

CROSSROADS

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BIBLE COLLEGE

CHRISTIAN STUDIES

SERIES ONE

STUDY ONE

SALVATION

MESSAGE

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Crossroads Full Gospel
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Bracketed comments following some scriptures assist the reader in understanding the intended meaning of these verses

We acknowledge the additional works of the various Scholars and Bible Commentaries used in conjunction with the College material. This is not to say that we agree with all their theology, but we certainly value their contribution to the Body of Christ.

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THE SALVATION MESSAGE

Congratulations on receiving Jesus as your personal Lord and Saviour. In doing so, you have made the most important decision of your life!

This small study is only a very brief outline of the salvation message, to start you on your way in the Christian walk. All the points are important to grasp, so study it carefully, expanding the booklet where you can.

Know, however, that Christianity is more than escapism. It is founded on and nurtured through a relationship between the Father and His son or daughter. Christianity is about the grace of God through which we have been saved, and the grace we need daily to walk the way He wants us to walk, faithful to Him.

It was once said by a great philosopher, “Irrespective as to how much education one may possess, if one does not truly have a Bible education as well, one is not truly educated.”

To this we could add that Bible education is the foundation on which man builds his character. Therefore true education is character building. Only the Spirit of God can teach man the eternal truths that pertain to such character development. Only then can man obey the two greatest commandments:

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength . . .”
(Mark 12:30).

“You shall love your neighbour as yourself . . .” (Mark 12:31).

***“ . . . Christianity is more than escapism.
It is founded on and nurtured through a
relationship between the Father and His
son or daughter. . . ”***

Unless we, by the grace of God, not only believe but also trust in the teachings of the Bible, we will not have been truly educated in the things that matter, the things of eternal value.

Background Reading: John 3:1-18

By accepting Jesus as Lord and Saviour you have escaped an eternal future of everlasting torment in the Lake of Fire. As a result of your commitment, your name is now written in a book in heaven called the LAMB'S BOOK OF LIFE. As Revelation Ch.20 tells us:

REVELATION 20:10 And the devil who deceived them was cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone . . . and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.

REVELATION 20:15 . . . And whosoever was not found written in the BOOK OF LIFE was cast into the Lake of Fire (and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever).

This shows that there is life after physical death. Though your body will die, you (the spirit-man, the real you) will live on forever - for you are an eternal personality. God's Word also tells us that we are three-part beings. We each have a spirit and a soul (mind), and we live in a physical body. The body can be thought of as the suitcase which houses the real us while we live on the earth.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:23 . . . And I pray God (that) your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

When a person's physical body dies, their spirit and soul, the real person, will continue to live on for eternity. Therefore, in a million years time, we will all still be in existence. Where we live for eternity, however, will be determined by whether or not we received Jesus into our lives as Lord and Saviour while we lived on earth. When a person dies, their spirit and soul will go immediately to either heaven or hell, depending on whether they belong to Jesus or not.

***“...There is life after physical death –
for you are an eternal personality. . .”***

Note that the Lord Jesus Christ clearly states that He is THE WAY and NO ONE can come to the Father but by Him.

JOHN 14:6 Jesus said unto him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes unto the Father, but by Me.”

He does not say that He is A WAY - as if there are other ways! Definitely not! Jesus is THE ONLY WAY and there is no other way. No Church is THE WAY, no religion is THE WAY, no religious leader is THE WAY, His mother Mary is not THE WAY, good works and self-effort are not THE WAY. Only the crucified, buried, risen and living Christ is THE WAY and NO ONE comes to the Father in heaven except through Him. He also says that anyone who comes to Him, He will never cast out. Therefore the needy sinner who believes in the Lord Jesus and comes to Him with a repentant heart, seeking a Saviour, will always be received.

JOHN 6:37 All who the Father gives Me shall come to Me; and he who comes to Me I will in no wise cast out (no one will ever be turned away).

THERE IS ONLY ONE TRIUNE GOD

There is one true triune God, eternally co-existent in three persons Who form the Holy Trinity: God the Father, God the Word and God the Holy Spirit. These three dwell together in perfect unity, forming one heavenly government called God - and each of these three Divine persons Christians recognize to be God. In other words, each is called God in His own right, and all are equally holy, just, righteous and loving.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Later He also created all the creatures that live upon the earth, and then He created man. The Word of God reveals to us the existence of the Trinity:

GENESIS 1:26 And God said, “Let Us (God the Father, God the Word and God the Holy Spirit) make man in Our image, after Our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.”

1 JOHN 5:7 For there are three Who bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit: and these three are one (in nature, purpose and unity).

God had no beginning and will have no end. We, created in God's image (Genesis 1:26-28), will also have an unending existence. After we die physically, we will pass to the next life where we will continue to live forever - for eternity (Romans 6:23; John 14:2-3).

“ . . Jesus does not say that He is a way - as if there are other ways - Jesus is the only way and there is no other way. . . ”

As you grow in your new life in Christ, you can come to a greater understanding (revelation) of God and experience greater intimacy with Him - our Creator and Lord. To grow in Christ we need the good food, “*the sincere milk*” (1 Peter 2:2) of God's Word.

THE BIBLE - OUR ROAD MAP

The Bible, otherwise known as the Word of God, is just that - God speaking directly to us. While there are many writers, the Bible has only one Author, that being Almighty God.

We, as Christians, learn about God through His written Word, which is divinely inspired and full of Divine truth.

