

# I Don't Want It!



Jessica's elderly aunt had died. In contrast to Jessica, who was very poor, the old lady had been extremely rich. In her will she left Jessica her lovely house and enough money to be able to live there comfortably for the rest of her life. The only condition was that Jessica should live in the house while her health permitted.

"I can't possibly accept that", said Jessica. "I did not visit Auntie that much and I don't deserve it. I would rather stay poor." So the estate was divided among distant relatives who had not even heard of the old lady.

What do you think about Jessica? Was she selfless and noble, or ungrateful? If the aunt had known about Jessica's decision how do you think she would have felt?

## God's Offer

Some people who know the gospel message say that they 'do not want to live for ever' or that they do not want to 'seek a reward'. They claim to be content with this life, maybe believing that this is honourable. This, however, is in conflict with the Bible message,

and certainly not what God wants for the men and women He created.

By the death of His only Son, God is offering us eternal life in His kingdom on earth. This is compared to living in His house for ever, as stated in the famous psalm:

*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever (Psalm 23:6).*

In comparison with this amazing gift, God asks us to do relatively little in return. However, it is NOT the primary purpose of the kingdom of God to reward us all with a lovely place in which to live and enjoy ourselves. It is not the 'holiday that never ends': nor is it a prize for our being such good people. It will be an amazingly wonderful place, but the purpose of God, as stated in the Bible, is to fill the earth with His glory:

*But truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD (Numbers 14:21).*

It will be a place where God's will is done, as we are told to pray:

*Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matthew 6:10).*

This has always been God's ultimate plan, even though people tend to ignore it. This was often the case with the Jews, who God took as His people. He pleaded with them to obey Him.

*Since the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt until this day, I have even sent to you all My servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them. Yet they did not obey Me or incline their ear, but stiffened their neck. They did worse than their fathers (Jeremiah 7:25–26).*

## **Pleasing God**

People who serve God, and only those people, give Him pleasure, as we see in both the Old and New Testaments:

*Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6).*

*The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him, in those who hope in His mercy (Psalm 147:11).*

*For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God (Colossians 1:9–10).*

*“For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies,” says the LORD God. “Therefore turn and live!” (Ezekiel 18:32).*

In fact, God commands (and this is a very strong word) us to repent (see Acts 17:30). So we simply cannot please God by refusing a place in His kingdom.

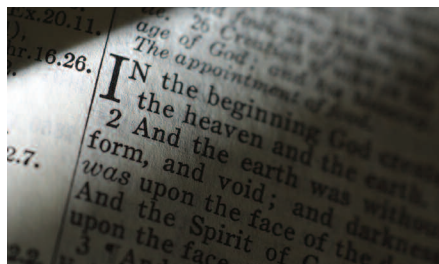
## **The Gospel Call**

Many people argue that they do not feel ‘called’, or that God has not called them. If they are saying that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ cannot save them then this is totally unbiblical.

Most certainly no one can be saved without God and the gospel, but people are called by the gospel message (2 Thessalonians 2:14; see also Romans 10:17, 1 Corinthians 1:21). Anyone who has heard it can respond to it. So if people do not feel ‘called’ then the problem is with them and not with God or with His offer of salvation.

To turn down God’s offer consciously and deliberately may be less an act of selflessness and more one of gross ingratitude. Never imagine that it is noble or pleasing to God to say that you wish just to perish.

Of course, you do not have to please God. You do not have to accept His gift, for you most certainly cannot earn it (see Ephesians 2:8–9, also Romans 6:23).



By having a Bible you have access to this generous gift of life. The gospel message is calling you. Whatever you think about Jessica, think hard about refusing the offer of life from the Almighty God.

**Anna Hart**