

ROMANS: CHARTER OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH
"Part VI: The Salvation Sufficiency Of Faith Alone In Christ's Death"
(Romans 3:21-30)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

One of the most debated issues in Christendom involves what is needed for a person to enter God's heaven. Consider the following:

- (1) Herbert W. Armstrong of the worldwide Church of God, in the November 1963 issue of "The Plain Truth," (pp. 1, 4, 7-8) said that salvation comes by **keeping the Mosaic law**.
- (2) Albert Pike, a chief proponent of Freemasonry, in Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry (1914, p. 639) said: "Notwithstanding the death of the Redeemer [Jesus Christ], man can be saved only by faith, **repentance and reformation**." (emphases ours)
- (3) In defense of her beliefs, Marge Francis of Gaylordsville, Connecticut wrote in the July 7-13, 2000 issue of The Voice that "Jesus' Mother, Mary, is the Mediatrix of all." Since this role for Mary is held by the Catholic Redemptorist Fathers to mean "Sinners receive pardon by . . . Mary alone" (The Glories of Mary, p. 82, 83), This belief holds one must rely upon Mary if he would enter heaven. (4) Walter Abbott, The Documents of Vatican II, p. 33 reports that the Catholic Church asserts: ". . . the [Roman Catholic] **Church** . . . is **necessary** for **salvation** . . . **through baptism** men **enter** the [Catholic] **Church**. Whosoever . . . would refuse to enter her or to remain in her could not be saved."
- (5) Some Christian believe one must believe in Christ but **then not** die with **unforgiven** post-salvation **sins** or fail to enter heaven.
- (6) Mary Baker Eddy, founder of Christian Science, denied sin even existed, saying **man** was incapable of sin and thus did **not need** the Christian's idea of **salvation**. Science and Health, p. 475.
- (7) However, our Nepaug Church Statement of Faith says in Article III, Section 6: "We believe that **salvation** from **sin** is **only** thru **faith** in the **atonement** death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ as one's personal Savior." In Section 5 of that article we hold that believers are kept saved as they are sealed by the indwelling Holy Spirit "until the day of redemption" when believers enter heaven.

Well, is there a passage in the Bible that clearly, undeniably reveals just HOW to enter God's heaven?

(We turn to the sermon "Need" section . . .)

Need: "Since one of the most debated of doctrines in Christendom is what a person really needs to DO to enter heaven, is there a Bible passage that explains it in a clearly UNDENIABLE way?!"

- I. **Paul claimed God's righteousness was manifested apart from the Mosaic Law as testified by the Old Testament itself, Romans 3:21.**
- II. **This righteousness is by faith in Jesus Christ for every person in the world as all have sinned, coming short of God's glory, 3:22-23.**
- III. **In explaining the application of that righteousness, Paul revealed HOW Christ's death so appeased God's WRATH against man that faith in Christ ALONE was ALL that was needed to be saved:**
 - A. Romans 3:21-23 reviews what Paul taught about the **condemnation** of **ALL** men since he noted God's **wrath** against all men in Rom. 1:18:
 1. Paul claimed in Romans 1:18 that God's **wrath** was leveled against all men for rebellion against God and repression of the truth.
 2. Then, in 1:18-22a, we have seen how the **evolutionist** has rebelled and suppressed God's revelation in creation, inciting God's **wrath**.
 3. Next, in 1:18, 22b-32, we saw how Paul showed the **pagan** rebelled and suppressed God's truth, also inciting God's **wrath**.
 4. Next, in 1:18; 2:1-16, we have seen Paul exposing the **moralist's** rebellion and suppression of God's truth, inciting God's **wrath**.
 5. Finally, in Romans 1:18; 2:17-3:20, we have seen Paul revealing the **Scripture-based man** in rebellion and suppression of God's truth, leading also to his inciting God's **wrath**.
 6. Thus, Paul revealed in Romans 3:21-23 how God deals with the bleak plight of the world in which **all** its **individuals** stand totally unshielded from God's **wrath** against **them**, cf. Leon Morris, The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross, p. 167-168.
 - B. Well, in Christ's death, God's **WRATH** was so **SPENT**, **all** who have sinned (Rom. 3:23) are pronounced righteous from sin by God as a **free GIFT IF** they **believe** in Christ's death, Romans 3:22a, 23-24:
 1. The Romans 3:24a word translated "justified" (KJV, NIV) means "to be pronounced righteous," UBS Grk. N.T., p. 537; Arndt & Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, p. 196.
 2. The One making this proclamation is the **very GOD** Who harbors **wrath** against all men who have sinned, Romans 3:25a, 26.
 3. This pronouncement is given to the **sinner** as a **GIFT**, Rom. 3:24a:
 - a. Paul taught the pronouncement is actually a "**gift**" by using the Greek word **dorean**, the noun meaning "gift", Ibid., p. 209.
 - b. Here, **dorean** means "as a gift, without payment, gratis." (Ibid.)
 - c. This **gift** of a righteous acquittal from God is given "by His grace," by **God's favor** that **thus** comes **without** man's **merit**.
 4. Paul shows **how** the cross make's this gift **not merited** by **man**:

