

HAVE YOU HEARD THE REST OF THE STORY OF JESUS?

By John Orr

INTRODUCTION



Why am I here? What is my purpose for life on this planet? What will happen when I die? These are questions people have asked since the world began. We spend billions worldwide-- every year-- trying to determine our origin, and our future beyond death. The answer is simple enough for a child to understand and yet too complicated for some of the greatest minds.

One thing has to be firmly established in your mind—WHAT IS TRUTH? We all want certainty. But we also tend to form our own conclusions based upon tradition and opinion. However, the Bible is the **ONLY** foundation for truth! It has stood the test of time without change. It is guided and protected by the Holy Spirit of God. There is more evidence for the accuracy of the Bible than any other book of antiquity.* That is because it is from God and not man. Therefore, what difference does it make if the majority of the world believes one way or another? The only thing that matters is what God says!

*see article on historical accuracy of the Bible at
<https://kenboa.org/apologetics/how-accurate-is-the-bible/>

Do you believe this? Yes or no

Whether you believe or not, this study will help you grow in faith. You will need faith to understand the Bible. And as you grow in faith, your life will never be the same again.

Jesus said: "I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness. And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day. 49 For I have not spoken on My own

authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.” (John 12:46-50)

Can you pass a driving exam without study? Yes or No

By what will you be judged when you take your driving test?

By what will you be judged, when you stand before God? _____

It has been said the only thing for certain is death and taxes. Both are painful subjects, but unavoidable. Everyone pays taxes, even if it is in the cost of goods sold. And everyone will die. But what is more certain, is our entire existence in this life will be judged by the word of God. And the only good reason you would commit the time and attention to study God’s word would be that you “set your heart to seek the Lord.” So, where will you spend eternity? If you died, right now—Do you know, that you know, that you KNOW, THAT YOU KNOW, WHERE YOUR eternity would began? Yes_____ No_____ Uncertain_____

So, before we start, consider where you stand with God, right now?

- 1.** Do you believe Jesus Christ is the son of God? Yes or No
- 2.** Do you love Jesus Christ, the Son of God with all your heart, mind and soul? (Think long and hard before you answer this question) Yes or No
- 3.** Does your life reflect this? Yes or No
- 4.** Are you passionate about studying and listening to His word? Yes or No
- 5.** Are you saved? Lost? Not Sure?”
- 6.** If you died right now, would you go to: Paradise or torment?
- 7.** If you have been saved from eternal destruction, what did you do?

Did you have a supernatural experience? Yes or No

Were you sprinkled as a baby? Yes or No

Did you say the sinner’s prayer for salvation? Yes or No

Were you baptized? Yes or No

What is the purpose of baptism?

- a. It is an outward sign of an inward faith
- b. It is to join the church
- c. Other _____

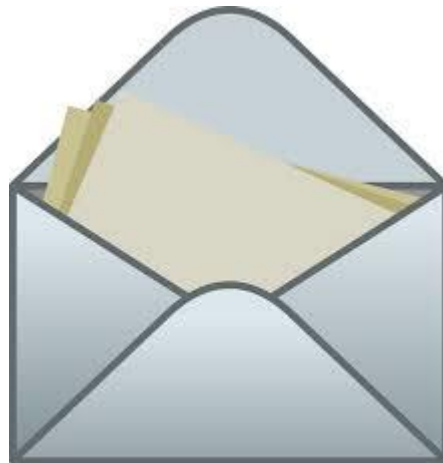
If you were baptized, what church were you baptized into?



So, no matter what you have HEARD,
EXPERIENCED OR HAVE BEEN
TAUGHT, Now hear

THE REST OF THE STORY
OF JESUS

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LESSON ONE: JESUS AND SIN

Do you know the six deadly words that can ruin your life and cost you your eternal soul?

The apostle John said in **1 John 2:15-17**: “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—**the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life**—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”

So, what are the six deadly words?

I Feel....”the lust of the flesh”

I Want....”the lust of the eye”

I Think....”the pride of life”

You might say, we all have “I” trouble. In fact, sin is a three letter word with “I” in the middle of it. So what is sin, and why should that concern us?

In **Romans 5: 12-14**, Paul stated: “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus **death** spread to all men, because all sinned— 13) For until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 14) Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.”

Because of Adam’s sin and his example, what do we all inherit? Sin or death? When is sin imputed (charged against us)? When we are born or when we knowingly break God’s law? Do innocent children suffer physical death even though they have not sinned? Yes or no

Galations 5:19-21: “The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20) idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and 21) envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

Do you have a problem with any of these?

King David, who lived over 3000 years ago, was one of God’s favorites. It was said of him that he was a man “after God’s own heart” (**Acts 13:22**). David truly loved God with ALL his heart. In **Psalms 42:1**, David

proclaimed: “As the deer pants for the water brooks (springs of water), so pants my soul for You, O God.”

And yet, David had a man murdered, after he committed adultery with his wife. He was exposed for his sin by the prophet Nathan. David was also told the child born out of wedlock would die. Would you write off such a man and despise him for what he did? And yet, all of us have sinned and fallen short of the Glory of God (**Romans 3:23**)

This doesn't excuse murder or adultery or any other sin. But that is who we all are! Many people believe that if you do good deeds and keep the 10 commandments you will be saved. But what if you were to base your salvation on keeping the Ten Commandments, how many have you broken at least once?

1. You shall have no other gods before Me.

(Example: **Ezekiel 14: 4-5**: “Therefore speak to them, and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Every one of the house of Israel who sets up his idols in his heart, and puts before him what causes him to stumble into iniquity, and then comes to the prophet, I the Lord will answer him who comes, according to the multitude of his idols, 5) that I may seize the house of Israel by their heart, because they are all estranged from Me by their idols.” (An idol is anything that comes in importance before God). Have you broken this commandment?

2. You shall not make unto yourselves any graven image. (Example: praying to a statue of Buddha, Jesus, Mary, an angel or anything earthly—including carrying around superstitious items). Have you broken this commandment?

3. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain (Example: calling yourself a Christian and not living as one or by using God's name in an irreverent or flippant way). Have you broken this commandment?

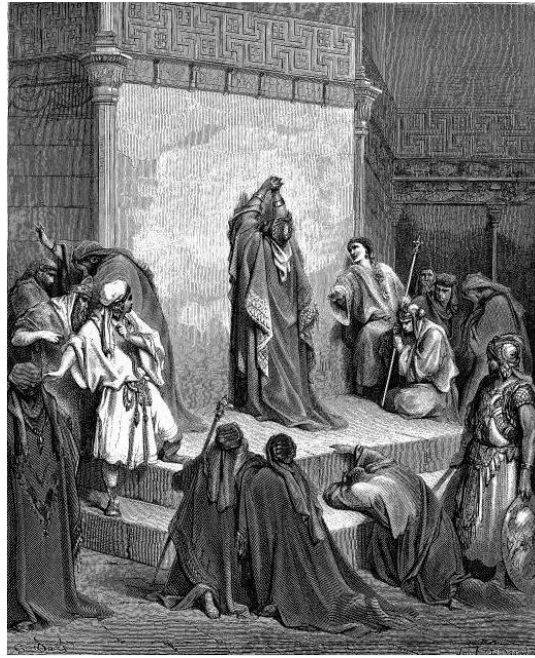
4. Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. (Example: The Sabbath day to the Jews was the Seventh day of the week or Saturday. Do you worship God every Saturday? The word Sabbath means “rest”. Since Christians are no longer under the Law of Moses, we cannot keep this command if we want to live under the law of grace. To the Christian, every day is the Sabbath rest from sin.

