

Good Enough For Heaven

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Heaven. You've probably heard that good people go to heaven. When Billy Graham was being interviewed on tv he said that he believed good people went to heaven. Many believe that to be true, people who do good in the world like talented entertainers who bring happiness to millions, philanthropists who give millions to charity, or a scientist who discovers a vaccine which saves millions of lives, people who have done good to mankind and are good enough for heaven, even people you know who are honest, hard-working individuals and who help others in need, they do good with their lives. You may fall into that category as well, friend, good enough for heaven.

God's scale. Do you consider yourself a good person? Do you? After all, you're not as bad as you could be. You've done good things in life, more good than bad. Many assume that God keeps a scale of balance in heaven where he weighs our good deeds against our bad and if the good outweighs the bad, then we're good enough for heaven. That's how most folks think. You may think that it's well, in comparison to others you look pretty good, your good outweighs your bad. Many assume God keeps a scale and the good they've done in life makes them good enough for heaven.

God's law. God gave Moses the 10 Commandments. This is God's law. 1. You shall have no other gods before me. 2. You shall not make idols. 3. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. 4. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. 5. Honor your father and your mother. 6. You shall not murder. 7. You shall not commit adultery. 8. You shall not steal. 9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. 10. You shall not covet. This is God's law and it is perfect but man is imperfect but God requires perfection to get into his holy heaven. But the Bible says this about man,

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

We sin. We fail. We fall short of God's standard of acceptance. The only man who ever walked this earth and who was perfect was Jesus Christ, but God's law demands perfection. We have a sin problem because of Adam and Eve's disobedience to God and that sin problem is passed down to each of us who are born into this world, for man enters the world under a curse with a corrupt nature and a bent toward sin. You're not a sinner because you sin, rather you sin because you are a big sinner.

Are we still good enough to go to heaven? Will our good deeds overcome our sins? Perhaps in our eyes but in the sight of God we have broken his perfect law and we

deserve to be condemned. You go and break the laws of your country and you'll be arrested and tried, sentenced and imprisoned for breaking the law. God is a God of justice. All who break his law will one day be tried, sentenced and condemned to a prison, a prison that has no exit doors and no parole. This prison is called hell. Hell is described as outer darkness; a bottomless pit; a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth; a lake of fire. No one in their right mind wants to go to hell and be imprisoned in endless suffering and misery.

Every human has sinned and broken God's direct law. The sentencing of the law will be carried out at a future day at judgment. Look at this terrible scene, friend, as described in the Bible in the book of Revelation,

11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

Here we see our good works read out loud before God and we have a lot of good to represent us and to commend us to God but unfortunately some of the things written in the books which represent the biography of our life, are not so good after all. They are bad, very bad in God's pure eyes. Our sins stand out in black print on white paper before a holy God. There we stand guilty as charged. This is our sin problem and this sin problem is enough to keep us out of heaven and, sadly, our sin problem is enough to send us straight to hell.

What can we do to please God? We realize that we're not good enough for heaven now. I would be pretty scared if I were you, friend. Hell is a terrible place full of demons and intense heat from all the fire. The Bible speaks of the terror of the condemned.

14 The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?

We aren't good enough for heaven but we're good enough for hell.

God's Son. I want to tell you, friend, about God's Son, Jesus Christ. The Bible has this to say about him,

16 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.

Jesus was good enough for heaven and he left heaven to come down here so we can go up there.

I'm going to share with you a story that will help explain how we can go to heaven even though we deserve hell. Listen to this story, friends, for it can change your life. I heard about a man who was traveling through the city of St. Louis, perhaps you've visited St. Louis yourself. Well, this man was passing through St. Louis on a Sunday morning, so he decided to park his car at a downtown church and go into the service. Once inside, this man realized he was the only white man in an all-black church. He took his seat on the back row so not to disturb anyone for the service had already begun. Up on the platform was a well-dressed elderly man who was the pastor of that church and he was speaking on the subject of heaven that morning and this is what he had to say. He said, "Some folks call heaven paradise, others call it Abraham's bosom, but I see heaven this way: here is Jesus just returned from his earthly ministry and the angel Gabriel greets him at the Pearly Gates. 'Hello, Jesus. Sure is good to see you, Jesus. We sure missed you up here, Jesus. Welcome home, Jesus. But wait a minute, who is that with you? Is that that thief, that thief from the cross? Oh, no sir, I'm sorry, Jesus, we can't have any thieves up here.' Jesus replied, 'Never you mind, Gabriel, never you mind.' And Jesus placed his arm around the thief in a hug and said to Gabriel, 'Open the gate. He's with me.'"

Good enough for heaven, that thief was, because he stood in the merits of another, the Lord Jesus Christ. Listen, friend, I know I'm not good enough for heaven. I once thought I was but now I know I am a sinner in need of a substitute for sin in the person of Christ Jesus, and so do you, friend. So do you. My sin problem is solved in the person of Jesus Christ who suffered and died on a bloody cross for me and my sins. I'm no better than that thief on the cross. I've stolen things in my life. I've lied. I've broken God's perfect law because I'm not perfect. I need a Savior from sin so I won't go to hell. I need to get my sins under his blood so I can have forgiveness for sin and receive pardon from God. My good works can't make me good enough for heaven but I can be good enough in God's sight by standing in the merits of his Son. All I need is Jesus and on that day he will wrap his arm around me and say, "He's with me."

Good enough for heaven. Listen to the promise of God in his Gospel to all who repent and believe. Jesus said,

"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

"I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

Listen to me, dear friend, who now realizes that you are not good enough for heaven, the Gospel is for the hungry, the weary and the thirsty. Are you hungry for God? Are you weary of your sins? Are you thirsty for Christ? The duty required is to come to Christ for salvation from sin and he has the pure Gospel promise to all who come,

"him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

Christ is the remedy for sin. One day you can stand next to him as he declares, "Open the gate, he's with me."