

Saved In Ignorance?

by Wayne Goff

I have talked with those who claim to believe the Bible concerning those who have never heard the Gospel. They would try to argue with me that these people could be saved in their ignorance. The declaration sounds like this: **“You mean to tell me that God will condemn a person who never had the opportunity to hear the gospel and be saved?”** I, too, am sympathetic to one who may never have heard the gospel, but I cannot answer *emotionally* and *unscripturally* that they would be saved. And I think the one who has made this argument has not really thought it out. Let me show you the logic that leads me to the Scriptural conclusion:

1. **If one person** could be saved from sin in his ignorance, **then the whole world** could be saved from sin in their ignorance, and God would not need to send Jesus to the earth to die on the cross! *“For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved,”* **John 3:17**.
2. **If** God sent Jesus into the world to save the world, **then there is no other way** by which man could be saved from sin! Jesus said that He was *“the way”* (**Jn. 14:6**), and there is no other Name under heaven that can save man, **Acts 4:12**.
3. **If** the *“gospel”* is *“glad tidings of good things”* (**Rom. 10:15**) **then** the gospel **saves** (*“glad tidings”*), it does not condemn. Man is condemned in his sin before he ever hears the gospel, **Romans 3:23**. The analogy I have always used is that of a man drowning in the ocean without a life vest. If a ship fails to reach him in time to throw him a life vest, then it’s not the captain’s fault that he drowned. He drowned because he was in the ocean. The gospel, God’s plan to save sinful man, is good news because God is offering it to man who is already drowning in his sin! See **Romans 5:12**.
4. **If** an honest person is truly desirous of obeying the gospel, **then** God will find a way to get the gospel to him. Jesus said, *“... ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you”* (**Luke 11:9**). A perfect example of this is Cornelius, the Gentile centurion, who did everything in his power to be right with God. His prayers came up before God as *“a memorial,”* and God provided a preacher who preached the gospel to him. Hearing it, Cornelius and his household obeyed, **Acts 10**! Consider those in Philippi, too, **Acts 16**!

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