

Why would You need the Gospel?

At the beginning of creation God had created man and woman pure and holy for the purpose of having them live with him in heaven. To this end God created this world for man to live in temporarily, in order to bear children, and then, after a period of time, to take the parents home to heaven one by one without dying.

However, this plan was upset by the devil. Adam and Eve were tempted to sin. After which they did not resist temptation, but proceeded to sin, burning their bridges, so to speak, so that they could never regain their holiness.

This ruined everything. The holy and righteous Almighty could not have sinners in his presence in heaven murdering each other, for instance, as Cain later murdered his own brother. Therefore, the sinful human race was not only locked out of heaven, but doomed to be punished. As a result, God set a day of reckoning called "Judgment Day." Sinners would have to die an earthly death, be brought before the almighty Judge, and then be punished with never-ending suffering called "eternal death."

Indeed, an earthly death is God's arrest. Earthly death is his judgment on that evil which had infected the soul. This is why this body is now lying here dead.

Thus your sins are no slight matter. They are a slap to the face of the holy Almighty. They are a revolt and a defiance so outrageous and damnable, that nothing less than a never-ending punishment of the sinner would do.

Who has broken Heaven's laws? Everyone has. "All have sinned," the Bible reports (Romans 3:23). Therefore,

"death passed on to all men, for all have sinned" (Romans 5:12). Thus the entire human race marches on to its grave on account of sin, because "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" (Romans 1:18).

Why should the punishment for sin be death? The pure and holy Almighty had warned his pure and holy creatures, Adam and Eve, whom he had created, that if they would ever sin, they will be punished with death. After this, the Bible related the tragic story, "By one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed on to all men, for all have sinned" (Romans 5:12).

See the truth in all of this! Admit that it is true! It is useless for you to deny it for "your sin will find you out" (Numbers 32:23); for "God will bring every work into judgment" (Ecclesiastes 12:4), since the Lord searches "the heart... even to give every man according to his ways" (Jeremiah 17:10).

So admit your sinfulness! You have grieved and offended the Almighty. If anyone should be sorry, you ought to be the one, and you ought to do it here and now!

What is more, realize that, out of his grace, the Lord determined to help you. He resolved to overturn the damage which the devil had done. God planned that the battle which the devil had won in the Garden of Eden should be fought all over again. This time not Adam but God himself, the second person of the Trinity, God the Son, would assume a human body, fight the devil, and win. Since he is almighty God, victory over the devil's temptation could be assured. Realize that this occurred decisively when the Lord Jesus Christ left his throne in

heaven and came down to this earth for the purpose of resisting the devil's temptations in your place, and, then, as your holy and powerful substitute, of keeping every law of God which you had ever broken! Furthermore, the Lord Jesus removed the pending eternal punishment which your sinning had brought upon you by suffering it himself on Calvary's cross. Then, on Easter Sunday, he broke the chains that had confined you, the sinner, in an eternal death forever, and pronounced his decided victory! See this!

Then the Lord distributed the fruits of his victory to man in order that it could do him some good, by pledging to his disciples, for example, on Easter evening, "Peace be to you!" (Luke 24:36.)

How would his victory benefit you? It would benefit you in this way: Since the demands of Divine Justice have been fully met and satisfied by no less than God himself, the Lord Jesus Christ; since his announcement from his cross, "It is accomplished" (John 19:30) assures you that everything required for your release from sin's ruin has been accomplished fully and flawlessly by no less than God himself, there are immense benefits to you, the sinner who has been standing all alone, facing, in spirit, the judgment bench of the angry Almighty himself.

First of all, God himself has cast all of your sins behind his back, and has declared you sinless. As a result, your guilt has been removed. In addition, your sentence of eternal death in hell's horrors has been cancelled. Because of this, heaven's doors now have been flung open wide to receive you after this life. Indeed, this had been God's intention all along.

Moreover, God wished to distribute these fruits of Christ's victory to all men. In order to do this, he put them into the form of a promise, a gospel promise. Then, in order to make these saving fruits your own, God spread his gospel promise from place to place throughout the world by sending his messengers to announce it. Whenever this good news of your deliverance is announced, your thoughtful Lord will exert his gentle power to move you to believe (Romans 10:16; Ephesians 1:19) "the promise that he has promised us: eternal life" (1st John 2:25), and thereby put you into possession of your salvation: the fruits of Christ's victory. Furthermore, the gospel words of peace will put you at peace with your heavenly Father and also with your conscience, in order that you may have divine assurance from Heaven's own pledge that God has pardoned you, become friendly and reconciled toward you, and so that you could be confident that your body also will rise to heaven, as Jesus rose on Easter Sunday, according to his promise, "Because I live, you will live also" (John 14:19).

Realize, then, that the only assurance which you could ever have that this salvation will be true, is if you would have God's own word for it: his pledge. This is precisely what the Lord has given you. He left his pledges behind on this earth with you in order that you could depend on them and not on your own thoughts; in order that you would have faith in his pledges as your only rescue from ruin by the great God himself, since God will keep his promises. Do so!

Hear those pledges once more!

“Through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned” (Romans 5:12); they “will go into everlasting punishment... into everlasting fire” (Matthew 25:46, 41) “which is the second death” (Revelation 21:8).

Nevertheless, “God is the God of salvation; and to God...belong the escapes from death” (Psalm 68:20);

For “the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus” (Romans 6:23).

So “the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world” (1st John 4:14) “who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).

“He who believes the Son has everlasting life” (John 3:36), he “will not be hurt by the second death” (Revelation 2:11).

“Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift!” (2nd Corinthians 9:15.)

“Lay hold on eternal life!” (1st Timothy 6:12.)

“Believe in the gospel!” (Mark 1:15.)