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WHY GOOD PEOPLE DON'T GO TO HEAVEN

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Occasionally I hear Christians say things like, "Well, he wasn't a Christian, but he sure was a good guy and I think surely people like that will go to heaven too." When we hold out this kind of hope that our non-Christian friends and family will make it to heaven, we actually reveal a huge and fundamental flaw in our understanding of the gospel. Here's why these "good people" will not be going to heaven if they are not Christians.

1. They Are Not "Good" People

We often refer to people who are nice, easy to get along with, and helpful to others as "good" people. They may certainly do some good things. They may volunteer to feed the homeless, care for sick children in the hospital, and help little old ladies across the street. They may be generous and kind. They may not sleep around, do drugs, or even drink. But none of this makes a person "good."

There is only one standard of "good" and God himself is that standard. Jesus said, "No one is good except God alone" (Mark 10:18). If a person is not perfect, as God is, he or she is not "good." God does not grade on a curve. He does not say, "Well, you weren't perfect, but at least you're better than some people."

2. They Are Sinners

The reason no one is good is because everyone has sinned. We have all "missed the mark." God created us for His glory and we have all fallen short. This sin is rebellion against our Creator and it has caused us to become God's enemies (see Romans 5:10).

None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:10-12,23).

3. Good Works Do Not Erase Sin

The whole point of the gospel is that man is incapable of washing his own sins away. If we have sinned - even one time - we have a problem that we cannot solve on our own. Doing a million good deeds would not erase our sin. If it were possible to work off our debt of sin, Jesus would not have had to die.

The writer of Hebrews wrote, "Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins" (Hebrews 9:22). The blood of Jesus is the only thing that can take away our sin stains and make us clean. That's why He had to die.

When we hold out hope that generous and kind people will go to heaven, we are really saying, "Maybe Jesus was wrong. Maybe people's good deeds really do wash their sins away. Maybe people can save themselves from their own sins. Maybe Jesus didn't have to die on the cross after all."

4. The Gospel is Our Only Hope

Jesus said He was the *ONLY* way to the Father (John 14:6). To say there is a way to avoid the punishment we all deserve and receive eternal life in heaven other than through Christ, is to directly contradict Jesus. And the apostle Paul said *EVERY* spiritual blessing (forgiveness, salvation, etc.) is "in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3).

The gospel is our only hope.

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, **not a result of works**, so that no one may boast.

If a person wants to spend eternity in heaven, his only hope is to respond to the *Good News* of Jesus Christ in faith and allow the blood of Jesus Christ to wash him clean. *Good people* don't go to heaven; *saved people* do!

"And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name" (Acts 22:16).

I love you and God loves you