2 TIMOTHY 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness

God will communicate with you through His written Word, the Bible. God will reveal Himself to you, or indeed anyone who will take the time to read His Word with an open mind.

HEBREWS 4:12 For the Word of God is quick (living) and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (exposing our motives, desires and thoughts for what they are - as God sees them).

The truth of God's Word leads us both to the power of deliverance and the Deliverer of that power. We can, with all confidence, depend on the authoritative written Word of God, for it is impossible for God to lie (Numbers 23:19; Titus 1:2). The Bible is our "Manual of Life," and tells us of God's commandments and principles. It is our detailed roadmap which shows us, as Christians, how to live the saved life (Joshua 1:8; John 17:17). It is the foundation of all Christian doctrine and should be the foundation on which our Christian life is built, and the filter through which every thought should be passed.

THE ACCOUNTABILITY OF MAN

Background Reading: Romans 1:16-20

What YOU do or do not do on this earth, will determine whether you go to heaven or hell after your physical body dies.

It is up to each of us to choose where we will spend eternity.

WE MAKE THIS CHOICE by either accepting or rejecting God's free gift of salvation, through Christ Jesus. In fact by not seeking God, Who will direct us to the Cross, we are rebelling against the moral light within our conscience, the moral light which will tell us that there is a God. Having been given this light, we are responsible for seeking and finding (Romans 1:20). Indeed God has not hidden Himself and is easy to find if we truly seek with an open heart.

***“...The truth of God’s Word leads us
both to the power of deliverance and the
Deliverer of that power. . “***

So even by not seeking truth we rebel against our God-given conscience. Man is born separated from God and on the road to eternal death. God throws man a lifeline to enable him to escape the waters of destruction - and this lifeline is Jesus Christ. If man rejects Jesus Christ, all he then does is continue on the road to hell, having either missed or rejected the opportunity to be saved and gain eternal life. The Word tells us that some fear and reject the very thing that would set them free because they love the darkness they are already in, and want to continue in it (John 3:18-20).

Nevertheless, man is accountable for his sin and his position. We know this because the scriptures tell us that man is without excuse to believe because the heavens declare that there is a Creator:

***ROMANS 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from
heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of
men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;***

***ROMANS 1:19 Because that which may be known of
God is manifest in them; for God has shown it unto
them.***

***ROMANS 1:20 For the invisible things of Him from the
creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood
by the things that are made (His creation), even His
eternal power and Godhead; so that they (all men) are
without excuse (to believe there is a God)***

***PSALM 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God;
and the firmament shows His handiwork.***

Indeed men see God’s handiwork as they look at the revelation of nature. As man recognises, with an open heart, that there is a Creator, he then becomes responsible for seeking that Creator and finding a way of communicating with Him. God promises that those

who seek will find, and those who ask will receive (Matthew 7:7-8). Indeed the Lord will move heaven and earth to respond to an open heart, and a seeker of truth - to reveal Christ to that person (John 14:6).

“ . . . God throws man a lifeline to enable him to escape the waters of destruction - and this lifeline is Jesus Christ. . . ”

Many believe that those who have never heard the Gospel cannot be held accountable for rejecting it. However, the phrase “*so that they are without excuse*” (Romans 1:20) tells us otherwise. The scriptures declare that man has no defence when it comes to unbelief. Unsaved man in looking at the created world should acknowledge the existence of a Creator, a mighty Being to whom worship and obedience are due. That man denies this truth, represses it or shuns it in horror renders him as being “*without excuse.*” Men will be judged according to the light they have been given, not the light they have not been given.

As Cottrell says, “*Whether individuals have or have not heard the gospel is not the issue. Whether they will be saved or lost depends not on what they have not heard, but on what they have heard. They will be judged according to the light they have, not the light they do not have.*” And he quotes Morris as saying “*Our condemnation in each case lies in the fact that we have sinned against the light we have, not against the light we have never received.*”¹

Therefore it is not just because of Adam’s sin that man is condemned.

“*Some would claim, that God is unfair in condemning men who have been placed in their present position by the fault or act of another, namely Adam. In reply to this argument, it may be said that Scripture nowhere says that men are finally condemned for Adam’s transgression as such. On the contrary, the Gospel reveals to us the Atonement, preordained from the first by the offering of animal Sacrifices, for the avoidance of such final condemnation.*

So, man was given a way out even from the very beginning, but for the most part has ignored or rejected that Way, Who has always

been Christ, which makes the transgression of all who followed Adam as far-reaching as was the original transgression. So man is lost not only because of original sin, but even more so because of his rejection of God's Solution for that sin (John.3:16). Once again, as Paul said, man is "Without excuse." "

*" . . . all have sinned against Light which they might have followed." "*²

The Word of God also tells us that every man has been given "*the measure of faith*" (or access to "*the measure of faith*") to believe there is a God (Romans 12:3).

Note: This scripture also applies to the saved who are given access to "*the measure of faith*" required for service and obedience.

This "*measure of faith*" for the heathen is really an inward moral light, contained in the conscience, which gives man the ability to acknowledge a Creator. Sin has not extinguished this gift and man's natural inclination is to seek out his Creator. Sin will stifle this inward motivation, however, and man can, through his own choosing, simply block off to the existence of a Creator. If man denies this part of himself, he will do himself damage, for only through being open to this light can he discover God. The measure of faith is a measure of awareness of God supplied by God's grace. Man is therefore responsible for seeking truth, but he will not discover truth on his own terms, only on God's terms!

