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WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

AND HOW TO RESPOND TO IT

PRETORIA NORTH
BAPTIST CHURCH

“A Terrible Dilemma...”

Romans 3:10-12

Introduction:

- One of the most incredible wonders of this life is the birth of a new baby
- It is just amazing to think that a man and woman can come together and out of their union springs forth a new **LIFE** that has never before existed.
- There is no baby as beautiful and wonderful and perfect as your own baby!
- But there are also a few other realities to consider about this baby.
- This baby has an eternal soul – he will exist **FOREVER!**
- **Q: The big question to ask is whether this baby is really as perfect as mommy and daddy would like to believe?**
- They will soon find out he/she isn't! Just keep his milk away for longer than he thinks is good and...*whaaaah!!*
- In this little baby lies the ability and even willingness to do **WRONG.**
- This baby will fall short of the person he was created to be by God.
- Like every other human, this baby has been damaged by the **SIN** that Adam and Eve brought into this world.
- **“Truly, even perfect Baby Adam is UNRIGHTEOUS – he is not as perfect as the God who created him, so he cannot relate to Him perfectly!”**

Study Points:

1) The Beginning of the Problem.

- God created Adam and Eve in His image and they were completely without sin and enjoyed a wonderful, deep and satisfying relationship with God.
- **Gen 1:27-31**
- But they got all of humanity into trouble when they chose to disobey God...
- As a result, their relationship with God was destroyed – their **SIN** brought about their and our separation from God.
- **WHY?**
- Because they fell into a state of **UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.**
- **Q: What is righteousness?**
- Merriam-Webster: **“acting in accord with divine or moral law; to be free from guilt or sin.”**
- This definition makes it sound like that it is all about what we **DO** that makes us unrighteous.
- We are not unrighteous because of what we **DO**; we are unrighteous because of what we **ARE!**
- **“Righteousness is the CHARACTER or QUALITY of BEING RIGHT or JUST.”**
- It is used to describe an attribute of **GOD!**
- To be righteous is to be absolutely free from all impurity and imperfection.
- It is to be **PERFECT!** It is to be **HOLY** – completely separated from any kind of **SIN...**
- **ONLY GOD IS RIGHTEOUS!**
- **Q: How much righteousness do I need?**
- God's standard is very clear – **Matt 5:48**
- You either **ARE** or you **AREN'T** righteous – there is no in between.
- Asking how much righteousness is enough is basically asking how much sin can we get away with...? **NONE!!**
- **ONE SIN** is enough to reveal you are unrighteous and to separate you from God!
- **Ecll 7:20; 1 Joh 5:17**

2) The Reality of the Bad News

- Even the “**best**” person who ever lived are hopelessly marred by sin...
- This is what the apostle Paul is teaching us in **Rom 3:10-18**
- Jew and Gentile alike – this is true of **ALL HUMANITY...**!
- Paul is not busy with new revelation here. He is just quoting Old Testament passages from the **Psalms** and the prophet **Isaiah.**
- **Ps 53:1-3; 5:9; 140:3; 10:7; Isa 59:7-8**
- Paul's conclusion in **Verse 19-20** is sobering...

3) Starting down the Romans Road

- In **Romans** Paul describes the reality of our sin, but then Paul also outlines God's solution to our problem.
- All of us must begin our spiritual journey with the admission that no one but God is righteous.
- **Matt 5:3**
- There are only one of two roads that you can travel:
 - *Will you take the Romans road or the way of sin?*
 - *Will you admit that you, like every other human being, is steeped in sin and is not God's equal?*
 - *Will you declare that you are as good as any other human and turn away from God?*
- To own up to your sin is to admit that you have missed the mark for which God has made you – you do not glorify Him because you are not reflecting His righteousness. This is true of **ALL THE WORLD!**
- This is **WHY** the world looks like it looks – because of **SIN**...
- You see, in the first five books of the Old Testament God reveals His directions about the importance of **HOLINESS**.
- Anyone who wants to understand what God the Father is like and how to please Him will find much information in these passages.
- But even if we want to adhere to these directions and want to please God, we fall short... **WHY?**
- Because of the **IMPACT** of sin...
- Matthew Henry: *"All mankind is under the guilt of sin as a burden; and under the government and dominion of sin as enslaved to it, to work wickedness. This is made plain by several passages of Scripture from the Old Testament which describe the corrupt and depraved state of all men, till grace restrain or change them. Great as our advantages are, these texts describe multitudes who call themselves Christians. Their principles and conduct prove that there is no fear of God before their eyes. And where no fear of God is, no good is to be looked for."*
- You need to admit to the fact that you are a sinner and that your sin ways you down and you also need to realize that it is this **SINFULNESS** of your nature that makes it difficult and actually **IMPOSSIBLE** for you to relate to God!
- **Isa 64:5-7**
- God is **HOLY, PERFECT, JUST, GOOD** and we aren't...
- He cannot **IGNORE** sin or then **RELATE**, be in **RELATIONSHIP** with **SINNERS**...
- Think of a living in a **GOOD** home that is very moral and right and then going to live in a wicked home where swearing, stealing and crime was the norm... you would feel **VERY** uncomfortable and even angered by their behaviour
- God cannot ignore sin just as much as you would be able to go on as normal. Not just because it would make Him uncomfortable, but because it is against everything He is!
- Sin simply cannot exist where the Lord is, because He is **GOOD** and sin is not...!
- It is then as we see the **REALITY** of sin in our lives and the real effects that it has on us and other people, that we see it is **RIGHT** for God to punish and **HATE** sin, because we see the **PAIN** and **SUFFERING** that sin produces.
- God is **SO GOOD** that He cannot and will not allow any **SIN** into His presence...!
- God wants us to **KNOW** Him and yet our **SIN** is what makes it impossible for us to know Him.
- As a holy God, He cannot ignore sin. His holy nature requires that He treat it with justice and cause the sinner to pay the price for his wrongdoing.
- To be **RIGHTEOUS**, means to have a consuming passion for **GOD** – this is hitting the mark!
- But we are **UNRIGHTEOUS** – we have a consuming passion for **OURSELVES** and then live for ourselves – we miss the mark and quite literally destroy ourselves... and in the process we defame the God who made us...

