



## **As Many as 1,000 Unmarked Graves of Indigenous Children Found at Former Residential Schools in Canada**

**The Wired Word for the Week of July 11, 2021**

### **In the News**

In May and June of this year, the remains of as many as 1,000 previously unaccounted for indigenous people, most of them believed to be those of children, were found in unmarked graves at the former sites of four Canadian Indian residential schools in the provinces of Manitoba, British Columbia and Saskatchewan. The bodies were found using ground penetrating radar.

The Canada Indian Residential Schools were a network of boarding schools for indigenous children, funded by the Canadian government and administered by Christian churches for the purpose of assimilating the children into the dominant Canadian culture by removing them from the influence of their own families and culture and depriving them of their ancestral languages.

The system began in the late 1800s and continued for about 100 years, with the last school being closed in the 1990s. Over much of that time, attendance at day schools, industrial schools or residential schools was compulsory for First Nations children. Due to the remote nature of many indigenous communities, school locations meant that for some families, residential schools were the only option.

Deaths in the residential school were common and have been linked to poorly ventilated facilities, inadequate medical screening and mistreatment. The transmission of illnesses, particularly tuberculosis and influenza, occurred easily in the confined spaces. And some students were also subject to physical or sexual abuse, poor nutrition and medical experimentation.

In many cases, the deaths were never reported to the deceased's families.

That children died in the schools is not new news. A Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) created in Canada expressly to address the atrocious legacy of the residential schools, reported in 2015 on the deaths of 3,201 children in residential schools, but the finding of new unmarked graves in large numbers has reopened wounds in the indigenous communities.

The actual number of deaths remains unknown due to inconsistent reporting by school officials and the destruction of medical and administrative records to comply with retention and disposition policies for government records. TRC chair Justice Murray Sinclair has suggested that the number of deaths may exceed 6,000.

While the school system was effective in disrupting the transmission of indigenous practices and beliefs across generations, those who survived the schools often graduated being unable to fit into their communities but remained subject to racist attitudes in mainstream Canadian society. The legacy of the system has been linked to an increased prevalence of post-traumatic stress, alcoholism, substance abuse and suicide, which persist within indigenous communities today.

In addition to the work of Canada's TRC, the Canadian government has apologized for its role in the residential school system, as have provincial leaders and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Present-day leaders of churches that oversaw the schools have issued specific apologies as well, including leaders from the Roman Catholic, Presbyterian and Anglican churches as well as the United Church of Canada.

Following the recent discoveries of unmarked graves, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau asked that flags on all federal buildings be flown at half-staff. On June 2, 2021, the federal government pledged C\$27 million in immediate funding to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to locate and identify unmarked graves at residential school sites. Two provincial governments have also pledged funds for similar work within their jurisdictions.

After the news of the unmarked graves, five Catholic churches and two Anglican churches on tribal lands were set ablaze. In each case, the chiefs of the affected tribes have denounced the arson, as has a group of residential school survivors.

More on this story can be found at these links:

[As Recently Discovered Unmarked Indigenous Graves in Canada Nears 1,000, Activists Demand Justice. ABC News](#)

[Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Report Details Deaths of 3,201 Children in Residential Schools. Toronto Star](#)

[Canadian Indian Residential Schools Gravesite Discoveries. Wikipedia](#)

[Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada](#)

[Suicide Ideation and Attempts Among First Nations Peoples Living On-Reserve in Canada: The Intergenerational and Cumulative Effects of Indian Residential Schools. Canadian Journal of Psychiatry](#)

### **Applying the News Story**

Canada is not the first country to use a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, whether by that name or not, as an official body to establish the scale and impact of past wrongdoing by a government (and/or non-state actors) in hope of resolving conflict, distrust and human damage left over from that past.

Sometimes called just a Truth Commission or a Truth and Justice Commission, or using a name that describes the specific past wrongdoing being addressed, such bodies have existed for prescribed periods in Uganda, Bolivia, Chile, Nepal, El Salvador, Rwanda, Guatemala, Australia, Germany, Panama and South Africa (this is not a complete list). They have sometimes been used to bring about reconciliation with indigenous peoples who have been mistreated because of government policies in earlier eras. Other times, they have addressed different historical wrongs.

