

The Good News



**your passport
to eternal life**

Written by Lyle E. Mullins

Copyright © Heaven Sent Ministries 2013

All rights reserved

What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul. These are the words recorded in Matthew 16:26. They are sobering words.

We don't like to think of dying or of eternity, or where we will spend it. But, nevertheless, it cannot be avoided. The important thing is to be prepared when the time comes for us to depart this life. The Bible also tells us that it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgement (Heb 9:27).

This is where the good news of the gospel becomes relevant. Perhaps you might take the time to read the following pages and come to understand that the good news of the gospel of Christ is for you.

The Fall of Man

We live in a world inundated by evil. A sense of hopelessness and despair permeates our society. The world seems to be spiraling out of control with no hope of righting itself. But it wasn't always this way. In the beginning God created everything and said it was good (Gen 1:31).

But something happened. Lucifer, the highest ranking angel in heaven, and perhaps the wisest and most beautiful of the celestial beings became filled with pride because of his beauty, and corrupted his wisdom for the sake of his splendor (Ezek. 28:14). He wanted to establish his throne on God's throne, to be like the "Most High" (Isa. 14:14). As a result, God cast him out of heaven down to the earth along with one third of the angels and earth became his domain.

This was a cataclysmic event. It affected not only the physical earth but it also led to the introduction of sin into the human race. Lucifer, now known as Satan set his eyes on man for the purpose of destroying his relationship with God.

Back To The Beginning

Adam, the first man, was unique in that he was created by God as a grown man. His mate, Eve, was also created as a mature woman. They were innocent as far as sin was concerned and the two of them enjoyed a very special relationship with God.

God placed Adam and Eve in a special place on the earth called the Garden of Eden that He prepared for them to enjoy. They were to work in it and to watch over it. God caused every tree that was good for food to grow in the garden. He also put two special trees there: the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God's one prohibition given to Adam and Eve—they were not to eat of the tree of the

knowledge of good and evil. The penalty for eating from that tree was death (Gen. 2:17).

The Deadly Encounter

We do know from Eve's encounter with him that Satan had access to the garden. Her subsequent dialog with him led her to disobey God's directive and she ate from the forbidden tree. Eve then offered Adam the fruit and he also ate from it. How Satan got into the garden is not clearly known. We do know that as a spirit being, he was able to take another form. In the Garden of Eden he appeared to Eve as a serpent. Satan deceived her by causing her to doubt what God said about eating from the tree. "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'" (Gen. 3:1). He continues by telling her that she will not die from eating from the tree; in fact, he says that if she eats the fruit from the tree, her eyes will be opened and she will be like God, knowing good and evil (v. 5). This has been a tactic that Satan continues to use even today. Many people find themselves hearing him ask the same question: "Did God really say...?" It is an effective strategy to prevent them from believing God when He speaks.

As a result of Adam and Eve's disobedience of eating the fruit from the forbidden tree, they now knew things that would change them forever. They were corrupted by this new knowledge and their nature became dark and sinful. The curse of death also entered into their lives, just as God had said.

The End Of Paradise

God had to remove Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. They could not be allowed to eat from the tree of life and live forever after eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Their relationship with God was broken. He could no longer have fellowship with them because of their sinfulness. The sin nature they possessed, along with the sentence of death that was upon them, was passed from Adam's seed to every human being. This is why

every person is separated from God and needs to be reconciled [restored] to Him (Rom. 5:12).

God cursed the ground. From this point on, it would produce thorns and thistles and Adam would have to work the earth by sweat and hard labor.

God's Answer For Sin

Since the time of Adam, man has tried to work his way back to God—to pull himself up by his own “bootstraps”—trying to please Him by doing better. But because of his sin nature, inherited from Adam, he will always fall short (Rom. 3:23). He can never be good enough to reunite himself to God. His sin has separated him from his Creator. But because of His great love, God intervened on man's behalf. He executed a plan that He orchestrated before the world was created—a plan to renew man's broken fellowship with Him. It was put into effect just over 2000 years ago when God entered the human race by becoming a man. God became flesh and dwelt among His own creation. He was born of a virgin and lived a sinless life as the God/Man. His coming was for one reason: to take upon Himself the sins of all mankind, to be the ultimate sacrifice for sin. God's Word says that he became sin for us (2 Cor. 5:21). He qualified as our substitute because He was without sin. As the perfect sacrifice, He was able to deal with the problem of sin once and for all on the cross. He willingly laid down his life for us. “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him. Whoever **believes** in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son” (John 3:16-18). Sin and death were conquered by Christ as He was raised to life after three days in the grave. This Great Act of atonement for sin satisfied God's demand for justice and enables all those who put their trust in Christ's finished work to be reconciled to God..

