

# Why Man Can Earn A Place In Hell But Not A Home In Heaven

(By Paul R. Blake)

## Introduction:

- A. Generated by a question in a Bible study
  - 1. Based upon a fundamental fact of doctrine that had its inception when Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil
  - 2. Before man committed sin, he did not need to be saved
  - 3. After man committed sin, he could not save himself
- B. Now that sin is in this world, being good will never be good enough.

## I. BEING GOOD IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH

- A. Rom. 5:1-2, 6-11; Mark 10:17-31 - Read and exegete
- B. Many good people are not going to be in heaven
  - 1. Jesus didn't come because the world was full of good people
- D. Human goodness isn't God's goodness
  - 1. Keeping the commandments will never be enough
  - 2. "I have now disposed of all my property to my family. There is one thing more I wish I could give them and that is faith in Jesus Christ. If they had that and I had not given them a single shilling, they would have been rich; and if they had not that, and I had given them all the world, they would be poor indeed." (Patrick Henry)

## II. HOW CAN MAN EARN A PLACE IN HELL BUT NOT A HOME IN HEAVEN?

- A. In Eden, man had a heaven-like setting
  - 1. All needs were taken care of, the environment was perfect and protected, death was unknown, access was given to the tree of life, there was nothing to fear, man's relationship with God was personal and direct in access - Gen. 2 - 3
  - 2. Man squandered the idyllic garden and his relationship with God by choosing to do the one thing forbidden; he did so willfully; he knew the consequences
  - 3. God is both love and righteousness; from His love He wanted man restored to the relationship but He could not do it without a price because He is righteous
    - a. To abandon man to his own destiny, God would have to stop loving him, and He would cease to be God
    - b. To save him without a price, He would have to abandon His righteousness and would cease to be God
  - 4. The unavoidable problem is that man had nothing to offer to pay the price, so God offered to pay the price for man's sins ... conditionally
    - a. Gen. 3:15
- B. Man earns perdition because he pays the price for entry.
  - 1. The price for entrance into heaven or hell is a righteous life; he trades away his sinless condition to enter hell; he must offer a sinless condition to enter heaven

- a. All men begin life without sin; if he remains in that condition, he is destined to go to heaven
- b. When a man chooses to sin, he willfully and knowingly exchanges his sinless life for a place in perdition - Matt. 16:26
- c. He later regrets his decision and wishes to go to heaven, but he no longer has the price of entry, a sinless life; he already traded it for a place in hell when he sinned
  - 1) Rom. 7:7-11, 22-25
- d. In order to recover his former righteous condition, he must have another pay the price for him, a form of propitiation
- C. Man cannot earn a home in heaven because after he sins, he no longer has the means of entry, a righteous life.
  - 1. If he is to become righteous in order to enter heaven, the state of righteousness must be imputed (ascribed, credited, attributed) to him
    - a. Rom. 4:6-8, 11:6
  - 2. God sent Jesus to pay for man's sins so that he might be reckoned to be righteous and be given a home in heaven
    - a. Man must never forget that he squandered his condition of righteousness when he sinned, and had nothing to offer to God to obtain a home in heaven
    - b. God paid his way through Jesus
    - c. Rom. 3:19-28; Heb. 2:14-17; 1John 2:1-2

Conclusion:

- A. Everyone was born in possession of an innocent, righteous life
  - 1. When we sinned, we earned a place in hell
  - 2. When we regretted it and wanted a place in heaven, we no longer had an innocent, righteous life to offer for it
  - 3. We needed another to pay our way
- B. God has paid our way into heaven through His Son Jesus Christ
  - 1. And now you are trading that away, too?!
  - 2. For what?!