" . . . Men will be judged according to the light they have been given, not the light they have not been given. . . "

God reveals Himself to man as man is open and seeks. Man is responsible for seeking the answers to life, but those answers can only be revealed by the Father. Man cannot discover them any other way.

The responsibility of man is therefore to seek the knowledge of God which will lead him to salvation through the Gospel of Jesus Christ. How can he do this, you may ask. God has told us that if we knock on His door, He will reveal truth to us. How? Through prayer. He will open the door and reveal Himself and His Word of

promise and hope (Matthew 7:7-8). There is, however, an important condition attached to this promise. When we seek God we must be open, leaving our ideas, opinions and perceptions of how we think things operate, on the shelf. We need to seek God and truth on His terms, not ours, being open to receive what He desires to reveal to us, not what we think we already know!

THE WAY OF SALVATION

Background Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:1-6

While man is responsible for seeking the God to which his conscience testifies, man still has the power of choice. This means that **God, in His love**, will never force anyone to receive His free gift of grace. His very nature is love, and love will never force. The free will of man to accept or reject the Gospel is a sacred scriptural principle. Only by a willing acceptance of Jesus' Lordship can God's saving grace be obtained, by which we are saved. And this has nothing to do with any "good works" we may have done, as Ephesians 2:8 and 9 tell us:

EPHESIANS 2:8 For by grace (God's unmerited favour) are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

EPHESIANS 2:9 Not of works (man cannot merit salvation), lest any man should boast (try to take the credit).

In other words, salvation can never be based on one's own works. For this reason no-one can take personal pride in it, and the glory belongs to the Lord. Sadly many people think that after this life, because they have lead good lives and harmed nobody, then their "good works" will give them favour with their Creator, and an entrance to heaven. But "good works" cannot save. Otherwise Jesus Christ would not have had to shed His Blood and die on the cross at Calvary.

The Bible tells us that:

ACTS 4:12 Salvation is found in no one else (except Jesus), for there is no other Name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved. (N.I.V.)

Jesus Himself said:

JOHN 14:6 . . . “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes unto the Father, but by Me.”

Therefore our so called “good works” outside Christ cannot earn our salvation. Also, if people try to come to God through Mohammed or Buddah or even Mary, for example, it will not work. The Name of Jesus is the only Name through which we can be saved. There is no other way - no other Saviour, no other Redeemer. All roads do not lead to heaven - there is only one road which does. This is the road that leads from the Cross of Calvary to heaven. This road is a narrow way, but the Light of God’s presence is on it, and God has promised those who come via the Cross, a place in heaven (Matthew 7:13-14; John 14:2).

This way, however, involves faith, for to receive anything from God, faith is required. And scripture tells us that faith comes as a result of believing on God’s Word.

HEBREWS 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him (God): for he who comes to God must believe that He is (that He exists), and that He is a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him.

To every person who yields to the message of the Gospel, by repenting of their sin and making Jesus their Lord and Saviour, God will give the ability to trust in the reality of the Gospel. This reality is Christ crucified, buried and raised from the dead - and us abiding in Him (John 15:5).

“. . . Man is therefore responsible for seeking truth, but he will not discover truth on his own terms, only on God’s terms. . . ”

God has made the way for every person to enter into life - spiritual life, abundant life and eternal life with Him. It is now up to each person to choose to enter into this spiritual life or else remain in spiritual death (1 John 5:11-12). And each person born into this world has only the period of their own lifetime in which to repent - after physical death there is no “second chance” (Hebrews 9:27).

DEATH - THE PROOF OF SIN

Every child of Adam, which includes the whole human race, has been born a darkened sinner unable to redeem themselves, unable to bridge the gap between themselves and God.

This is the reason God’s love was manifested at the Cross in Jesus.

Man, blinded by sin and crippled by the sin nature, is born needing the saving spiritual Light that heaven gave to the world through Jesus (Luke 1:79).

How do we know that man is a sinner in darkness and needs saving from his darkness?

The answer is found when one comes to understand that man was created in the beginning to never die. He was created to live forever, growing in the knowledge of God and enjoying His fellowship. We see the first example of this in God seeking to walk with man in the cool of the day in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:8). This would have been a regular occurrence before Adam and Eve sinned and hid themselves in shame from God.

Adam lived 930 years, Enos 905 years and Cainan (Kenan) 910 years. Methuselah, the oldest man who ever lived, died just before the flood aged 969 years. After Noah’s flood, the life of man was shortened, and today a person of great age will live to 100. All in all, however, death has reigned since the Fall of man in the Garden. For God to create, in His image, a spiritual being called man, only to then have that being die a few short years later, would go against God’s principles. Let us explain this statement.

From God can only come life, never death, for He is only Light and Life. Darkness and death have no part in God and had no part in His original plan (John 1:4; John 8:12). Something that this spiritual entity called man did must have caused a separation from his spiritual life source (God) which caused death to come. God did not

create this spiritual being called man to die. The physical death of man proves beyond doubt that something has gone drastically wrong with God's creation.

***“ . . . All roads do not lead to heaven -
there is only one road which does - the
road that leads from the Cross of Calvary
to heaven. . . ”***

The Bible explains to us that this wrong is sin and that it has darkened man from the time he came into existence, from the time of Adam's sin. Again death silences every argument that man would use to try and justify himself, or to blame his environment or others for his sinful behaviour. The very presence of physical death declares that man's sin is real and that it, and the sin nature, are at the root of all his problems. God, in Christ, however, has made the way for man to walk with Him again, and in His will and His power to bring Him glory. Amen.

