

IT IS FINISHED

Part 1...Home Bible Study...Part 1... Home Bible Study...Part 1... Home Bible Study...Part 1... Home Bible Study...Part 1

“...Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy.”

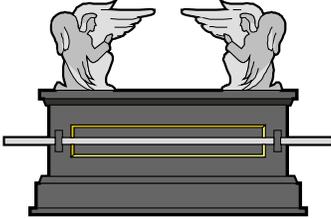
Leviticus 19:2 [also see 1 Peter 1:16]

**“But your iniquities have separated you from your God;
your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.”**

Isaiah 59:2

“...without holiness no one will see the Lord.”

Hebrews 12:14



Through these and hundreds of other clear Scripture passages, we find that we must be sinless to stand in the presence of God. Sin actually separates us from God. We often say "holy" means sinless, but to be holy actually means to be "set apart". God is "set apart" from us because He is sinless and we are not.

“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,”

Romans 3:23

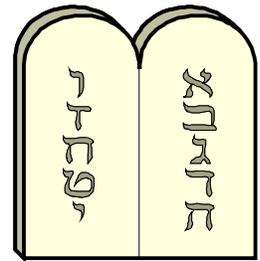
”For the wages of sin is death...”

Romans 6:23

“...How then can we be saved? ...all our righteous acts are like filthy rags...”

Isaiah 64:6

We read in Scripture that we are sinful, and that if we die in our sins we will be eternally and completely separated from God in hell. By our very nature, our human nature, we are opposed to God in all we do. Even our best efforts at doing good are tainted with sin. Our most fervent worship of God and our acts of kindness to others are spoiled by many shortcomings including impure motives and insufficient commitment.

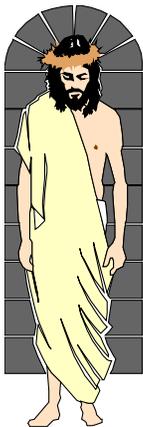


**“... now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, ...
This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. ...
Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation.
However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked,
his faith is credited as righteousness.”**

Romans 3:21 - 4:5



God also tells us that He wants all of us to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. God wants us to be holy so that we can be with Him in heaven. Out of His great love, God sent His own Son, to live a perfect life in our place, and to suffer separation from the Father on the cross, all to pay the penalty for our sins. Christ now offers to each of us His own perfect righteousness to take as our own. Those who accept Christ's righteousness as their own are then holy and able to be with God. Those who still try to go to God with their own righteousness always fail. The fact is that all of us deserve to go to hell and be eternally and completely cut off from God and His goodness, but when we accept Christ's righteousness, we are then declared by God to be brothers and sisters of Christ and co-heirs with Him. You see, when we cast aside our own sin filled righteousness and replace it with Christ's righteousness, we then meet God's requirement and can stand in His presence.



Some people believe that God forgives them because they try their best. By earthly standards they can be very good and decent people, but they still cling to their own righteousness. They have rejected Christ's righteousness and are headed for hell.

God's plan of salvation is very simple. Christ did it all for us. There is NOTHING for us to do. When he cried from the cross, "It is finished", the task was completed for us. There is nothing for us to add. When we try to add our own efforts to gain God's forgiveness, then we are no longer trusting in Christ alone.

Exactly how could Christ suffer in our place? Can we really understand how this works? No, we do not fully understand how Christ could take our place, but we can believe it.



For Discussion

The Grand Canyon is about ten miles wide and over one mile deep. If someone tried to jump across, what would happen? Would it make any difference how good of an athlete the person is? How is this like trying to use our own righteousness to please God?

When Jesus cried, "It is finished." His work of salvation was complete. Why is it comforting to know that Jesus has done it all for us and there is nothing left to do?



Prayer



Dear Lord, praise and glory be to your name. You have given to us the righteousness of Christ. Let us daily remember the worthlessness of our own righteousness. You have made us a co-heirs with Christ and guaranteed us a place in Your mansions in heaven. Help us to regularly study your Word, that we may grow in faith and become better equipped to be your humble servants. We ask this in the name of our dear Savior, Amen.



Optional Reading

Read Romans 3:9 - 4:8; and 7:14 - 8:17.

What additional thoughts does the Apostle Paul mention in these sections?



Suggested Hymns

Sing or read a hymn about taking Christ's righteousness as your own.



- Jesus Your Blood and Righteousness** ... # 376 in Christian Worship (CW) [371 in the Lutheran Hymnal (TLH)]
- My Hope is Built on Nothing Less** # 382 in Christian Worship (CW) [370 in the Lutheran Hymnal (TLH)]
- Rock of Ages Cleft for Me** # 389 in Christian Worship (CW) [376 in the Lutheran Hymnal (TLH)]
- Your Works, Not Mine O Christ** # 401 in Christian Worship (CW) [380 in the Lutheran Hymnal (TLH)]