

## Four Truths You Must Trust

### Romans 6:23

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

#### Introduction

In Billy Graham’s autobiography, “Just As I Am” he tells about his conversion experience. He said in 1934 Mordecai Ham, an old-fashioned evangelist, came to Charlotte, North Carolina, to conduct a meeting – a meeting that actually lasted for 11 weeks, with preaching every morning and every night except Mondays. A 5000-seat tabernacle had been constructed for the event.

At first Billy Graham did not want to go to these meetings because Dr. Mordecai Ham was a controversial figure. When Graham finally did attend the meetings he signed up for the choir which sat on the platform behind the preacher. He concluded that if he was in the choir, he would be safe from Dr. Ham’s accusatory stare. Graham writes that he was extremely uncomfortable in the services, but he simply could not stay away.

Then it happened. Sometime around Graham’s 16<sup>th</sup> birthday Dr. Ham was preaching with conviction and power. When the invitation was given, Billy Graham responded by choosing to believe in Jesus Christ and giving Him control of his heart and life. God used the message of the old fashioned preacher, Mordecai Ham, to touch the heart of Billy Graham and transform his life.

The old time preachers believed some things that many preachers and Christians don’t care much about today. The saints who have walked before us embraced Bible truths that transformed their lives and helped build a legacy of faith that will not soon be forgotten. Charles Spurgeon believed these truths and became the prince of preachers. Dwight Moody embraced these truths and shook two continents for God. Billy Graham trusted these truths and God used him to preach them to more people than any other man in history. This morning I want to preach to you about four truths you must trust.

#### The Truth About Sin

The world denies the truth about sin. Today, we live in a world that says we need safe sex instead of abstinence. We even have a president in the White House who wants tax payers to pay for the contraceptives of those who indulge in the sin of fornication. In our culture, sex outside the boundaries of a healthy marriage is not considered a sin, but rather celebrated way of expressing one’s individual freedom.

Today, we live in a world that says substance abuse is a disease not a sin. If you abuse alcohol then it must be because your daddy left home when you were a child. If you abuse drugs it must be because you grew up in a poor neighborhood. Let’s get real! If you are an alcoholic don’t blame it on your daddy! If you are a drug addict it’s not the neighborhood’s fault, it’s your fault! Let’s call it what it is. Substance abuse is a sin! It’s time to stop blaming everyone else and take responsibility!

Today we live in a world that says homosexuality is a genetic condition, not an abomination. Modern science wants us to believe that homosexuals can’t help it, they were born that way. Modern sociology wants us to embrace and celebrate the homosexual lifestyle. Yet, the Word of God is clear, *“You are not to sleep with a man as with a woman; it is detestable.”* (Lev. 18:22)

The church doubts the truth about sin. Christians are guilty of categorizing sins. We compare our sins with the sins of others and think that my sins aren’t as bad as her sins. Christians act as if God has a different standard for them than He does for non-Christians. Understand this, the only difference between the sins of the believer and non-believer is position. The believer has been forgiven. The non-believer hasn’t been yet. All sin is wickedness in the eyes of God!

The Bible declares the truth about sin.

1. Everyone is guilty – *“For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.”* (Rom. 3:23)

## 2. Sin brings death

- a. *“The person who sins is the one who will die.” (Ezekiel 18:20)*
- b. *“The wages of sin is death...” (Romans 3:23)*
- c. *“Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death.” (James 1:15)*

### **The Truth About Judgment**

The world mocks the truth of judgment. Proverbs 28:5 says, *“Evil men understand not judgment...”* Secular humanism wants us to believe that man is the ultimate authority and judge of what is right and what is wrong.

The church is offended by the truth of judgment. Christians don't want others to confront us about our sin. We get angry if a concerned brother lovingly confronts us when we are wrong. We don't want the preachers to cry out against our sin! How many parishioners slander the preacher when he calls a spade a spade? Let me remind you that if you throw a rock into a pack of dogs, the one who hollers is the one who got hit! We don't want the Holy Spirit to convict us of our sin. When Christians are engaged in sin they tend to avoid the Bible, the church, and other Christians. When we are guilty and unrepentant of sin we avoid people and places and things through which the Holy Spirit might convict us of our sin.