WHY SHOULD PEOPLE ACCEPT JESUS AS THEIR LORD ?

Background Reading: Genesis 1:26-28; 2:8-9, 15-25; 3:1-24

Mankind originated when God created a perfect sinless man called Adam, who became the father of all mankind. Before Adam fathered any children, however, he sinned against God. This allowed spiritual death (therefore spiritual darkness) to surround his spirit, and he thus became separated from God. This position of death (or separation from God) has been inherited by all his offspring, as Romans 5:17-18 declares:

ROMANS 5:17 For if by one man's (Adam's) offence (sin) death reigned (in all) by one (through that one man); (how) much more (will) they who receive abundance of (God's) grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by (through) One, Jesus Christ.

ROMANS 5:18 *Therefore as by (through) the offence (sinful action) of one (Adam), judgement came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the (one act of) righteousness (by Jesus) the free gift came upon all men unto justification of (that brings) life (union with God to all who believe and receive Jesus as Lord).*

God's written Word tells us that life (or conversely death) is in the blood (Leviticus 17:11). We can understand from this that ALL of Adam's offspring have genetically inherited his polluted blood, and it is this polluted blood which has caused mankind's state of spiritual death.

ROMANS 3:23 *For all have sinned (are born in a state of sin separated from God, and are sinners), and come short of the glory of God (as a consequence are deprived of God's saving presence);*

ROMANS 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death (spiritual death which is separation from God); but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

The love of God was shown when Jesus died on the cross, becoming the sinless sacrificial Lamb. It was through this act of love that God made the way for us to be cleansed and taken out of our state of sin. The Word of God reveals to us that sin is so serious that:

HEBREWS 9:22 *. . . without shedding of blood (there) is no remission (forgiveness of sin).*

Most basically defined, sin is anything that does not conform to the character and nature of God. Sin is not only doing that which is wrong, in thought, word or deed, sin is also not doing that which is right, morally and spiritually. This means that there are sins of commission - wrongdoing - and sins of omission - not doing right. Without God in your life, positionally and experientially, you will sin. As the scriptures tell us, man is born in a state of sin, dominated by the sin nature, and therefore commits sin. Everything fallen man does is steeped in sin and he is unable to rectify this situation.

***“...The physical death of man proves
beyond doubt that something has gone
drastically wrong with Gods’
creation...”***

Such was the debt and weight of sin that the second member of the Trinity had to become a perfect man and be sacrificed in our place on the altar of Calvary in order to make the way for man’s redemption. What an awesome price! This sinless sacrifice was required to satisfy perfect justice. Nailed to the cross, Christ took the punishment for our sin, and now is the only Mediator between God and man. All must come through Him, for He alone holds the keys of truth - to unlock men’s hearts to His grace, and the gates of heaven to man (Revelation 1:18).

It was Jesus Who paid the price for our forgiveness through the shedding of His Blood. Without the shedding of His Blood we could not have been redeemed - restored to God. The Resurrection of Christ then became the ultimate proof to Believer and unbeliever alike of the truth of the Gospel. It shows forth the defeat of the power of death, and guarantees salvation to the Believer. So the way has now been made. It is the responsibility of each individual, however, to respond to God’s love by accepting Jesus as Lord and Saviour. Only by doing so can each person escape the bondage of spiritual death and the fearful prospect of an eternity of torment without God in the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:15). And justice decrees that the weight of our sins (without Jesus) will determine the measure of that torment.

WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY ?

Christianity is not a religion, a system of ethics or a set of traditions which are relied upon to produce the goal of pleasing God. For as we have learned, man has no way of earning his own salvation. Rather, Christianity is a personal relationship between born-again Believers and God. And in this relationship, Christians know God to be their Heavenly Father (Romans 8:14-17). Christians are people who have made Jesus Christ their personal Lord and Saviour, and who continue to follow Him through the teachings

contained in God's written Word. Therefore Christianity is not based on practices, rituals or methods but on a relationship which then orders the Believer's faith-walk (John 14:23; Hebrews 5:9).

***“...The Resurrection of Christ then
became the ultimate proof to Believer
and unbeliever alike of the
truth of the Gospel. . .”***

As Christians grow in the knowledge and love of God, they can allow this love to flow through them so that they perform righteous works of faith and love (John 15:5). This is one of the Bible's promises, and in this way, the Father is truly glorified. Indeed as Christians express the love of God and display the power of God in their lives, men and women will be drawn to the Saviour. Believers, with God's grace at work in and through them, become banners of His love, showing others the truth of the Gospel through their attitudes and actions (John 13:34-35). Indeed the finished work of the Cross defeated the power of sin. This results in a transformed life, a changed character and a new Lord. Only the power of the Blood can produce these radical changes in the heart and life of a man (2 Corinthians 5:17).

SPIRITUAL REGENERATION IS NEEDED

Background Reading: Romans 5:6-11

Spiritual regeneration is another term for being “born again.” This regeneration takes place because of God's saving grace. We were born sinners, and because of the sin nature which permeated us from birth, we sinned continually (Jeremiah 17:9, Romans 3:10). Sin's stain kept our soul in darkness.

But upon regeneration (being born again), the Holy Spirit came to dwell within us (1 Corinthians 6:19) and God's saving presence surrounded our spirit. In this, darkness was driven out of our spirit - for He Who has come is the true Light of the world. He is, in fact, the Father of Lights (James 1:17).

