

## THE GOOD NEWS

The GOOD NEWS is that God has made a way for us to have a personal relationship with Him, to go to heaven when we die, and to have a meaningful and happy life here on earth.

Because this good news is authentic, we must first face reality. The eternal God of the universe is perfectly righteous and always acts in conformity with His character. We humans, on the other hand, fall short of God's standard of perfection. We are morally flawed – some of us worse than others! Our moral imperfection (sin) makes it impossible for God to have a relationship with us or to accept us into His perfect heaven. In fact, the opposite is true: His righteousness and justice demand that He find us guilty of moral imperfection and separate Himself from us eternally, which the Bible calls spiritual death.

To make matters worse, we cannot earn God's acceptance by following or keeping a set of religious rules or laws. We are simply incapable of being perfect. That's the reality of it. No matter how relatively "good" we are, we are just not good enough to satisfy God's righteous standard of perfection.

But there is good news! God is also loving and gracious and has provided a way for us imperfect humans to be accepted by Him without compromising His righteousness and justice. God sent Jesus Christ (the God-man) to accomplish this in His death and resurrection.

The heart of the good news is this: Jesus Christ died for us (in our place). On the cross Jesus voluntarily took our imperfections (sins) upon Himself and, as a result, suffered the consequences of those sins. God found Him guilty instead of us.

God the Father then had to mete out to Jesus (God the Son) the just punishment for those sins, which was spiritual death. On the cross Jesus cried out, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" It was at that moment that He bore the full penalty for our sins. As man, He was able to die for us; as God, He was able to bear the eternal consequences for sin, that is, being forsaken by the Father (which is the same as spiritual death).

Jesus' resurrection clearly demonstrated that He was who He claimed to be – the Messiah, God in a human body. The resurrection was also proof that God the Father accepted the death of Jesus as full payment for our sins. God's perfect righteousness and justice were satisfied. God could then, consistent with His character, extend His love and mercy to us. He could now forgive our sins and give us the gift of right-standing before Him, thereby "saving" us from the consequences of our sins, namely guilt and spiritual death. This is grace – God's undeserved blessing to us!

This gift of salvation is available to everyone who "believes." The gift cannot be earned; it can only be received by faith. Genuine faith can be expressed in a prayer to God similar to this:

**Dear God:**

**I acknowledge that I am not good enough to get into Your perfect heaven. I believe that Jesus Christ bore the consequences for my sins. I believe that You accepted His death as payment in full for my sins. I receive your gift of salvation now. Amen.**

## ROMANS 3:21-30-OUTLINE

### Main Point (Vs 22):

We are made right with God by placing our Faith in Jesus Christ.

### Level One Explanation (Vs 23-24a):

1. Everyone has sinned (and justly deserves God's wrath, condemnation and judgment (see 1:18-3:20)).

2. YET God in his undeserved kindness declares that we are righteous.

### Level Two Explanation (Vs 24b):

1. God did this through Jesus.

2. Jesus Christ freed us from the penalty of our sins. (Doctrine of Redemption.)

### Level Three Explanation (Vs 25a):

1. God sent Jesus to take the punishment for our sins. (Doctrine of Substitution).

2. God sent Jesus to satisfy God's anger (wrath) against us. (Doctrine of Propitiation).

3. Jesus did this on the cross!

### Therefore, the good news is... (Vs 25b):

People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus died for their sins.

### Theological Insights (Vs 25c-26):

1. God did not fully punish sins in the Old Testament because he was going to fully punish those sins on the cross.

2. The cross allows God to be Just (in punishing Christ for our sins) and at the same time Gracious (in declaring sinners to be righteous in his sight when they believe).

### Summary Conclusion (Vs 27-30):

We are made right with God only by Faith.

### Extra Credit:

Those who are made right with God by faith in Jesus Christ are assured of sharing in God's Glorious future (Chapters 5-8).

## Discussion Questions

1. Opening questions: What struck you most about the sermon/the passage? What surprised you? What confused you? What did you disagree with?
2. As you heard the gospel message presented on Sunday, what struck you about it on that particular day? Was there an aspect of the gospel that caught you off guard or that you heard or felt in a new light on Sunday?
3. Describe a time when you fully came to terms with the reality of God's forgiveness (that is, that your right standing with God had nothing to do with your performance but only to do with God's grace shown in the death of Jesus for our sins).
4. How would you respond if a non-Christian asked you, "Do my actions need to change in order to be a Christian and live the life of a Christian?"