

If I'm a Good Person, Why Do I Deserve to Go to Hell?

Romans 1:18-32

1 If I'm a good person, why do I deserve to go to hell?

2 Many people don't become Christians because they don't see a need to. 3 They have a good life. Things are going pretty well for them. 4 They behave pretty well morally and ethically.

5 But whose standards do they follow? You look pretty good if you choose the standards; comparing yourself only with the people who are not as good as you are. "After all, I live a pretty good life. I don't rob banks, steal cars, or kill people. I don't do anything bad enough for my picture to wind up in the newspapers or on the television screen. Most people I know consider me a pretty good person (I think!)."

Hell is for bad people. Right? So the question is: 6 If I'm so good, why do I deserve to go to hell?

I. Because God Has Revealed Himself and His Will – v18-23 7

The first reason is because God has revealed Himself and His will. In Romans, Chapter 1, verses 18 through 23 we read, ⁸ The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. ⁹

For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for

images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. ¹⁰

God is the only One Who has the right to set the standards and to judge you by them! The reason for this is ¹¹ because He created you. ¹ Not only that but ¹² He created you in His image ². He made you a free moral agent suitable for being judged. In fact, God executed that right in the Garden of Eden when He sentenced Adam and Eve to death ³. And, then, ¹³ God, through Lord Jesus, paid the price for your redemption from sin on the cross!

¹⁴ God has shown you His nature and power through nature. ¹⁵ Verse 19 here says . . . **since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them.** God revealed His nature in our

¹ Genesis 2:7 - the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

² Genesis 1:27 - So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

³ Genesis 3:19 - By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.

very bodies. In Genesis Chapter 1, verse 26, **God said, Let us make man in our image, in our likeness.** You can tell something about a manufacturer by the product that is produced. You can tell something about God by the beautiful bodies He created.

¹⁶ Then, in verse 20, it states, **For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.** God revealed His power and nature through “invisible” qualities. ¹⁷ His power can be seen in the force of a tornado which can pick up a train and whip it through the air or drill a piece of straw through a 2 by 4 board. ¹⁸ His divine nature can be seen through His natural laws. You break the Law of Agriculture and your crop fails. You break the Law of Architecture and your house collapses. You break the Laws of Health and your body suffers and you die early. You break the Laws of God and your body and soul die! Romans, Chapter 6, verse 23, says, **For the**

wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

However, ¹⁹ notice how the revelation of God through nature is considered by the world. ²⁰ It is, by and large, ignored. Psalm, Chapter 14, verse 1, The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good. Or ²¹ it is distorted. Daniel Crawford, missionary to an African country, realized that to effectively share the gospel, he had to understand their thinking and to identify with them. After preaching about evangelism in Boston in 1913, he was asked by a lady, "Why don't the Africans just look up through nature to nature's God?" "That's exactly what they do," he replied to her. "They know from their observations that there is a Supreme Being. But, oh, the thoughts they have of Him. Everywhere they see the strong devouring the weak. The lion pulls down the antelope, locusts destroy their crops and pestilence kills their children.

So when they gaze heavenward, they conclude that God doesn't really care what happens to them.”⁴

22 God has shown you His righteousness and love through the gospel. Romans, Chapter 1, verse 17 says in the Living Bible, This good news tells us that God makes us ready for heaven, makes us right in God's sight, when we put our faith and trust in Christ to save us. This is accomplished, start to finish, by faith.

II. Because the World Has Not Responded to God's Revelation – v24-32

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The second reason is because the world has not responded to God's revelation. Romans, Chapter 1 continues with verse 24 through 32, 24 Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a

⁴ “Our Daily Bread” – May 16.

lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator — who is forever praised. Amen.

Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion. ²⁵

Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not

only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

²⁶ God presented Himself as absolute Lord but the world doesn't serve Him. Verse 21 nails that home, **For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Instead ²⁷, they have corrupted the body and mind He gave them. In verse 26 it talks about shameful lusts ⁵. The phrase, shameful lusts ⁶, ²⁸ in the original language, means a corrupted mind conditioned by constant unnatural sexual activity. In verse 27 ²⁹ it mentions the phrase "inflamed with lust" ⁷. In the original language ⁸ this means to be so wrapped up in sexual appetite that they can't discern the difference**

⁵ v26 - Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones.

⁶ πάθη ἀτιμίας.

⁷ v27 - . . . the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another.

⁸ ἐξεκαύθησαν ἐν τῇ ὀρέξει αὐτῶν.

between the genders. This is homosexuality at its worst! ³⁰ Then they shut God out of their minds ⁹.

Then ³¹, in verse 29 ¹⁰ they mistreated one another; the precious creations of God He built in His image. In one of His parables ¹¹, the Lord said in disgust, **The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'**

Again ³², God presented Himself as provider of everything the world is and has; but they never thanked Him. ¹²

Finally ³³ ¹³, God presented Himself as King of the universe, but they have dishonored Him by

⁹ v28 - Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done.

¹⁰ v29 - They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice.

¹¹ Matthew 24:40.

¹² v21 - For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.

¹³ v23 - . . . exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

substituting images in His place. ³⁴ Images made to look like mortal man were the Roman gods. ³⁵ Images made to look like birds, animals and reptiles were the Egyptian gods. ³⁶ Our substitute images today are science, the media, medicine and government!

III. Because You are Guilty as Dirt – But Washed White in the Blood of the Lamb! ³⁷

The final reason you deserve to go to hell is because you are as guilty as dirt! God would be justified to condemn this sinful world, but ³⁸ . . . **God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.** For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁴

So, ³⁹ Lord Jesus went to the cross to satisfy the justice of God. He became your sin so you and I could

¹⁴ John 3:16-17.

become righteous. Second Corinthians, Chapter 5, verse 21, makes this pretty plain, **God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.** ⁴⁰

When you respond to the Lord by surrendering your life to Him, you are washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb ¹⁵. You are forgiven ⁴¹ and can start life all over again. You are as guilty as dirt, but you have been washed white in the blood of the Lamb!

Now, as a new creation, ⁴² you can be confident that you are saved and will go to heaven with Lord Jesus when He comes again! Romans, Chapter 5, verse 9, says, **Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!**

⁴³ Even though you deserve God's wrath, He loved you enough to suffer and die for you. Respond to Him now by surrendering your life to such a loving God!

¹⁵ Revelation 7:14 - These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

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