JOHN 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again (regenerated), he cannot see (enter) the Kingdom of God.”

Regeneration (to be born again by the Spirit) is the only way the sin problem can be dealt with and the gulf between man and God bridged - for God alone could forgive our sins and give us spiritual life in exchange for spiritual death.

JOHN 3:16 For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him (Jesus) should not perish, but have (with God) everlasting life.

Through the action of accepting Jesus as Lord and Saviour, man can be reunited with God. However we must be sorry for the sins of the past and turn from them, forsaking our old life to follow Jesus. This is what the word “repentance” means. As we do this, God will give us the power, through His grace, to walk away from our old life and our old ways of sin.

“. . . Sin is not only doing that which is wrong, in thought, word or deed, sin is also not doing that which is right, morally and spiritually. . .”

There was no other way God could bring mankind back to Himself but by allowing His only begotten Son Jesus to shed His Blood and to die. Jesus, Who was God the Word clothed in flesh, became the perfect sacrifice. Through this, God could then legally bring mankind out from under the authority of darkness, otherwise known as spiritual death. John 1:1 and 1:14 tell us about God the Word taking on human form - being clothed in flesh.

JOHN 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (God the Word).

JOHN 1:14 And the Word was made flesh (a human being) and dwelt among us . . .

These scriptures are speaking of God the Word, the second member of the Holy Trinity.

God the Word took on flesh through the virgin birth and became a human being called Jesus. He was called the Son of God and the Son of Man, being truly identified with both God and man. He became, without ceasing to be God (God the Word), a perfect sinless man. He stripped Himself of the right to use His Godly power while on earth, including the knowledge He possessed as God the Word, and forsook His heavenly rights as God. Therefore during Jesus' earthly ministry, God's miraculous power was released by the faith that Jesus obtained as a man.

Jesus' life displayed the fruit of the Divine Nature which energized Jesus' human nature, empowering Him to walk in fellowship with the Father all the days of His earthly life. Indeed He said to His Disciple Phillip, *"He who has seen Me has seen the Father"* (John 14:9), His sacrificial love showing forth the Father's nature and character. Fallen man, however, did not have access to this Divine Nature until after the Cross. Access to the graces and energies of God's Divine Nature had been denied following Adam's sin, and the descent of man into spiritual death. At the Cross, man's redemption was paid for, and man once again gained the right to access God's Divine Nature through Jesus the Saviour. When God brings man back into spiritual union with Himself, man becomes a partaker of the Divine Nature as he yields to the Spirit of God.

“. . .Regeneration (to be born again by the Spirit) is the only way the sin problem can be dealt with and the gulf between man and God bridged. . .”

Jesus died on the cross at Calvary and was resurrected by God's mighty power. Today He is seated at the right hand of God the Father, and all power and authority in heaven and on earth have been given to Him (Matthew 28:18).

This is Jesus, our wonderful Saviour, the Prince of Peace, the King of kings, the Lord of lords and our Kinsman Redeemer. Amen.

THE BOOK OF LIFE

Background Reading: Luke 10:17-20

Your name is now written in the Book of Life because you have:

1. Acknowledged you were a sinner born in a state of sin, and needed God's saving grace to be set free from the grip of sin and death (Romans 3:23).

2. Received Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour according to Romans 10:9-10:

ROMANS 10:9 That if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.

ROMANS 10:10 For with the heart man believes (faith is exercised) unto righteousness (rightstanding with God); and with the mouth, confession (open acknowledgement) is made unto salvation (action with your faith).

Because of this you are made righteous in Christ. You need now to:

3. Continue to follow and serve Jesus as Lord of your whole life, through acting on the direction God has given in His written Word (Hebrews 5:9).

4. Continue to turn your back on all sin through repentance. This involves making a complete "about face" in regard to sin, i.e. making a 180 degree turn. To do anything against God's commandments, knowingly or unknowingly, is called sinning. (Know, however, that after this quality decision, God will give you,

through His grace, the spiritual strength to walk in the righteous standard that He has set).

1 JOHN 1:9 If we confess (acknowledge then forsake) our sins, He (God) is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (the results of sin).

5. Diligently study God's Word so you can know and obey all God's commandments (2 Timothy 2:15).

6. Set aside a special time each day when you can read the Word of God, pray and fellowship with the Lord. This is called your "quiet-time" and is best done at the start of each day, before daily responsibilities and pressures take precedence. Remember, to draw close to God, you need to spend consistent time with Him (Psalm 5:1-3).

7. Rely not on willpower but the empowerment of the Holy Spirit through the Divine Nature both to desire and then to do the things He asks (2 Peter 1:4).

CAN YOUR NAME BE TAKEN OUT OF THE BOOK OF LIFE ?

YES! - you can forfeit your salvation after becoming a Christian. The following scriptures show that this is possible:

EXODUS 32:33 And the Lord said unto Moses, "Whosoever has sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book" (this shows that one's name can be added or taken out).

In scripture God is warning Christians not to fall into the types of sin described in 1Corinthians 6:9-10. He is also showing the world His moral standard so that the mirror of truth can reveal sin for what it is, and that as sinners, we all need God's grace and forgiveness.

See also - 2 Peter 2:20-22; Luke 8:13; 1 Timothy 4:1; Galatians 5:4.

