

“Do Good People Go To Heaven If They Aren’t Christians?”

Ephesians 2:1-10

Sermon Series: “You Asked For It”

Introduction-Question: “My non-Christian friend is the best person I know. Will God let her into heaven?”

Answer: No. Heaven is a place of perfection so forgiven people go to heaven instead of good people.

Why is this true?

1. In the eyes of God, we are all sinners under His judgment so none of us is good enough (v. 1-3).

A. We are the walking dead (v. 1). Apart from Jesus, we are separated from God and without spiritual life so we are walking around with physical life but dead on the inside. Just like a dead person cannot respond to physical stimuli, a person without Jesus cannot respond to spiritual things apart from the supernatural work of God. We need a spiritual resurrection because we are not sick but dead. Sinners may be in different states of decay, but dead is dead.

B. We are controlled by the world, the devil, and the flesh (v. 2-3).
The world is the system of this world’s values that opposes God. Clinton Arnold writes, “Here he uses ‘world’ not in the literal sense of creation as in Eph. 1:4, but in the theological sense of people organized in their opposition against God (see, e.g., John 15:18-19; 1 Cor.3:19). This could be interpreted to refer to the various non-Christian religions, ideologies, philosophies, values, and economic systems as well as to the more mundane but the equally powerful influence of peer pressure, fashion, and the media. These influences provide a script for living day-to-day life apart from God and his values.”

The devil spiritually controls those apart from Christ.
John 8:44

The flesh is our own sinful nature. We are born with it and controlled by it apart from Jesus.

C. We are disobedient (v. 2). Sinners sin. That is our nature. We disobey God, and even when we do the right things our motive is often wrong. Also, a non-believer

may be staying away from immoral things but is not worshipping God, which is the reason we are created. The greatest command is to love God so if we are not doing that we are living in sin, and we cannot say that we love God when we are rejecting His Son.

D. We are under the wrath of God (v. 3, John 3:36). The wrath of God is His settled, righteous, just anger toward sinners. His holiness compels Him to punish all sin. In other words, we are doomed on our own apart from Jesus.

2. Salvation is the supernatural work of God (v. 4-6).

-Dead people can't accomplish anything. This is a spiritual resurrection and supernatural transformation not moral reformation.

Matt Chandler writes, "What made me love Christ wasn't that all of a sudden I figured out how to do life. What made me love Christ is that when I was at my worst, when I was at my lowest point, when I absolutely could not clean myself up and there was nothing anybody could do with me, right at that moment, Christ said, 'I'll take that one. That's the one I want.' You know the Bible calls the church Christ's bride. So it's like standing before Jesus, completely exposed, all of our flaws and insecurities and—worse than that—our sins are right there in front of his face, and against all reason and rationale, the song of grace becomes startlingly, exhilaratingly true because the Groom looks at us and declares us beautiful. Spotless. Righteous. Justified. This is the gospel. It is important to admit, believers in Jesus, that Christians are not more moral than anyone else. The essence of the gospel and what we celebrate is not that 'we can' but that Christ did."

3. The purpose of salvation is the glory of God instead of human boasting (v. 7, 9).

-There will be no boasting about ourselves in heaven (v. 9).

-God is eternally showing off His grace and glorifying Himself in us (v. 7).

-We will be worshipping Jesus Christ forever (Revelation 7:9-12).

4. Salvation is the gracious gift of God that cannot be earned by our goodness or efforts (v. 8-10).

-These verses address two common questions that relate to the question at hand today.

"If I'm not good enough, what can I do to earn my way in?" "Is somebody forgiven by praying a prayer even if their life doesn't change?"

-Jesus saves us by grace alone through faith alone.