

We reason that as long as our conscience is not bothering us too much, our relationship with God must be decent.

Honestly, I can't even remember the last time I did anything truly bad.

And when our conscience occasionally *does* bother us, we can always point to worse people. Surely "average" is good enough for God, right?

Maybe I wasn't the best person today, but at least I haven't done *that*.

But that is not the case! According to the Bible, God's requirement for everyone who enters into His presence is:

## MORAL PERFECTION

This does not merely mean avoiding sinful *acts*, but every impure desire, thought and inclination is sin.

Jesus highlights the severity of God's law in Matt. 5:22 "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire."

And in Matt. 5:48 "You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

How can You make a demand like this?

Indeed, why does God demand such a thing from us? Because God made us to be His image-bearers. And God Himself is wholly good, sinless and holy. Our task is to love God, enjoy Him and perfectly reflect His nature by our deeds, words and thoughts.

## THIS IS THE PURPOSE OF MANKIND

But because of our fallen nature, we do not do this. Instead, we're like insolent rebels who wallow in waste and throw mud and rocks at our good king every time we see him.

Consequently, all of our sins are against God, which is why David addresses God in Psalm 51:3-4 this way:

**"For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment."**

So who deserves a place in heaven in the presence of our good God?

## NOT A SINGLE ONE OF US

And nobody would escape God's righteous judgement and wrath unless He had, in His overflowing mercy and love, sent His Son Jesus Christ to pay the debt of our sins.

The gospel of John describes the birth of Jesus like so:

John 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

John 1:14 "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."

If you have been told that Jesus came into the world just to be some sort of role model or prophet, then you have received catastrophically incorrect information.

## SO WHAT HAPPENED ON THE CROSS?

Many know phrases like "Jesus was crucified for our sins and rose from the dead" but do not even think about what it means. It means that He, the one and only Son of God, voluntarily came to suffer the punishment that was *deservedly due to us*.

2. Cor. 5:21:

*For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

This is why Jesus is called "the Lamb of God"

Thus the debt of sin is paid in full for everyone who believes in Jesus, turns to Him and repents with a broken heart.

John 1:12 "But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."

This is God's promise to all sinners who believe the gospel.

John 10:27-30, the words of Jesus:

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one."