BUT

REVELATION 3:5 *He who overcomes (by staying in Christ), the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels.*

First Corinthians gives us an outline of the types of sins, that if practised without repentance, will cause people to be fast-tracked into unbelief, thereby bringing them to deny Jesus at a relational level - whereby forfeiting their salvation:

1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-10 *Do you not know that the unrighteous (all who reject God's Son) shall not inherit the Kingdom of God (shall not go to heaven)? Be not deceived: neither fornicators (sexually immoral), nor idolators (idol worshippers), nor adulterers, nor effeminate (sexual perverts), nor abusers of themselves with mankind (homosexual offenders), nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers (slanderers), nor extortioners (swindlers), shall inherit the Kingdom of God.*

REVELATION 21:7 *He that overcomes (by staying in Christ) shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son (adopted into the family of God and treated as a son forever).*

REVELATION 21:8 *But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers (the sexually immoral), and sorcerers (those who practise magic arts), and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone (the Lake of Fire): which is the second death (eternal separation from God following the Great White Throne judgement).*

If former Christians practice these types of sin and in doing so, lose their faith in Jesus' Lordship, God calls them to repent. They can then be restored to salvation, for God calls all sinners, everywhere, to repent so that they may be cleansed by the Blood of the Lamb (1 John 1:9). The Blood is sufficient, even in such cases.

Note: Sin always pulls us away from God's influence and grace. Repentance and the Blood of Jesus applied to sin cause us to come back under the influence of His grace. Some types of sin exert a greater gravity to pull us into a dark place, this place being that of man thinking and living without God's influence and grace (Hebrews 3:12-14).

Sin will take us on a journey away from God's influence. Sins of greater gravity can help fast-track us into darkness, causing a change in our hearts so that relational truth in Christ becomes historical truth outside of Christ. This means that heart-belief shrinks to mental assent, and we then only believe with our minds, not our hearts. In this way, the faith required for salvation is extinguished.

These scriptures give Christians a warning that practising these types of sins will fast-track Christians into unbelief, resulting in them stepping out of Christ and therefore forfeiting their salvation.

If unbelief is left to run its race through the Christian not maintaining the proper object for their faith, i.e. the Cross, the finished work of Christ at Calvary, then ultimately they will forfeit their salvation. This is because man is saved by faith in Christ and His finished work. Only by this means can man be joined to Christ and so be saved.

***“...YES! - you can forfeit your
salvation after becoming a Christian. . .”***

Jesus saves from sin, and not in sin. Christians who think they can practise sin with immunity are sadly mistaken – for such “*shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.*” (1 Corinthians 6:9).

Such sins will cause Christians who practice them to deny Jesus on a relational level, thereby shifting their belief to a religious or historical level which means only meaning mental assent that He is Lord.

In regard to people who live in a de facto relationship, and let's say in a church service give their hearts to the Lord, these people should not return to that de facto relationship. To do so would be to continue to commit the sin of adultery (or fornication). Because of a lack of repentance from the sin about which scripture warns, they would not have truly made Jesus Lord. If they truly have had a conversion experience, then to stay in this type of relationship will help fast-track them into unbelief. As we have said, this means that the relational truth of Jesus as Lord, which is heart-truth and constitutes faith, would eventually change to mere historical truth about Jesus. We must meet the conditions to be "in Christ" if we are to abide in Him. Sin is sin, and we are saved from it, not saved so we can return to it with impunity.

Repentance for salvation purposes is an attitude and commitment of the heart to go God's way and not any other way, including the way of the flesh.

Salvation May Be Forfeited or Abandoned by Rejecting Christ

"God, as a loving Heavenly Father, does not desire that any person fall away from the salvation He has graciously provided in Christ. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

But, the Bible also teaches that believers who have accepted Christ as Savior can be lost if they repeatedly disregard the teachings of Scripture, continue to resist the conviction of the Holy Spirit, and finally reach the point where they have turned away from their Savior. Jesus makes that point in the Parable of the Sower where, speaking of some who have become believers, He said, "They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away" (Luke 8:13).³

However, be assured that, providing you truly purpose to live within the Biblical boundaries of salvation and continue to have faith in Christ's finished work on the Cross, nothing can remove you from the Father's hand (John 10:27-29). This guarantee is valid for eternity, as long as Jesus remains your Lord. Indeed He has prepared a place in heaven for all who receive Him and continue in His love (John 14:1-3).

“ . . . Repentance for salvation purposes is an attitude and commitment of the heart to go God’s way and not any other way, including the way of the flesh. . . ”

Those who reject making Jesus Lord and Saviour (or do not, with an open heart, seek God Who will show them the truth of Calvary) will remain spiritually bankrupt, walking in spiritual darkness. After physical death they will live in everlasting torment. Rejection through ignorance or the avoidance of truth will be no excuse (John 12:48), for man is accountable for his position of sin.

ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

Background Reading: 1 John 3:1-3; John 10:27-29

If you have made Jesus your Lord and Saviour and are following Him, you can rest assured that you are saved and that you are a child of the living God. Jesus declared in John 5:24:

JOHN 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He who hears (and receives) My Word, and believes on Him (the Father) Who sent Me, has everlasting life (with God), and shall not come into condemnation (shall not go to hell); but is passed from death (separation from God) unto life (union with God through Jesus Christ).

This scripture gives us great assurance for it declares that we, as Believers, have eternal life and are no longer separated from God, but united with Him forever (as we remain “*in Christ*”). This is the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

ROMANS 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation (no guilt) to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit (according to His leading and empowerment).