Hebrews 4: 7-8 states: “Again (as opposed to the seventh day) He appoints a certain day, ‘Today,’ saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted, ‘Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.’ 8) For if Joshua had given them rest (a Sabbath), God would not have spoken of another day later on.”

5. Honor your father and mother. Example: Have you obeyed every command of your parents, your entire life?
 6. You shall not murder. Example: “whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.”—(1 John 3:15) Are you a murderer?
 7. You shall not commit adultery. Example: “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ 28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed sex outside of marriage. Have you broken this commandment?
 8. You shall not steal.
Example: not returning or losing something you borrow, copying licensed products or even thinking about stealing—“for out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.”—**Matthew 15:19**. Have you broken this commandment?
 9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor (Example: Do you gossip about others or enjoy hearing gossip?)
 10. You shall not covet (Example: greed, lust, etc.)
Have you broken this commandment?
So, do you want to be judged by how well you kept the 10 commandments? Yes or no?
- If so, we all are lying, murderous, idolatrous, gossiping, thieves, and so on. True or False?
- King David was now at the lowest point in his life. He didn’t blame God. He didn’t justify what he did.

But he did write in **Psalms 51:1-3**:

“Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your loving-kindness
According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions. 2) Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. 3) For I acknowledge my transgressions, And my sin is always before me.”



We all suffer directly or indirectly from sin. Because of sin, death came into the world, and death spread to all for all have sinned (**Romans 5:12**). Even innocent children suffer disease, death, deformities, starvation, etc. because we suffer from death our entire lives. You may not be handicapped or sick because of something you did specifically. But death is in the world, and we all suffer the effects of it. Before Adam and Eve sinned against God, nothing bad happened.

So what can be done?

We will continue to face death and its effects for these short years on this earth. But because of Jesus, it doesn't have to be forever.

First, we need to listen to David as he continues in **Psalms 51: 6**: "Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom."

In other words, we have to be honest with ourselves and God. It is very difficult for us to admit we are thieves, liars, murderers, adulterers, angry, selfish, worldly minded, unfaithful, unthankful, unloving sinners. But until we see the "death" inside our hearts, we can never have "life".

The apostle Paul says it plainly: "And you, being dead in your trespasses and sins"—**Colossians 2:13**

Jesus adds to this by saying in **Matthew 4:4**: “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’”

If you have not studied the Bible daily, and passionately, your soul is starved to death. True or False?

So what would you see if you looked into a spiritual mirror?



What would your human body be like if you ate food as much as you studied the Bible? _____

Next, David pleads with God to take his old ruined heart and throw it away. He asks God for a **NEW HEART!**

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. This time, David says, “God—YOU create a new, different, obedient, thankful, faithful, loving heart. Start completely over with me! **DESTROY** the death inside me, and create something new and precious in your sight.” Have you ever felt that way about yourself? Yes or no

Finally, David comes before God with a **BROKEN HEART**.

Psalms 51:16-17: “For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart—These, O God, You will not despise.”

The real question is, do you really know yourself?

Satan does. Satan knows everything about you. His mission is to lie to you, deceive you, harden you and drag you to eternal destruction. He is constantly working to put doubt, fear, anxiety, anger, sorrow, and suspicion into your head. He brings up every old hurt, failure, and fear from the past. But, he wants you to forget about him and blame God for everything. He

was there in the Garden of Eden and he'll be around till Jesus comes back and destroys the world. That is why the Apostle Peter warns Christians:

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." (**1 Peter 5:8**)

Can you imagine how vulnerable you are without Jesus against Satan?

Satan also uses many false teachers to do his bidding. You may hear a religious teacher and think him or her to be holy.

But consider what the apostle Paul said in **2 Corinthians 11:13-15**:

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works."



Does this bother you? Yes or No

Why?

How can you know that what you have been told in the past about your salvation is the truth?

Consider your own feelings. Many days in life we feel frustrated. Most of that comes from wrong thinking, and lack of discipline. Sometimes, we even feel worthless. But in spite of all we have done against our creator;

"The Lord is not slack (or slow) concerning His promise, as some count slackness", but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." (**2 Peter 3:9**)

The Lord's judgment upon us is tempered by his love.

That is why Jesus said, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (**John 3:16**)

No one can or ever will love you that much.

The story is told of a 16 year-old girl who was raised in a fine home. She was well educated. But she got caught in the act of adultery with a married man. And because of that, she was turned out of her house, never to come back again. Being a scarlet woman, she could only turn to prostitution for her livelihood. At the age of 21 they found her lying face down in the snow. They rushed her to the Cincinnati hospital and there she died in the late 1800's. On her person there was not much of anything of value except this poem. And the poem is entitled, "The Beautiful Snow." Some of the poem goes like this:

Oh the snow, the beautiful snow,
Filling the Sky and the earth below;
Over the house tops, over the streets,
Over the heads of the people you meet;
Dancing, flirting, skimming along,
Beautiful snow, it can do no wrong;
Flying like the kiss of the fair lady's cheek,
Clinging to lips in frolicking freak

Beautiful snow from the heavens above,
Pure as an angel and gentle as love;
Once, I was like the snow but I fell,
Fell like the snowflakes from heaven to hell;
Fell to be trampled like filth in the streets,
Fell to be cursed, spat on and beat;
Pleading, cursing, and dreading to die,
Selling my soul to whomever would buy;
Dealing in shame for a morsel of bread,
Hating the living and fearing the dead;
MERCIFUL GOD have I fallen so low?
And yet, I was once like the beautiful snow;

How strange it should be that this beautiful snow
Should fall on a sinner with nowhere to go.
How strange it should be the snow
And the ice comes again
And strikes my desperate brain.
Fainting, freezing, dying alone,
Too wicked for prayer, too weak for a moan
To be heard in the streets of this crazy town
Gone mad in the joy of this snow coming down.
To lie and to die in my terrible role,
With the bed and the shroud of the beautiful snow;

This poem was sent that evening to the Cincinnati paper and the next day it was published. One poet was so touched by the poem that he paid for her final resting place. And as hundreds followed her body to that place, he had prepared a tombstone.



And on that tombstone these words are written as a plea to all lost and broken souls today:

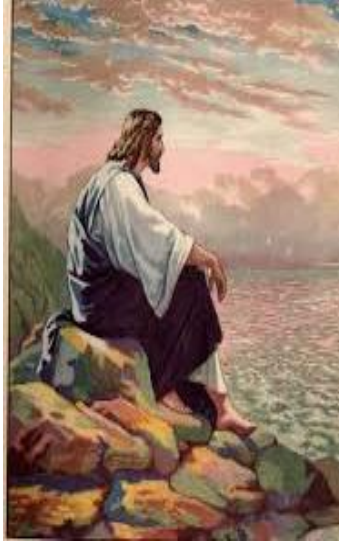
“Helpless and frail as the trampled snow,
Sinner despair not, CHRIST STOOPS LOW!
To rescue the soul that was lost in its sin
And raise it to life and enjoyment again.
Groaning, bleeding, dying for thee,
The Crucified hung, was made a curse on the tree.
His accents of mercy fall soft on thine ear.
“Is there mercy for me, will he heed my weak prayer?
Oh God in the streams that for sinners doth flow,
Wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.”

