How is Jesus the Savior of the world?

On September 11, 2001, passengers on United Airlines Flight 93 attempted to gain control of the hijacked airplane that was by most accounts headed for a target in Washington, D.C. The plane crashed in a field in Pennsylvania. All 44 passengers were killed. The valiant passengers sacrificed their lives so that possibly many more lives were spared. Those passengers were lifesavers in the sense that they substituted their own lives for the lives of others.

Christians refer to Jesus as a lifesaver. Jesus saved our lives and the lives of every single human being. That is quite an astounding assertion. How specifically did Jesus save the human race? The answer hinges on Jesus serving as our substitute.

The Bible clearly states that God is absolutely holy, righteous and just. The problem is that we human beings are not in God's spiritual league, far from it. The apostle Paul bluntly reminds us that no one is perfect: "There is no one righteous, not even one…All have turned away and have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one" (Romans 3:10, 12).

We are sinful; God is not. Left to ourselves, our lack of holiness will prevent us from living eternally in our holy God's presence. God's Word says, "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). Instead of going to heaven, our final destiny is eternal death in hell. Jesus said that those who are not righteous will be cast by God into the place of torment (Matthew 13:49, 50), the abode of the evil angel Satan. It is an ominous and bleak eternal outlook!

But God intervened. We have a lifesaver. We have a substitute. In unimaginable love, God the Father sent his Son, Jesus, to save us from death and hell. As true God and true man, Jesus lived a holy and sinless life in our place. Jesus substituted his holiness for our lack of holiness, so that because of Jesus God counts us completely holy!

Then in remarkable humble love for all of us, Jesus suffered and died. On the cross, Jesus suffered the agony of eternal separation from God the Father's love. We deserved that eternal punishment for our sin, but God put Jesus under the sentence of death as our substitute.

Then victoriously Jesus rose from the dead to prove that he fully accomplished our salvation. He is the Savior who rescued the world from the guilt of sin, the hold of death, and the power of hell by his perfect life and his death for us.

Trust Jesus who is your "substitute" Savior, and all these eternal blessings are yours!

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