

HOLINESS

A Divine Way of Living



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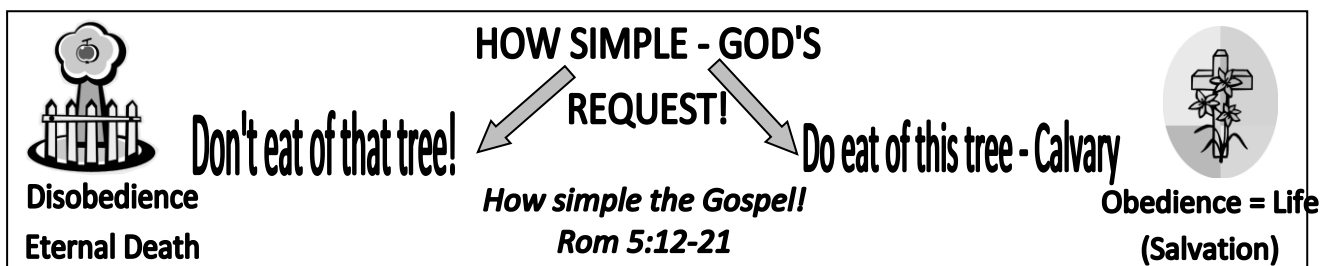
LESSON 8/Part 2

HELL, HEAVEN & HOLINESS: PART 2.

MANS REBELLION:

Adam and Eve wilfully chose to disobey God, thereby destroying themselves as God had made them. Sin is coming “short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23). No amount of good deeds in the future could pay for sinning in the past. By very definition of who He is, God could not tolerate rebellion in His universe. He immediately cast Adam and Eve out of the idyllic paradise He had created for them—but not without graciously and lovingly offering them an alternative. They and their descendants could be reconciled to Him, on His terms, of course—or they could suffer eternal separation, not just from the Garden but from His holy presence. The choice was theirs and their descendants’ to make.

Having been created for fellowship with God who had given them life and who alone could sustain it, separation from Him was, of course, the sentence of death. God had made that clear from the beginning. He had given Adam and Eve the easiest command possible—out of the hundreds (and perhaps thousands) of trees in the garden, they were to abstain from eating the fruit of just one. That’s all, only one! And God clearly warned, “In the day that thou eatst thereof thou shalt surely die” (Gen 2:17). Death was not in the fruit but in the disobedience.

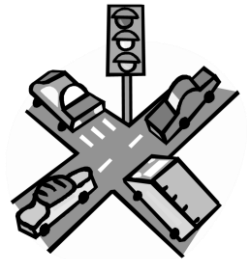


THE RULES OF LIFE

One can't even play a game without rules. Surely it is only reasonable that God should have rules in His universe. Without physical laws, the universe (if it could even exist) would be unimaginable chaos. That man is a moral being requires moral rules, and to allow them to be broken without punishment would bring moral chaos. We see this on a small scale in families where well-meaning but foolishly indulgent parents, by not punishing their children consistently each time they break

the rules, train them to be rebels. The child quickly learns that he/she can have his/her own way and soon ruin life for everyone.

Life itself teaches us how foolish it is to ask why there should be punishment for sin. Every person understands why this must be, whether they admit it or not. And right here we encounter a serious roadblock to faith for many people. Unquestionably, the Bible teaches that the punishment for sin is eternal. Jesus clearly warned of hell and referred to “hell...fire that never shall be quenched” (Mk 9:45).



HELL IS ETERNAL DEATH

“Why?” comes the inevitable complaint. “Why should the punishment for sin be eternal? That seems too harsh! Why can’t God punish us for varying lengths of time depending upon each one’s sins, and then forgive us? Why would God sentence anyone, even a Hitler, to eternal punishment? Why must the Lake of Fire be eternal?” The answer is found in who God is and in the fact that “God created man in his own image” (Gen 1:27). Losing that image cuts us off from the source of life.

The penalty for sin is death. Obviously, death separates from life—**life comes from God, so death separates us from the Life-Giver**. Thus, there is no cure for death except for the sinner to become pure and holy in God’s sight in order to be reconciled to Him. Contrary to the Roman Catholic belief in the purging of sin in the flames of some imaginary “purgatory,” no punishment of the sinner could ever cleanse him of his sin.

God is perfect in holiness and cannot fellowship with sinners. It’s not a question of policy—whether or not a soft attitude would encourage sin. It’s a matter of who God is, the very nature of His being. He cannot compromise with evil, cannot go back on His word. Cannot? Yes,; “He cannot deny himself” (2 Tim 2:13). And that is why the penalty for sin is eternal death—**not extermination**, but separation from God forever!

Heaven is the presence of God – Hell is the absence of God.

The law of gravity cannot suddenly be reversed for a person falling from the top floor of a 50-story building, whether he fell accidentally, jumped, or was shoved.

Man cannot fix his sin. (If you think you can absolve your sin by good works or religion, then you don’t “get it”- you don’t understand what sin really is. It has so distorted and damaged our spirit that God has had to make us again – a new Creation. 2 Cor 5:17, John 3:16 - Born again). Only God can pay the penalty for sin, and He did in Christ. **The only remedy for death is RESURRECTION.**

The Lord Jesus said -Page 3/...

Joh 11:25-26 : "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall _____ . Believest thou this?"

THE RICH MAN

The rich man in hell is a pitiful example of spiritual blindness unto death. He had spent a lifetime attempting to satisfy his innate spiritual thirst for God with riches and success. And now in hell, he cannot escape that tragic delusion. His physical tongue is in the grave with his dead body, but he imagines it is parched with physical thirst—and he asks Abraham to send Lazarus with just “the tip of his finger” bearing a drop of physical water to cool his “tongue” (Lk 16:24). He disdained the “water of life” when God offered it, and now in hell, he doesn’t even recognize the nature or cause of his thirst. All of his life he sought to physically quench a spiritual thirst, and now that thirst will burn forever for the water of life that he despised when it was available to “whosoever will” (Rev 22:17). The burning thirst that can’t be quenched in the Lake of Fire will never end for the same reason that the unspeakable ecstasy in heaven will not cease for all eternity: “In thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore” (Ps 16:11).

God made us for Himself, for His love, His joy, His companionship. To be separated from Him is to agonize in endless torment for what the redeemed in heaven experience.

SAVE THE LOST

May we fully awaken in this life to the truth of our eternal inheritance so that we may love and praise our Lord as we ought, without waiting until heaven to do so. And may we be used of God to awaken many unsaved to come to Christ and drink of the water of life while they still have the opportunity. 1 Tim 4:15-16.

All deserve separation from God because all have sinned, yet no-one can blame God for sins consequences. In and through Christ we can choose to be saved from sins consequences.

“Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?”

Genesis 18:25