- a. God set forth Jesus crucified on the cross as what the KJV calls a "propitiation" through the sinner's faith in Christ, Rom. 3:25.
- b. This word is treated by some to be merely an **expiation**, or a covering for **sins as God is viewed NOT to be angry at sinners**, cf. Catholicism's The New American Bible, fn. to Rom. 3:25.
- c. Yet, the relevant word in Romans 3:25, **ilastarion**, appears elsewhere in the N. T. **only** in Heb. 9:5 for the Old Testament's **mercy-seat**, Moulton & Milligan, Voc. of the Grk. N.T., p. 303.
- d. That "mercy-seat" was used once each year **not** to deal with **individual sins** by the people of Israel, but **generally** for the **sinners themselves** who were under God's **wrath**, Lev. 23:26ff.
- e. This fits with the **context** where, since Romans 1:18, something must absorb the **wrath** of God against **sinners themselves!**
- f. Thus, Christ's death so **SATISFIED** the righteous demands of God against the **sinner**, that when the sinner **simply** believes in Christ, God's fierce wrath against him is **so spent** that God can pronounce him **absolutely righteous** as a **gift** to the sinner, 25a.
- g. Accordingly, the sins done before Christ's cross were **totally** removed at the cross to avert **all** of God's wrath against **all** who believed in God as Savior before the cross, Rom. 3:25b (4:3).
- h. Thus, presently, any time any sinner believes in Christ, God is both just and the Justifier of that person so as to **pronounce** him perfectly **righteous** in God's eyes, Romans 3:26.
- i. Hence, Paul concludes man's works do not even compute into salvation: salvation is God's **gift** by **faith**, Romans 3:27-28.
- j. God then pronounces righteous every man, regardless of his human heritage, by faith **ALONE** in Christ **alone**, 3:29-30.

Application: (1) We must **BELIEVE** on Christ's work **FOR** us on the cross to be pronounced righteous by God. (2) Now, **ONCE** we have **DONE** so, we can **REST** in the truth that we **WILL** enter heaven due to **GOD'S GIFT** to us by faith **ALONE** in Jesus Christ!

Lesson: Since the **WRATH** of God against **EVERY** man was so **FULLY SPENT** against **CHRIST** on the cross where He died **FOR** us **ALL**, **NO MORE** work or merit on **MAN'S** part is even **RELEVANT** for his destiny. Man is justified as a **GIFT** from God by faith **ALONE** in Christ **ALONE!**

Conclusion: (To illustrate the sermon lesson . . .)

While admitting he was worthy of death, the thief on the cross asked Jesus to remember him when He entered His kingdom. Jesus replied, "Verily I say unto thee, **To day** shalt **thou** be **with me** in **paradise**." (Luke 23:40-41, 42-43 KJV)

Jesus' reply to this man reveals how we gain heaven as follows:

- (1) The thief was a sinner as Jesus did not correct his assertion to the other thief that he deserved punishment: he deserved damnation!
- (2) Yet, the thief entered heaven without giving to the Church: as a crucified man, his possessions were confiscated, Mtt. 27:35!
- (3) The thief went to heaven without baptism, communion or going forward in a church service as he was restricted from doing so.
- (4) The thief went to heaven without penance: though admitting he was guilty of death (Luke 23:40-41), and having previously mocked Jesus on the cross (Mtt. 27:41-44), he asked Jesus to remember him without confessing these, and Jesus still said he would enter heaven.
- (5) The thief went to heaven without last rites: Jesus, the only "qualified" one there to give them was the **first** to **die**, John 19:31-33.
- (6) The thief missed confirmation en route to heaven: this ritual allegedly gives the Holy Spirit for salvation, but the Holy Spirit was not given for another 50 days on Pentecost, cf. Acts 2:1-4.
- (7) The thief bypassed purgatory to enter heaven: though he admitted he was worthy of capital punishment, he went to heaven the **day** he died without time to suffer for his crimes, Luke 23:41, 43!
- (8) The thief on the cross went to heaven without speaking in tongues as that gift came 50 days later at Pentecost, Acts 2:1-13!
- (9) The thief went to heaven without reincarnation: though a criminal, he went to heaven that day, not allowing enough time for several reincarnations to provide enough self-improvement to reach it!
- (10) The thief went to heaven without asking for Mary's help!
- (11) The thief went to heaven without Jesus adding the condition that he confess any post-salvation sins before he died: the thief's salvation included the eternal security that he would to make it to heaven in the end!