

What Must You and I Do To Go To Heaven?

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Is it possible for a sincere person to be lost eternally? Is it possible for an actively religious person to be rejected by God? These are questions of eternal importance and probably ones we have asked either about ourselves or someone else that we care about deeply. How do we go about determining the answers to these questions? Jesus says that His words will judge us in that final Day (John 12:48). Since Jesus claims to be an authoritative spiritual source, we should allow Him to answer our questions.

Next, we turn our attention to our first question: Is it possible for a sincere person to be lost? I would begin by turning the question around and saying, Is it possible for an insincere person to be saved? No one that I am aware of would make that claim. But, can a person who is living a life sincerely with a clear conscience before man and God be lost? Paul answers that for us in Acts 23:1, "Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." Was Paul claiming that he was living and doing right before his conversion to Christ? No! What he was saying was that in his heart and his head he thought he was right at the time, but now knows he was wrong showing it through his belief in Christ on the Damascus road, his repentance and baptism into Christ. Therefore, Paul's example shows us that sincerity of heart is not sufficient to save a person.

Our second question: Is it possible for an actively religious person to be rejected by God? In Matthew 7:21-23 we read an account of some very active religiously minded people. Jesus addresses them this way, "Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name? And then I will declare to them, I never knew you depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!" Lawlessness involves rebellion against God coupled with a refusal to acknowledge God. So, according to Jesus, it is possible to be actively religious and rejected by Him.

The "gospel" good news is that it does not have to be that way! We can be recognized by Jesus, we can be sincerely active religiously, and we can do the will of the Father and go to Heaven. We can be blessed spiritually in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus, Ephesians 1:3. The way to receive these spiritual blessings is to be "in Christ". To be in Christ, we must be "baptized into Christ (to) have put on Christ." (Galatians 3:27)

I love you and want to go to heaven with you.