The Bible declares the truth about judgment. Judgment is illustrated in the Old Testament. In Genesis, Moses gave us the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. The sin of homosexuality brought the wrath of God's judgment down on the people of Sodom and Gomorrah in a storm of fire and brimstone. In 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings God's judgment is poured out on the wicked king and queen Ahab and Jezebel. Ahab wanted the little vineyard of the poor peasant Naboth. But, Naboth would not sell. Ahab went home pouting and complaining to Jezebel when he didn't get his way. Jezebel vowed to get the little vineyard for her weak husband and devised a plan to kill Naboth. She had the poor man stoned to death for no reason and secured the vineyard for Ahab. But, that is not the end of the story.

God hates sin. God does not ignore sin. God judges sin! Listen to the Bible's description of the fate of Ahab and Jezebel. Read 1<sup>st</sup> Kings 21:17-19, 22-24; 22:29-38; 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings 9:30-37.

Judgment is declared in the New Testament. Every believer in Jesus Christ will be judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ. (Read 2 Corinthians 5:6-9) Every unbeliever will be judged at the Great White Throne of God. Hebrews 9:27 says, *“...it is appointed for people to die once, and after this the judgment.”* Revelation 20:11-15 describes the judgment at the Great White Throne. (Read Revelation 20:11-15)

### **The Truth About Eternity**

The world dismissed the idea of eternity. The atheist and evolutionist believe that there is no life after death. The spiritist of Buddhism and Hinduism believe that you will have a different life after death. You may be reincarnated as a dog or a tree or a cat or a mouse.

The church dilutes the idea of eternity. The annihilationist believes that hell is real but it is not eternal. Those who die and go to hell will eventually cease to exist completely. Some Christians believe in apparitions and think that after we die we become ghosts who roam to dimension between this world and the next. Still, other Christians believe that when we die we are awarded our wings and take our place among the ranks of God's angels. None of these ideas are supported by Scripture and they only serve to dilute the Biblical idea of eternity.

The Bible declares the truth about eternity. God gave the prophet Daniel a vision of the end of time. In that vision Daniel gives a description of tribulation and judgment. Listen carefully,

*“At that time Michael the great prince who stands watch over your people will rise up. There will be a time of distress, such as never has occurred since the nations came into being until that time. But at that time all your people who are found written in the book will escape. Many of*

*those who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to eternal life, and some to shame and eternal contempt.” (Daniel 12:1-2)*

The Lord Jesus promised eternity. In Matthew 25 Jesus Himself describes the Day of Judgment. Listen to His words, “And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.” (Matt. 25:46) Eternity is for real. Eternity is forever. Eternity can only be spent in one of two places: heaven or hell.

### **The Truth About Jesus**

The world despises the claims of Jesus Christ. Jesus claimed to be the Son of God; the world says He was the illegitimate son of a German soldier that Mary had an affair with. The Bible claims that Jesus was sinless and holy; the world says He was only a great teacher. The Bible claims that He paid our sin debt on the cross and was raised from the dead; the world says His crucifixion was a meaningless tragedy and His empty tomb is a made-up conspiracy.

The church is confused over the truth about Jesus. The Catholics aren't sure if He is sufficient alone to save; you must have Jesus plus membership in the Catholic Church to be saved. The charismatics aren't sure if He is strong enough to keep one saved; you can have it today and lose it tomorrow. The Baptists aren't sure if He wants us to shout about being saved; sit on your hands and whisper “amen” occasionally.

The Bible declares the truth about Jesus Christ! The Bible says He is sufficient alone to save – “*Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*” (Acts 4:12, KJV) The Bible says He is strong enough to keep – “*And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*” (John 10:28, KJV) He is looking for us to shout His praise – “Some of the Pharisees from the crowd told Him, ‘Teacher, rebuke your disciples.’ He answered, ‘I tell you, if they were to keep silent, the stones would cry out!’” (Luke 19:39-40, HCSB)

### **Conclusion**

John 3:16 says, “*For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.*” Forgiveness of sin, escape from God's wrath, and an eternal home in heaven are made possible only through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

Years ago a young English evangelist named Henry Moorhouse was invited to preach revival in a Welch mining town. One night as Moorhouse started for the pulpit, two of the men in the church called the preacher to one side.

“Brother Henry,” they said, “some of us believe you better close the meeting tonight and leave town.”

