

Paul Is in Heaven Because He *Blank...*

(You Fill in the Blank)

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I. A series of recent events:

- A. Five times, a preacher said the dead man was in heaven because of what he did**
- B. A friend told me neither the deceased nor his family believed in the Bible's Jesus**
—Yet I could tell you of the longsuffering and goodness of the deceased
- C. This friend asked me to pray that she would be able to save a family member**
—I told her the same Jesus who saved the thief all by Himself can save a Unitarian
—Yet on that spot, I prayed with her that the Lord would help her give understanding
- D. A pastor who told the Moslem doctor—Christianity is not what gets you to heaven**
—The doctor told him he was the first Christian who had not told him he was hell bound
—A family who heard the explanation asked for baptism to follow this kind of Jesus

II. Paul is in heaven because he *blank...* (In Paul's case, Paul was not the doer)

Act 9:1 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,

Act 9:2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.

Act 9:3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:

Act 9:4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

Act 9:5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: *it is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

Act 9:6 And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

Act 9:7 And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.

Act 9:8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought *him* into Damascus.

Act 9:9 And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

Act 9:10 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I *am here*, Lord.

Act 9:11 And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for *one* called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth,

Act 9:12 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting *his* hand on him, that he might receive his sight.

Act 9:13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem:

Act 9:14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name.

Act 9:15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:

Act 9:16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

Act 9:17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.

Act 9:18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.

III. Paul is the pattern—So, to fill in the blank for Paul—Is to fill in the blank for all

1Ti 1:15 This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

1Ti 1:16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

IV. Paul is in heaven because he blank ... (Let us try to fill in the blank)

A. Not because of his good works—He was a Christian killer

Act 9:1 And Saul, yet breathing out...slaughter against the disciples of the Lord...

B. Not because he found Jesus Christ—Jesus found him

Act 9:3 And as he journeyed...suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:

C. Not because he called on the name of Jesus—Jesus is the one who called his name

Act 9:4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul...

D. Not because a preacher found him—But because he was a chosen vessel

Act 9:15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me...

E. Not because he first believed in Jesus—Jesus came to him—Then he believed

1Ti 1:16 ... a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

V. ‘Believing in’ and ‘coming to’ Jesus are bigger things than most think

A. ‘Believing in’ and ‘coming to’ from the negative side—The ‘nots’ of natural man

Joh 5:40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

Joh 6:44 No man can come to me...

1Co 2:14 ...the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

Rom 9:16 So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

Joh 3:3 ...Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Joh 8:43 Why do ye not understand my speech? *even* because ye cannot hear my word.

Joh 10:26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep...

B. ‘Believing in’ and ‘coming to’ from the positive side—It is by God’s power

Eph 1:19 And what *is* the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

Eph 1:20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead...

Php 1:29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace...gentleness, goodness, faith,

Act 13:48 ...as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

Joh 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him...

Joh 10:26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

Joh 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

Joh 10:28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand.

VI. Paul is in heaven—Not because of Paul—But because God saves His people

Mat 1:21 ...thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Joh 19:30 ...It is finished...

Isa 53:11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

Rom 5:9 ...being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

Rom 8:33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth.

Rm 8:34 Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

VII. Believing the gospel does not save you to heaven—But to peace about going

A. From the negative side—Belief is not a necessity to get to heaven

Rom 3:3 For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?

Rom 3:4 God forbid,,,

2Ti 2:13 If we believe not, *yet* he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

B. From the positive side—The preacher does not give life—He gives light

2Ti 1:8 ...the gospel according to the power of God;

2Ti 1:9 Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

2Ti 1:10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:

Act 9:17 ...Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight...

Luk 1:79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and *in* the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

C. From a practical side—The gospel gives a peace in this world about the next

1. The preacher could take a load off by knowing the dead is in heaven because of Jesus
2. My friend could look for other evidences of spiritual life besides belief
3. My friend could take a load off by knowing she does not have to save her friend
4. The job of Christianity is not to save the world to heaven
—The job of Christianity is to proclaim the Christ that saves the world

- The broadness of the truth of Christianity is that Christ can save without Christianity
- The beauty of the truth of Christianity is that it does not praise itself, but its Christ

5. The glory of Paul's Christianity is that:

- The deceased man is not in heaven because he did anything
- The deceased man is in heaven because Christ did everything