SO...DO YOU KNOW, THAT YOU KNOW
THAT YOU WOULD BE WITH JESUS IF
YOU DIED
RIGHT NOW?

LETS CONTINUE TO STUDY

THE REST OF THE STORY

OF JESUS



LESSON TWO: JESUS THE SAVIOR

Was there really a Jesus? Most people on earth have either heard of him or believe he lived on Earth. But many do not know what this simple children's song means: "Jesus loves me this I know, because the Bible tells me so."

I John 3:1: reveals a timeless truth:

"Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him."

We will never understand the painful, humiliating experience of Jesus leaving heaven's glory to live as one of his own creations

. The Apostle Paul explains it this way:

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.

And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.”
(Philippians 2:5-8)

The phrase “no reputation” means to “empty oneself” or to give up everything. Not only did he give up heaven’s glory to live in the flesh, he lived as a bondservant or slave—owning nothing! Then died the worst possible death.

Would you do this for anyone? Yes or no

Would you do this for those who hated you? Yes or no

Can you imagine what it was like growing up perfect? His brothers and sisters did not believe in Him (**John 7:5**). Can you imagine Mary scolding one of his brothers saying “why can’t you be more like Jesus?” The people in his own village did not believe in Him. Neither did the religious scholars of the day. In fact, everyone deserted him when He was on the cross. He had nothing to call His own. He was raised a carpenter’s son. He was basically homeless during His three years of teaching. He wasn’t even attractive.

Isaiah 53:2-3 tells us: “For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness (handsome); and when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him. He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.”

Many do not follow Jesus with all their heart, because this is not the kind of Jesus they want. Just as many in His own time rejected Him because He wasn’t their idea of a Messiah. But consider these words by Dr. James Francis written in 1926:

“He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman.

He grew up in another obscure village, where He worked in a carpenter shop, until He was thirty when public opinion turned against Him.



He never wrote a book. He never held an office.

He never went to college. He never visited a big city.

He never travelled more than two hundred miles from the place where He was born.

He did none of the things usually associated with greatness.

He had no credentials but Himself

He was only thirty three when his friends ran away.

One of them denied Him.

He was turned over to His enemies and went through the mockery of a trial.

He was nailed to a cross between two thieves.

While dying, his executioners gambled for His clothing, the only property He had on earth.

When he was dead He was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.

Nineteen centuries have come and gone and today Jesus is the central figure of the human race and the leader of mankind's progress.

All the armies that have ever marched, all the navies that have ever sailed, all the parliaments that have ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned put together, have not affected the life of mankind on earth, as powerfully as

that one solitary life"

According to Wikipedia, "the Gregorian calendar (which used the term A. D.) is the most widely used calendar in the world today. It was invented in 525 A. D. For decades, it has been the unofficial global standard, adopted for the pragmatic interests of international communication, transportation, and commercial integration, and recognized by international institutions such as the United Nations and the Universal Postal Union." The point? Practically the entire world claims Jesus as Lord whether they realize it or not. Because the initials A. D. is from the Latin "anno domini" which means "year of our Lord". Because of Jesus, all time has been and will be determined by his life on earth.

WHY DID JESUS DIE?

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 tells us:

"Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures."

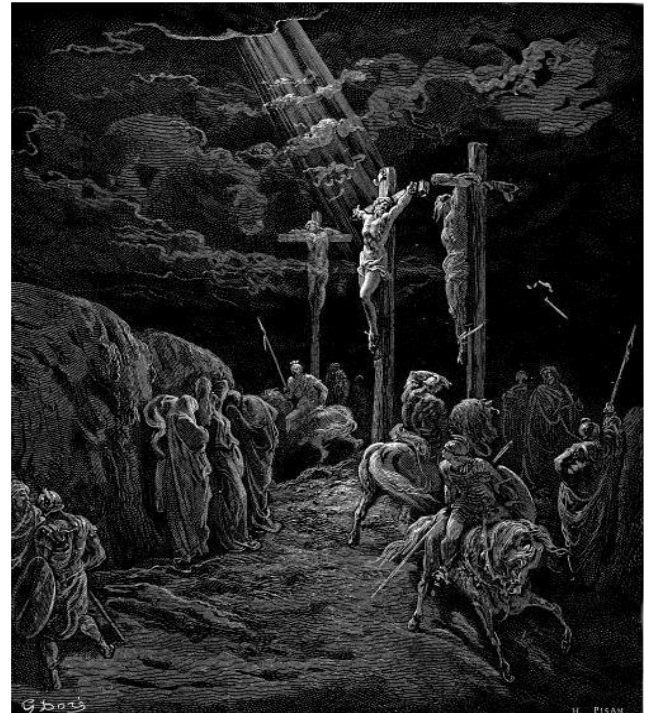
That's the best news anyone can hear, provided they respond in faith. You have sin that cannot be removed by prayer, by an experience, by sprinkling or by any other human method. The response to the gospel displays the mighty power of God. Only Jesus can be your sacrifice. Because only Jesus kept all 613 laws of the Old Testament. You can't. You can't even keep the 10 commandments. But Jesus kept them all and only he could take our place and satisfy the Justice and the love of God at the same TIME!



That's why Isaiah the prophet said:

*"Surely He has borne our griefs
And carried our sorrows; Yet we
esteemed Him stricken, smitten by
God, and afflicted. But He was
wounded for our transgressions, He
was bruised for our iniquities; The
chastisement for our peace was upon
Him, and by His stripes we are
healed.*

*All we like sheep have gone astray;
We have turned, every one, to his
own way; and the Lord has laid on
Him the iniquity of us all."* **Isaiah
53:4-6.**



The story is told of a great chieftain that was wise and powerful. Many of his rules mirrored some of God's laws concerning justice.

You were to love and honor your parents, stealing was punishable with 10 lashes. You took a life, you forfeited your own, and so on. One day it was reported there was a thief in the camp. The chief gathered his people together and warned them if the thief did not come forward, he would raise it to 20 lashes. The stealing continued and he raised it to 30 lashes, then finally 40 lashes, a death sentence for most people. Finally, the thief was discovered. It was the chieftain's own mother. What would he do? Would he sacrifice his justice to satisfy his love, or would he sacrifice his love in order to satisfy his justice. When the day of punishment came, the chief sat at the judgment seat. They took his mother and stripped the clothing off her back as they tied her to a pole. The man with the whip looked at the chieftain. The great leader gave the sign to begin.

Crack went the whip...

A blood curdling scream came from his mother. The executioner began to strike again.

"STOP", cried the chief as he ran toward his mother tearing the clothing off his own back. He then held his mother in his arms, and looking back he signaled for the man with the whip to continue.

In the same way, Jesus stopped the wrath of God:

"who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed." **(1 Peter 2:24).**

At the cross, the justice and the love of God was satisfied!