“Why, brethren?” questioned the preacher. “What is the matter? What have I done?”

“It is nothing you have done, brother Henry. It is what is going to be done to you. There is a wicked fellow in this town by the name of Ike Miller. He is the vilest, lowest, lewdest man we know anything about. He hates preachers, despises the church, abuses Christians, curses the Lord and the Bible. He told some of us to tell you that unless you close the meeting tonight he's coming tomorrow night to break it up and pistol-whip you out of town.”

Henry bowed his head in silent thought, and then he said, “Brethren, I feel very definitely that the Lord has brought me to preach to you. He will take care of me and this meeting. I'm not running.”

That night the tabernacle was packed and jammed. They sang; they prayed. He read his Scripture and began to preach. He had just well started when the door opened with a bang. In walked the bulky, burly man, Ike Miller. Moorhouse intuitively knew who he was. Ike walked all the way to the front, sat down on the very front bench, and looked up at the preacher as if to say, “Well, go ahead and do your stuff.”

Henry closed his Bible and decided to preach on John 3:16. He preached a sermon on the love of God that would have melted the heart of a statue. When he finished, he called the people to their feet and led out in the invitation hymn. No one moved. Some few sang. In the middle of the second verse, Ike Miller turned around and stomped out of the room. The crowd broke up at once. The men crowded around the preacher. They said, "Henry, why did you preach about the love of God? What does a man like Ike Miller know about the love of God? Moorhouse bowed his head, and he said, "Brethren, pray for me. Perhaps I have made a mistake, but I was trying to follow the leadership of the Holy Spirit."

The Holy Spirit knew what He was doing. He had spoken through the preacher to the sin-cursed heart of the wicked miner. Ike Miller left that tabernacle and blindly staggered down the main street of the town. He passed saloons, gambling joints, and other places of sin and wickedness. Men and women tried to stop him, but he shook them off and kept on walking. He came to the end of the street, turned to the right, walked about half a mile out on a narrow country road. He came to a tumbled down gate in a dilapidated fence, enclosing a one-room weatherboard shack so old and decrepit that the light could be seen through the spaces between the boards. He made good money, but drank, gambled and caroused it all away.

He plodded toward the door and pushed it open. The room was bare. There was an old stone in one corner, a bed, a pallet, a table and two rickety chairs. His wife was seated at the table, doing some sewing for the children. His two children, a girl about ten and a boy about seven, were on each side of their mother. They heard the door and looked up to see their father come in. Their faces turned white with fear. The mother stood up, motioned the children behind her and slowly backed up toward the bed. The boy and girl swiftly crawled under the bed. They thought their father was drunk, coming to beat up on them. The mother was willingly anxious to take all the abuse upon herself to spare the children. Ike knew what they were doing. He was a rotten sinner, but he had plenty of sense. His heart strained in his great body. His eyes began to sting with unshed tears. Walking into the room, he stretched out his arms and gathered his wife into them. And he said, "Dear, you need not fear anymore. God has brought you a new husband tonight."

He pressed her to his heart while he sobbed. After a bit, he released her. Kneeling by the side of the bed, he called for his children. They crept up, saw their mother's tears and began to cry also.

Ike embraced them, petted them, comforted them, kissed them, and cried with them. And after a while he turned to his wife and said, "Dear, we ought to pray." All four knelt at the old table. The woman began to pray but broke down. All the pain, the torment, the passion of the abused years came out in her loud weeping. The children sobbed with her.

Ike raised his voice. "Lord," he said, and stopped; "Master," and stopped; "Savior," and stopped; "Father," and stopped. He did so want to pray, but he did not know how. His sinful heart broke. The long restrained flood of tears swept him in a mighty emotion of penitence and longing. Somehow there came to his mind an old prayer verse he'd learned at the knees of his mother. Lifting his head, he wept out:

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,  
Look upon a little child.  
Pity my simplicity,  
Suffer me to come to thee."

Friends, Jesus Christ reached down from heaven and with His own heart's blood washed away that man's sins. He made Ike Miller a forgiven child of God for all eternity.

There is someone here this morning that needs to make a decision. The Lord is tugging at your heart right now. He is offering you the forgiveness of sins, a changed life, and an eternal home in heaven. Satan is also trying with all of his hellish power to keep you from trusting Jesus Christ. The decision is yours. What will your decision be?