

The Big Surprise

There are surprises, and then there are ***surprises!!!*** Simone Manuel wining gold in the Olympics recently was a big surprise, even to herself! But Boise State beating the University of Oklahoma in football a few years ago was a ***huge surprise!***

Surprises abound in Christianity, mostly because the Bible is not read regularly in today's world. One of the great surprises in the Bible was a teenage kid with a sling and rock killing a well-seasoned giant warrior named Goliath. Another notable surprise was a 90 year-old woman named Sarah giving birth! A well known "surprise" was a virgin giving birth to the Messiah.

But there is one surprise that is a modern shocker – it is this, ***"You can't get to heaven by being good!"*** Yes, you read it right. You cannot get to heaven by being good! Hmmm.

You can get to hell by being bad. You can get to heaven by being forgiven through the blood of Christ. But you can't get to heaven by being good. How do we know? It's simple, really. God said so!

Luke 18:19, "And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone.

Romans 3:10, "There is none righteous, not even one."

Romans 3:23, "... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

All the good deeds in the world cannot make one sin go away. Kindness, sweetness, helpfulness, tenderness and even forgiving others, cannot make a person's sins go away, not even one. We, as kind-hearted humans, tend to think of the world as a balance scale – good on one side, bad on the other. And so, it seems, that when the good outweighs the bad you go to heaven. One problem: that just ain't Bible! What IS Bible truth on the subject? Let's consider a few:

John 8:23, "Unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."

Luke 13:3, "Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."

I Timothy 6:12, "...you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."

I Peter 1:18-19, "...you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, *the blood* of Christ.

Romans 6:4, 5, "Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection...."

Contacting the blood of Jesus by being buried with Him in baptism is the only way to heaven. Not our goodness, but His! What a great ***SURPRISE!***

-Ray Wallace