

Good News

We can understand from our study of the Bible why there is so much pain and suffering in this world. In the beginning God looked at his entire creation and observed that it was "very good".¹ In Genesis chapter three mankind decides to deviate from God's instruction. This is very important. The consequence of this first sin is a separation from God and death. This separation from God is also why there is so much pain and suffering in this world.

Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear.

But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.

For your hands are stained with blood, your fingers with guilt. Your lips have spoken lies, and your tongue mutters wicked things.

No one calls for justice; no one pleads his case with integrity. They rely on empty arguments and speak lies; they conceive trouble and give birth to evil.²

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.³

The good news is God has made a promise and provided a way back to a close relationship with him. The good news is that the way God has chosen is not difficult; it does not place a heavy burden on us. Each of us is provided with the opportunity to reverse the pattern of unbelief and disobedience mankind set in the Garden of Eden by believing God's promise of eternal life and obeying his instructions. The good news is Jesus Christ.

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."⁴

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."⁵

Since we are all a product of thousands of years of mankind wandering away from God's instruction, it should come as no surprise to learn that our ways are not in harmony with God. To repent is to acknowledge this truth and then make every effort to turn back to God. Jesus said:

"The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"⁶

Disobedience caused by unbelief is what caused all the problems of mankind in the first place. Believing God and then following his instructions is the solution for all the problems of mankind. This is also the solution for each of us personally. After Jesus was crucified and resurrected he appeared to his followers and gave this instruction:

He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.

Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."⁷

First you believe, and then you obey. The first act of obedience is usually baptism. If you were baptized as an infant you have not been baptized according to the teaching of Jesus Christ.

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¹ Genesis 1:31

² Isaiah 59:1-4

³ Romans 6:23

⁴ John 14:6

⁵ Matthew 11:28-30

⁶ Mark 1:15

⁷ Mark 16:15-16