There is not a picture in existence today that fully portrays the devastation our sin did to his body. Isaiah, who saw the scene at the cross over 700 years before it happened said:

"Just as there were those who were appalled at Him. His appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any human being. "And his form marred beyond human likeness." (New International version)

Now, what does that mean?

In less than 24 Hours after his arrest, Jesus went through 6 mock trials.

He was arrested by a “multitude” (army) of people with swords and clubs (**Matthew 26:47**).

After being struck in the face, verse 67 states:

“Then they spat in His face and beat Him; and others struck Him with the palms of their hands, saying, “Prophecy to us, Christ! Who is the one who struck You?”

Next, in **Luke 23:11** we read: *“Then Herod, with his men of war, treated Him with contempt and mocked Him, arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him back to Pilate.”*

Then, in **John 19:1**, the Bible said that...*“Pilate (the Roman Governor) took Jesus and scourged Him.”*

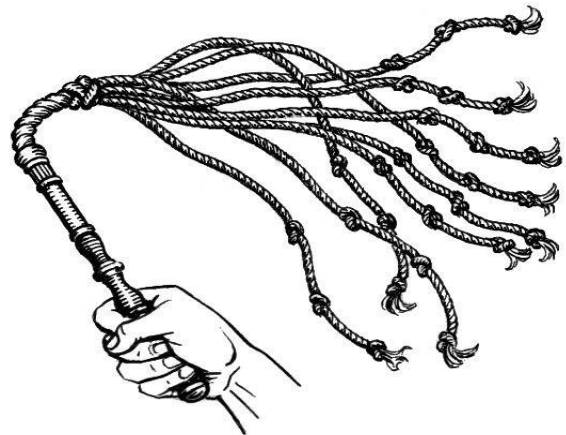
Scourging usually involved two Roman soldiers with whips called a cat of nine tails or Scorpio (Latin for scorpion).

It often had bone, metal, or other material at the end, so the victims flesh would be torn to pieces. They tied his hands with chain or rope to a stump and whipped him everywhere until the soldiers tired. When they got through with him, he was a bloody mess, from head to toe.

Then if that wasn't enough, Matthew goes further and explains:

“Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorian and gathered the whole garrison around Him. And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him.

When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head. And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified.” (Matthew 27:27-31)





Now, carrying a crossbeam on His shoulders, He fell down on the pavement of the Via Dolorosa on the way to Golgotha (the place of the skull) to be crucified. Another man carried it the rest of the way. Then, nailing His hands and His feet to a crude “cross like structure”, they raised Him up to feel the greatest torture of all: crucifixion. The Romans perfected this art of torture to dissuade any rebellion against Rome. The impaling of the hand and feet and other parts of the body created sympathy and even disgust from some of the Roman soldiers themselves. It was not only an extremely painful experience, but also one of great humiliation and torment. God kept Jesus’ bones from being broken so that He would endure his full justice for our sin. **Psalm 22:14-18** described this event over 1000 years before it happened:

“I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.”

The crowd (his own people) wagged their heads at him, mocked him, reviled him. Then the worst happened. God had to separate himself from his Son, because he became sin for us. Matthew records:

“Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (Matthew 25:45-46)

It wasn't pretty. And neither is your soul which is dead in sin. Colossians 2:13 states: “And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh...”

Would you say, Jesus appeared on the outside as we with sin appear on the inside?



Can you invite Jesus to come into this? That is why he died, so you can die with him and be recreated into something truly beautiful inside.

Isaiah 59:1,2 says: “Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, **so that He will not hear.**”

This also means something else has to be done besides praying a “sinner’s prayer” or asking him to come into your heart for salvation. God had something else in mind: THE GOSPEL! And the good news begins with the sacrificial death of Jesus for you and me.

So, you see, the GOSPEL or good news is
The rest of the story of Jesus!

You can now see what Jesus wants you to know!



There is an old song that asks the question:

“Why did my Savior come to
earth?

And to the humble go?

Why did He choose a lowly
birth?

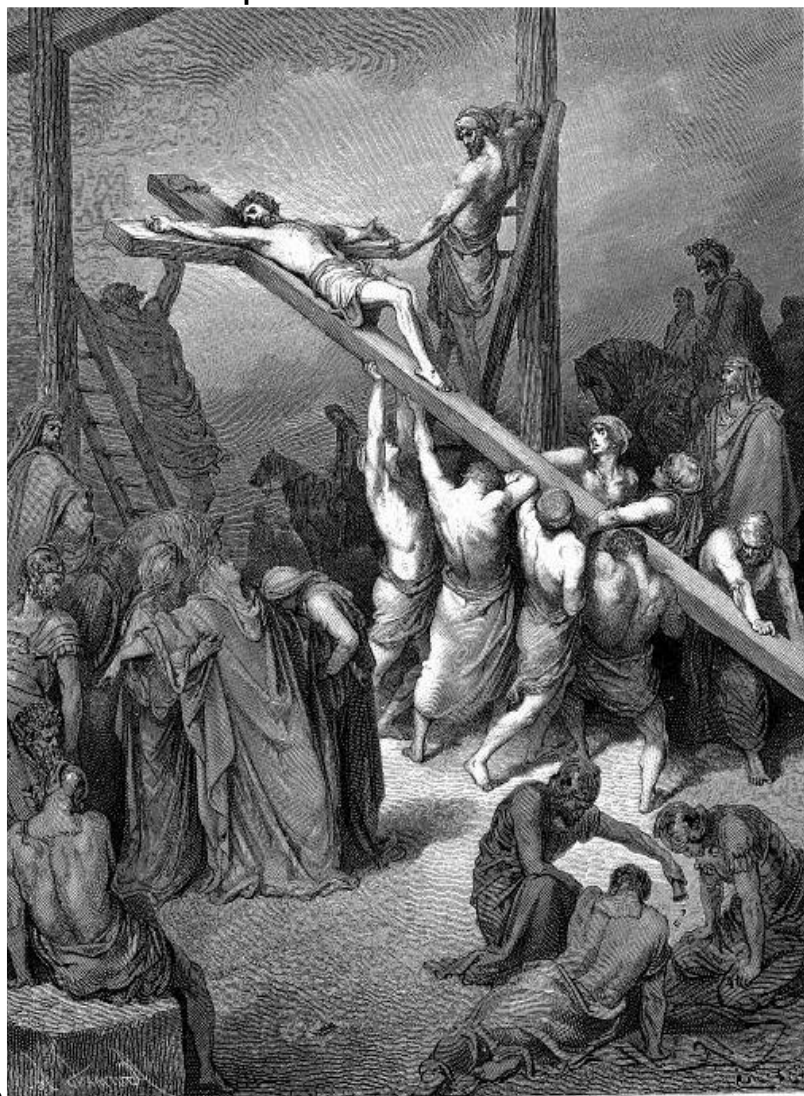
Because he loved me so!

Why did He drink the bitter
cup?

Of sorrow, pain and woe?

Why on the cross be lifted
up

Because he loved me so...”



WHY WAS HE BURIED?

What do you do with something dead? You bury it. Why? Because a dead body goes from death to dust. A transformation takes place.

Something that was once alive and functional now turns back into the dirt from which it came. But Jesus' death was different. Instead of going from death to dirt, he went from death to life.



