

Card Trick (Salvation) (Imputation)

*Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.
Hebrews 7:25*

The Basic Bible Truth

All mankind has a huge problem that we cannot solve for ourselves. It is called sin. In our frail humanity, we fail to see sin from God's perspective. His view of sin is clearly defined as He placed the death penalty upon all who are guilty of even the slightest wrong. But our God also loves us and shows us mercy and grace by offering to us, free of charge, salvation. It is the prime ingredient of our lives. Everything else that matters, hinges on one question and its answer. Have we come to the point in our lives that we recognize our sinful condition, and our absolute inability to help ourselves out of our precarious predicament, and accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior of our lives.

The Object

(Link to a video of this card trick)

A Normal Deck Of Cards



The premise of this object lesson is to present the Gospel with what I unequivocally will tell you is the best card trick I ever learned! It takes a little practice, but it is absolutely amazing. The subtleties of this trick take too long to explain in written form, so I have included a video of how the basic trick is performed.

The Lesson

I would like to talk to you today about what it means to be a Christian. And just to be sure we are all on the same page here, let me explain something right up front. We use many words and phrases to talk about Salvation. We talk about being saved, being born again, becoming a Christian, becoming a new creation, inviting Jesus into our heart, being redeemed, being converted, or being reconciled. There may be slight differences between each phrase in it's focus, but we are essentially talking about the moment in someone's life when they realize that they are a sinner in need of a Savior, and turn to God and ask Him to be a very real part of their life.

I would like to use this deck of cards to illustrate some truths about Salvation. First, you will notice that from the back, these cards all look the same. As humans, we all have similarities that we recognize to be human: eyes, ears, nose, arms, and such. But God looks past that, and sees us for what we really are. When I show you the other side of the deck, you can see for yourself just how unique we all are. But one man was very different, Jesus Christ. Let's let the ace of hearts represent Him. He came to this earth as a genuine human being—100% man, and yet 100% God also. He demonstrated for us what a perfect life, a perfect heart looks like. As I turn the ace over you will notice that Jesus looked much the same as you and I. In fact the Bible says that He looked remarkably unremarkable. There was nothing about Him physically that would have drawn our attention. As I shuffle the cards may I remind you that the Bible says that He walked among us as an average looking man—but with a perfect heart.

I would like to take a moment now and talk about what it means to be saved. Let's look at four average people who we might meet. As I show you the bottom card, I ask, "Is that a perfect heart?" Obviously, no. So I will lay that card face down on the table. I will show you the next card and ask the same question, and the answer is again the same. Again and again I show you a card and ask the same question concerning a perfect heart, and each time I get "No" for an answer. We now have four cards on the table face down.

The Bible says that we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. None of us is perfect. None of us has a perfect heart. So let's look at the four people once more, just to make sure. As we go through them again, you agree, none has a perfect heart. But, the fine print in the Bible says that nothing imperfect can enter Heaven. So where does that leave us? In need of a Savior! Here is how it all works. I divide people into four groups, when it comes to dealing with them.

First, we have those that will have nothing to do with God. Their vile hatred of anything religious is evident in their behavior and words. They will die one day, and they will stand before God and He will look at their heart. As I turn the card around, we can all see a very imperfect heart. As I toss the card behind me to the floor, I remind you that God will say, "Away from me, I never knew you." And they will be cast into the outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth forever and ever.

So let's look at our second individual. Their attitude about God is a little different. They believe that God is real, but they have no desire to have a relationship with Him. They tolerate others who believe but, they themselves, have no time for such nonsense. One day they will stand before their maker and answer for their choices here on this earth. As I turn the card over, you will notice again, there is no perfect heart here. And again, the judgment of an Almighty God prevails and they burn in Hell forever and ever. And I toss the card behind me to the floor, and remind you that God will say, "Away from me, I never knew you." And they will be cast into the outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth forever and ever.

Will our third candidate fare better? They go to church! In fact they may even teach Sunday School, or be a Deacon. They busied themselves working in the church, but forgot one very important thing. They never got around to asking God into their hearts. They never became a Christian, even though they were surrounded by those who were Christians. Allow me to turn the card over and show you that unfortunately, their heart is as far from perfect as the others. And their punishment will be the same, awful fate. And this card is tossed away as well, behind me to the floor, and I remind you that God will say, "Away from me, I never knew you." And they will be cast into the outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth forever and ever.

So far, this is a sad story with sad endings. But there is a glimmer of hope with this fourth person. This individual understands their need of a Savior. They realize that they do not have a perfect heart, and repent of their pride and humble themselves and ask God for forgiveness. And can you believe, God

reaches down into their life and changes them completely! They are made into a new creation. And because of the transformation of salvation in their life, God does an amazing miracle. He imputes the righteousness of Christ into the heart of the saved individual. And when God looks at them, He no longer has to look upon the imperfect heart of a sinner. As I turn the card over you will notice that there is now a perfect heart where once was something else. What a miracle.

Now does that mean that they no longer sin? Of course not. We all fail in our everyday lives, but the righteousness of Christ, imputed into the life of every believer, covers our imperfections and allows God to see us as positionally perfect in Christ. And that means that when we die and stand before God, He will look at our heart and see the perfect heart of Jesus, and say, "Welcome home my child."

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