

THE BIBLE VIEW

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Theme: Salvation

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No Higher Than the Coffin Lid

Bill Brinkworth

A rich man came to Jesus unintentionally admitting he committed the same mistake that most would not dare confess. He confessed to having the same philosophy that sends most lost people to Hell. The man's misunderstanding is also where most churches and religions err. His false belief was in his question, "... what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life" (Matthew 19:16).

That ruler (Luke 18:18) tried to work his way to Heaven by doing all he could to earn himself a place there. He and most religions believe that if you do enough good things, good will outweigh the bad, and God will let you into Heaven.

False religions teach that obeying and following traditions, rules, catechisms, rites, sacraments, pillars of the faith, or their religion's teachings will get them to Heaven. Wrong! Unbiblical! That thinking distinguishes man-made religions from real Christianity!

True Christianity is the only "religion" that teaches one does not have to do anything to get to Heaven except believe what Jesus did for them and ask for salvation from Hell. One does not have to "pay" for salvation by doing good works because it already has been paid for them by Jesus Christ's sacrificial deed.

After receiving salvation, one will want to do all one can to please and obey God and His commandments out of love and gratitude. However, those good acts have nothing to do with getting saved.

All have sinned. All do not only commit iniquity but were born sinners. Because of sin, no one can get higher than the coffin lid after death. That is the bad news.

However, there is good news. There is a person who never sinned. His undeserved death on the Cross is the sole payment God will accept to cover anyone's sin. It is Jesus alone, God's only son, that was worthy enough to pay for our transgressions.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast." Ephesians 2:8-9

Trying to do good “works” to earn Heaven is not accepting Christ’s finished work on the Cross. That rejection shows disbelief that Christ’s sacrificial payment was insufficient to cover a person’s iniquities.

Like the rich ruler learned, doing good deeds and living the way one thinks is right is not enough to earn eternity into Heaven. That man had done “right” his whole life, yet he was still looking for one more thing to do to guarantee eternal life.

Good deeds never satisfy God because they are not enough. Trusting that one loves us so much that He gave his life so that we can live eternally is the only way God will accept.

Are you 100% certain that you would go to Heaven if you were to die today, tomorrow, or a hundred years from now? You can be sure because the “ticket” has been paid for. All you must do is believe and accept God’s wonderful gift!

The most important question concerning any man living is this: Is he a saved soul or not? Is he a child of God or an heir of wrath? – Spurgeon

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Rom. 10:13

Born Again

Bill Brinkworth

One of the most popular stories told to explain what it means to be saved from Hell is found in John 3. It is the story of Nicodemus.

Nicodemus was a very influential, scripturally educated leader of the Jews (John 3:1). Perhaps this ruler was afraid, ashamed, or embarrassed to be seen with Jesus, who was causing much confusion among the Jews. For whatever reason, Nicodemus visited Jesus at night.

Jesus told that man a spiritual truth that has troubled many people since.

“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” John 3:3

Immediately, this strict follower of the Jewish law admitted he did not understand what Jesus was saying. Nicodemus questioned if Jesus meant that his physical body had to be re-birthed (John 3:4). That man had much scriptural learning, but he was missing something fundamental. He was missing an understanding of spiritual things.

Jesus explained to the man how all could know if they were Heaven-bound when they died. The way of salvation involves believing and trusting on Jesus’ sacrifice for all our sins. Salvation hinges on that belief.

People must rely on Jesus’ gift to us and trust His death on the Cross as the ONLY payment for the forgiveness of sins that God will accept. Salvation cannot be earned by anything that is done or said. Jesus has done it all for us by His sacrifice.

“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.” John 3:16

Read more about the second birth at www.devotionsfromthebible.com/john/born-of-water/.

“Born once, die twice. Born twice (includes being spiritually born into the family of God); die once.” — *Author Unknown*

A Changed New Life

Bill Brinkworth

No one is perfect, or they would not need to be saved. All are sinners and bound for Hell unless something prevents that from happening.

Accepting Christ as Saviour is the only thing that can keep one from an eternity in torment. When one is saved, they are a new creature in Christ. A person is changed when they are genuinely saved. Paul was certainly proof of this.

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” II Corinthians 5:17

Before His salvation, Paul did all he could to serve God his way. In doing so, he unknowingly became an enemy of God and Christians. The man was responsible for killing many believers and did much to slow the spreading of the Gospel.

After Paul was saved, his enthusiasm for opposing Christianity was rechanneled to tell many others how they could be saved. He became a sincere servant of Christ.

No matter what he did after salvation, Paul still had a past. There was no way to undo what he had done. All the preacher could do was go forward in doing the right things after being forgiven and do all he could for the cause of Christ. Paul did that with all his heart.

“But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” I Corinthians 15:1

Many are plagued with a guilty conscience for their past, even after they are saved. Years ago, I remember listening to a Christian radio program where the host answered questions. One caller, choked with guilt, called and told the host, “I am saved; I know I am forgiven, and my sins are forgotten, but I just cannot forgive myself, and that is why I am going to take my life.”

Immediately, the program was changed over to music. I imagine the radio preacher dealt with the man’s guilt and desire to take his own life. Sadly, many cannot forgive themselves and live defeated lives even after salvation.

We all have pasts. No saved person should have any joy in the wrong they have done. If we could do it over, most of us would choose never to have committed the sins we have done.

No remorse or guilt is going to change our past. When we trust Christ for salvation, our sins are not only forgiven by God, but they are forgotten (Psalm 103:12) and covered by His shed blood.

Since God, knowing all we did, still offered us a way to His Heaven, we must also forget our past. We can show our gratefulness for His extraordinary grace, as Paul did, by loving and serving the Lord with all our heart, soul, and might (Deuteronomy 6:5).

“Worry not who you are, but whose you are.” — *Author Unknown*