ROMANS 8:2 For the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

Some people, on receiving Jesus, sense a dramatic change in their lives and feel very different within themselves. Others, however, are not conscious of any change at all. This does not make one person more saved than another, nor does it mean that God loves one person more than another. Such differences occur because we are all individuals and respond differently to life's experiences. Therefore we cannot base our salvation on the way we feel, for our emotions can vary from day to day and are by no means reliable indicators of our spiritual position in Christ. We can therefore only base our salvation on what God's Word declares - for the Word of God is our assurance of salvation, and the only proper foundation for our faith. Eventually, however, Christians, with proper study and openness to the Spirit of Truth, obtain that blessed assurance of their salvation and union with Christ through His precious Blood.

Be aware, however, that Satan will try to influence you with thoughts of doubt concerning the reality of your salvation. For example, he may try to convince you that you're not really saved, or that God doesn't really love you or that the whole thing is all a figment of your imagination. You need to ignore such suggestions and declare that you are a child of God, saved by grace through Jesus' sacrifice. God's Word is the final authority on the matter. Hold fast to your conviction regardless of what the devil, your emotions or other people may try to tell you. Speak out the truths of God's Word in the face of any uncertainty, and learn to rely on it in every situation. Other scriptures to look over are - John 3:16; Romans 10:9; 10:13; 5:1; Colossians 1:12-13; 1 Timothy 2:4.

“...We can only base our salvation on what God's Word declares - for the Word of God is our assurance of salvation. . .”

Our Lord said “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10). This should settle it if Jesus is your Lord!!

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF MAKING JESUS LORD ?

Background Reading: Psalm 23

1. When we took this step we were taken out of the Kingdom of Darkness and placed into the Kingdom of Light (the Kingdom of God).

COLOSSIANS 1:13 Who (God) has Delivered (rescued us - all who have received Jesus as Lord) from the power (dominion) of darkness, and has translated (placed) us into the Kingdom of His Son

2. With Jesus as our Lord at the time of our physical death, we will go to heaven rather than hell. This is the guaranteed promise of an eternal future spent with God rather than in everlasting torment (2 Corinthians 5:8).

3. With our names written in the Book of Life, God becomes our eternal Provider. Today He can provide:

(a) SPIRITUALLY -

The Lord has promised to help us grow and prosper spiritually as we follow the leading of His Word.

3 JOHN 1:2 Beloved, I wish (pray) above all things that you may prosper and be in health (physical prosperity), even as your soul prospers (spiritual prosperity).

This verse is telling us that God wants our souls to prosper along with our physical bodies. If our souls are to prosper, our minds must first be renewed by studying God's Word. In this way we come to know and accept His principles. Then we must willingly act in faith on this renewal of our minds. Some of the fruits which can be produced in our lives as a result are: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). These are known as "*the fruit of the Spirit.*" In other words God desires for us, as His children, to develop, by His

grace, in character, displaying these fruits in our lives. In this He is well pleased.

(b) PHYSICALLY (Health) -

Although it was completely unjust, Jesus' suffering and death constitute the Sacrifice of Atonement which took place so that mankind could be made whole, spirit, soul and body (Hebrews 13:12). Therefore both His suffering and death together constitute the Sacrifice of Atonement - that has set free all those who believe and trust in Christ and His redemptive work. The Atonement itself was then brought to completion by the Resurrection.

“...Satan will try to influence you with thoughts of doubt concerning the reality of your salvation. . .”

In the context of the Atonement, Christ's finished work on our behalf, we can now understand that He paid the price for our healing by the stripes (wounds) He endured both prior to and during the crucifixion. This means that we can claim healing by believing and trusting on His Word.

ISAIAH 53:4 Surely He (Jesus) has borne our griefs (taken our sickness, weakness and disease), and carried our sorrows: yet we did (ignorantly) esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

ISAIAH 53:5 But He was wounded (pierced) for our transgressions (rebellion), He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace (the punishment that brought us peace) was upon Him (and Him alone); and with His stripes (by His wounds) we are healed (and made whole - if we believe to receive from God).

Jesus, the Bible tells us, is the same yesterday, today and forevermore (Hebrews 13:8). He healed people by the power of God when He walked upon the earth, and God's power is still available

today to bring healing into our lives. We receive healing, and any other of God's promises, by having faith in His Word and praying in the Name of Jesus - with our focus on Calvary and Christ's finished work. Sin and everything it has brought into this world, including sickness and disease, have been defeated by "Christ's finished work." Amen. We need to pray with faith (trust and belief), not wavering but being fully persuaded that God's Word is true, and will accomplish what it declares for those who receive its promises.

(c) MATERIALLY -

The Lord has promised to provide for our needs as we live according to His Word.

MALACHI 3:10 "Bring all your tithes (and offerings v.8) into the storehouse, that there may be meat in My house, and prove Me now in this," says the Lord of Hosts, "if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to hold it.

MALACHI 3:11 And I will rebuke the devourer (Satan and his forces) for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field . . .

As we give our tithes and offerings in faith, with a willing heart, and continue to live a surrendered life, trusting in Him in every area of our lives, God has promised to bless us, provide for us and protect our provision. He will then be Jehovah Jireh, our Provider (Matthew 6:25-34).

***"...Jesus, the Bible tells us, is the same yesterday, today and forevermore:
Hebrews 13:8. . ."***

This is only an outline of some of the benefits of making Jesus Lord. Indeed God's Word contains many more promises and they

are available to all who believe according to the Word and surrender their lives according to the Word.

