

How Do I Get To Heaven?

RADIO MESSAGE BY DWIGHT PORTER

FRIEND, I am coming to you in this manner because it is impossible for me to talk to you personally. I will take only a few minutes, but it will be the most worthwhile time you will ever spend this side of eternity. Many times churches and preachers make salvation so complicated that you cannot understand God's plan for taking you to Heaven. I am praying earnestly that you will open your heart and mind to this plain presentation of God's provision, that you may be delivered from your sin and enter Heaven.

WHAT IS HEAVEN?

How can you describe a place where there will be no sorrow, tears, pain, darkness, or death? Imagine it if you can. There will be nothing wrong, for no sin will be present to produce that which is foreign to God's nature. **"And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Revelation 21:27).** Only perfect creatures will possess such blessings in this perfect place.

Heaven is a real place. Did you know that? **"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a PLACE for you. And if I go and prepare a PLACE for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2,3).** In Revelation 21 and 22 we learn of this wonderful place that God is preparing for His saints. It is called "The Holy city." **"Having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal."** It is a literal city, decorated with every kind of precious stone, with twelve gates, everyone a pearl.

WHO WILL BE IN HEAVEN?

If Heaven is a prepared place (and it is), then only prepared people will be present. If these glorious provisions of God's grace are for His children, then only those of His family will be present. Only the heirs of His inheritance can partake of this wonderful fellowship throughout eternity. Since Heaven was created perfect by the power of God, then this same power must make us perfect if we are to live there forever. **"For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).**

MY PRESENT CONDITION

Have you ever wondered why the Bible uses the term "Saved"? Are you one of the many who say, "Do you mean that I am so bad that I cannot go to Heaven? Well, I am not as bad a sinner as some people I know." But wait a minute, friend, there is no such thing as large or small sins. God makes no classification of sin. **"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2:10).** When Adam sinned, he involved us all in his fall. **"Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin: and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12).**

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). **"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (I John 1:8).** Sin is a sad and terrible reality, and the Bible is filled with the accounts of its results.

This is our present condition according to God. We are all guilty. That is why God's Son came into this sinful world. **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was**

lost" (Luke 19:10).

GOD'S REACTION

It is interesting to realize that God went into immediate action upon the miserable failure of Adam and Eve. God not only made the first move, but all of them since that tragic incident. We have no record of man asking God for help or assistance. His provision was prophesied throughout the entire Old Testament.

Christ is fully revealed in the New Testament. It was God's love that motivated His action to redeem us from the bondage and judgment of sin. **"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).**

God's judgment of sin (which was necessary to satisfy His righteousness) was poured out upon the One He provided for us. **"But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).** Only the sinless Christ could die for another. **"For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (II Corinthians 5:21).** Christ becomes our substitute; He alone is satisfactory to a holy God. **"Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (I Peter 2:24).**

What more could God do in manifesting His love and concern? Of His own volition, unsolicited, He has provided this eternal salvation for us.

WHAT MUST I DO?

First of all, what do you want to do? What can you do? How can a fallen creature redeem himself? What can a dead man do to restore himself to life? Our sin has forever kept us from being righteous by our own efforts. We can only believe in the work of another. **"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).** A historical faith is not sufficient. You can accept Christ just as you accept the fact that there was a George Washington. Saving faith is the personal appropriation of Christ and His finished work on Cal vary in your behalf. **"But God commendeth His love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).**

Salvation is a gift. It cannot be merited or deserved. Therefore, we can do absolutely nothing to earn it. **"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23).** **"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5).**

GOD DEMANDS REPENTANCE

First, we believe ourselves to be the sinner God declares. We must deal with our sin before ever meeting the Saviour. God reveals His Son only to those who repent of personal sin. This is God's requirement. **"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30).** Christ declared that we will repent or perish. **"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3).** When we repent, we have a change of mind toward God, our sin, and ourselves. We turn to God, acknowledging our sin and crying out for His divine intervention. Real repentance is being sorry enough for our sins to turn to God, Who alone can forgive and cleanse us of them.

God makes it very plain in His Word that we are saved by repenting of our sin and believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. Listen to Paul's message in Acts 20:21: **"Testifying both to the Jews**

and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Just because in one place the Bible mentions faith and in another place repentance, in no way is one or the other left out. Both faith and repentance are the gifts of God, and no work on our part is involved. God communicates conviction that gives us such sorrow for sin that we turn to God and believe His promises of deliverance. *"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but wrath of God abideth on him"* (John 3:36).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, 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 5:34).

