

## Who Goes to Heaven?

Many people, when asked about where they will spend eternity, will say something like this. "I hope I am going to Heaven." "I'll be with the man upstairs." "Up there" as they point upwards. These answers, and others that are similar, are offered. Then, if they are asked, "Why do you think you will go to Heaven?" their answers will be along this line. "I am a good person." "I am a church member." "I have never done anything wrong." "I live a clean life and help others." "I've never committed any crimes." On and on the list goes but, it still begs the question of who goes to Heaven and why. Any person in their right mind would certainly want to go to Heaven when they die; HOWEVER, do they meet the qualifications to do so? Heaven is the dwelling place of God and, He has set a high standard for those who would enter there. Those who do not meet His qualifications cannot and will not be permitted entrance. "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." {Revelation 21:27} Why? Because God is holy and those who are not, those who are unclean because of sin, are not permitted in. In the eyes of God, we are ALL sinners, "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: ... For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" {Romans 3:10, 23} Well now, if none of us are righteous; if all of us are sinners and have fallen short, what can we do to qualify for Heaven? And that my friend, is a good question.

The Bible, God's Word, talks about being "born again" or, in simple terms, being spiritually reborn, saved. Jesus Christ told a religious man he needed to be "born again" and the man questioned how this could happen. Hear what God's Word says, "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see (or enter -RAC) the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." {John 3:3-7}

Being "born again," that spiritual rebirth, is something that the Holy Spirit does in the heart of a person when they repent for their sins and trust Jesus Christ as Saviour. Repentance is a change of mind (heart) that leads to a change of action or, as one man put it, to take God's side against my sin. You see, all of us are born sinners; we have a sin nature and that is what makes us a sinner. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:" {Romans 5:12} That one man was Adam when he disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden. Repentance is **absolutely essential** to being born again; if a person cannot or will not repent, then that person cannot and will not be born again (saved). Even Jesus Christ taught that, "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." {Luke 13:3} In Acts, chapter 17 the Apostle Paul warned, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:" {Acts 17:30} When a person repents and calls on Jesus Christ for forgiveness, that person is forgiven and saved. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." {Romans 10:13} On the Cross of Calvary when Jesus died and shed His blood, He was paying our sin debt once for all; before God, there could **NEVER** be another sacrifice for sin. "And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;" {Hebrews 10:11-12} It is when we confess to God, **NOT** some man somewhere, but to God that we are sinners and seek His forgiveness, it is then that we are "born again." "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to

cleanses us from all unrighteousness.” {1 John 1:9} In 1 John 1:7 we are told that it is the blood of Jesus that washed away our sin, “...and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

So, **who goes to Heaven? ONLY** those who have repented and been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ as they have received Him as personal Saviour. Can we know this for sure? Well, God said we can; “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ... These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; **that ye may know** (emphasis added) that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.” {1 John 5:11, 13} When we trust Christ as Saviour, the Bible tells us that, “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” {2 Corinthians 5:17}

For those who have trusted Jesus Christ as personal Saviour, when they depart this life they are promised that, “We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.” {2 Corinthians 5:8}

Even though, as a sinner saved by grace and going to Heaven, in this life we have a responsibility to live our lives in such a way as to bring honor and glory to our Saviour. “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” {1 Corinthians 6:19-20} This is why it is so important to spend time in God’s Word daily, to daily come to Him in prayer, and to faithfully attend a good, fundamental, Bible preaching church. Just as we need to be fed physically, we also **NEED** to be fed spiritually.

Well my friend, I hope that I have answered the question, “Who Goes To Heaven?” If you have never repented of your sin and trusted Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour, then I invite you to do so now, before it becomes eternally too late. There is no formal or fancy prayer to be said; just cry out to God and ask Him to be merciful to you a sinner, and to save you as you repent and call on Him. It is my prayer that you will do this; this is the reason that this Gospel tract was written.

--Richard A. Ciarrocca, 2016