

## But first ...

This is a single grain of wheat. Wheat feeds one quarter of the world. It's just a seed.

It can be eaten. Or planted. If sown into good soil, it can produce 100 more. A year later 10,000. Ten years later, it could be 5 billion tonnes - enough to feed the world seven times over.

But to do that, it must change. Are you willing?



## The background

A man was born 2,000 years ago in Israel, named Jesus, who was called the Christ. Many sources confirm he really existed.

He claimed to be God's answer to all the world's problems. Including yours! Many others have too, of course. Like them, he invited us to believe in him, in order to have eternal life.

In today's scientific world, that seems far-fetched. As a former scientist, I once thought so as well. And if you follow another religion, you might say, **"So What?"** What makes his claims any different?

He claimed to be God's Son, making himself equal with God: Speaking of God, he said, "I and the Father are one." He didn't mean he was another God, but the only one.

The religious leaders of the day called it blasphemy. They had him nailed him to a cross and killed. But after three days, his disciples said, he rose from the dead, and later ascended into heaven without dying again.

If this sounds ridiculous, religious, or irrelevant, and, **"Who cares?"** comes to your mind, please read on. It's important.

so what?

## Was he wrong?

He claimed to be God! So he was either badly deluded, or deliberately lying, or correct – either mad, or bad, or God!



**Was he mad?** – he spent three years teaching his disciples, and it was written down in a book called the Bible. His understanding of human nature and of how to live has been recognised as unsurpassed in all human history. He wasn't mad.

**Was he bad?** – No selfish act of his was ever recorded. He healed all who came to him. He did many miracles, witnessed by thousands. The greatest teacher of the day said to him, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him." He wasn't bad.

His death and resurrection were witnessed by hundreds of people. Finally, his story exactly fulfilled detailed prophecies recorded over centuries, like: they would cast lots for his clothes; he would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver and the money used to buy the potter's field. No one else in history has fulfilled prophecy like this.

So however unlikely it all seems, we would be foolish not to take him seriously. And if what he said IS true, then **it's the single most important message the world has.**

## So what was his message?

God named him Jesus because, he said, "He will save his people from their sins." ('Jesus' means, 'God saves'.)

But why sins? Surely we need saving from sickness, violence, debt, accidents, floods, earthquakes and wars? Stealing a few pens from work, or telling a few lies hardly seems worthy of God's attention. So what's the problem?

Sin is.

# so what?

## God hates sin

Some then say, "What's true for you, is not true for me," meaning, "Your standards are not my standards." What you and I call sin may differ. True.

The problem is, we cannot even be true to ourselves! We all know that stealing is wrong, but we have all done it. We all want rules until they get in our way, and then we want an exception. We all want justice, until we are caught. Then we want mercy! But not for others; they deserve what they get... And of course we **all** hate hypocrisy!

So what standard should we use to measure sin? Mine, or yours? Neither. It is God who hates sin, and this is HIS standard:

*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*

The glory of God is the standard. God is perfect, so perfection is the standard.

OK. So we are all sinners...

so what?



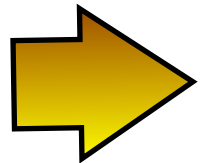
## Why do we need saving?

Because:

**Sin destroys.** It wrecks your life, causes you to be sick, and in bondage to anger, fear, depression and hatred.

**Sin divides.** You from people, families, friends. And you from the love of God. You might say, "But how do I know that God even exists? How do I know he loves me? I don't feel it, or see it!" Precisely! Sin has separated you from him. How can you feel it?

**Sin kills.** It results in eternal destruction. God said, "*The wages of sin is death.*" Not just physical death. Your soul lives on when your body dies. So where do you want to live? With God, or without him? With love, or without? In heaven, or hell?



## The Bad News

That is the choice, and there is no coming back.

This is not multiple choice – it's either/or.

THAT'S THE PROBLEM!

And the final problem is: mankind cannot fix it.

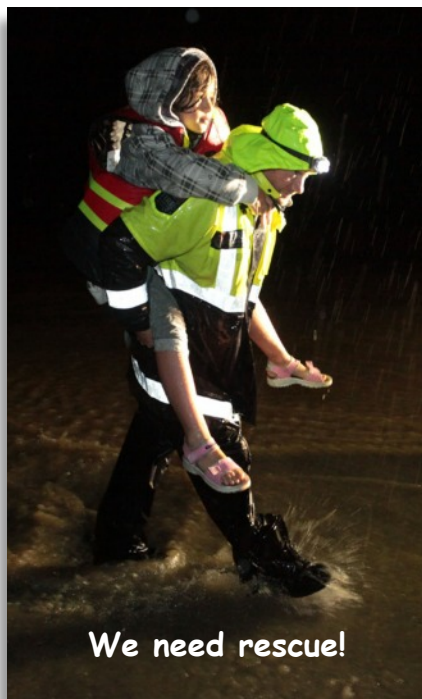
We have tried all sorts of solutions - good works, religions, fasting, praying. But how can sinful people invent a solution for sin? We can't!

### WE NEED RESCUE!

But remember what God said? The name 'Jesus' means 'God saves!' Only he can save you and me from our sins. AND all its consequences of sickness, bondage, separation and death.

Jesus said, *"For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."*

### How?



## The Good News

Jesus saves us from our sins by removing them. He is the only person who lived without sin. And since sin must be paid for, he showed his love for you by this - he died to pay for your sins. We deserve to die, but he died instead.

And Jesus also rose again from the dead! His tomb is empty. He is alive today in heaven, waiting for you to make this crucial decision.

If you choose to believe, God accepts you because he accepts his Son, Jesus. You are then forgiven. Forever! And because your sin has been paid for, guilt is gone, condemnation is gone, and fear is gone.

The separation between you and God is also gone! He opens his arms to you, and welcomes you into his family – a child of God.

Remember the seed of wheat? To live, it must change. If you want to live, you must give up your 'old self' - your old way of thinking. The old 'you' must go! If you put your trust in what Jesus has done, he writes your name in his book of life, and when you die and stand before him, you will be invited to enter into eternal life.

Heaven becomes your destiny.

**So what must I do?**