On the day of Pentecost, 50 days after Jesus was buried in a tomb, Peter preached the first Gospel sermon. He said this of Jesus death and burial:

“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know— Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed

the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. For David says concerning Him

“For You will not leave my soul in Hades (the grave) Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. “Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. (Acts 2:27ff)

His burial emphasized the power of Jesus overcoming our greatest problem: SIN AND DEATH. The apostle Paul stated in 1 Corinthians 15: 54-55:

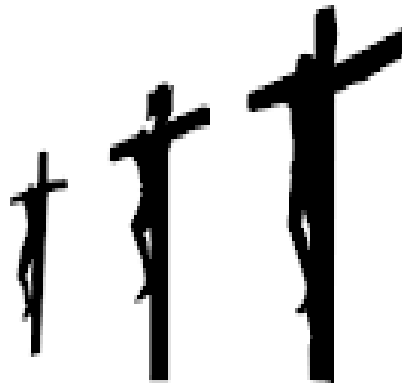
“So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is your sting? O Hades (the grave), where is your victory?”

Jesus did what no other religious, political or world leader could do. Every one of them died. Most of them died in their sins. They are still living eternally in death. But Jesus conquered death for us. So that we might have life eternal.

The death, the burial and the resurrection IS the gospel or good news of Christ. You cannot receive Salvation, the Holy Spirit or the blood of Christ unless you DIE *WITH JESUS*.

“Therefore we were buried with him through baptism into death that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father even so we also should walk in newness of life.” (Romans 6:4)

When you die and are buried and raised with Jesus, you share the same experience in God’s mind. It is truly an act of God and not of man. Only when we are buried with him can we be raised to a new life!



WHY WAS HE RESURRECTED?

The word resurrection means to “stand again”. No one has ever been raised from the dead without God. But they only were raised to die again. All of these stories of being in heaven or hell are very personal and very real to these people. But God said: “And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.” (Hebrews 9:27)

All of us are faced with something we cannot avoid—the death of these bodies. But the resurrection of Jesus meant that we can have eternal life—NOW. Death is no longer a concern to those who share in the resurrected life of Jesus Christ. Our faith and obedience to Jesus removes the fear of death and replaces it with eternal life.

The resurrection of Jesus is not only the greatest event in Human history, but the events surrounding it are undeniable. Hundreds witnessed Jesus alive over a period of 40 days (Acts 1:4). Over 150,000 people in Jerusalem did not dispute his resurrection as Peter spoke to all of Jerusalem:

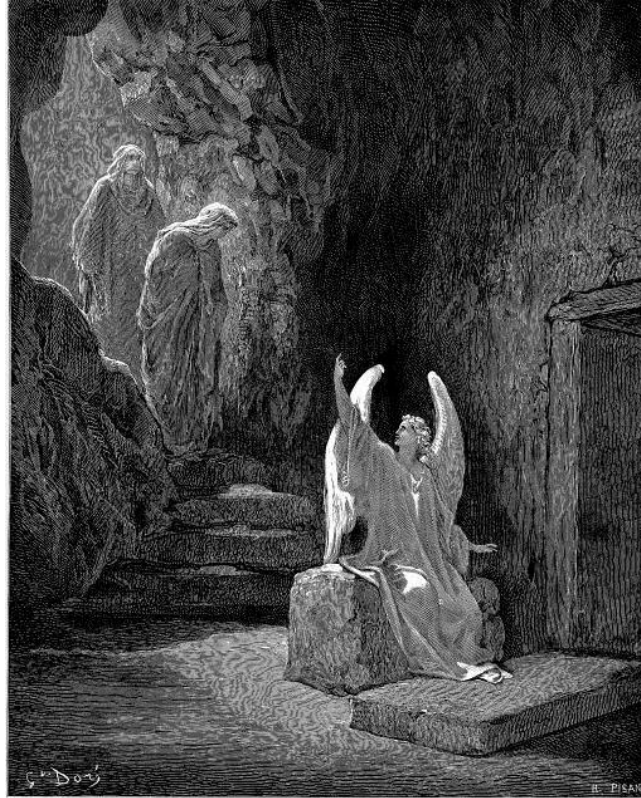
“This Jesus God has raised up, of which WE ARE ALL witnesses.” (**Acts 2:32**)

“Also, two secular non-believers in Christ tried to explain away the three hours of darkness after Jesus Died (**Matthew 27:45**). The fact remains, everyone in the Roman Empire experienced it. His resurrection was talked about, everywhere. Many people have died throughout the centuries for their RESURRECTED Lord, because they believe with all their heart that Jesus saved them from ETERNAL death by his resurrection.



More importantly, no one ever loved us as much as Jesus. And today, that undying love continues. Why?

“Jesus loves me, this I know, because the Bible tells me so!”



The empty tomb is the greatest dilemma for non-believers. It is, however the greatest confidence for his followers: confidence over sin, over death, over conflict, over discouragement, over doubt, over fear, over uncertainty and over hell. And all of this is called the Gospel, or the good news of Jesus Christ.

And, (after his resurrection), he promised his continuing work through the Holy Spirit. He is the extension of Jesus on earth. (**John 14:15**). He is God in nature, just as Jesus. Both are in subjection to the one God, we call the Father (**1 Corinthians 11:3**). He teaches us the more we study the word of God (**1 Corinthians 2:10-16**), the more he can do with our lives. He helps us when we pray (**Romans 8:26, 27**) by making intercessions for us. He loves us, he abides in us, and he is here to help us be faithful to the point of Death.

He can be grieved (**Ephesians 4:25**).

And he can be quenched (**1 Thessalonians 5:19**).

This is why it is so important to be in the word every day. Without Bible study, the Spirit cannot help us become what God intends for us to be. But

if we are faithful, we will eventually bring forth the fruit (or the results) of his presence in our lives in **Galatians 5:22**:

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”

AND

In Romans 8:9: “If we do not have the spirit, we do not belong to God .”

That is why Jesus promised His disciples the Holy Spirit in **John 16:8-11**:

“Will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.”)

So the saving work of Jesus continues. But do you really know Jesus?

1 John 2: 3 says:

“We know that we have come to know Him if we keep His commands.”

HAVE YOU HEARD THE REST OF THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL (GOOD NEWS) OF CHRIST?



LESSON 3:

JESUS AND SALVATION

The death, the burial and the resurrection IS the gospel or good news of Christ. You cannot receive Salvation, the Holy Spirit or the blood of Christ unless you JOIN WITH JESUS in HIS death, his burial and his resurrection.

Does that mean you have to literally die on a cross with Jesus? _____

What if God asked you to do that, right now, would you do it? _____

Make a list of all the things you wouldn't do for Jesus.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Since Jesus died for you and me, let's see what Jesus asks us to do.