Conclusion:

- Starting down the **Romans** road is to admit that **YOU** are under the burden and dominion of **SIN**.
- You **ARE** unrighteous and cannot relate to this Holy and righteous God – you are separated from Him.
- **YET**, there is hope!
- **Isa 1:18**
- God had the salvation of sinners in mind from the beginning of time, even when they could not be aware of it...!
- He has always loved sinners and will not desert them in their hopeless situation as sinners...!

“The Problem of SIN...”

Rom 3:21-23

Introduction:

- *It is difficult to be something that you are NOT... to ACT the part...*
- The word “**hypocrite**” comes from this principle – being an **ACTOR** or a pretender...
- There is something more difficult than this...
- *It is even more difficult NOT to be who you are... actually quite IMPOSSIBLE...*
- A very simple example – **LAUGHTER**...you cannot **NOT** laugh like you are.
- We react to life according to who we are... some might call us **SPECIAL, FREAKY, WEIRD**... but that is just many times who and what you are...
- In the first study, we started looking at the **GOSPEL** a little bit more in detail – zoning in on different aspect of it.
- We saw that God is **RIGHTEOUS**, meaning He is **PERFECT, PURE**, without any **IMPERFECTIONS**...
- Adam and Eve were created in His image – they were righteous...
- But they rebelled against God and they fell into **UNRIGHTEOUSNESS**.
- This is our **TERRIBLE DILEMMA** – **Rom 3:10-12**
- We are not unrighteous because of what we **DO**; we are unrighteous because of what we **ARE!**
- It is difficult not to be who you are and in the case of our unrighteousness it is **IMPOSSIBLE** not to be who we are...
- Because we are unrighteous, we do unrighteousness...
- We **SIN** because we are **SINNERS**...!
- We are **STUCK** in our sin – we sin because that is what comes **NATURALLY** to us.
- We sin without even **THINKING** about it...!
- The **KNOWLEDGE** of sin comes when we are confronted with the **STANDARD** God has set for us – His **COMMANDS** that He has given us according to which we need to live our lives.
- **Rom 3:20**
- Even though you “**don’t know**” that you are sinning, doesn’t excuse for being accountable for your wrong actions... **IGNORANCE** isn’t an excuse before God – **YOU HAVE THE BIBLE!!**
- **Isa 5:13; Hos 4:6**
- But actually, we **DO** know clearly that certain things are **SIN**... even from when we are very young...
- **Rom 2:14-16**
- So today we need to focus on **THE PROBLEM OF SIN** and here is the **ONE** thing that I want to make very clear for you in this study: **YOU NEED TO TAKE YOUR SIN SERIOUSLY!**
- Lets read **Rom 3:21-23**

Study Points:

- We will answer **FOUR QUESTIONS** in order to help you understand the **SERIOUSNESS** of your **SIN**:

1) **HOW** do you **SIN**?

- John Hannah: *“Sin is mankind’s wilful choice, in spite of the unceasing mercies and kindness of God. To refuse to honour Him by reflecting His character. God made us for that supreme purpose, but we determined to go the way of our selfish preoccupations. ANY ACTION THAT DOES NOT REFLECT THE CHARACTER OF ITS CREATOR IN ITS MOTIVE OR CONSEQUENCES IS SIN.”*
- We are **ALL** sinners by **NATURE** and by **PRACTISE**...
- We **ALL** have failed of that which is the chief end of man – to bring God **GLORY!**
- Therefore, in the simplest and most inclusive terms: **WHEN WE DON’T BRING GLORY TO GOD, WE ARE SINNING!!**
- In the Old Testament, we find primarily three words that describe **SIN** for us: **Psalms 32:1-2**
 - 1) “**SIN**” – *missing the mark*. **NOT** conforming to the law of God namely sins of **OMISSION**...
 - 2) “**TRANSGRESSION**” – *overstepping the boundary*. We trespass God’s law namely sins of **COMISSION**...
 - 3) “**INIQUITY**” – *the depraved and evil state of our heart*. **Gen 6:5; Ps 51:5**

2) WHOM do you SIN against?

