

the perfect life of obedience that Jesus lived) credited to us, as if WE had done it!

2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV) - For our sake *[for believers]* He *[God the Father]* made Him *[Jesus]* to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God. *[See also 1 Peter 2:24, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4]*

Isaiah 53:6 (ESV) - All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD *[God the Father]* has laid on Him *[Jesus]* the iniquity *[sin]* of us all.

So how do you get in on this good news?

Response

~ **Repent and Believe.** “Repent” means to turn away from our sin and from any hopes of rescuing ourselves. “Believe” means to turn to Jesus, trusting our whole lives to Him as our Savior, Lord (or “Leader/Owner/Master”), Treasure, and our very Life!

Luke 13:5 (ESV) – *[Jesus said:]* unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.” *[“Perish” means going to God’s eternal judgment in hell.]*

Proverbs 28:13 (ESV) - Whoever conceals his transgressions *[sins]* will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them *[repentance]* will obtain mercy. *[Also Isaiah 55:7]*

Romans 4:4–5 (ESV) - Now to the one who works *[foolishly trying to EARN being right with God]*, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. ⁵ And to the one who does not work but believes in Him who justifies *[declares righteous]* the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness

So how will YOU respond?

John 3:36 (ESV) - Whoever believes in the Son *[Jesus]* has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him. *[And remains on that unbeliever FOREVER in hell – Mk 9:47-48, 2 Thess 1:8-9.]*

We’d love to talk with you about what it means to follow God, finding a Bible-teaching church near you, etc:

Most people think they’re OK with God, but listen to Jesus’ shocking warning:

Matthew 7:13–14 (ESV) - Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are **many**. ¹⁴ For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are **few**.

More strong warnings from Jesus that should shock us into pausing to make sure that we’re in right relationship with God and not among the “many” that Jesus warned about:

Mark 9:47–48 (ESV) - ...if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into **hell**, ⁴⁸ **‘where... the fire is not quenched.’** *[And if some of this language is symbolic, then the reality is even worse - so terrible that we don’t have words to express it!]*

But there IS good news in the Bible about how we can be sure we’re right with God and will **enjoy** Him forever in *heaven* (Psalm 16:11, Revelation 21-22), rather than be punished under His righteous wrath forever in *hell*. That good news can be summarized with four words: God, People, Jesus, Response.

God

~ **God is the Creator who made you and is the great Treasure and Reason for which everything was made:**

Genesis 1:1 (ESV) - In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Romans 11:36 (ESV) - For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory forever. Amen.

~ **As Creator, God has the right to be the Ruler of His Creation.** He created people in His image (Genesis 1:27), so that we could know, love, enjoy Him and show His greatness and glory. God put the first man and woman (Adam and Eve) into a perfect world in a perfect relationship with Him and gave them one rule – not to eat the fruit from a particular tree. This would show whether they treasured God over their own way.

~ **Because He is completely good and righteous, God requires perfect obedience to His law.** Most people want God to judge the Hitlers, terrorists and pedophiles in the world, but hope that OUR wrongdoing will be overlooked. But the Bible says:

James 2:10 (NIV) - For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.

Habakkuk 1:13a (NIV) - Your eyes [God's eyes] are too pure to look on evil; You [God] cannot tolerate wrongdoing. [Also see 1 John 1:5 – “in Him is no darkness at all.”]

People

~ **People are sinners. We all choose our own way, rather than loving and obeying God 100% of the time, and therefore are headed for God's judgment.** Adam and Eve chose to eat the forbidden fruit, choosing their own way over being in right relationship with God. The Bible calls this “sin”. And since then, ALL of us are born sinners, rebelling against God:

Romans 3:10, 23 (ESV) – **None** is righteous, no, not one; ...for **all** have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

Romans 6:23a (ESV) - For the wages of sin is death... [“death” is referring to the unending punishment in hell that Jesus warned about in Mark 9:47-48, Matthew 25:46, etc]

~ **And it's no use hoping that we can just try harder, or thinking that deep down we're pretty good.** Many think that their biggest problem is how others have hurt them. Sadly, people DO hurt each other (sometimes in horrible ways). But our MAIN problem is our OWN sin:

Mark 7:21–23 (ESV) - [Jesus said:] For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, ²² coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. ²³ All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

Jeremiah 17:9–10 (NIV) - The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? ¹⁰ “I the LORD search the heart and examine the mind, to reward each

person according to their conduct, according to what their deeds deserve.”

Isaiah 64:6 (NIV) - All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts [the very best we can do] are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.

So far, this looks hopeless! How can God be good AND still make a way to declare any sinners like us as “righteous” and in right relationship with Him?? The answer is in what God did when He sent His own Son, Jesus, to earth...

Jesus

~ **Jesus is fully God, AND fully human (only God could pull that off!), and lived the PERFECT obedience to God the Father that we should have lived.** This was the life that loved, enjoyed, and showed the glory of God like humans were SUPPOSED to do from creation (Genesis 1:27).

Colossians 2:9 (ESV) - For in Him [Jesus] the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily [“deity” means that He is fully God! This is how Jesus could absorb the full, eternal punishment that the sins of ALL believers for ALL time deserved in several hours on the cross – only the eternal God could do that! But God cannot be hurt or die, so Jesus ALSO had to be fully human...]

Hebrews 2:14 (NIV) - He [Jesus]... shared in their humanity so that by His death He might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil...

1 John 3:5 (ESV) - You know that He [Jesus] appeared in order to take away sins, and in Him there is no sin.

~ **As the only sinless human ever, Jesus is the ONLY person who didn't deserve death. But He took on Himself the sin of all who would believe in Him, taking ALL of God's righteous judgment on Himself, in place of His followers.** Then God the Father raised Jesus from the dead on the third day, showing that God accepted as “paid in full” what Jesus had done on behalf of those who would be His people! So sinners like us now have a way for the guilt and penalty of our sins to be completely removed. Instead of judgment, those who trust in Jesus get all of the righteousness of God (through