

# Where Am I Going?



Many people think that God is pleased with them and that they will get to heaven someday. However, the Bible says that most people are in fact headed for hell, as Jesus stated in Matthew 7:22-23:

“Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”

The Holy Bible has much to say about heaven and hell and how you can know which of these two places is YOUR final destination. The reliable and respected King James Version of the Bible will be quoted herein, since it has been used of God for centuries to lead countless souls to heaven.

## **1. What keeps us from going to heaven?**

“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] As Isaiah 59 says, it is sin that keeps us out of the presence of God, preventing us from entering heaven.

## **2. What is sin?**

The Bible uses many terms for sin, including iniquity, unrighteousness, trespasses, violence, wickedness, uncleanness and others. Sin is rebellion against God of any kind, even if we aren’t aware of it: “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” [1 John 3:4]

The sin we practice is the violation of God’s laws for any reason, whether ignorantly or maliciously. We continually violate God’s laws from birth and it is our natural tendency to do so. The Bible confirms this: “The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.” [Psalm 58:3]. The apostle Paul admitted: “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing” [Romans 7:18]

## **3. Who takes away sin - God or us?**

“The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” [John 1:29]

Only the sinless saviour, Jesus Christ, acting as a sacrificial lamb, could pay for the sins of sinners. There is nothing at all that you, or anyone else acting on your behalf, can contribute to your salvation because the Bible says: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of

God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" [Ephesians 2:8-9].

#### **4. Isn't anyone good enough to get to heaven?**

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." [Romans 3:10-12] ... "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" [Genesis 6:5]. According to God, we are hopelessly lost sinners, totally unfit for heaven and incapable of making ourselves good enough to go there.

#### **5. I believe in God, I go to church, I am a good person, I don't hurt anyone. Isn't that enough to get me to heaven?**

Committing even one little sin qualifies a person for hell. God is holy and no sin can be allowed in His presence: "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" [Revelation 21:27]. But the wonderful Good News of the Bible, is that when a person is saved, they receive the righteousness of Christ, so that when God looks at a saved person, He sees them, spiritually, as if they were as sinless as Jesus Christ, and not the vile sinner they used to be: "For he hath made him [Jesus] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." [2 Corinthians 5:21].

#### **6. Doesn't God want or need any help from me?**

Salvation is a priceless gift from God that costs the recipient nothing (no sacraments, no prayers, no good deeds, NOTHING!): "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God" [1 Peter 3:18]. "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." [Isaiah 53:5-6]. Christ took upon himself, the full punishment of those he came to save. That punishment consists of the wrath of God: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." [John 3:36]

#### **7. What is the wrath of God?**

God's wrath involves eternal separation from Him without hope, forever - eternity in hell: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" [Revelation 21:8]. This punishment is not just for what the world considers 'really bad people'. It applies to whomever dies unsaved -

whomever dies without having their sins completely paid for through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God: "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." [1 John 5:12].

### **8. Doesn't God love everybody?**

Does God love everybody? Not according to the Bible: "For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee. The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity." [Psalm 5:4-5] The Bible says that before God converts a soul and gives a sinner a new heart, that person is His enemy: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." [Romans 5:10]

Do you think God loves you? Don't assume that He does just because things may be going good for you or just because you survived some kind of serious accident or illness. Don't even assume God loves you because you prayed a prayer that you believe God answered. The Bible says that "he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" [Matthew 5:45].

### **9. So why do people go around telling everybody that God loves them?**

Many people misinterpret the Bible. For instance, the Bible says that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" [John 3:16]. Obviously God does not hate people and love them at the same time. When the Bible says God loves the world, it is a reference to saved people of all nations, not every single individual in the world, as clarified here: "for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" [Revelation 5:9].

### **10. Doesn't God hate sin but love the sinner?**

God hates sin AND the sinner: "The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth" [Psalm 11:5]. The penalty for sin is extremely severe because it is proportional to the absolute holiness (purity) of God. The Bible clearly states that God loves the righteous (saved) person and hates the unrighteous (unsaved) person. We saw in 2 Corinthians 5:21 (question #5) that those who have been saved have the righteousness (purity) of Jesus Christ and therefore the love of God. Jesus said: "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." [John 17:23]. So while God is a God of love (1 John 4:16), He also delights in exercising judgment:

"But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD."

[Jeremiah 9:24].

God's judgment is absolutely faultless and He judges according to the standard of the righteousness of Christ:

"because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man [Jesus] whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." [Acts 17:31]

### **11. What can I do to avoid the wrath of God?**

"And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner" [Luke 18:13]. You can't DO anything to earn or cause salvation from God's wrath, but you can cry out to God to have mercy on your soul to save you from the wrath that you deserve for your sins. You can't even honestly do this until God shows you that you are a hopelessly lost condemned sinner: "There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God." [Romans 3:11]. God saves people by convicting them of sin and drawing them to Him by the Holy Spirit.

### **12. What does conviction of sin mean?**

Conviction of sin means that God causes a person to feel truly guilty about their sins to the point where they can no longer bear the grief and guilt, not just to the point of wanting to avoid getting caught by someone or to avoid the results of their sin, but to the point where they want God to rescue them from their sinful way of life so they can live a life which will please God. Conviction takes place by hearing the Word of God and through the convicting power of the Holy Spirit: "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God" [Romans 10:17] ... "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." [Romans 3:20].

### **13. I believe in Jesus so I must be OK, right?**

The kind of believing in Jesus that saves a person is not just a historical knowledge of Him. One must believe that they need Him, personally, to be Lord of their lives for now and throughout eternity and they must believe that He is THE all sufficient substitutionary sin-bearer for themselves: "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many" [Hebrews 9:28]. In order to believe in Jesus the way that He expects us to, we need Him to give us the faith to believe since we cannot truly know God unless and until God reaches out to us which He does through the Holy Spirit and through His word in the Bible. That is why it is so very important to read the Bible asking God to show you the truth about your need for the Saviour, Jesus Christ. But it still entirely up to God to choose to save a person: "For many are called, but few are chosen." [Matthew 22:14] ... "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." [James 1:18] ... "Ye have

not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit" [John 15:16].

#### **14. Why is it all up to God to save anyone?**

Only an infinitely holy God could pay the price that His justice demands - eternal damnation in hell. And because Jesus paid the price for those He came to save, a person can know that God is satisfied with the payment: "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." [1 John 1:7]. Since everyone has a corrupt sin nature from birth, God must convert the heart in order for a person to be truly saved: "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" [Matthew 18:3] ... "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." [Ezekiel 36:26-27]

#### **15. Why doesn't God just save everyone?**

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." [Isaiah 55:8-9] ... "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" [Romans 9:20-21]

Have YOU been converted? Bear in mind, water baptism does not convert a person. Have you received of God a new heart and a desire to obey God's laws?

**Where are YOU going?**

---