- David as our understanding of against **WHOM** our sin really is... **Ps 51:4**
- We don't sin against **OURSELVES** and we don't sin against **OTHER PEOPLE PRIMARILY**.
- For many people, this isn't such a **SERIOUS THING**, because they don't understand **WHO GOD IS** and therefore how **SERIOUS** their **SIN** is...!
- Sin is actually more about the **WHO** than the **WHAT**...
- If you **SLAP** me in the face, our friendship may take a bit of a knock... If you slap a black belt karate dude in the face, you're going to get **HURT**...! If you slap a traffic officer in the face, you're going to get a fine or sit in jail... If you slap the president in the face, you're going to get locked up if not shot...!
- In every case the **OFFENSE** was the same - a **SLAP** in the face. The **CONSEQUENCE** and the **SEVERITY** thereof depends on **WHO** was being slapped in the face.
- Our **SIN** is against the **HOLY GOD OF THE UNIVERSE**...! You get the picture!
- **Gen 6:5-6**

3) WHY do you need a SAVIOUR?

- You have sinned against God and **HE IS GLORIOUS**.
- His glory simply refers to **ALL THAT HE IS** – His **TOTAL BEING**.
- John MacArthur: *“God is the only Being in all of existence who can be said to possess inherent glory. We don't give it to Him; it is His by virtue of who He is. If no one ever gave God any praise, He would still be the glorious God that He is, because He was glorious before any beings were created to worship Him... His glory is His being – simply the sum of what He is, regardless of what we do or do not do in recognition of it.”*
- You need a **SAVIOUR** because **ONE DAY** you **WILL** stand before this glorious God...
- **Heb 9:27; Rom 14:12; 2 Cor 5:10-11**
- We need to understand what will happen if you are to stand in your sinfulness before this **GLORIOUS** God...!
- **Exo 33:18-20; Isa 6:5; Heb 10:26-31**

4) WHAT do you need to be saved FROM?

- **Eph 2:1-3** – we are by nature children of **WRATH**!
- Because of our unrighteousness and our sin that flows from it, we stand under God's deserved **JUDGEMENT** for failing to bringing Him the glory He deserves.
- God's wrath is His **CALCULATED** and **JUST RESPONSE** to sinful people.
- **Rom 1:18-20** – we **CHOOSE** not to honour Him...
- **Rom 2:5-6** – we **STORE UP** wrath by our sinfulness
- **Joh 3:36** – if we don't believe in Jesus, His wrath **REMAINS** on us and it will **TAKE ALL OF ETERNITY** to satisfy His wrath...
- *Five biblical truths about the wrath of God:*
 1. God's wrath is just.
 2. God's wrath is to be feared.
 3. God's wrath is consistent in the Old and New Testament.
 4. God's wrath is His love in action against sin. (*God's love for his glory motivates his wrath against sin.*)
 5. God's wrath is satisfied in Christ.

Conclusion:

- You need to understand the **SERIOUSNESS** of your sin!
- If you don't, you will **NEVER UNDERSTAND** why you need a **SAVIOUR**...!!

“The Cause of DEATH...”

Rom 5:12

Introduction:

- **Q:** What was the **HIGHLIGHT** of your week so far?
- While we are thankful for all the highlights that we experience, we are also mindful of the reality of **TRAGEDIES** in our and other people’s life’s at this time.
- There are **MANY** tragedies that may happen to us during the span of your life here on earth.
- Sickness; failure; crime; broken relationships; bankruptcy; etc.
- For most people though one of the greatest tragedies is **DEATH**...
- Death is such a painful thing. It brings about so much sorrow. Those of you who may have lost someone very dear to you to death, know first-hand how much pain is involved as well as a host of questions that you many times struggle to find answers for.
- **DEATH** is a great tragedy...!
- **Q: WHY? Why do people die? Why is there something so terrible and destructive as DEATH?**
- **Gen 2:15-17**
- **Rom 5:12**
- Death came into **CREATION** because of **SIN**...!
- Most of us know this answer so in this study we want to spend some time just to examine the **REALITY** and the **EXTENT** of this **DEATH**...

Study Points:

- We will look at **TWO ASPECTS** of **DEATH**:
 1. The **REALITY** of death...
 2. The **EXTENT** of death...

1) The **REALITY** of death...!

