

“How GOOD the GOOD NEWS is”
March 31, 2013

1 Peter 3:18- “Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.” (The GOOD NEWS in one sentence)

TO FULLY APPRECIATE THE “GOOD NEWS” ...

1. FIRST, THE “BAD NEWS”

- We were created to reign over all creation—under the reign of God
- The evil one (Lucifer) fell from his privileged position under God when he refused to accept his place.
- We listened to his lies—and joined him in his revolt against God. As a result, we, too, fell from the place of perfect unity with God, with one another, with all of creation—and even with ourselves!
- NOTE: In trying to be “like God”—without God—we became less than we were.
- **RESULT:** We were distanced from Holy God by our sin; our complete lack of holiness. (*“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” Romans 3:23*)

2. THEN, THE “GOOD NEWS”: GOD GAVE US HIS LAW

- Not simply “do’s” and “don’ts” ...
- Rather, HOW GOD DESIGNED US TO LIVE LIFE WITH HIM.
- Joshua summarized His Law: “Be very careful to keep the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you: to love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to obey his commands, to hold fast to him and to serve him with all your heart and all your soul.” (Joshua 22:5)
- Jesus: **“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” (Matthew 22:37-40)**
- Romans 13:8- **“LOVE is the fulfillment of the Law.”**

WHEN THERE IS NO LAW—THERE IS NO LOVE!

- *“Where lawlessness increases→the love of most will grow cold” (Matthew 24:12)*
- *“Whom the Lord loves—He disciplines” (Hebrews 12:6)*
- *“If you love Me, keep My commandments” (John 14:15)*

GOD, IN HIS ANGER, MOVED TO RESTORE OUR BROKEN RELATIONSHIP

“The fierce anger of the LORD will not turn back until he fully accomplishes the purposes of his heart.” (Jeremiah 30:24)

- His anger is NOT erratic emotions, a loss of self-control, or a bad temper...
- It IS God’s whole-hearted opposition to sin! (*He can’t simply overlook sin or compromise His standards*)
- His anger is His predictable, steadfast antagonism against everything that would keep us from Him!!!
- The ultimate proof of His love is seen in His infinite concern about what happens to us.

NOTE: The opposite of ANGER is APATHY—neutral, indifferent. The scariest experience would be to have an apathetic God, who simply doesn’t care!

SIMPLY TRYING TO “OBSERVE THE LAW” WILL NOT CHANGE US, HEAL US, OR RESTORE US TO GOD

The Law’s “purpose is to keep people from having excuses, and to show that the entire world is guilty before God. For no one can ever be made right with God by doing what the law commands. The law simply shows us how sinful we are.” (Romans 3:19-20 NLT)

(Romans 8:3)- The Law is “powerless” to change us.

A SENSE OF GUILT resulting in vain attempts at SELF-ATONEMENT does not resolve the issue of sin and separation from God.

- *Hindu worshipers travelling 5 miles or more to local temples on their knees*
- *Shiite Muslims beating themselves until they draw blood*

**NOTE: MAN-MADE RELIGION—“DO” and “EARN”
BUT...THE COVENANT GOD MADE FOR US IN CHRIST—“DONE” and “RECEIVE”**

“For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, GOD DID by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.” (Romans 8:3-4)

THE HEART OF THE “GOOD NEWS”:

“When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.” (Colossians 2:13-15)

RESPONSE TO THE GOOD NEWS:

- 1. See ALL of your sins, your sicknesses, your sorrows, every spiritual enemy, and every curse “nailed to the Cross” and forever “taken out of the way”!!!**
- 2. See ALL of His life—His purity, power, health, vitality, joy, peace, love—being poured into you!!!**
 - a. “He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?” (Romans 8:32)**
 - b. “Your old life is dead. Your new life, which is your *real* life—even though invisible to spectators—is with Christ in God. *He* is your life.” (Colossians 3:3 The Message)**
 - c. “We can only keep on going, after all, by the power of God, who first saved us and then called us to this holy work. We had nothing to do with it. It was all *his* idea, a gift prepared for us in Jesus long before we knew anything about it. But we know it now. Since the appearance of our Savior, nothing could be plainer: death defeated, life vindicated in a steady blaze of light, all through the work of Jesus.” (2 Timothy 1:10 The Message)**





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