THE ANSWER TO OUR GREATEST NEED

What Does It Mean To Believe?

Although the sacrifice of Jesus Christ paid our sin debt in full, we must put our faith and trust in Him and what He has done for us. True biblical belief involves repentance (a change of mind), that is, we acknowledge that our sin has separated us from God and that we need to be changed. We are willing to accept Christ's payment for our sin. Our eternal destination hangs in the balance—eternal life or eternal condemnation.

To be condemned is to be eternally separated from God. “But [for] the. . . unbelieving. . . their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death” (Revelation 21:8). However, it is not death that God wants for us, but life. “The thief [Satan] comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I [Jesus] have come that they may have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10).

The Spirit Of Life

Jesus not only died for us, but He was also raised to life by the power of God on the third day. He ascended to heaven where He is seated at the right hand of God. After His ascension, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit. He is the one who enables us to understand the things of God, even things that may be hard to understand from our human perspective. He lives in the hearts of people who believe that Jesus died for their sin and are willing to receive Him as their Lord and savior. He is called the Spirit of Life, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, and the Spirit of God. He is all of these things and more.

He is the one who changes us from the inside out, making us a new creation in Christ. It is a transaction that is initiated by Him. He not only cleanses us from our sin, but He also cleanses our conscience and removes the guilt associated with sin.

The Commitment Of Christ

When you put your faith and trust in Jesus, He promises to give you a new life. He promises never to leave you nor ever to forsake you. He promises to be your helper in time of trouble. He promises to hear you and answer you when you pray. He promises that one day He will come again for you and take you to be where He is, and you will live there with Him forever and ever.

God Is Looking For You

You may be going through a tough time right now. You may be facing loneliness, or perhaps you are fearful about the future. You may be wondering, "Does God really care about me?" The answer is, "Yes, He does!" As a matter of fact, He may be using these very words to let you know that He is seeking you.

He says in His Word, "Come to Me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Mt. 11:28). You may be saying, "Will God take me like I am?" "There are so many things wrong in my life." "I would like to come to Him, but first, I need to clean up my life." "Even if I come to Him, I'm not sure that I can live up to His standards." God knows you struggle with these things. But, since you have no power in yourself to change your sinful condition, God offers you repentance from sin. By faith you come to Him confessing that you are a sinner by nature, that you need His forgiveness and that you receive Him as the Lord and Savior of your life. This is a transaction initiated by Him and it is the beginning of eternal life.

Do you believe this? Put your trust in Him and He will start you on an incredible journey of faith. He is ready and able to change your life forever. If you are not sure how to speak to Him, use the prayer below as a guide. The prayer is not magical; it is only meant to help you put into words your desire to know Him.

"Dear Jesus, I understand that I am a sinner by nature. I can do nothing to change this. However, I know that you can change me. You love me so much that you died for me. I believe this to be true.

I also believe that you rose again on the third day after your death and that you are now seated with God in heaven. I believe this gospel—this good news—I come to you repenting of my sins and I desire that you become my Lord and Savior. Thank you for your forgiveness and for this wonderful gift of salvation. Amen.”

WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE?

If you believe the good news—the gospel—and confess Jesus Christ as your Lord—the Master of your life, He will begin a work in you that will continue until He comes again to take you to be with Him forever.

One thing that will bring immediate benefits to your life is to read the Word of God (the Bible). This is where you will come to understand God’s plan for your life. The Spirit of God will help you to understand what God wants to communicate to you.

Christ himself asked that all believers follow His example of being baptized. This act of obedience identifies you as a follower of Christ. It is a picture of dying to the old way of life and being raised to walk in a new way of life. It is done in the presence of other believers.

As a believer, you are a member of a living body called the church. Each member is important and has something to contribute. Your fellowship with other believers is important to help strengthen your relationship with Jesus Christ. Your contribution will be important to its overall ministry.

Remember, God loves you. You are special to Him. He is committed to help you live this new life. Nothing can separate you from Him. You are a new creation in Christ. You begin this new adventure just like a newborn baby. As you read and study God’s Word, you will begin to grow in knowledge of Him. This is your source for truth. As you increase in the knowledge of the truth, you

will become freer and freer to walk in holiness. Since the Holy Spirit now resides in you, He will help you understand the things of God. Day by day your life will change as He conforms you into the likeness of Christ.