- When we are young, we many times live as if we are **IMMORTAL**... it is only as we get older that we start to think about **DEATH** more often... and especially in the time that we are in now, **DEATH** is a much greater reality for many people...
- Our charismatic friends will then also advise us **NOT** to **SPEAK** about death – it is **NEGATIVE** and you shouldn’t **SPEAK DEATH**...!
- But **DEATH** is a reality... the chances that you are going to die is **100%**! (If Jesus doesn’t come back first...)
- There are only **TWO** people who lived on this earth and never died – Enoch (cf. **Gen 5:21-24**) and Elijah (cf. **2 Kings 2:11-12**)
- **Heb 9:27**
- **Ps 139:16**
- Many people are **SCARED** of death; they have a **FEAR** for death...
- **DEATH** is not the problem – it is being **PREPARED** for death that is the problem. People are **SCARED** of death because they are not ready to die...
- **YOU ARE GOING TO DIE – GET READY!!**
- **GOD** spoke the **TRUTH** in **Gen 2:16** – man did surely **DIE!**

2) The **EXTENT** of death...!

- Death extends to **THREE SPHERES**:

2.1 **PHYSICAL** death.

- **Rom 8:19-22**
- Because of man’s **SIN**, all of creation has been given over to **DECAY – DYING**...
- If **SIN** didn’t come into the world, none of our **BODIES** would have decayed, become weaker or sick... I wouldn’t have to wear glasses.
- **PHYSICAL** death is most probably the most common understanding of the result of **SIN**...
- Just on a side note – this is one of the challenges that Christians who want to merge the Bible with evolution have. Some “*Christians*” try to put in a **GAP** between **Gen 1:1** and **Gen 1:2**, allowing there a **PRE-HISTORIC** time in which the dinosaurs lived...

- The term **PRE**-historic is just ridiculous to start with...
- But here is the real dilemma – **WHEN** did **DEATH** come into the world...? When Adam and Eve sinned.
- When did the dinosaurs live and **DIE** according to them? **BEFORE** Adam and Eve. So according to them **DEATH** came before the fall of man – that is a direct **LIE**...!
- Your body will become weaker; this earth needs to run out of its resources sometime – death extends to the **PHYSICAL** sphere...

2.2 SPIRITUAL death.

- Death also extends to the **SPIRITUAL** sphere.
- When Adam and Eve sinned they died **SPIRITUALLY** – their relationship with God ended and they were separated from **KNOWING** God.
- **Eph 2:1** (cf. **Col 2:13**) spells it out very clearly for us that this is the case with **ALL** of humanity – we are born spiritually **DEAD** – unable to have a **RELATIONSHIP** with God and being utterly unable to **DO** anything **GOOD** according to **GOD’S** standard.
- **SIN** resulted in us having absolutely **NO** spiritual pulse, **NO** ability to have a saving knowledge of God **OUT OF OURSELVES**.
- What can a **DEAD** person do for himself? **NOTHING!!**
- We can therefore do **NOTHING** to **SAVE** ourselves, make ourselves spiritually alive...!
- To think that man has the ability to have any kind of spiritual life in himself without the supernatural work of God to bring it about, is to again fall for the lie of Satan in **Gen 3:6**...

2.3 ETERNAL death.

- The extent of death doesn’t just end with **PHYSICAL** and **SPIRITUAL** death – it doesn’t end in the **TEMPORAL** realm but overflows then to the **ETERNAL** realm, and therefore the last sphere that death extends to is **ETERNAL** death...
- **Rom 6:23**
- The wage of **SIN** is **DEATH** – what death is primarily talked about here?
- Reading the rest of the verse will help us to understand the context...
- but the gift of God in Jesus is **ETERNAL LIFE**...
- **DEATH** is put in **CONTRAST** with **LIFE** in this verse. If we then have to do with **ETERNAL** life, the accurate interpretation is that we also have to do with **ETERNAL** death.
- The other two spheres of death may be implied, but in this verse the primary interpretation refers to **ETERNAL** death.
- *What is that?*
- **Rev 20:11-15; 21:8**
- **THIS** is the reason why so many people **FEAR** death, because they know they are not **READY** to be judged by **GOD!!**
- **Heb 9:27** – you **WILL** be judged...!

Conclusion:

- Do we have to **FEAR** death for the rest of our lives...?
- Let us end with some of the **GOOD NEWS**:
- **DEATH** don’t have the final word **ANYMORE**...!
- **Heb 2:14-15**
- **Col 1:18**
- **1 Cor 15:50-57**
- **1 Cor 3:21-23; Phil 1:21**

“The FREE GIFT...”

Rom 6:23

Introduction:

- What is the **GREATEST** birthday present you ever got so far in your life?
- Mine is my **CAR**...!
- Birthday presents is just one of those awesome things that you get for being born and you didn't even have anything to do with it...!
- Let's just quickly recap what we have been studying so far about “*What is the Gospel...?*”
- The **Terrible dilemma** is that we are **UNRIGHTEOUS!** (**Rom 3:10-12**)
- The **Problem** is our **SIN** that flow from this – **SIN, TRANSGRESSION** and **INIQUITY**... (**Rom 3:23**)
- This **Sin** is the **CAUSE OF DEATH – PHYSICAL, SPIRITUAL** and **ETERNAL!** (**Rom 5:12**)
- This is all the **BAD NEWS** about who we truly are and what we truly deserve.
- But the **GOOD NEWS** is that God is not a bad news God!
- From even before the beginning of this world, **HE HAD A PLAN!!**
- “*He never planned on completely destroying all humanity, though He had to punish sin. From the very beginning, our Lord had in mind to make a GIFT OF SALVATION to humanity, through His Son, JESUS! That's the GOOD NEWS He wants to share with us!*”
- That's brings us to our next verse in the **Romans Road: Rom 6:23**

Study Points:

• From the second part of this verse, we will look at **FOUR INSIGHTS** that we get into Salvation:

3. It's a **FREE GIFT**.
4. It's **OF GOD**.
5. It's about **ETERNAL LIFE**.
6. It's **IN CHRIST JESUS our LORD**

1) It's a **FREE GIFT**.