Some countries, including the United States, have not established official commissions but have attempted to address past governmental harmful policies through legislation and through piecemeal efforts by cities, states and grassroots organizations. The United States has its own [Indian residential school past](#), and longstanding discriminatory divisions with other groups.

While there have been many such commissions, they have not all been successful and effective, and in some cases, may have done little more than allow governments to legitimize themselves by pretending they have dealt with painful history when they have only deferred the problem to administrations still to come.

Still, the best of TRCs have at least met a minimum standard of not allowing things to get worse. Dag Hammarskjöld, the secretary general of the United Nations through most of the 1950s, who faced criticism about the limitations of the UN, once said the UN was "not created to take mankind to heaven, but to save humanity from hell." Some have suggested that such a definition applies to TRCs as well.

There are no biblical examples of TRCs, but both truth and reconciliation are important themes in the Bible, and the current news from Canada gives us a reason to look at them afresh.

## The Big Questions

1. What is it about humankind that allows dominant groups to deem it proper to force others to conform to the dominant culture? What, if any, noble motives might be in play? What, if any, ignoble motives might be in play?
2. Why do you suppose the compulsory boarding schools were supported by churches?
3. What, if anything, do official apologies accomplish for the recipients? for those making the apology? What is the effect of apologies from people who did not commit the wrong to people who did not suffer the wrong (or some of whom did not suffer the wrong)? What fallout might present generations suffer from the wrongs committed by or against their predecessors?
4. How far can reconciliation go without truth?
5. To what degree do you think your relationship with God is based on truth and reconciliation? Explain your answer.

### Confronting the News With Scripture and Hope

Here are some Bible verses to guide your discussion:

#### Zechariah 8:16-17

**These are the things that you shall do: Speak the truth to one another, render in your gates judgments that are true and make for peace, do not devise evil in your hearts against one another, and love no false oath; for all these are things that I hate, says the LORD.** (For context, read [Zechariah 8:11-17.](#))

In this passage, the prophet Zechariah is addressing the remnant of Israel and Judah that has returned from exile in Babylon, and are now trying to resettle their homeland that was devastated at the time the Babylonian army overran their land. Zechariah tells them of God's intention to restore them and of God's will that they "Speak the truth to one another" and treat one another fairly and justly.

**Question:** Telling the truth, treating one another fairly and justly; what other ingredients are essential for good communal life?

#### James 5:16

**Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed.** (For context, read [James 5:13-18.](#))

Here is a biblical basis for apologies, official and otherwise. Note that James links confession of sins/apology with healing.

**Questions:** What is the relationship between the physical, emotional, rational, relational, willful and spiritual aspects of our lives? Can you be a wrongdoer in any one of these areas and still be whole in the others? Why or why not?

#### Matthew 5:23-24

**So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift.** (For context, read [Matthew 5:21-26.](#))

This is from Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. While it can stand alone, Jesus used it as an extension of keeping the "You shall not murder" commandment (see the context verses).

**Questions:** Why do you think Jesus puts reconciliation with others *ahead* of offering a gift to God? What standard of right and wrong is Jesus promoting here? In the context verses, how are murder, anger, reconciliation and justice linked?

### **Joshua 22:32-33**

**Then the priest Phinehas son of Eleazar and the chiefs returned from the Reubenites and the Gadites in the land of Gilead to the land of Canaan, to the Israelites, and brought back word to them. The report pleased the Israelites; and the Israelites blessed God and spoke no more of making war against them, to destroy the land where the Reubenites and the Gadites were settled.**

(For context, read [Joshua 22:10-34](#).)

This is from the account of a major misunderstanding between the Israelite tribes that had settled in the portion of Canaan west of the Jordan River and the smaller number of Israelite tribes that had settled east of the Jordan. The conflict was over an altar-like structure the eastern group had built, and the western group had assumed an unholy motive on the part of their eastern cousins. The misunderstanding was sharp enough to cause the westerners to make war plans against the easterners.

Fortunately, a delegation from the western group was able to visit the eastern group and ascertain the truth, which moved both groups to reconcile.

This biblical situation is not similar to the Canadian one, but it is an example of truth leading to reconciliation.

