

The Unwilling God

All over the world, people die every day. Some die of old old age, a terminal illness, accident of some sort, murder, etc. Right now, this very moment, people are dying and the question that begs answer is this, "Where will they spend eternity?" Will they spend eternity in the place called heaven or in the place called hell? There is no place in between such as purgatory. What is purgatory? "Purgatory is believed by some as a place for sinners who have God's grace but need to endure "temporal punishment" for transgressions that did not receive payment during their lives. In other words, if anyone has any leftover sin, this place purges them of it, before they reach the gates of heaven." {-copied}

Every human being is an eternal soul housed in a body of flesh and bone and, one day, this body of flesh and bone will have outlived its purpose and die. We may not like to think or talk about this happening, but it is a fact of life as cemeteries provide evidence of. So then when the body dies, what becomes of the eternal soul, the real you? According to God's Word, the Bible, the soul goes nonstop to one of two places, Heaven or Hell; there is no purgatory in between. The belief in purgatory is man made and is without any biblical basis whatsoever.

In Luke Chapter 16, the Bible talks about two men who died. One man went to Heaven and the other man to Hell. {Luke 16:19-31} Hell is described as a place of fire and unrelenting torment; "I will weep and mourn for you." {vs. 24} The fate of this man was sealed during his earthly life! Jesus Christ when speaking of Hell twice said, "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." {Luke 13:3,5} Jesus Christ, THE Messiah, who left the glory of Heaven taking the body of a man so that He could shed His blood on the Cross of Calvary. Why did He do this? Because of His great love for us and the fact that He would not see anyone go to Hell. This is what John 3:16 is all about – "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Romans 5:8 "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." God did not die for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" {Romans 3:23} and "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:" P

As Jesus was being crucified, one thief rejected Him as Saviour but the other trusted Him; that thief is with Jesus in Heaven now! "Art thou not afraid of me, who art the King of the Jews? Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise." {Luke 23:43} The sin debt is paid and Jesus Christ is at this moment in Heaven with God the Father. "And every priest standeth daily offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had suffered for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;" {Hebrews 10:11-12} It was not just the death of Jesus that paid our sin debt, it was His innocent shed blood; it was His death AND blood – the two cannot be separated forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:" {1 Peter 1:18-19}

It was the love of God for us that Jesus did all of this and if you are wondering why God would do all of this, the answer is found in 2 Peter 3:9 where we read, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, **not willing** {emphasis added} that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." {1 John 4:10} Friend, God loves you so much and He patiently waits for you to repent of sin and call on Him for forgiveness and salvation. God does **NOT** want to see you die and go to the place called Hell. He wants you, like the Apostle Paul said, "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} As one old-time preacher wrote, "The Lord, who hath promised to come, is not slack in the performance of that promise of his, according as men take slackness; so as to put off and disappoint the day which he had set: but, in his merciful longsuffering to us-ward, as he had eternally decreed, he waits for our repentance; as taking no pleasure in the destruction of any of his creatures, but graciously inviting all men to repent and be saved."

Will you be like the two thieves on the cross; one rejecting Jesus as Saviour but the other trusting His as Saviour? The decision is yours and yours alone to make. How will **YOU** respond? "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." {Romans 10:13} "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 that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." {1 John 5:11, 13}

~Richard A. Ciarrocca/May 2021

All Scripture references are KJV.