The most misquoted verse in the Bible is Acts 16:31. Some people think this verse is for everyone. Not everyone is told to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. This truth was communicated to a repentant sinner. He was prostrate on the ground. He had already admitted his sinful condition and was crying out for direction to be rescued or saved from his sin. Listen to the Philippian jailer's question! *"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"* (Acts 16:30) The answer to any person in such repentant attitude is, *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house"* (Acts 16:31).

By faith we receive Christ into our lives. We believe Him to take away our sin and place us in His family, enabling us to go to Heaven according to His promise. *"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name"* (John 1:12). Right this moment will you do the following:

1. Will you realize God's holiness and the fact that no sin will enter Heaven? Will you recognize that God, being just, must punish sin?
2. Will you acknowledge yourself to be what the Bible declares you to be, a condemned sinner worthy of eternal death in Hell instead of Heaven?
3. Will you repent by turning to God, naming your sins? Are you willing, with God's help, to leave your old sinful paths?
4. Will you rest fully upon God's Word, believe Him to forgive your sin and cleanse you of it because of His promise that you believe?

WHAT WILL GOD DO?

He will do exactly as He has promised. He has sufficient power to keep His Word. By the previous verses, you can easily understand the following:

- ❖ You have been placed in His family—John 1:12.
- ❖ You have eternal life—I John 5:11,12.
- ❖ You have no condemnation—John 5:24.
- ❖ You will never perish—John 10:29.

You ask how long it takes for this transaction to come to pass? The timing is limited only by God's power to back His Word. It is instantaneous, for God's plan of salvation is complete. It needs only to be received by faith. It is given to you. *"FAITH cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God"* (Romans 10:17). When faith meets God's promises, it is done, for Christ died, rose from the dead, and now lives to meet your need.

WHAT ABOUT MY IDEAS?

Away with what you and I think. The important question is, What has God said in His Word? Now you know!

Now, when will I get feelings? There is no promise in the Bible that you will have a certain feeling. You are saved the moment you rest upon God's eternal, unchanging Word. You should not expect to depend upon your feelings in order to

be saved. Eventually, a deep-settled peace will abide within as a result of the assurance, based upon the Word, that you are in God's family and bound for Heaven. *"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that YE MAY KNOW that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God"* (I John 5:13).

I refuse to be a hypocrite, and I am going to wait until I can hold out! Since when are you supposed to hold out? Where in the Bible does it say you are going to be saved by your own effort? In God's family, we have our Heavenly Father to look after us. He gives us strength and power to live for Him. A miracle is produced within us that changes our appetites and desires. No longer do we please ourselves, but we walk in newness of life. *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, He is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new"* (II Corinthians 5:17).

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME?

As a new child of God, you must have nourishment and direction. There are so many things I could tell you that I hardly know where to begin. Let me give you a few suggestions to guide your Christian walk.

1. Recognize your Bible to be God's message to you. Read it daily. Start reading the Gospel of John. Each time you will see something new.
2. Develop a vital prayer life. Talk over all of your plans with the Lord. Remember, *"Ye have not, because ye ask not"* (James 4:2).
3. Cultivate good Christian friends. Keep company with people who want to do God's will. This motivation should take you to church every time the door is open to meet with people who are praying and studying God's Word. Be sure it is a Bible-teaching church!
4. Maintain an enthusiastic testimony for Christ. Be a person of action. Christ carried a cross up Calvary's hill for you. He commanded you to tell the world about His death and resurrection. Other people can be saved just as you were. Find active service in a Bible-preaching church. Go to work for Christ!
5. Allow the Holy Spirit to direct your life. *"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure"* (Philippians 2:13). It is a Spirit-led life. *"For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God"* (Romans 8:14). Keep in the place of prayer and Bible meditation so the Holy Spirit will be able to give you direction in every area of your life.

HOW ABOUT YOU?

And now, friend, you are faced with the gospel. If you have never acknowledged Christ as your Saviour, do it now! If you are a Christian, serve Him with all of your heart.

Thanks for your time. I hope you have been helped. If I can assist you in any further way, please let me know. Just drop me a card or letter, for I want to meet you in that wonderful place called Heaven. I will be there by the grace of God. WILL YOU?

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