**SALVATION: A GIFT FROM GOD**

There are many people just like yourself who may be asking the questions, “how can I be saved?” And of course, “why do I need to be saved?” They are very good questions.

I will in this short text give an overview of salvation from the eyes of God. The question of how to be saved is for sure the most important question to answer. But first we need to understand why salvation is needed so we can rightly apply the remedy God provides in Jesus Christ.

Genesis 1:1 reads, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” This is the grounding of all our lives. God created everything that is both seen and unseen; and it was created perfect. No blemish or flaw to be found. While He gloried in His celestial creation Scripture tells us His shining moment of creation was the creation of the humane race. *Genesis 1:26-31*.This began with Adam and Eve.

God placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden to work and live. And to have an intimate, perfect relationship with God Himself. He did this with only one prohibition; “you can freely eat of any tree in the garden but one; the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The day you eat of that tree you will surely die.” *Genesis 2:16-17. (my shortened version of the two verses*) When tempted by the Serpent, both Adam and Eve ate of the prohibited tree and death came their way. And ours as well.

Due to the sin of the first parents, all of humanity has within them a sin nature, passed down through the ages. This sin nature has severely damaged the relationship between God and His created people. Those who He made in His image. *Genesis 1:26-27.* The only way this sin could be atoned for was with a blood sacrifice. *Hebrews 9:22*. But not any blood sacrifice. Only a perfect, sinless, unblemished sacrifice would do.

So the why of salvation is the original sin in the Garden of Eden. All of humanity is now tainted with a sin nature that has created a void between God and the people He loves; which needs to be atoned for. The requirement from God is a blood sacrifice bringing about death in the one sacrificed. And the only One to live a perfect, God honoring life that God would accept for a substitute sacrifice, was Jesus.

Jesus the Christ, the only begotten Son of God, came to earth for that very purpose. To be a substitute sacrifice for all of humanity. Then God’s holiness could be appeased as His requirement would be fulfilled that a perfect sacrifice has been made; once and for all. *1 John 2:2.* You may be asking, “how does that affect me?” And, “what do I do now?” Great questions.

First as we are all infected with the sin nature which needs to be atoned for we have two choices. To live perfect, holy life in the sight and requirement of God. Or accept the gift Jesus offers in our place. The Bible tells of no one can live a life to God’s standards. We all have gone astray. *Isaiah 53:6.* All of humanity is destined for death, an eternal separation for God at the end of each one’s life in a place called death and hell. Unless someone steps in and pays our debt to God. “For the wages of sin in death,” *Romans 6:23a.* This is where Jesus comes to the rescue.

Jesus, born of a virgin, conceived through the Holy Spirit, fully God and fully man, lived a perfect, holy life fulfilling the requirement of God. The need for a perfect sacrifice. And only Jesus could do this. The Bible tells us then if we seek and accept Jesus as our substitute sacrifice that God will be well pleased to transfer to us the holiness or perfection of Jesus as Jesus Himself takes on Him our sinfulness. If we call on Jesus and believe He died the needed death then we take on the life of Christ as He takes our sinful life on Him. *2 Corinthians 5:21.* And this is available to anyone.

In *Romans 10:8-13* this is explained quite clearly. The Bible teaches us that if we will confess Jesus as Lord and believe God raised Him from the dead we can be saved. Salvation through a substitute. Simple. Believe and confess. Trust that God loves you enough to die for You and He wants to have you with Him in heaven for all of eternity. The last verse of this passage says this is available to ALL who call on His name. Yes that means you. *Romans 10:13.* So how to do this.

Prayer. Ask God to forgive you in the name of Jesus, allowing Jesus to be Lord or ruler over your life. In essence submit to Christ and allow Him to lead you the rest of your life. Right on into eternity. That’s it. The beauty of this is when you submit to Christ from the heart in truth and humility you are instantly forgiven and also given the Holy Spirit to live inside you. *Romans 5:5.*

I will close with a short prayer you can use to seek God and ask for his forgiveness. Remember, it is not as much about the words as the attitude of your heart.

*Dear God. I know I’m a sinner and Only You can save my soul. I believe Jesus died for my sins and I accept that forgiveness by faith. I ask You to come into my life as I surrender to Your Holy Spirit and seek Him to lead me. Thank you for loving me and forgiving me. In Jesus name, amen.*

If you prayed that prayer earnestly the Bible says you are forgiven. Congratulations! We would love to help you explore your new found faith. So please contact us or come and worship with us.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Beech Grove Baptist Church