



How Good is Good Enough?

Many people are hoping to get to heaven because they believe they are basically good. They are convinced they have never done anything deserving of hell, and since God is a loving, merciful Person, He'll let them in.

Well, that sounds good, but is it true? It might make me feel better to believe that now, but what a shock it will be if I get to the end of my life and find that I was wrong. I would rather have someone tell me the truth now so that I can do whatever is necessary to gain entrance to heaven and avoid hell for all eternity.

**But where can I learn the truth
about God's requirements for heaven?
Has God said anything about it?**

Well, the good news is that God has spoken. The Bible is God's message to the world. And since it's God's Word, we'd better listen carefully to what it says rather than trusting our own ideas or other people's opinions.

What did Jesus say? **“For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven”** (Matthew 5:20). The Pharisees were considered the most righteous people of their day, living according to a very strict set of rules and regulations. But the Lord Jesus said that was not enough; our righteousness needs to exceed their high standard. Then He raises the standard even

higher, by saying, **“Therefore, you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect”** (Matthew 5:48).

**“But,” you object, “no one’s perfect!
We’re only human!”**

And that’s why we cannot enter heaven on our own merits. That’s why we need a Saviour. And that’s why the Lord Jesus came to save us from our sins (Matthew 1:21; John 1:29). If you think you’re good enough, then you will never recognise your need of Christ. Jesus Himself condemned those **“who trusted in themselves that they were righteous”** (Luke 18:9).

That’s why it was necessary for Jesus to die on the Cross. The Bible teaches that the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23) and when Jesus died on the cross He fully paid the penalty for our sin, and cried out, **“IT IS FINISHED!”** (John 19:30).

Does that mean everyone will go to heaven?

Well, the Bible is clear that there will be many people suffering eternally, separated from God in a place the Bible calls hell (2 Thessalonians 1:9-10; Revelation 14:9-11). But God doesn’t want anyone to perish. He wants everyone to come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9). He wants everyone to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4).

So how can you take advantage of this wonderful offer?

The Bible says **“Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness”** (Romans 4:3). God had made a promise to Abraham and Abraham took God at His word, believing that what He said was true. Paul says it was not by works, not by religious ritual (circumcision), not by keeping the law (the commandments), but simply by believing that what God said was true (Romans 4:20-22). And Paul says that this same offer is available for each one of us (Romans 4:23-25).

Are you willing to take God at His Word? Do you agree with the Bible that you are a sinner and undeserving of heaven? Do you agree with the Bible that your works will not save you? Will you trust the Lord Jesus to save you from your sins? Or will you keep trying by your own good works, religious rituals, and good life to earn your way to heaven?

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