



ETERNAL
Life?

...OR
ETERNAL
Condemnation?

WHICH ONE DESCRIBES YOUR DESTINY?

Most folks “hope” they will be good enough to go to heaven. They cannot imagine themselves in hell. After all, they’re not as bad as the guy down the street or the woman at work. On the other hand, some have lived such wicked lives they cannot imagine themselves in heaven. They expect to go to hell.

What if both parties are wrong? Suppose there is bad news for the self-righteous and hope for the worst of sinners. Would you be interested in learning more? Please give me a few minutes to explain what the Bible teaches about the eternal destiny of everyone on planet earth. All references from God’s Word, the Bible, will be italicized in the paragraphs below.

Mankind has a dilemma. It goes back to the beginning of time. You see, God created a perfect world, without sin, pain or suffering. He also created the first man and woman without sin. *God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good (Genesis 1:31).*

God created man in His own image. *In the image of God created He him; male and female created He them (Genesis 1:27).* That means mankind is personal (having personality), moral (having an innate sense of right and wrong), and spiritual (not mere animal, but having a desire to relate to God).

Furthermore, man has been given a free will, to make choices about the course of his or her life. In other words, we are not programmed as automatons or robots. Life has real meaning and purpose. God has taken special interest in His creation, particularly man, His crowning achievement.

Unfortunately, the first man Adam, along with his wife Eve, chose to disobey God by listening to the lie of Satan, an angel who had been created by God but chose to defect and oppose God. In the paradise world of Eden in which they lived,

God had given specific instructions for the first couple to enjoy everything, but not to eat the fruit of one particular tree – the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Adam and Eve deliberately ate of that tree, disregarding what God had said. Instantly, they became sinners and realized it, foolishly trying to hide from God. But God knew where they were and confronted them, pronouncing death upon them for defying Him – primarily, instant death of the spiritual aspect of their being, so that they became *dead in trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1)*, forever after having an inherent sinfulness that could not be shaken.

Their body, now corrupted by sin, would eventually die. That had not been God's intent for man, but Adam and Eve freely chose the path of sin, never realizing all the pain and suffering that comes with it.

In other words, the image of God in man was severely marred from that point forward, and the earth was cursed also because of the entrance of sin into the world. The entire story can be found in Genesis, chapters 1-3.

The Bible is clear that *by one man (Adam) sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned (Romans 5:12)*. No one can escape the curse of sin. *There is none righteous, no, not one (Romans 3:10)*. *For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23)*. That means every person on earth is born into this world a sinner. There is no escaping it. It is a disease of sorts that affects the entire human race.

God is a holy, perfect judge, and He must punish sin according to justice. *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? (Genesis 18:25)*. Thus, all sinners must pay a price for their sin, and the price is high. *The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23a)*.

The end result of the disease of sin is not merely physical death, but the Bible speaks of something more dreadful—eternal death, or we could say, damnation in hell, which is ultimately described as a lake of fire, originally *prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41)*. *Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:15)*. This is the default eternal destiny of the entire human race, apart from divine intervention. What terrible news!

Thankfully, God did not leave us stranded, and so there is also good news! *I declare unto you the gospel ... by which also ye are saved ... how that Christ died for our sins ... and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day (1 Cor. 15:1-4)*. The word gospel means “good news.”

How is the death of Jesus good news? Moreover, why did He die? God specified that *without shedding of blood is no remission (forgiveness for sins) (Hebrews 9:22)*. Justice demands that sinners die to pay the price for their own sins – unless they have a substitute.

God sent His only Son Jesus to earth—born of a virgin—to live a perfect, sinless life and then to offer Himself as a substitutionary sacrifice for the sins of the world. He did this because He loves you. *But God commendeth (demonstrated) his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8)*. *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)*.

In payment for your sin, God will accept either your death or (preferably) the death of His Son. But the choice is yours. Your death results in eternal condemnation. Christ's death, if accepted, results in eternal life.

Perhaps you are wondering, “What must I do to obtain eternal life?” *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved (Acts 16:31)*. To believe is to trust, to depend upon. It is not merely acknowledging that Jesus died and was resurrected. It is recognizing that He died for YOU, to pay the price for YOUR sins, so that YOU might have eternal life. It is choosing to depend on His blood atonement as the payment for your sins in satisfaction of God’s justice. *For He (God the Father) hath made Him (Jesus Christ the Son) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (that is, in Jesus – 2 Corinthians 5:21)*.

In order to be saved, you simply need to depend on Jesus as your Savior from sin. Going to church, getting baptized, or living a moral life will not save you. Salvation is not of works. It is a gift of God to be accepted by faith alone. It is not faith in Christ plus your good works. It is trusting Jesus alone. *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast (Ephesians 2:8-9)*. *The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ (Romans 6:23b)*.

Do you believe God’s simple plan of salvation? Will you choose to depend on Him right now to save you from sin and hell? Jesus said, *He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life (John 5:24)*.

If you have chosen to believe on Jesus alone, then you are saved, and nothing can take away your salvation, for salvation is dependent on Christ’s finished work on the cross, not on your own merit or goodness. You are eternally secure. Jesus says so. *I give unto them eternal*

life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand (John 10:27-28).

Eternal life ... or eternal condemnation? **Which one now describes your eternal destiny?**

If you have chosen to depend upon Jesus for forgiveness of sins and eternal life, we rejoice with you! You are now part of God's family. *As many as received Him (Jesus), to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name (John 1:12).* Now it is the will of God that you live the rest of your life in a manner that pleases Him. You can discover God's will in His Word, the Bible. Start reading today!

If you received God's gift of eternal life in Christ, would you let us know? We will gladly pray for you, rejoice with you, and send you some free literature on how to live your new life in Christ.

-By James Hollandsworth

© 2014

 **REVIVALFOCUS**
MINISTRIES
www.RevivalFocus.com