ago. Have you realized this? Have you come to Jesus Christ? Because there are many who say, “O Yes, I believe in Jesus. I believe Jesus died for me on the cross.” (Matthew 7:21-23). But they are just hypocrites. They just willfully carry on in sin. There are many hypocrites, false professors today who claim to be Christians, but are not. If I claim to be a doctor, it does not make me a doctor. And you would be foolish to take medicine from me if I did that. And you see, just because someone claims to be a Christian does not make them one.

John says, “He that continues in sin is of the devil. And, to many, Jesus said, He would say, “Depart from Me,” on that day of judgment, “I never knew you.” And those people in Matthew 7 are professing Christians who, if you read on in the context, it says they hear the Word of God but they don’t do it. Now I am not saying we earn our own salvation here.

Let me give you a simple analogy to try and explain the difference between a true Christian who has seen what Jesus has done on the cross, and a false Christian who has never really seen what He has done. If you went to the beach, and you saw a sign that said, “Sharks! Don’t swim in the water.” And you thought, “Who are these guys to put rules on my life? That sounds like fun, I like swimming with sharks.” And so, you dive into that water, and you are swimming away there. And then, all of a sudden, you see a fin come towards you and this shark is rapidly gaining ground on you. And you are trying to swim to the side, but cannot make it. That shark is way too fast for you. And you’re not going to make it, but just then, an Olympic swimmer walks by with his wife at the side of him and baby in a pram. Without hesitation, this guy dives into the water, he is so fast and he swims right in between you and the shark. So the shark rips this guy to pieces; there’s blood everywhere. And while this is happening, you get to swim to the side. Now as you are climbing out of the water, you look back, you see your savior dead in the water. You look up, you see his distraught wife looking on, baby in the pram without a father.

Now, and this is my point: What would it say about you, if in 2 years time or in 5 years time or in 10 years time, you went past that waterfront again, and you saw the sign saying, “Sharks! Don’t swim in the water.” And you thought, “Who are these guys to put rules on my life? That sounds like fun.” And so, you dive back into that water. That would say that you’d never truly seen the sacrifice that that guy had made for you. And in the same way, the person who says, “Yes, I believe Jesus died on a cross for me,” but it doesn’t affect their life, they have no desire for Him, and they are just willfully carrying on in the things that God hates, that person has never truly seen the sacrifice that Jesus has made for them.

Have you seen that sacrifice? Jesus says, “Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28). If you want peace with God, Jesus Christ died on a cross for the sin of the world, and if you would come to Him, He will completely forgive you.

And notice, He doesn’t say, “If you are weighed down with your sin, if you are feeling guilty, then go and labor on, go and clean up your own life.” He doesn’t say that. He says, “Come to Me.” Come to Me, just as you are, and He will save you. But you can’t, this is so important, you can’t go to Jesus Christ, holding on to sin. Jesus said, “Unless you repent, you will perish.” What I mean by this, is not that you clean up your life. But you can’t go to Jesus Christ, saying, “I want eternal life, but I am not willing to let go of these things in my life.” Like the rich, young ruler, it was his possessions. (Matthew 19:22). In his case, that was his idol. You cannot go to Christ determined to hold onto your own self. But if you come to Him, just surrender your life to Him just as you are, believe that He has saved you. Jesus can save you. The blood of Christ cleanses from all sin (1 John 1:7). No matter what you have done in your life, whoever you are, whatever you have done, if you go to Jesus Christ, He refuses none who come to Him. (John 6:37).

So I plead with you. I plead with you. Life is all about living for Jesus Christ. Do not waste any more of your life. Do not waste one second. The Bible says, “Behold, now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.