In John 3:1-6, a man named Nicodemus came to Jesus by night. Let's

notice what was said. "There was a man of the Pharisees named

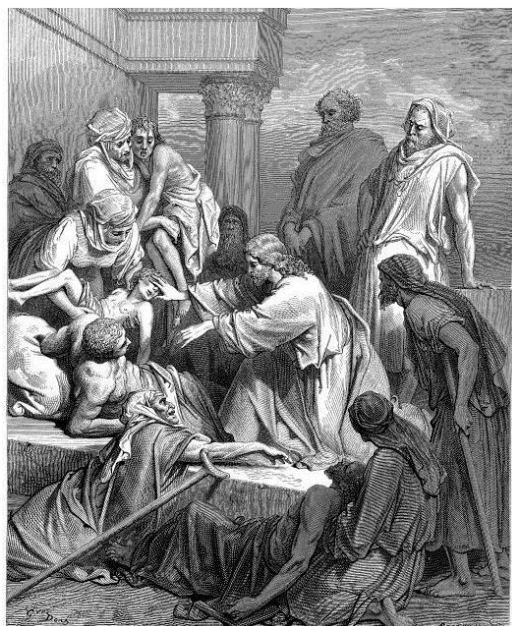
Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

What kind of signs did Jesus do? The gospels are full of amazing truths. Jesus healed lepers, the blind, the lame, the deaf, and all manner of diseases?

These kinds of signs were primarily for the Jews to confirm the words of Jesus and his apostles. No one has been able to duplicate THESE signs since then. These signs were recorded by those who witnessed them so that we may believe. The apostle John states: "And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this

book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name." **John 20:30-31**

Nicodemus, a high ranking member of the Jewish ruling council believed Jesus was from God, BECAUSE of these signs. So Nicodemus begins with faith. That is where we must begin. If we do not believe in the miracles of Jesus, we will not believe in the words of Jesus.



And it is the words of Jesus that will judge us someday (**John 12:47-49**).

Continuing in our text in **John 3:3-4**, we read:

Jesus answered and said to him (Nicodemus), “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?”

Nicodemus does not understand, so he literally scoffed at Jesus with his question. But Jesus was not speaking of a fleshly birth but a spiritual one as He continues:

5 Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, He cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”

Nicodemus believed in Jesus because of the signs, but this belief could not carry him very far.

Many people today only believe what they see. Because of that, they will never accept Jesus, God, the Bible or his instruction. Because: ...”without faith it is impossible to please Him (God), 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 apostle Paul said in **Ephesians 2:8**: “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.”

So the first thing you must do is be willing to believe everything Jesus tells you—not a man, not a church, not a book...but Jesus! To believe in Jesus means to “trust and obey”. (read Hebrew chapter 11) Jesus is the medium by which God bestows his grace and favor. Jesus brings us to God through his own sacrifice (as we will see later). But, no one truly believes in someone they don’t love with all their heart. And if you love someone that much, you will do exactly what they ask of you.



Jesus said, “Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.”(**John 15:13,14**)



So, what does it mean to believe in Jesus?

Jesus gave a charge to his apostles as He was ascending to heaven. It is called the great commission:

Jesus said: to them (His apostles), “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”

(Mark 16:15-16)

So if one truly believes with all his heart, he may be baptized. But if they don't believe, or don't know what TO believe, being baptized won't work. Philip the evangelist preached the gospel of Jesus to a man from Ethiopia in Acts chapter 8. The Bible says: “now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, “See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?” Then Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.”

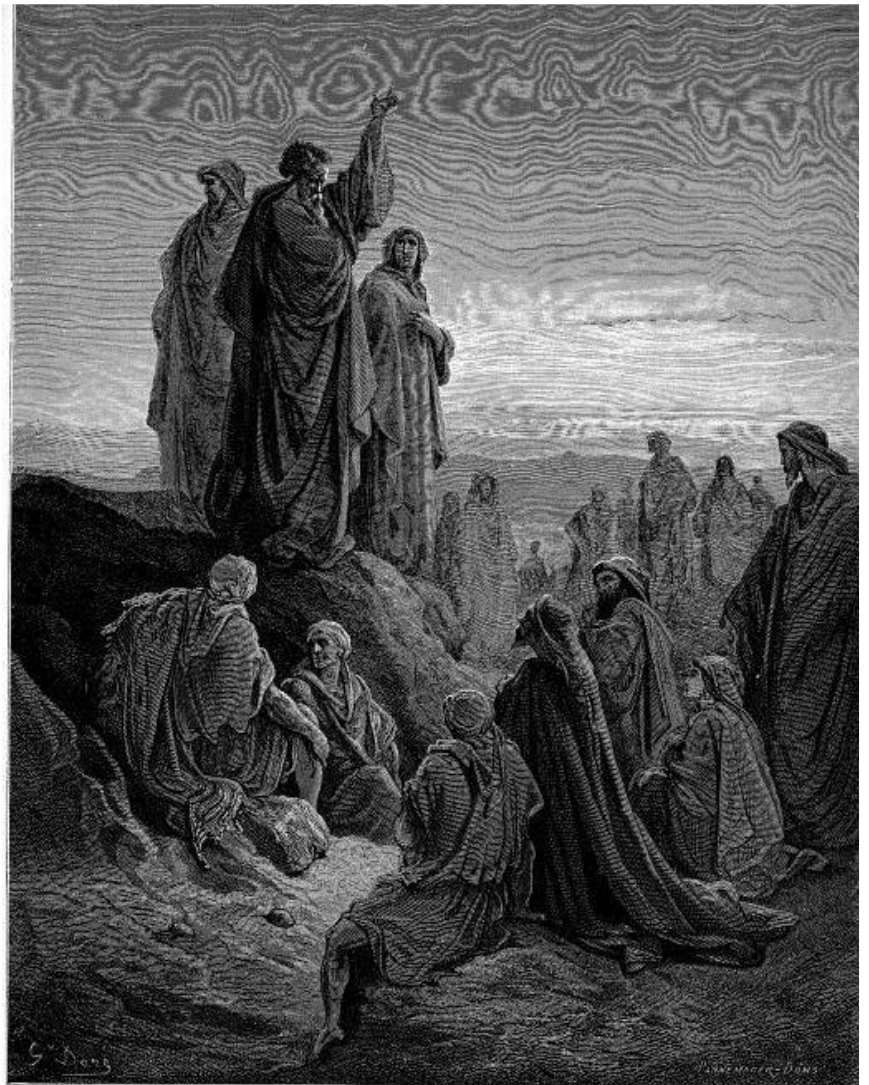
And he answered and said, ‘I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.’ So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.” **(Acts 8:36-39)**

The name Jesus means “God saves”. Jesus will save us if we “believe with all our heart”, if we “confess to others that he is the Son of God” “and if we are baptized into his name or possession”. Confessing that Jesus is the Christ the son of God is more than saying words.

The word confession is something that comes deep from within the heart. To confess that he is the son of God is to love him with all your heart, your soul and your strength. It is the desire to become one with him, and let him be Lord of your life. The word Christ means anointed one. God anointed Jesus as the Savior of men. And you anoint Him Lord with all the love in your heart for the rest of eternity. But there is more.

Peter preached **the first gospel message... In Acts 2:36-41 we read:** “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 for the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.

And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, ‘Be saved from this perverse generation’.



Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.”

Are you beginning to get the picture? It all works together *toward* our salvation.

Two questions arise from this. What does it mean to repent? The word literally means to change your mind . . . and to change your heart. The child of God that has been born of water and spirit continually seeks to bend their will to the will of God. They try every day to be more like the Spirit of Jesus, and less like the world in their thinking. (**Romans 8:5**)

Acts 26:20, Paul said that he “...declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn, and do works befitting repentance.”