- As opposed to the severe judgement that we **DESERVE**, stand this **GIFT** which the **ESV** has translated **FREE GIFT** to give weight to the meaning of the Greek word which means “*a favour with which one receives without any merit of his own*”.
- It is implied that this **GIFT** can only flow from God's **MERCY** and **GRACE**.
- Mercy is to **NOT** receive what we actually do deserve – therefore part of this **GIFT** is that we are **FORGIVEN** of our sins – **Ps 32:1-2**
- But it doesn't **END** there because we do actually **RECEIVE** something and therefore it further implies the **GRACE** of God – receiving that which we **DON'T** deserve...!
- The gift of having a **RIGHT STANDING WITH GOD**, being declared **RIGHTEOUS** even though we know that we are **UNRIGHTEOUS!**
- It is the **GIFT** of being **REBORN; CHANGED** from the **INSIDE OUT**; given a **NEW LIFE**; a **NEW NATURE!** (**2 Cor 5:17**)
- Salvation comes to us in the form of a **GIFT** – completely **UNDESERVED**...!

2) It's **OF GOD**.

- It is **GOD** who extends this **MERCY** and **GRACE** to us – He is the **SOURCE** and **GIVER** of this salvation!
- **Ezek 36:25-28 = NB!!**
- In these verses we find that **GOD** gives us a:
 - 1) New **PURITY** – we are **FORGIVEN** of our **SIN**... (**Ps 103:12**)
 - 2) New **PASSION** – we now have a **DESIRE** and **LONGING** to love and serve God... (**Phil 1:20**)
 - 3) New **POWER** – we now have the **ABILITY** through the **HOLY SPIRIT** to obey God... (**Rom 8:12-14; Gal 5:16-25**)
 - 4) New **PURPOSE** – we now have this as our **GOAL** in life – to **GLORIFY GOD!** (**1 Cor 10:31; Col 3:17; 1 Cor 6:19-20**)
- **Eph 2:4-5** – “**BUT GOD**...” (cf. **Tit 3:4-8**)

3) It's about **ETERNAL LIFE**.

- This stands as opposed to the wages of sin which is death – **ETERNAL** death...
- Eternal death, being under the judgement of God and experiencing His **WRATH** is explained to us in this way in **2 Thess 1:5-9**... It is to be in the presence of God without any experience of His **GOODNESS!!**
- Eternal life stands as the opposite of this and is defined for us in **Joh 17:3**
- It is to have an **INTIMATE REALTIONSHIP** with God in which you **KNOW** Him **INTELLECTUALLY** and where you **EXPERIENCE** all His **GOODNESS**.
- It **STARTS** in this life and will continue into all **ETERNITY!**
- Eternal life is then primarily about the **QUALITY** of life and not the **QUANTITY**.
- **Joh 10:10** gives us this understanding
- This is the **GIFT** that comes to us from **GOD – KNOWING HIM!!**
- He **HIMSELF** is actually the **GIFT** that we do receive and that **ALL** because of His **MERCY** and **GRACE!**

4) It's **IN CHRIST JESUS** our **LORD**.

- The **ONLY** way this gift can come to us is through His Son – **JESUS!**
- Remember what we said: *“From the very beginning, our Lord had in mind to make a **GIFT OF SALVATION** to humanity, through His Son, **JESUS!**”*
- It is because of **WHO HE IS** and **WHAT HE HAS DONE!!**
- *Jesus is exactly the opposite of us:*
 - We are **UNRIGHTEOUS** and do **SIN** which leads to **DEATH...**
 - He is **RIGHTEOUS** and therefore lived a life of **PERFECT OBEDIENCE** because he is **LIFE!**
- *What Jesus has done:*
 - As **CHRIST**, the **ANNOINTED ONE**, He came and lived a **PERFECT LIFE** of **RIGHTEOUSNES;**
 - As **JESUS**, the One who saves, He came and then died a **SACRIFICIAL DEATH** – in **OUR** place for **OUR SINS...**;
 - As **LORD**, the Sovereign One who **REIGNS**, he **VICTORIOUSLY ROSE** from the dead and conquered **DEATH, SIN** and our **UNRIGHTEOUSNESS...**!
- You see, although this is a **FREE GIFT** that comes to **US**, no gift is *“actually free”*... it will always **COST SOMEONE SOMETHING...**
- Jesus **PURCHASED** this **GIFT** for us with His own **BLOOD!!**
- **1 Pet 1:17-21**
- **1 Cor 6:19-20**

