



# SIN

*"If you obey every law except one, you are still guilty of breaking them all."* (James 2<sup>10</sup> – CEV)

**READ:** Luke 18<sup>18-23</sup> – The Rich Young Ruler  
Luke 23<sup>32-43</sup> – The Thief on the Cross

- What do these two men have in common?
- How did the two men differ?
- Where do we get the idea that 'good people go to Heaven and bad people go to Hell'?
- Are some sins worse than others?
- Are some people more sinful than others?

*<sup>1</sup>In the past you were dead because you sinned and fought against God. <sup>2</sup>You followed the ways of this world and obeyed the devil. He rules the world, and his spirit has power over everyone who doesn't obey God. <sup>3</sup>Once we were also ruled by the selfish desires of our bodies and minds. We had made God angry, and we were going to be punished like everyone else.*

*<sup>4-5</sup>But God was merciful! We were dead because of our sins, but God loved us so much that he made us alive with Christ, and God's wonderful kindness is what saves you. <sup>6</sup>God raised us from death to life with Christ Jesus, and he has given us a place beside Christ in heaven. <sup>7</sup>God did this so that in the future world he could show how truly good and kind he is to us because of what Christ Jesus has done. <sup>8</sup>You were saved by faith in God, who treats us much better than we deserve. This is God's gift to you, and not anything you have done on your own. <sup>9</sup>It isn't something you have earned, so there is nothing you can brag about."* (Ephesians 2 – CEV)

The Word of God teaches that the difference between sinfulness and righteousness is as stark as the difference between: death and life; lost and found; black and white. There are no shades of grey.

We cannot 'earn' our salvation by being good, because nobody can ever be good enough (other than Jesus). We are saved from death and hell (the consequences of our sin) by a loving God who provided a Saviour (Jesus) to take the punishment we deserve, so that we can receive the reward that He deserves. When we ask God to forgive us, and ask Jesus to save us, God takes ALL our sin away from us (past, present and future) and makes us right with Him. We pass from death to life.

It's called 'grace' and is quite scandalous. We may find it 'unfair' that bad people can end up in Heaven while people we consider to be good may be sent to Hell. But if God was to be fair according to our definition, nobody would be saved. How scandalous is God's grace? Well, consider this final question:

- Who does God love more: Mother Theresa or Adolf Hitler?