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Stephen Whitmore

Reading: 1 Peter ch 3 v 18 - 22

Calvary is central to everything God has purposed for the world.

We are all unjust in the sight of God. Our sins have separated us from God and there is no way back unless sin is dealt with. To accomplish this, Christ suffered for sins (v 18).

We have to put away everything we try to do by ourselves. It is a work of the spirit of God that can take us back.

Christ has died - Sins dealt with; Christ has risen - Stand accepted in the presence of God (Rom 4:25).

Noah preached a similar message about the people's sin and rebellion. Only seven heeded his warning and the rest of the world faced God's judgment.

You can either look at the cross and think He suffered for my sins and took my judgment or look at the cross and dismiss it as a fact of history. The result of failing to believe is that instead of open arms receiving us into His presence there will be a nail pierced hand pointing us into judgment.

In the Old Testament, we see God used many ways to speak and plead with man. It was impossible for man to bridge that gulf between God and man. We are separated from God by our iniquities "our sins" (Isa 59:1)

Calvary tells us what God was prepared to do for us. The Bible tells us that "God manifest in flesh" (1 Tim 3:16); "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim 1:15), yet "He was in the world but the world knew Him not" (John 1:10)

A choice has been given - What will you do with Jesus who is the Christ?

The people rejected Him, yet God has provided a Saviour. Christ once suffered for sins. God punished the Lord Jesus Christ. He bore all the punishment for every sin ever committed. God must punish sin because it is the barrier that stands between us and God. He took the judgment of God upon Himself.

"All we like sheep have gone astray ..." (Isa 53:6)

The Lord Jesus Christ was separate, different from everyone else. The only one who never sinned.

God is a God of love and mercy.

Instead of judgment falling on a world, The Lord Jesus, the just One, took our punishment so God could forgive our sin because God wants us in His presence.

Men over the centuries have said we will go our own way. Men cried "away with Him". God went further than any man would go and gave His Son at Calvary to set us free.

Every morning and evening a sacrifice had to be offered as a picture of what the Lord Jesus Christ would do at Calvary. John the Baptist announced Him with the words, "Behold the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29). He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself (Heb 9:26).

God is holy and every sin must be dealt with. On Calvary every sin was dealt with so everyone can be brought back to God.

In the sight of God, "All have sinned and come short of the Glory of God" (Rom 3:23).

Are we ready to accept what God has done? Are we prepared to believe the Lord Jesus Christ took the punishment for our sins?

To be saved, you need to accept in your heart that you are a sinner and recognise personally that you need a Saviour. There is no other way sins can be dealt with. It does not matter how many times you turn over a new leaf or how many good deeds you do. We have to turn from ourselves and turn to Christ, putting our lives in the Saviour's hands.

Repentance means a complete change of heart. He has the power to save us. He has risen from the dead and had defeated every enemy that separates us from God. Anyone who puts their trust in Him will share what He has in heaven. He is our forerunner. The assurance that we have our place with Him in heaven.

This is what is on offer tonight. There are solemn consequences of turning our back on what He has done. God has appointed a day to judge in righteousness (Acts 17:31). Those who refuse to trust the Lord Jesus Christ will face the judgment. You turn your back on Him and you will face Him as your judge.

We cannot promise time. God's Word says:

“Behold now is the accepted time, Behold now is the day of Salvation”.

We can promise the following:

“Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out” (John 6:37). “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:21). The warning of God still comes: “Harden not your hearts”.