Conclusion:

- God is the One who is extending this **GIFT OF SALVATION** to all those who would believe in Jesus as their Saviour and follow Him as their Lord.
- This is the **GOOD NEWS** of a God who is not a **BAD NEWS** God...!
- That is why Paul says in **Eph 1:3** – **“BLESSED** be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has **BLESSED** us with every spiritual gift in the heavenly places, in Him...”
- We are to **SPEAK WELL** of God and to **PRAISE** Him for He has done **GOOD** to us, **SPOKEN WELL OF US**, in Christ Jesus our Lord...
- May **YOU** know Him!

“CHRIST and Sinners...”

Rom 5:6-11

Introduction:

- “Love” has become such an empty word that we through around so easily...
- One thing that is clear about the word “love” is that it is actually a **VERB** – it is a term that implies an **ACTION!**
- And that leads to a **QUESTION** I would like to ask you, actually more like **FOUR QUESTIONS**:
 - 1) Has someone ever told you they **LOVE** you?
 - 2) In what ways has these people **SHOWN** their love for you?
 - 3) Have you ever told someone you **LOVE** them?
 - 4) In what ways have **YOU** shown your love for this person?
- It is very **EASY** to make an empty profession of **LOVE**... **TRUE, BIBLICAL LOVE** is something that must be **MANIFESTED**, something that must be **SHOWN**...!
- We are busy beholding, looking intensely, at: **WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?**
- So far we have seen:
 - 1) Our **TERRIBLE DILEMMA** – We are **UNRIGHTEOUS**...
 - 2) The Problem of **SIN** – we do sin because we are sinners and this separates us from God...
 - 3) This **SIN** is the **CAUSE OF DEATH** – Physical, Spiritual and Eternal...
 - 4) **BUT**, there is a **FREE GIFT** that God planned from the very beginning He wants to give to sinners – **SALVATION!** In **Rom 6:23** we got **FOUR INSIGHTS** into this gift of salvation...
- In this study we will zoom in on the **FOURTH INSIGHT** we found in **Rom 6:23** concerning this gift of salvation namely that it is **IN CHRIST JESUS** our **LORD** and I want to answer just this **ONE** simple question: **HOW DOES JESUS DEAL WITH SINNERS?**
- We will be reading just a few verses in **Rom 5:6-11**...

Study Points:

• In these verses we discover **THREE REALITIES** concerning how **JESUS** deals with **SINNERS**:

7. His **INTENSE LOVE** for sinners. (**v6-8**)
8. His **PERFECT RIGHTEOUSNESS** that He **GRACIOUSLY** imputes to them. (**v9**)
9. His **GEAT CONCERN** is to bring about their **RECONCILIATION**. (**v10-11**)

1) His **INTENSE LOVE** for sinners. (**v6-8**)

- Some of us would **MAYBE** be willing to die for our friend...
- Very **FEW** if any would be willing to die for their **ENEMIES**...
- The understanding of this is very simple, yet utterly astounding – Jesus **SHOWED** how much He loves us by **DYING** for us **WHILE WE WERE STILL GOD’S ENEMIES!**
- **Joh 10:11-18**
- **Joh 13:1**
- **Joh 15:12-13**
- The love that Jesus **MANIFESTED** is a **SACRIFICIAL** love that He **CHOOSE** to **WILLINGLY PROOF** to those who did not **DESERVE** it, but because His Father willed it...!
- **Joh 14:30-31**

2) His **PERFECT RIGHTEOUSNESS** that He **GRACIOUSLY** imputes to them. (**v9**)

- “**Justified**” means to be declared **RIGHTEOUS** – it is to have a **RIGHT STANDING WITH GOD** in which your sins have been forgiven **AND** God sees you as **PERFECT** or **COMPLETE!**
- Jesus came and He lived a perfect life in which He completely obeyed God in **EVERYTHING!**
- It is because He was **PERFECT** that He could offer up His perfect life as a payment for our sin (“**justified by His blood**”) and also bring about our **RIGHT STANDING** before God.
- **Heb 5:7-9**
- **Rom 3:21-24** makes it very clear that this righteousness comes to sinners **ONLY** through the **GRACE** of God and not because of any **WORK** or **MERIT!**
- The only thing that needs to happen to receive this righteousness is to **BELIEVE** in Jesus!

- The **MOMENT** someone places their **FAITH** in Jesus, at the very moment they are forgiven of their sins and made perfect in Jesus before God – they are **DECLARED RIGHTEOUS!**
- It is this **RIGHTEOUSNESS** that is our **SAFEGUARD** against the experiencing the wrath of God!
- The **ONLY** reason that someone can claim of why they do not deserve to be under the wrath of God, is because Jesus **IMPUTED** His righteousness to them...He **CLOTHED** them with His **PERFECT LIFE** so that when God looks at them, He sees the perfect life of His Son.
- This is how **JESUS** deals with sinners who would but simply place their **TRUST** in Him...!

