

A young man once questioned the importance of Jesus dying on the cross for sinners. Why, he said "I might be willing to die for other people even for people I don't like. "

The answer to his question was a little shocking: would you be willing to become a fly so that you could die for other flies? What a terrible and frightening thought that would be.

But Jesus coming to earth was like that: before Jesus came to earth He lived in Heaven with all the praise and honor which He deserved, for you see, Jesus is God. Yes, He is the very God who has always been and the same one who created all things. Jesus had to lower Himself to become a man to die for men. What a humbling experience that must have been.

The question will arise as to why Jesus or anyone for that matter must die for us so that we might be saved. If all you have to do about sin is to say you are sorry about it and that you will try not to keep doing it, we can all do that and no one would have to die for us.

But it is not true that if you say that you are sorry, you will be forgiven. Someone must take the punishment for your sin before it can be forgiven. What is the punishment God requires for sin? Death in hell is what God says must happen for each sin. Roman 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death. . . ."

THE GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD

Because we could not save ourselves, God in His Mercy sent His Son to this earth, born in a manger, to save us from our sin. Mary was the real mother of Jesus but, God was His Father. Because of that, Jesus was not born in sin like you and me, and thus Jesus would live His whole life on earth without doing anything evil.

Try to imagine then why we find Jesus, the only innocent man ever, hanging on a cross between two thieves. The important people back then accused Jesus of lying to everyone by claiming to be the Son of God which would make Jesus a blasphemer. They never mentioned His miracles (healing the sick - raising the dead) which proved that He was the Son of God, and so they persuaded Pilate to sentence Jesus to death on the cross.

WHAT A TERRIBLE TIME THIS WAS.

Jesus was put on the cross with nails, lifted up in the air, and left to die in awful pain. The other two men who died with Jesus were also put on crosses and suffered much agony. One of those men joined the wicked crowd, who were watching Jesus die, in making fun of Jesus. But the other man sensed that Jesus reason for dying was different from why he was dying and said to Jesus "Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." And Jesus answered him "Today thou shalt be with me in paradise." Praise the Lord This man made it in and we can too.

WAS GOD ANGRY ABOUT THIS?

This may surprise you, but the Bible says in Isaiah 53:10 "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him. . . ."

Certainly God was angry at the wicked people who did this, but God had planned that Jesus would die taking the punishment for all of our sin.

This was God's plan to offer salvation to all: Jesus, who had no sin of His own to die for, died instead for our sins paying the full price just as we will do if we die and go to hell. God was satisfied with Jesus payment for our sins and now tells us how to be forgiven and saved through Jesus.

GOD'S SIMPLE PLAN OF SALVATION

Is it really easy to be saved? Don't we have to put some effort into helping God to save us? No, **everything that needs to be done to save you has already been done by Jesus.** In fact the Bible tells us that salvation is a gift from God: Romans6:23b ". . . the gift of God is salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ." Is it hard to accept a gift? Only if you don't like the gift or don't want it. But, you say, I do want to be saved. I want the gift.

LET'S PUT IT IN THREE EASY STEPS

1. **Repent** of your sins - this means to admit that you have done many things wrong and that you want God to forgive and help you to do right. Repentance does not mean that you promise never to sin again.

2. **Believe** that Jesus is the Son of God who died for your sins on the cross, was buried, and the third day rose again to pay for all of your sins.

3. **Accept** Jesus Christ as your Savior inviting Him into your heart to wash away all your sins (past, present, and future sins) trusting Him to save you now forever.

Romans 10:9 "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Here are your questions. Answer each question and e-mail just the answers: as soon as we receive your answers back, we will send out your next course.

1. True or false - If you are sorry for your sins and tell God that, you can go to Heaven.

2. What is God's required payment for sin? d_____ in h_____.

3. Jesus was not born in s_____ like you and me.

4. True or false - God was upset that Jesus had to die.

5. Salvation is a g_____ from God.

6. What are the three steps to being saved?

A. r_____

B. b_____

C. a_____

Send your answers to bmason6@bellsouth.net.