

Articles and Sermons :: "All Good People Go to Heaven— No Matter What."**"All Good People Go to Heaven— No Matter What." - posted by Shanu, on: 2011/1/17 23:37**

My interest peaked when one of the Pennsylvania coal miners related a conversation between himself and another trapped miner during an emotional interview that aired last Tuesday night with Stone Phillips of Dateline NBC. This young miner said that he asked an older veteran during the ordeal, "Will I go to heaven. . . cause I know the Bible says you've got to be baptized to go to heaven, and I haven't been baptized."

His co-worker and friend, in an attempt to comfort the concerned man, responded, "All good people go to heaven," and then he stressed, ". . . no matter what."

This interchange is thought-provoking. Few talk openly about such personal matters, and this man is to be commended for being concerned about going to heaven, when so many people are not.

You and I, possibly, have not been in such a life-threatening situation, wherein deep reflection is thrust upon us without warning. But the seriousness of our own mortality and morality confront us, periodically, and we have questions, just like this "doomed" soul did.

This underground episode reminds us of the belief of people in all cultures and times—there is life after death. Our Creator formed us with a searching heart (Acts 17:27); that inquisitive disposition is not satisfied with a "the-grave-ends-it-all" philosophy.

The miners talked briefly about heaven—going there. How do we know that the place to which some people go after death is called "heaven"? The Bible gives us the name. Jesus teaches us about heaven; the word "heaven" is found 135 times in the four gospels alone. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are the four inspired records of the life of Christ.

No one has come to this conclusion on his own—that "heaven" is the place to which some people go after death. We learn it from the Bible. But who will, and who won't, go to heaven?

Many believe it matters how they live. Many have the conviction that "being good" is important. They believe in some kind of judgment upon evil; because obviously, if "good people" go to heaven, "bad people" don't. Many people, then, are concerned about being good.

The older miner responded, "All good people go to heaven." This "consolation" reflects the belief of many people today, and it raises another very important consideration. How good is good enough? Are there some bad things that will keep us out of heaven? If we do many good things, even though we have done some moderately bad things, does the good outweigh the bad? Are we supposed to just hope or guess that we are good enough? And who really considers themselves to be a "bad person"?

"I believe," "I think," or "I hope," often preface these spiritual guesses about who will go to heaven—who is good enough.

But what does the Bible say? Wasn't that the concern of the young miner. Unfortunately, the Scriptures did not guide the sincere reply. If we learn about heaven from the Bible, then we should consider what the Bible says about going to heaven (cf. Matthew 7:21).

Consider several Bible truths.

1. God wants all people to go to heaven (2 Peter 3:9; John 3:16).
2. There are some people who are "good," and there are others who are "bad." Who would argue that Abraham Lincoln was no better than Charles Manson? Good and bad, however, are matters of degree as we view one another. But how does God view us?

The Bible teaches that no responsible person is "good enough" to go to heaven. Although we can always find someone who is "worse" than we are, we have all sinned against God. As God views us, "there is none righteous, no

not one. . . for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:10,23). That means we must be saved from our sins, and the goodness of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 4:15; Romans 3:24-26) will redeem us.

3. The very fact that Jesus died on the cross reminds us of how serious sin is. Since every person is included in the "world" of John 3:16, we all share moral culpability in sending Jesus to the cross. But in order to have the benefits of Jesus' saving death, we must obey him (Hebrews 5:9). Does this include baptism? Read these passages, and decide if the accountable person needs to be baptized in order to go to heaven.

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" (Mark 16:16).

"And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name" (Acts 22:16).

"Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; in which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, that aforetime were disobedient, when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water: which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 3:18-21).

4. Tragedy does not guarantee salvation. Jesus warned the man who had been paralyzed for 38 years, "Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you" (John 5:14). Only by obeying Jesus Christ can we be forgiven of our sins. Instead of interjecting our "think-so's," we need to acknowledge the sole authority of the Bible to answer these questions— yes, it does say one must be baptized to be saved.

Some may criticize these comments, saying, "Leave the old man alone. He's been through enough." I am just as elated as anyone that these nine men were rescued. But my prayer is that this brush with death, that we "witnessed," will make us all look— into the Bible— to answer the question "Will I go to heaven?"

Maybe because of this someone will evaluate his life, compare it with the guidance of Jesus Christ, and be rescued from the mirage that says, "All good people go to heaven— no matter what."

Biblically, we must conclude, "no matter what," one can be saved from sin if he believes in Jesus, repents, is buried in to the Lord's death through baptism, and is faithful to the Savior (Luke 13:3,5; Romans 6:3-4; Revelation 2:10).

Re: "All Good People Go to Heaven— No Matter What." - posted by knitefall, on: 2011/1/17 23:42

Yep, it all comes down to the item of, "Are there any Good people?"

ask yourself, "Am I trying to be a victim or am I really just a culprit?"

ah... telling answers...