**Questions:** When, if at all, does truth preclude reconciliation? What happens when reconciliation is attempted without a reckoning with the past wrongdoing?

### **For Further Discussion**

1. In New Testament Greek the word for truth -- *aletheia* -- is used both to mean reality (or facts) and the message of the gospel -- gospel truth. The New Testament writers were not suggesting that gospel truth is somehow less real than facts, but rather that the truth based in the nature and character of God is larger than an accurate accounting of what happened or is happening.

- Here's an example of *aletheia* meaning reality: "Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, 'Who touched my clothes?' ... the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth." --Mark 5:30, 33
- Here's an example of *aletheia* meaning gospel truth: "Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, 'If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.'" --John 8:31-32

How are these two kinds of truth related? How might each function in terms of reconciliation? How might they function together?

2. Comment on this apology issued to the survivors of the residential schools by Archbishop Michael Peers, in 1993, from the Anglican Church of Canada:

I accept and I confess before God and you, our failures in the residential schools. We failed you. We failed ourselves. We failed God.

I am sorry, more than I can say, that we were part of a system which took you and your children from home and family.

I am sorry, more than I can say, that we tried to remake you in our image, taking from you your language and the signs of your identity.

I am sorry, more than I can say, that in our schools so many were abused physically, sexually, culturally and emotionally.

On behalf of the Anglican Church of Canada, I present our apology.

He added: "I know how often you have heard words which have been empty because they have not been accompanied by actions. I pledge to you my best efforts, and the efforts of our church at the national level, to walk with you along the path of God's healing."

[This document](#) tells what positive steps that church took to put the bishop's words into action.

3. Respond to this, from the *Wikipedia* entry in the links list above:

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 80th call to action was for the government to designate a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation that would become a statutory holiday to honour the survivors, their families, and communities. In August 2018, the government announced it was considering three possible dates as the new national holiday. After consultation, Orange Shirt Day was selected as the holiday.

Orange Shirt Day pre-existed the government's efforts to make it a holiday. The day started in 2013, when at a residential school reunion, survivor Phyllis Jack Webstad told her story. She recounted how her grandmother bought her a new orange shirt to go to school in, and when she arrived at the residential school, the shirt was stripped away from her and never returned. The other survivors founded the SJM Project, and on September 30, 2013 -- the time of the year when indigenous children were taken away to residential schools -- they encouraged students in schools in the area to wear an orange shirt in memory of the victims of the residential school system. The observance of the holiday spread quickly across Canada, and in 2017 the Canadian government encouraged all Canadians to participate in the observance of Orange Shirt Day.

On March 21, 2019, Georgina Jolibois submitted a private member's bill to call for Orange Shirt Day to become a statutory holiday ... Following the discovery of the remains of 215 children on the grounds of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School on May 24, 2021, Parliament agreed to pass the bill unanimously, and the bill received royal assent on June 3, 2021.

4. If you could recommend the launch of a TRC in the United States, what history and present-day problems would you want it to address? Why?

5. What is it about apology that makes for healing? Should we, as Christians, require apologies when we experience injustice? when our ancestors experienced injustice? Should Christians accept every apology? Why or why not?

Some people argue that giving an "apology" for an action that someone else -- especially someone dead and gone -- performed is of no real value. What is your view of that argument?

### **Responding to the News**

This is a good time to consider where some truth on your part might contribute to a reconciliation.

### **Prayer**

Reveal to us, O Lord, where we have done wrong against others, and spur us to do all we can to bring truth and healing to those situations. In Jesus' name. Amen

## Other News This Week

### Man Who Saved 31 Fellow Refugees Sentenced as Human Smuggler to 142 Years in Prison The Wired Word for the Week of July 11, 2021

#### In the News

Six months ago, Hanad Abdi Mohammad, 28, from Somalia, steered a boat with 33 refugees from Turkey into the Greek island harbor of Lesbos. Today he sits in prison on the Greek island of Chios, sentenced in mid-May to 142 years and 10 days in prison for human smuggling. Under Greek law, the maximum number of years he must serve is 20.

Though he is troubled by nightmares about the night he took the wheel of the boat, when two passengers drowned, Mohammad said he didn't regret his actions. "If I hadn't done it, we'd all be dead," he asserted.

