

We are saved by faith, not our works—"For by grace are we saved through faith; and that not of ourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works" (Ephesians 2:8). Even if you sincerely try your best, it is not good enough in God's sight. The prophet explained why—"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6). In God's eyes, even our good works are unacceptable. We cannot fix things on our own. That's why we need Jesus.

A Proven Remedy

It is heartbreaking to hear of people who die during a pandemic, especially when help is available. It is even more disturbing to know that people needlessly perish in their sins when God offers forgiveness. God loves us so much that He made a way for us to escape pending judgment. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Jesus left heaven, lived a perfect life on earth, and suffered on the cross for our sin. He willingly took our punishment so that we could be spared. Jesus became our Substitute. "For he [the Father] hath made him [Jesus] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). Despite sinning against God, Jesus offers to make us righteous. That's love!

If you want to be forgiven, there are two requirements. Jesus said, "...repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15). First, you must "repent," meaning that you need a change of mind. Realize that your sin offends God and

desire a changed life. Second, "believe the gospel." The gospel refers to what Jesus did for you—He died, was buried, and rose again. He is alive and wants to play an active role in your life. Believe it, and He will do for you what He has done for millions of others throughout history!

Are you ready to trust Jesus to deliver you? If so, claim this promise—"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13). You can call upon Him to save you by praying something like this: *Dear Jesus, I realize I have broken Your commandments and face eternal punishment. I am sorry for sinning against You and believe that You died in my place. Please forgive me and save my soul. I trust You for salvation, not my good works. Thank You, Jesus! Amen.*

If you trusted Jesus to save you, He will not let you down. With our sins forgiven, we have peace within our hearts, knowing that we are ready for eternity. We have nothing to fear—not even a pandemic. The psalmist declared, "Thou shalt not be afraid for...the pestilence that walketh in darkness" (Psalm 91:5-6). What a promise!

For more information, please contact:

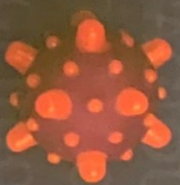


1210 E 62nd St. Chicago, IL 60637

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Surviving...



Something Worse Than the Coronavirus!

The outbreak of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) created widespread panic across the globe. People rushed to stock up on disinfectants, face masks, food supplies, and even toilet paper. Economic uncertainty led to record losses on the stock market and sweeping government intervention. Social distancing and quarantines became standard practice. Sadly, the death toll began to rise, especially among the elderly and vulnerable. When fatalities increased, so did fear in the hearts of many. The crisis captured the attention of the entire world!

Surprisingly, something far worse and more lethal than the Coronavirus has largely been ignored. What could be worse? The consequences of sin. While viruses threaten a person's health, sin threatens the soul. The reason so many people fear death is because they do not know what lies beyond the grave. Thankfully, the Bible sheds light, not only on the effects of sin but also the remedy for it. Let's consider sin as sort of a virus of the soul.

Symptoms

Just as a virus has symptoms, so does sin. We know that we have a problem with sin by the things that we do and say. Jesus taught that sin was a matter of the heart. "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are the things which defile a man" (Matthew 15:19-20). Despite our best efforts, we all slip up because our hearts have been corrupted by sin. Even when we try to change our ways,

we often find ourselves doing what we said we would never do again.

Infection Rate

When a pandemic sweeps across the world, we can be thankful that not everyone is infected. However, that is not the case with sin. When it comes to sin, there is a 100% infection rate! "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). It is not just "the other guy" who is guilty of sin. It is all of us. Take a quick inventory of your life. How many times have you broken God's commandments? Have you followed the two most important ones—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" and "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matthew 22:37, 39)? If we are honest with ourselves and with God, we are not as righteous as we may have thought.

Causes

So, how did we become infected by sin? First of all, we are sinners by birth. The apostle Paul explained it this way, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12). Adam and Eve were the first sinners. They disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden and corrupted themselves. From that time forth, sinners have populated the world with other sinners. Secondly, we see that we are sinners by choice. Though we were born with a sinful nature, we cannot excuse our sin by blaming our forefathers. When bad words come out of your mouth, who speaks them? You! When evil thoughts arise in your heart, who allows them

to fester? You! None of us can shift the blame. Remember that God holds us personally accountable for our actions. He said, "I the LORD search the heart...to give every man according to his ways" (Jeremiah 17:10). We will all stand before God one day and be judged.

Mortality Rate

Just as the infection rate of sin is 100%, so is the mortality rate. Sin is much more dangerous than the Coronavirus because everyone will die from it. Sin carries a penalty. God clearly says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:20). We are also warned, "For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). Sin brings more than physical death, it brings eternal death. The Scriptures warn of the final judgment—"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death" (Revelation 20:14). The second death refers to the death of the soul. Those who die without repenting will suffer forever in the lake of fire.

Self-Remedies

When people are sick, they often look for ways to treat themselves. However, there are no self-remedies for sin. No matter how hard we try, we cannot cleanse our souls of guilt. Religion tells us to make up for our evil deeds by doing good works. We are told to get baptized, take communion, be kind to others, and keep all of God's commandments. Those things are good, but they cannot save us. Notice what God says, "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight" (Romans 3:20). Clearly, being a good person does not earn forgiveness.