

Sinners Welcome

Luke 7:33-34 [New King James] *“For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon.’ The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’”*

Jesus Christ was called in a derogatory manner a friend of sinners, and thankfully that is exactly Who He is, your Friend and mine.

Religious people tend to think they have an “*inside track*” on who is going to be saved and who is not.

The rule keepers, the “*good*” men and women the “*holy*” people are in, and the trouble makers, low-lifers, drug takers, drunks, etc. are out.

Is this how the Triune God looks on human beings and their righteousness?

Isaiah 64:6 [New King James] *“But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; we all fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.”*

This is how God views our efforts at becoming righteous by our own strength.

Habakkuk 2:4 [New King James] *“Behold the proud, his soul is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith.”*

The people whom God calls righteous live by faith, faith in what God has done for all humanity through His only Son Jesus Christ.

We only receive this righteousness by faith.

Romans 4:13, 16, 18-22 [New King James] *“For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.” ... “Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all” ... “who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, ‘So shall your descendants be.’ And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah’s womb. He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. And therefore ‘it was accounted to him for righteousness.’”*

It was through Abraham’s faith in the promises God had made that he was accounted as a righteous man.

Romans 4:23-25 [New King James] *“Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.”*

We also can be accounted as righteous in God’s eyes if we have total faith in the sacrifice of God’s Only Son and the sacrifice He made for all humanity, to be freed from the penalty of death.

This “*spiritual healing*” is available to every human being, and especially those who admit they are sinners.

Romans 5:10-11 [New King James] *“For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And*

not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.”

This is a very important scripture for all humanity.

God loves us so much that while we were still rebelling against Him and His way of life, Jesus Christ took on Himself the penalty of such a rebellious way of life.

Isaiah 59:1-2 [New King James] *“Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.”*

The great divide that separates us from God the Father, caused by our sins, is bridged by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, so that we are reconciled to God the Father.

John 3:16-17 [New King James] *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”*

The sacrificial act of Jesus Christ on the cross, shows just how much the Triune God loves the humans they have created.

That God the Father should be willing to offer His Only Son Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ willing to endure such agony and humiliation, confirms the very words of Jesus Christ that we have just read.

Human expectations of justice and fairness are set aside when God’s Son, Jesus Christ, starts to hand out the fabulous grace of His Father.

Matthew 20:1-15 [New King James] *“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. Now when he had agreed with the labourers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.’ So they went. Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, ‘Why have you been standing here idle all day?’ They said to him, ‘Because no one hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.’ So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, ‘Call the labourers and give them their wages, beginning with the last to the first.’ And when those came who were hired about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius. But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius. And when they had received it, they complained against the landowner, saying, ‘These last men have worked only one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.’ But he answered one of them and said, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what is yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?’”*

This could be very dangerous in today’s society in particular. Can you imagine the reaction of the unions and many politicians?

Our Saviour Jesus Christ is dangerous because He forgives where we cannot muster forgiveness, and He blesses where we cannot see any justification for such a blessing.

The men involved in this parable were “*day workers*,” if they did not take home a full day’s wage, their family would be hungry.

The other workers knew this, but still were angry when they did not get more as a result of the master’s generosity to those in real need.

Matthew 11:28 [New King James] *“Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”*

There is no limitation here, all are invited.

There are some scriptures that some people take, most often out of context, that may indicate that some people will not have a chance of salvation.

For example –

Luke 12:32 – *“little flock”*

John 6:44 – *“none come unless Father draws him...”*

Matthew 20:16 – *“many called, but few chosen.”*

What is not fully understood is the way the Triune Godhead has created human beings to be involved in His plan for the creation of children in His family.

We see this *“human family”* involvement from the very beginning with Adam and Eve.

This same *“human family”* involvement in God’s plan continues on past the First and Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Humans at first in physical bodies, then in spirit bodies, are involved in the increase of the created family of God, to fulfil His original purpose, [**Genesis 1:26-27**].

There is one criteria a human being has to choose to receive God’s forgiveness for sins that are regretted and repented of and His grace.

Why?

Humans were created by God who is love itself, [1 John 4:8, 16] to be objects of His love.

A love that is very different to human love.

The Greek word translated *“love”* when referring to God’s love is *“agapé”* which means a spontaneous love, irrespective of the *“rights”* or response of the recipient, [**Romans 5:8**], a sacrificial love, [**John 3:16-17**], that puts aside personal desires, [**Philippians 2:5-8**] to love the object of that love.

God knows you cannot force a person to love you, so He extended the love He wants humans to have for Him, first to us.

1 John 4:19 [New King James] *“We love Him because He first loved us.”*

It is **only** those who refuse to respond to this *“agapé love”* extended to human beings, whom God will have to reject, because they would not even desire to be part of a created family whose life was based on such love.

A life that was constantly *“giving”* not *“getting”* when we express such a life in the simplest terms.

We read about this *“human involvement”* in God’s plan for all humanity in the prophecies found in the revelation of Jesus Christ to the apostle John.

This involves the resurrection back to physical life all who have never heard of their only Saviour, Jesus Christ, [**Acts 4:12**].

How thankful we all should be that Jesus Christ is the “*friend of sinners.*”