Repentance is not only something one thinks, but also something that is seen and done. True belief in God brings about true repentance. For instance, if you are living in sin—repentance requires change. Change of heart, mind, soul and circumstance. Without actual change, you continue to offend God.

Why would anyone continue to hurt those they love?

What is the best reason for anyone to repent?

Romans 2:4 tells us: “Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness (or kindness) of God leads you to repentance?”

Yet before we are baptized into Christ, we have to answer and

confess the most important question in life. In **Matthew 16:13-18** we read: “When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?”

So they said, “Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”

16 Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

17 Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”

Now some mistakenly put the emphasis here on Peter, whose name means “a stone”. But the rock he was referring to was the confession Peter made. The word rock means “boulder”. In this passage, Jesus was using a play on words. Peter is masculine. Petra (rock or boulder) is feminine. Jesus was saying—“Peter, you are just a small stone, but what you confessed (that I am the son of God) is the foundation upon which I will build MY church.” We find an example of this in **Acts 8:36-39**:

“Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, “See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?” Then Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may. “And he answered and said, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.”

The good confession, as Paul calls it, is a statement of allegiance to God and Jesus. The word Christ, means anointed one—God’s anointed King, High priest, and Prophet.” He fulfilled every one of God’s requirements to save mankind.

And for those who love Him with all their heart and soul, and strength will forever proudly proclaim “I BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD!”

In all this, belief, repentance, and confession are leading **unto** salvation.

In Romans 10:10, the apostle Paul says: For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Just the act of verbalizing the good confession is not enough. There is one more step.

One more thing Satan does not want you to know!

It is now time for the greatest event of your life. The time when you truly join yourself with Christ. The moment God puts to death the old man of Sin and creates a new life: **BAPTISM**

BAPTISM IS OUR RESPONSE TO THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST. BUT YOU MUST HAVE A TRUE UNDERSTANDING BEFORE YOU DO IT SO THAT YOU WILL KNOW THAT YOU KNOW THAT YOU KNOW THAT YOU KNOW. . .



Now let's put the whole picture together. The word Baptism means to dip, plunge or immerse. But the word in the original Greek language was βαπτίζω (baptízō) also used

to describe sunken ships at sea or when someone drowned

(<http://www.alanknox.net/2012/07/the-verb-baptize-in-josephus-writings/>). The greek word baptizō was especially prominent in the dye trade. Cloth would be dipped or immersed into a vat of dye. The material was “baptized” in dye. When the cloth was removed from the vat of dye, it had a distinct and new appearance. It was identified in a new way. Red cloth would come out of a vat of red dye. Blue cloth would come out of a vat of blue dye. The cloth was identified by its new color. The first reference to baptism in the Old Testament was in **Isaiah 1:18**: Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the Lord,

“Though your sins are like scarlet,
They shall be as white as snow;
Though they are red like crimson,
They shall be as wool.”

The only problem for those in the days of Isaiah, it was truly impossible to change scarlet into pure white. But in baptism, God does the work, not man. It is not a ritual or an outward sign. It is a supernatural transformation by the Holy Spirit. **1 Corinthians 12:13** states:

“For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.”

Also, the word “Baptism” has a death element to it. Jesus will not come into a heart that is dead and full of Sin. **Colossians 2:12, 13** says you are “buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses.

Until you die with Jesus you cannot be raised with Jesus. And the burial grave corresponding to Jesus' tomb is the waters of Baptism. When you go under that water, your "old man of sin" is crucified with him, AND the "body of sin" is destroyed by the Holy Spirit. As you do this in Jesus "likeness", in God's mind it really happens. To God, you die WITH Christ, you have been buried WITH Christ and you have been raised WITH Christ. In **Romans 6:3-7** Paul asked twice if you knew this when you were baptized. If not, then Baptism into Christ did not occur.

"OR DO YOU NOT KNOW that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, KNOWING THIS, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin."

Did you understand this when you were baptized? Yes or no

You may have gone under water a thousand times in your life, but without a correct understanding, you have believed "in vain" Remember **1 Corinthians 15:1,2**—"Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—UNLESS YOU BELIEVED IN VAIN. "

So what do you need to KNOW when you are being baptized?



You must believe with all your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, just as you will be raised to walk a new life.

You must realize in God's mind, you are on the cross with Jesus. Romans 6:6 states "you are crucified With Christ."

You have just been asked if you believe that Jesus is the Christ the son of God. When you answered "yes", you are declaring your unending love and faithfulness to him...You are ready to be joined with him in every way. There is no going back. In your heart and mind, true change is taking place (repentance). You are surrendering all to him.

Now, you are ready to DIE with him. You realize the water is your grave. The spirit of God is ready to create something brand new as he hovered over the waters of creation.

As you go down into the water, in God's mind you are in the tomb WITH Christ.



Colossians 2:12 explains: (you are) “buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses.”

The transformation process is now in the hands of God. His spirit is taking the “body of sin” and destroying it (Romans 6:6). He is burying it “with Christ” and baptizing you into HIS DEATH. Since the word baptism itself contains a death element (drowning, sinking, dying), it is a great relief to know in the blink of an eye, God’s mighty transforming power is at work. Your part: faith! And Who does the work? God? He takes your old spiritual body that is dead in sin and destroys it. You are in the process of being born again!

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” (2 Corinthians 5:17)



As you come up out of the water, in God's mind you are resurrected WITH Christ. You were once dead, but now you are alive. Jesus said:

“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.” (1 John 5:24)

You are now a true believer. You have received Jesus, because sin is GONE! “Yet to all who did receive Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. (John 1:12-13)

Your right to become a child of God is not based upon who you are or where you came from. It's not based upon your skin color, your financial situation or your own wisdom. Your salvation is not based on a HUMAN DECISION to accept Jesus into your heart and say a sinner's prayer. It's not a family thing. Your parents cannot have you baptized at any age and have it count without the authority of Christ. It just doesn't work!

God's Spirit will join you to the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ only when you understand the meaning and purpose of baptism. When you come up out of your grave (the water), you:

1. Will be freed from sin (**Romans 6:7**)
2. Will be given eternal life
3. Will be given the gift of the indwelling spirit as a helper
4. Will become a new creation
5. And most importantly, you will be covered with the blood of Christ.

Galatians 3:27 says: "for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ." You will be protected against the stain of sin, as long as you walk in the light of God's word and obedience to him.

As the Apostle John said in **1 John 1:7**: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin."

Now that you know the truth, you can truly start over. But some may say, What if I have already been baptized? Remember the words of Jesus in **Mark 16:16**:

"He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."

You can be baptized a thousand times, but if you didn't know what to believe; if you didn't do it out of an undying Love for Jesus; then you need to consider doing it the LORD's way this time.



Consider the disciples in Acts 19 who were baptized again because they had never heard of the Holy Spirit. “And finding some disciples he said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed? “So they said to him, “We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.” And he said to them, “Into what then were you baptized?”

So they said, “Into John’s baptism.” Then Paul said, “John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.” When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.”

Since this is the work of God and not a work of man, by grace through faith God saves you as you are baptized by the Holy Spirit in water.

