

# **Dear Friend . . .**

I have some good news for you. It is very good news. It has blessed the souls of millions of men, women, boys and girls through the centuries. It is "good tidings of great joy." It can be an inestimable blessing to you. I invite you to read about this Good News with great care.

But as a faithful servant of the Lord, I must tell you at once some bad news. It is very bad news. We cannot fully appreciate the Good News unless we understand the bad news.

Almighty God is righteous. He is holy. He has revealed to men His righteousness and holy Law.

The bad news is that we have all, without exception, broken God's Law or failed to live up to its demands. We have transgressed the Law in words, in thoughts and in deeds.

We have sinned against God (Romans 3:23).

But worse . . . God will not tolerate sin. "The wages of sin is death"(Romans 6:23), separation from God through all eternity.

And, to cap the dreadful climax, we cannot save ourselves from our dire predicament.

Our character will not save us. Our conduct will not save us. Our willpower will not save us. Our church membership will not save us. Our pastor will not save us. We desperately need a Saviour.

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And now the Good News. It is true that God is righteous and holy. But He is also loving, kind, merciful and compassionate. He loves us with an infinite and tender love. He loves us so much that He intervened in human history and sent us the Saviour we need.

Who is the Saviour, this wonderful love-gift from God the Father? He is Jesus Christ, the ever-blessed Son of the living God. Oh how we thank and praise the Almighty for stooping to our needs and rescuing us from our dismal plight!

What marvelous Good News this is!

And how specifically was the problem of our sin and resultant death divinely solved?

The Bible is crystal clear. Let us hear its message with humble, thankful hearts. Let us heed its solemn warnings and gracious invitation. Let us gladly submit to its plain, compelling summons.

This is what the blessed Lord Jesus did for lost sinners. This is Good News indeed.

He, the sinless Son of God, bore the guilt and shame of our sins upon Himself. He "bare our sins in His own body"(1 Pet. 2:24) when He died on the cross of Calvary. He "died for our sins" and "He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3,4).

The prophet Isaiah writes eloquently: "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5).

The justice of God was revealed in the verdict of death. The love of God was revealed in that the death was visited, not upon sinners who deserved it, but upon His dearly beloved Son.

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What then is my privilege and duty? I must recognize my need of a Saviour. I must realize that by nature I am a lost sinner, and I must bow my heart in loving devotion and sincere faith before the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lover of my soul.

With all my being, my intellect, feeling and will, I must trust Him as my own personal Saviour—as the One who shed His precious blood on the cross that I might be cleansed, forgiven and accepted as righteous in the sight of God.

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved . . .” (Acts 16:31) – saved from the guilt and penalty of sin, born again into the family of God (John 3:3) and redeemed by the blood of the Lamb of God (1 Peter 1:18,19).

This is God’s plan of salvation. Those who gladly embrace the plan and receive Christ as their Saviour have everlasting life (John 3:16). Their feet are planted squarely on the royal highway of blessing that leads them to Heaven, their everlasting home.

Those who reject the Saviour—and how I hope that you are not in this group—will experience a visitation of the wrath of God.

Who told us this? The beloved apostle John. He gave us a solemn warning: “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life” (John 3:36). Isn’t that wonderful? Trust Jesus Christ with all your heart as your dear Saviour and you enter at once into eternal life, never to be separated from the Lord you love.

But please notice the rest of John 3:36: "And he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

The wrath of God. What tragedy! What visitation of judgment! What irreparable loss!

Let us believe God. Let us take Him at His Word. Let us stake our soul's immortal destiny on the finished work of Christ on our behalf.

If our hearts are humble and receptive, if we turn to the Lord Jesus Christ in saving faith, our everlasting portion will be joy forever in His blessed presence. Heavens gates will open before our wondering view. We shall know the inexpressible delight of being forever in the presence of our adorable Lord.

What is your response to the gracious summons of the Son of God?

I trust that it is a glad, positive, sincere, mature affirmation of faith. I plead with you to trust Christ as your Saviour, to rejoice that your sins are forgiven for Jesus' sake and to join the company of the redeemed.

—Charles J. Woodbridge, Ph.D.