According to eight migrants who were with him during the crossing, the Turkish smuggler who arranged their passage abandoned the boat when a Turkish Coast Guard vessel forced it into Greek waters. They saw Mohammad as a rescuer, not a human trafficker.

Human rights advocates say Mohammad and other asylum seekers like him were only seeking safety, claiming that criminalizing desperate people with lengthy prison terms in such cases is unjust.

Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and generally accepted international norms, a ship that is in a position to provide assistance to persons in distress at sea must do so.

In 2015-16, more than 1 million refugees overwhelmed Greece, which reacted by toughening its migration policies as a matter of national security.

Clio Papapadoleon, a prominent human rights attorney, said characterizing migrants as smugglers is tantamount to "treating a small-time drug offender like Escobar," a reference to the Colombian drug kingpin. Desperate migrants can sometimes be persuaded to take the wheel in exchange for free passage or a small payment, she said.

Papapadoleon said law enforcement doesn't really target the actual traffickers, finding it easier to go after little fish, or to harvest low-hanging fruit.

Human rights workers say criminalizing refugees is meant to intimidate migrants and convince them not to attempt the trip. In some cases, volunteers who aid or rescue refugees in danger have also been arrested, prosecuted, incarcerated and fined for "facilitating illegal entry" into Greece and other countries.

Take the case of [Salam Kamal-Aldeen](#), co-founder of Team Humanity, as an example. Aldeen, who holds a Danish residence permit, was moved to join the humanitarian effort to help refugees in 2015 when he saw a picture of Aylan Kurdi, a 3-year-old Syrian refugee whose body washed up on the shore after his family tried to get to safety in Greece.

"So we began to save lives ... we put our lives on hold so that we could ensure that these refugees could keep theirs," Aldeen said. He held dead and dying people in his arms, dug their graves, and tried to figure out how they "could limit the amount of human life lost" while following the law.

"Believe me, it's not a pleasant experience to watch someone drown in front of you ... let alone thinking what it's like to experience drowning," Aldeen emphasized.

Aldeen and other Team Humanity volunteers saved 51 lives on one run alone, but subsequently were arrested and accused of human smuggling for their search and rescue operations.

"I spent 48 hours in jail," Aldeen added. "It makes my stomach turn to think how many refugees may have died in that time and how the power of the authorities could have been better used to save lives rather than in an attempt to ruin them."

Aldeen faced heavy bail, detention, threats of a life prison sentence or deportation, and was placed on the National List of Undesired Aliens. His case is not yet resolved.

"Even if the system were to fail me, although I have faith that it won't," Aldeen wrote, "my concern is not that I may spend the rest of my days behind bars over a fictitious claim, but ... that people are still dying right now."

More on this story can be found at these links:

[He Saved 31 People at Sea. Then Got a 142-Year Prison Sentence. \*The New York Times\*](#)

[Greece's Crackdown on Humanitarian Organisations. \*Global Legal Action Network\*](#)

[Good Samaritan Laws & Protections. \*Criminal Defense Lawyer\*](#)

[Duty to Rescue. \*Wikipedia\*](#)

[Why It's Hard to Punish 'Bad Samaritans.' \*Pew Trusts\*](#)

### **Applying the News Story**

Laws regarding whether the average person has a legal obligation or "duty to rescue" or render "reasonable" assistance to someone in distress vary from time to time and place to place.

Some "Duty to Rescue" laws make it a crime not to call an emergency number or aid someone in danger of injury or death if it is in one's power to do so, if no one else is helping and if one can render assistance without placing oneself or others in harm's way.

"Good Samaritan" laws shield people who assist those in extreme distress from criminal prosecution or liability. An illegal drug user may be allowed to call 911 to get medical help for a companion who has overdosed without fear of being arrested on drug charges, for example.

A person may be deemed to have a duty to rescue in particular circumstances as well. If a person has created a hazard that endangers another individual, the person who created the hazardous situation has a duty to rescue the individual in danger. Such a duty may also arise where a "special relationship" exists, such as the relationship between parents and minor children, employers and employees, spouses, caregivers of elders or persons with disabilities, etc.