3) His **GEAT CONCERN** is to bring about their **RECONCILIATION**. (**v10-11**)

- “**Reconciliation**” is to **RESTORE** two **HOSTILE** parties to one another; to bring about a change in their relationship so that they can become **FRIENDS**.
- Through our sin we prove ourselves to be **ENEMIES** of God – we **REBEL** against Him in living lives of open and wilful disobedience.
- But we need to understand that **GOD** doesn’t then just stand apathetic or neutral to our sin – he **HATES** our sin and He **HATES US** for doing it...!
- **Ps 5:4-6**
- There is therefore **ENMITY** between us and God because of our **SIN!**
- Jesus therefore came to **DESTROY** this enmity first of all – to deal with our **SIN**, **BUT** that is not **ALL...**
- His concern is not just that we should stand **NEUTRAL** before God and still disconnected from God, but that we should be in a **RELATIONSHIP** with God...that we should **KNOW** Him!
- Jesus deals with sinners in such a manner that they **MOVE** from being **ENEMIES** of God to **REJOICING** in God!
- Oh the **JOY** it must bring Jesus when **ONE SINNER** is **RESTORED** to this **LOVING, INTIMATE** relationship with the Father because of His **INTENSE LOVE** and the **RIGHTEOUSNESS** He graciously imputes to them so that they can **KNOW** God and **REJOICE** in Him, **LOVE** Him, **BE IN AWE** of Him...!
- *How does this reconciliation become a reality for us?*
- **SIN** is the issue and the **CONSEQUENCES** of this sin. Therefore, before there can be any movement from **ENEMY** to **FRIEND**, this needs to be dealt with – their needs to be **FORGIVENESS**.
- **1 Joh 1:9** – we need to **CONFESS** our sins, meaning there needs to be **REPENTANCE** of our sin.
- **REPENTANCE** is absolutely crucial for **RECONCILIATION** to take place!
- This reconciliation is so **TOTAL**, that from the moment you place your **FAITH** in Jesus and are declared **RIGHTEOUS** and you are **FORGIVEN** of your **SINS** because of your **REPENTANCE**, you are then a **NEW CREATION!!**
- **2 Cor 5:14-19**

Conclusion:

- Henry Blackaby in his book “*Experiencing God*”, writes about *Seven Realities* about knowing and experiencing God.
- The **Second Reality** that he writes about goes like this: “*God pursues a love relationship with you that is real and personal.*”
- How does **JESUS** deal with sinners?
- He **PURSUES** them with His **LOVE**, dying in their place for their sins, and **CLOTHE** them with His **RIGHTEOUSNESS** as they put their **TRUST** in Him in order to **RESTORE** them in a **LOVING** and **INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP** with their God as they **REPENT** of their sins!
- **Joh 17:24-26**

“The Commitment of Salvation”

Rom 10:9-10

Introduction:

- I don't know how many of you get frequent headaches...? What do you use...? **IMAGINE** having a headache and someone gives you a Panado – you **KNOW** that it contains Paracetamol that is a narcotic that is able to soothe your pain... you even **AGREE** that it is able to take away headaches... and then you let it lie on the cupboard and look at it... waiting for it to take away your headache...!?
- Why this illustration? Because we have been looking at *What is the Gospel...?*
- A quick recap... of the **ROMANS ROAD** verses: **Rom 1:19-20; 3:9-11, 23; 3:23; 5:12; 6:23; 5:6-8**
- In this study then we want to answer the question: **HOW** is someone then saved...?
- We will be talking about *“The Commitment of Salvation.”*
- The Bible is very clear about **HOW** someone is saved.
- **Joh 3:16; Rom 3:21-22** – **FAITH** in Jesus Christ! **TRUSTING** in Jesus! **BELIEVING IN** and **UPON** Jesus!
- What does it mean to **REALLY** believe in Jesus?
- **Jam 2:19** – even the demons believe what God has said and yet they are not saved...
- So, tonight we will look at a further passage in **Rom 10:1-11** and we will look at what is **CHARACTERISTIC** of a **FAITH** that bring about **TRUE SALVATION**...
- To put it differently – We will look at **THREE CHARACTERISTICS** of **SAVING FAITH**...