Bible hearers of this message did not hesitate to do whatever they were taught. Why? Because they loved Jesus with all their heart and soul.

Do you truly love Jesus with all your heart and soul? _____

Do you believe everything Jesus did, said and asked you to do?

Have you truly repented by changing your heart and mind and commit to loving Jesus by keeping his commandments for you?

Are you willing to confess before the world your undying love for Jesus the Christ, the son of the LIVING God? _____

Are you ready to put to death your old heart and life and receive the free gift of salvation and the Holy Spirit by being Baptized into Christ? Yes or No?

Is there anything you **wouldn't** do for Jesus, right now?

Ephesians 4: 4-6 says:

“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”

When you come out of the water, you rise to a new life. Paul, who once murdered Christians, said, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Wouldn't it be wonderful if you could really know, that you know, that you know, THAT YOU KNOW, you are in Christ Jesus and that if you died today, you would know you'd be with Jesus!

But what if you were sprinkled as a baby?

At that moment, did you believe?

Did you repent?

Did you confess that Jesus was the son of God?

Then were you really baptized? _____

And if you asked Jesus into your heart and prayed a sinner's prayer, was Jesus able to come into a heart full of sin and death?

Habakkuk 1:13 describes God by saying: "But you are pure and cannot stand the sight of evil."

While **Isaiah 59:1, 2** states:

"Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened,

That it cannot save;

Nor His ear heavy,

That it cannot hear.

But your iniquities have separated you from your God;

And your sins have hidden His face from you,

So that He will not hear."

As long as sin is in you, Jesus is not. You cannot ask Jesus to come into that mess. That is why Baptism is a death, a burial and a resurrection

Was there an example of anyone in the Bible that did this and God said they were saved? _____

What does **Acts 18:8** say?

"Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized."

Was Hearing and Baptism involved in Believing?

And consider **Acts 16: 25-34**:

“But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone’s chains were loosed. And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself. But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, “Do yourself no harm, for we are all here.”

Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. And he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

So they said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.” Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.”

When was the Philippian jailor called a believer? Before or after baptism? _____

In all the confusion today of denominations, pastors and priests and preachers are telling you different things to do. Wouldn’t it feel good to step back from all those voices and consider only what Jesus has to say?

Wouldn’t it be wonderful to be a part of the first church in Jerusalem, where we read in Acts 2:38?

Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to

you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call. And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.” Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. “

What did they do to be saved and receive the Holy Spirit?

And in Acts 2:47 we read: “praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”

Can you join the Lord’s Church? Yes or no

Can you join a denomination? Yes or no

What if today you could become:

NEITHER CATHOLIC EVANGELICAL nor denominational

The Bible says you can be added to HIS church.. To the church in the beginning. Not a building, or a cult, but a kingdom established by Jesus on the day of Pentecost around 33 A. D. The same church to which the apostle Paul belonged. In Romans 16:16, he said: “All the churches of Christ send greetings.” The Lord’s church that has been around in its same form for around 2000 years. It is where all Christian churches come from, and IT IS WHAT THE LORD WANTS US TO BE—THE ONE BODY) It is what that confession to the “one Lord, one faith (or belief), one body, and one baptism is all about (**Ephesians 4:1-4**) What a great idea to be “Christians only”. It would be great to be a part of the Lord’s Church without adding to or taking away.

Today, there are over 32,000 denominations of the church. Is that what Jesus wanted? Yes or no

So, do you want to be a part of the one body or a member of one of the one of the 32,000 denominations?

So, where do you stand with God right, now?

Saved____ Lost____ Not Sure____

(Take your envelope with your name on it and compare it to the word of Jesus Christ)

What did those in the Bible do to be saved from their sins?

“Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, **hearing**, **believed** and **were baptized**.”

Have you heard and read the true gospel message? Yes or no

Do you believe that Jesus died and was buried and rose from the dead? And that he loves you with all his heart, in spite of all the evil you have done? Yes or no

Are you ready to repent and turn from the old way of thinking and take hold of eternal life? Yes or no

Would you be willing to confess the name of Jesus now and forever before all the world? Yes or no

Are you willing to die and be buried and raised with Jesus Christ in Baptism for the remission of your sins and become the possession of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit? Yes or no

Are you ready? Don't you want to be sure? Is there anything you wouldn't do for Jesus?

If you have not been added to the Lord's church by being baptized, what are you waiting for? Begin your new life by being born of water and spirit in baptism. All things are ready. Clothing, towels and water have been prepared for you. And in just a few minutes, you can be a Christian *only*.

"Today if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts."
(Hebrews 3:15)

Eternity is just a short time away. Everyone is APPOINTED (By God) once to die and after that the judgment. (Hebrews 9:27).



As the apostle Paul was told:

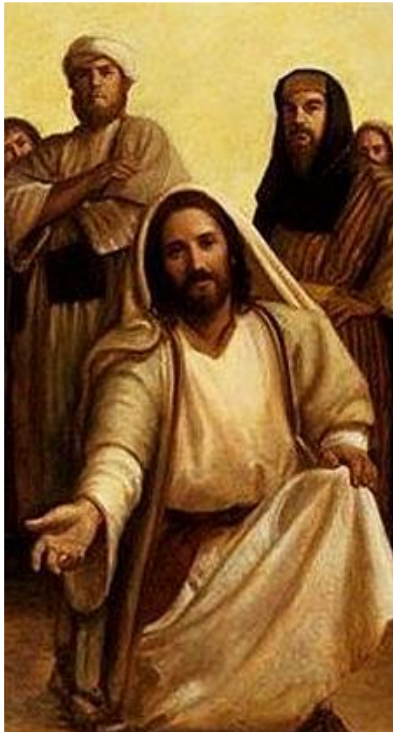
"And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22:16)

Now that you know, that you know, what to do to be saved, what will you do? Wouldn't you love to know the peace and fullness of joy Jesus can give you by joining yourself to his death, burial and resurrection? Even if there is the slightest doubt in your mind, in

just a few minutes, all doubt can be removed. He made this moment possible for you....It cost him EVERYTHING. Are you ready to give up your old life and die with him today?

The following invitation is taken from Matthew 11:28-30.

Please consider this today, before Satan hardens your heart. Consider the loving invitation of Jesus. Write your name in the blanks, and then re-read aloud.



“Come unto Me, _____, I know that you are tired of sin and your heart is burdened with guilt and fear. So, _____,

I want you to take my yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and humble in heart, and for the first time in your life, you can find rest for your soul.

For unlike the yoke of sin and death, My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

_____, will you join Me in My death, in My burial and in My resurrection by being baptized right now? Love, Jesus.

What is your answer to Jesus Christ?

YES OR NO

“We **know that we have come to know him** if we keep his commands. Whoever says, “I know him,” but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. But if anyone obeys His word, love for God is truly made **complete** in them.” 1 John 2:3-5. And now you know...THE REST OF THE STORY OF JESUS!

Is there anything you wouldn't do for Jesus, right now?

This is when people in the Bible were baptized—Immediately, the same day, the same hour, etc. We can go to the church building where there is water; clothing is prepared; towels are ready; and Jesus is waiting. Once we get there, it will only take a few minutes to make the first step toward a glorious eternity. Will you do it for Jesus?

Are you ready?