Whether or not one has a legal obligation to render assistance to someone in danger, one may find ethical or moral grounds for or against taking such action.

### **The Big Questions**

1. When, if ever, have you been in need of rescue? Who, if anyone, stepped up to help you?
2. When, if ever, have you provided emergency assistance to someone in grave danger? Why did you do so?
3. Would you step up to aid someone in distress if you knew that you might be punished for rendering assistance? Why or why not?

4. What person or persons in biblical or church history can you name who risked their own possessions, personal security, or freedom to help others? What do you think motivated them to act as they did?

5. What price would you pay or what sacrifice would you be willing to make to save people in danger? How might your answer change, depending on changing circumstances?

### **Confronting the News With Scripture and Hope**

**Here are some Bible verses to guide your discussion:**

#### **Proverbs 24:10-12**

**If you faint in the day of adversity,**

**your strength being small;**

**if you hold back from rescuing those taken away to death,**

**those who go staggering to the slaughter;**

**if you say, "Look, we did not know this" --**

**does not he who weighs the heart perceive it?**

**Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it?**

**And will he not repay all according to their deeds?** (No context needed.)

The imagery in these verses suggests the capture and massacre of a people while others stood by and watched, as if nothing was happening. The bystanders feign ignorance of the events, but there is one "who weighs the heart" and "who keeps watch over your soul" who knows the truth. As the Lord told Samuel when the sons of Jesse came before him when it came time to choose a new king, "the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7).

In Daniel 5:24-28, the prophet Daniel interprets the handwriting on the wall, "*Mene, mene, tekel, and parsin,*" for Belshazzar, the Chaldean king. The third word, *tekel*, means, "you have been weighed on the scales and found wanting." That very night, the king was killed.

In the Proverbs text, it appears that God not only weighs the hearts of those who actively engage in murder, but also the hearts of *all* those who could have taken a stand against the violence, but did nothing to stop it or to rescue those in danger.

**Questions:** How do you suppose God "weighs" the heart, and on what "scales"? How does the awareness that God knows what is in your heart, and that one day God will repay you according to your deeds, impact the decisions you make and the actions you take today?

Describe the worst "day of adversity" you can imagine. How can you build up your inner strength so that you don't faint when that day comes?

#### **Esther 4:13-16**

**Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, "Do not think that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews. For if you keep silence at such a time as this, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another quarter, but you and your father's family will perish. Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this." Then Esther said in reply to Mordecai, "Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will also fast as you do. After that I will go to the king, though it is against the law; and if I perish, I perish."** (For context, read [Esther 4:1-17](#).)



When Mordecai learned that Haman had set in motion the wheels of the extermination of the Jewish people throughout the kingdom, he displayed his distress publicly, tearing his clothes, putting on sackcloth and ashes, marching through the city, "wailing with a loud and bitter cry" all the way to the king's gate. He was joined in his protest by Jews in every province, who fasted, wept, lamented, and lay in sackcloth and ashes (vv. 1-3).

Mordecai's niece, Esther, who had been made queen, sent garments to him, as it distressed her to know that he was dressed in such weeds of woe, but he would not accept her gift (v. 4). Then Mordecai informed Esther of Haman's plot, giving her evidence as proof of his hatred and describing the hush money that Haman had promised to pay into the king's coffers in exchange for the destruction of the Jews (vv. 7-9).

Esther reminded Mordecai of the law that said anyone approaching the king inside the inner court without a royal summons would be put to death, unless the king extended his golden scepter to that person. The king had not called her for 30 days (v. 11).

In the end, Esther decided to go to the king, risking her life, "though it [was] against the law" (v. 16), for the sake of her community.

**Questions:** When, if ever, have you intentionally disobeyed a law in order to rescue others from danger? What gave you the courage you needed? Under what circumstances would you be willing to disobey a law, even if it meant you might pay with your life?

