

MVP

When Ken Stegall was in the eight grade, he was selected as the Outstanding Male Athlete of the Year in his school. He comments: "Quite an honor, huh? But the reality was, we never won a game. It was a small school in a small community, and we played all the teams in nearby towns. We barely had enough players to field a football team. I can remember one game that we almost won... but we never won a single game. So I was the best of the losers... but I was still a loser."

Ken wasn't being critical of himself nor his team. He was making this spiritual application: "You may be more moral than all of your friends... But you're still a sinner. So am I." *

After making the case that all Gentiles are sinners and therefore condemned in Romans 1, and how the Jews were also sinners because they violated the Law of Moses in Romans 2-3, the Apostle Paul rendered the final verdict: "For ALL have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). That "all" includes you, me, and everyone else. Paul wasn't just trying to be critical; he was stating a fact: we ALL are condemned because of our sin and we are lost.

"But God..." Even though we are all condemned sinners, God loves us and desires to save us. He went to great lengths to provide a way of salvation. "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16 ESV).

God loves you, me, and all sinners so much that He gave His one and only Son Jesus to die on the cross for our sins. Jesus paid the price for our redemption from sin. "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (Ephesians 1:7).

God will save from sin and give eternal life to those who place their faith and trust in Jesus (Acts 16:30-31), turn from sin in repentance (Acts 17:30-31), confess Jesus before men (Romans 10:9-10), and are baptized (immersed) into Christ for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38). He will continue to cleanse from sin those who continue to walk in the light of His Word (1 John 1:7-9).

It's universal: we are all under sin's condemnation (Romans 3:23). But it's also universal that God loves every sinner and has provided the way of

salvation through the gift of His Son Jesus. “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23).

Jesus is the real MVP – Most Valuable Person – because He died for us so that we can live.

Won't YOU accept His offer of salvation and eternal life?

-- David A. Sargent

* From *Two Roads to Heaven* by Ken Stegall, p. 45.