

ILLUSTRATED MESSAGE

TITLE: The Winning Horse

OBJECT: Poster of a horse race

DOCTRINE: Propitiation

STORY WITH THE OBJECT

Waiting to get into a restaurant one day, we saw a couple that was super happy. When we asked why they were so happy, they told us, "You don't know what it's like when your horse wins the race! Nothing in the world can make you happier!" My friend told them, "I know something that can make you happier - knowing that your sins have been forgiven and that you will go to heaven after you die." When he said that, all of their joy disappeared.

TRANSITION TO THE SPIRITUAL

You can have a winning horse, or have all the riches in the world, but if you don't know if your sins have been forgiven or if you'll go to heaven after you die, what does it matter? Where you spend eternity is much more important than having a lot of money; it's more important than anything else.

THE PROBLEM (LAW)

Where will you spend eternity? A young rich man asked Jesus, "How can I get to heaven? Jesus told him if he kept the 10 Commandments, he could get in. But who can keep all the commandments perfectly? Have you kept them? What about the law that says, "Do not use God's name in vain" as a swear word? Do not steal. Riding the metro without paying, or taking something small from work is stealing. Do not commit adultery. This commandment includes sex outside of marriage, too; even looking at a person with lust is committing adultery in your heart.

THE CONSEQUENCES (ETERNITY)

The truth is that no one can keep the 10 Commandments perfectly, except one person, Jesus Christ. The bad news is that the wages of sin is eternal death, eternal separation from God in hell. We are all guilty of sinning against God.

THE SOLUTION (CROSS)

But God in His mercy has provided a solution for us. Jesus Christ himself took the punishment for our sins when he died on the cross. He paid for our sins, and he proved it by resurrecting three days later. He paid the consequences for your sins so that we can go to heaven and not to hell.

THE CALL (REPENTANCE AND FAITH)

Jesus offers forgiveness and eternal life if you repent of your sin and give him control of your life. Nothing can compare with the assurance of knowing your sins are forgiven and knowing you have eternal life. Tell Jesus that you want to change and follow him. I encourage you to do it today, and you will see that having Jesus in your life is much better than having a winning horse!