Study Points:

- **THREE CHARACTERISTICS** of **SAVING FAITH**:
 - 10. It is a PUBLIC Faith. (v9a+10b)**
 - 11. It is a HEARTFELT Faith. (v9b+10a)**
 - 12. It is a RESURRECTION Faith. (v9c)**

1) It is a PUBLIC Faith. (v9a+10b)

- To *“Confess”* Jesus as Lord is not just about **SAYING** the **RIGHT WORDS**...!
- It is not just about praying the **RIGHT** prayer or the **SINNERS** prayer although praying is a means by which we can profess our faith in Jesus.
- To **CONFESS** Jesus as Lord: *“It refers to a PUBLIC DECLARATION of our AGREEMENT with what God has declared.”*
- It is to **AGREE** with God about what He has **DECLARED** to us through the **BIBLE** about who He is, who we are, who **JESUS** is and what He has done and that you desire to be **SAVED** by Him and desire to **SERVE** Him.
- It is to make **PUBLICLY** known that Jesus is **YOUR** Lord, even if it means that people would laugh at you, make fun of you, hate you and even want to do bad things to you – the people who lived in Rome and confessed **JESUS** to be Lord and **NOT CEASAR** – they could **LOSE THEIR LIVES**...!
- **Joh 12:37-43**
- **Matt 10:32-33** – the word *“acknowledge”* here means more than just your words
- **BUT** it is about more than just **SAYING** something...
- **Verse 9** goes on: *“...AND...”*

2) It is a HEARTFELT Faith. (v9b+10a)

- To be saved from **SIN** you must both speak words of faith in **JESUS**, declaring that He rules your live **AND** believe this in your **HEART**. These three little words, **“JESUS IS LORD”**, reflects or reveals a **DEEP HEART CHANGE** that has already occurred.
- This public declaration that Jesus is your Lord and Saviour is **GROUNDING** in the reality of a **HEART** that has been changed and believes this.
- In **verse 10** we see that a **HEART** that believes leads to someone being **JUSTIFIED** – made right with God – **RESULTS** in the mouth **CONFESSING** this reality...!
- The **MOUTH** speaks out of the **OVERFLOW** of the **HEART**...!
- *How is the HEART changed to believe this?*

- **John 1:12-13**

- **HEARTFELT FAITH** is the result of the work of **GOD** in a man and results in a heart that is **CHANGED!!**

- Martin Luther: *Faith is the work of God in us, which changes us and bring us to birth anew from God. It KILLS the old nature, makes us completely different people in heart, mind, senses and all our powers, and brings the Holy Spirit with it! It is impossible that FAITH ever stop doing good. Faith doesn't ask whether good works be done, but, before it is asked, it has done them.*

- Saving faith is a **HEARTFELT** Faith which means that it is about an **INWARD CHANGE** that results in **NEW HEART** namely new desires and a new focus about life.

- A **NEW HEART** will lead to **NEW BEHAVIOUR** and that is the last characteristic of saving faith...

3) It is a **RESURRECTION Faith. (v9c)**

- To believe that Jesus was **RAISED** from the dead, implies that you believe everything else that is said about Jesus in the Bible namely:

- 1) That He is **GOD** who became **MAN**;
- 2) Lived a **PERFECT LIFE** of **OBEDIENCE** towards God;
- 3) But then died a **SUBSTITUTIONARY DEATH** in the place of sinners to pay the **PENALTY** for their sins;
- 4) And that God accepted this **PAYMENT** as **COMPLETE** by **RAISING JESUS** from the dead;
- 5) After which He **ASCENDED** into heaven where He now reigns as the **KING** of kings;
- 6) And one day He will return to **JUDGE** the earth...!

- Saving faith means we put our **TRUST** in the **RESURRECTED** and **LIVING JESUS!**

- Where **HEARTFELT** faith is about the **INWARD** change of our **HEART**, **RESURRECTION** faith is about the **OUTWARD** change of the **NEWNESS OF LIFE!**

- *“Jesus’ resurrection makes a new, holy life possible for those who TRUST in Him. Because the grave could not hold Him, we are SAVED from our SINS, we are EMPOWERED to live the RIGHTEOUS lives God calls us to, and we have the PROMISE of eternal life with Him.”*

- Read **Rom 6:3-5**

- *“Christianity isn't an idea to give assent to, to just agree with, but a personal choice about whom we put our trust in and HOW WE LIVE OUR LIVES!!*

- Saving faith results in a **NEW WAY OF LIFE!**

- **Col 3:1-10**

- This is what it means to truly **“ACKNOWLEDGE”** Jesus before others – it is to **SAY** that He is your Lord and then to **SHOW** by your life that this is truly so!

- This new life is because of the **EMPOWERMENT** and **WORK** of the **HOLY SPIRIT** in us.

- **Gal 5:16-17**

- **Resurrection** faith is the about a **LIFE** that is now **LIVED** according to God's **WORD** – a life of **GOOD WORKS** flowing from, that is the result of our **FAITH!**

- **Eph 2:10; Matt 5:16; Matt 12:35**

- Charles Spurgeon: *“Faith and obedience are bound up in the same bundle. He that obeys God, trusts God; and he that trust God, obeys God. He that is without faith is without works; and he that is without works is without faith.”*

Conclusion:

- This is the **CHARACTERISTICS** of **SAVING FAITH...**

- It is **PUBLIC** by telling other people that Jesus is your Saviour and Lord and that He has changed your **HEART** which is then revealed through your **LIFE** that is then different and changed.

- Have **YOU** come to place your trust in **JESUS** in this way?

- Does your life **SHOW** that this is the kind of faith that you have?

- The Bible makes it very clear that it is **ONLY** by this kind of **FAITH** that we can be saved...!!