### **Matthew 12:9-13**

**He left that place and entered their synagogue; a man was there with a withered hand, and they asked him, "Is it lawful to cure on the sabbath?" so that they might accuse him. He said to them, "Suppose one of you has only one sheep and it falls into a pit on the sabbath; will you not lay hold of it and lift it out? How much more valuable is a human being than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the sabbath." Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and it was restored, as sound as the other.** (For context, read [Matthew 12:9-14.](#))

On this occasion, religious leaders were trying to find grounds to discredit Jesus, so they challenged him to narrowly define laws against working on the Sabbath. A man with a withered hand was present in the synagogue that day. His condition probably meant that his ability to provide for himself and his family was compromised.

The religious leaders wanted to know whether Jesus stood with the side of "law and order" or with lawbreakers. Jesus reframed the discussion, so that rather than talking about what was prohibited (work on the Sabbath), he focused on what was always permitted and lawful (to do good on the Sabbath).

Jesus pointed out that the leaders themselves would rescue a sheep that fell into a pit on the Sabbath, yet here was a human being of much greater value who needed help on the Sabbath. What did it say about them if they would rescue an animal, but not a man?

So Jesus healed the man, but the Pharisees conspired together how they might destroy Jesus (v. 14).

**Questions:** What limits, if any, does God place on our "duty to rescue" or help others? Is there ever a situation when it would be unwise or counterproductive to render assistance to someone in danger? Explain. How do you determine when to help others, and what kind of help, if any, is appropriate?

### **Luke 10:27-29, 36-37**

**[The lawyer] answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your**

**soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live." But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" ... [Jesus asked,] "Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."** (For context, read [Luke 10:25-37](#).)

It is often customary to view the Samaritan in this passage as the "good" character, while assuming that the priest and the Levite who passed by the injured man were callous and uncaring, self-absorbed and hypocritical as they continued on to their destinations, probably to perform their religious duties. But would we have acted differently if we had been in their shoes?

**Questions:** Did the priest and the Levite have "a duty to rescue" the injured man by the side of the road? Why or why not? What possible legitimate justification might the priest and the Levite have had to pass by the injured man?

How did Jesus change the focus of the lawyer's question, and what difference did that change make?

When, if ever, have you discovered that you were asking the wrong question, and that God was asking you a different question? How, if at all, did that change your dialogue with God?

### **For Further Discussion**

1. The Dutch Anabaptist, [Dirk Willems](#), was arrested because he refused to belong to the state church, a capital crime in Europe in those days. He escaped from prison and was running across the thin ice of a pond when the guard pursuing him fell through the ice. When Willems heard the drowning man's cries for help, he returned and rescued him, even though it meant his capture and subsequent execution at the stake.

Does a "duty to rescue" apply only to the rescue of friends, or also to the rescue of strangers or even enemies? Explain your answer.

2. [Some have pointed out](#) that people who take great risks to help others and their allies are not always rewarded for their good deeds. Lifeguard Tomas Lopez once rescued a drowning man at Hallandale Beach, Florida, saving his life. But instead of being lauded as a hero, Lopez was fired because the drowning man was swimming "at his own risk" in a section of the beach clearly marked as "out of the protected area." According to company policy, Lopez should have left the man to die. Six of Lopez's fellow lifeguards were stunned. When they told the company and the media that they supported Lopez's actions, they were fired as well.

Under what circumstances would you stand up for someone you believe has done the right thing, even though lending your support might have negative consequences for you?

3. Discuss this, from TWW team member Malia Miller: "Christ rescued us through his suffering and death on the cross, and despite that, humanity continues to disrespect that sacrifice through our failure to keep God's laws. Thankfully, the omniscient God provided a pathway for our salvation knowing our unworthiness."

### **Responding to the News**

Now might be a good time to re-read the Genesis creation stories. Remember that each human being is created in the image of God and, thus, is of inestimable value and deserving of rescue. As Christians we are obligated to see Christ in every other person, including those who make foolish mistakes and need rescuing.

Think about who in your community needs rescue (food, shelter, essentials, etc.). What time or other assets might you donate to help? Discuss how to help in ways that preserve the dignity of the person who is in distress.

**Prayer**

Grant us courage, O God, to offer whatever help we can to those in desperate need, regardless of the possible unpleasant or harmful repercussions that may come to us. Help us to do what is right, as you see it, that prayers of thanksgiving may rise to heaven from the lips of millions around the world. For your glory. Amen.

**Copyright 2021 Communication Resources**