TO HAVE VICTORY IN JESUS

Background Reading: 1 John 5:1-4

To have victory in Jesus, we need, with God's grace at work in and through us, to obey all His commandments. So first we must acknowledge the truths in His Word. Then we must choose to act on them, believing for God's empowerment to live according to His will, not ours. Doing this will bring us into a victorious life in the Christian faith. To just believe that God's Word is true will not change people's lives, or indeed be of any benefit. In fact the Bible tells us that even the demons believe in God . . . "*and tremble*" (James 2:19)! What is needed is that we combine our belief with action - that we purpose to obey the truths contained in God's Word from our hearts. Only from the vantage point of commitment is God's power made available to us to live the saved life. This power comes through the Divine Nature that we, in Christ, are partakers of (2 Peter 1:4).

Willing acts of obedience will develop a mature, true love in our lives. From this will come lasting spiritual fruits, and so prosperity of our spirit, soul and body. If we live in this love, the lives of those around us will be affected, for they will see the reality of Christ's love in us as we allow God's grace to work through us. Amen.

Indeed the Word of God tells us that the measure of our love for God will be the level of our obedience. Jesus stated in John 14:21:

JOHN 14:21 He who has My commandments, and keeps (obeys) them, he it is who loves Me: and he who loves Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest (reveal) Myself to him.

As we, by God's empowering grace, keep His commandments, we will be pleasing Him - being at one with Him, asking according to His will and having our prayers answered:

1 JOHN 3:22 And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

THE FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS OF CHRISTIANITY

1. We were all born in a state of sin, and need God's grace to overcome sin:

ROMANS 3:23 For all have sinned (all are born in a state of sin and are sinners), and come short of the glory of God (as a consequence, are deprived of God's saving presence).

See also Romans 6:3-4.

2. The shedding of Jesus' sinless Blood on the cross was the redemptive price needed to release us from the bondage of sin. However for us to be released from sin's eternal grip, we needed to repent of (turn our backs on) sin, and receive Jesus as our Lord and Saviour:

ROMANS 10:9 That if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus (that Jesus is your Lord), and shall believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.

ROMANS 10:10 For with the heart man believes unto righteousness (rightstanding with God); and with the mouth confession (open acknowledgement) is made unto salvation (action with our faith).

3. Jesus was raised from the dead by God's power and is alive forevermore:

REVELATION 1:18 I am He Who lives, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

All power and authority in heaven and on earth have been given to Him by God the Father:

MATTHEW 28:18 *And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth."*

4. Jesus is God the Word, Who forsook His heavenly privileges and clothed Himself with flesh through the virgin birth:

JOHN 1:14 *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*

Jesus' father was God, and therefore He was a sinless man, as Adam (man's federal head) was before he committed high treason.

5. Man is responsible for seeking God's truths so that he may be set free, spiritually and physically. And God has revealed to us in His Word that if we diligently seek truth with an open, sincere and unbiased heart, we will find it:

MATTHEW 7:7 *Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:*

MATTHEW 7:8 *For every one who asks receives; and he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks it shall be opened.*

6. The chief heartfelt confession the sinner must make is the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Before sinners come to Jesus they cannot, through their own efforts, obtain God's favour or power to overcome sin:

EPHESIANS 2:8 *For by grace (God's unmerited favour) are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

EPHESIANS 2: 9 *Not of works (nothing man does can earn him salvation), lest any man should boast.*

However when Jesus is allowed to be Lord of our lives, we have access to the power of God to help us overcome sin:

PHILIPPIANS 4:13 I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me.

Because:

PHILIPPIANS 2:13 . . . it is God Who works in you (through Divine enablement) both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

THE SINNER'S PRAYER

Use this prayer as a reference for helping others receive Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

Dear Father, scripture tells me that I am separated from You and Your love. I want to put this right and enter into a relationship with You as Your child. I acknowledge I am a sinner. I believe that Jesus died on the cross and shed His Blood for my sin. I also believe that Jesus was raised from the dead by the power of Your Spirit. I am now willing to turn from my way and go Your way, and I ask forgiveness for the things I have done wrong, the sins I have committed. I ask You Jesus into my heart as my personal Lord and Saviour. I will now live for You Lord, with the help of Your grace at work in me, and serve You, day by day. I believe I am now forgiven and washed of all sin. I believe I am now born again and that my name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. I thank You Lord, and pray all this in the precious Name of Jesus. Amen.

Remember: You are now a child of God and have the Holy Spirit dwelling within you:

1 CORINTHIANS 6:19 . . . do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, Who is in you, Whom you have (received) of (from) God, and you are not your own?

You have found the greatest treasure life offers, the Lord Jesus Christ. As you continue in your new life in Christ, you can come to know God in a deeper way - as your Father, your healer, your provider, your refuge and your eternal home. Remember too that we will all still exist a billion years from now. Therefore the most important aspect of each person's brief earthly life is to gain the saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing else gained in our earthly life, no success or wealth or power, can compensate for an eternity spent in the Lake of Fire where the weight of man's sin is so great that it will keep him there forever. We cannot take with us anything gained outside Christ - indeed temporal riches and fame will be left behind to fade and rot (Matthew 6:19-21). Only the love of God, if taken hold of in this life, will last for eternity in the heart of the Believer.

God bless you and may you have the victory in your new life in Christ. Amen.

For further information or teaching material to help you grow in the Christian faith, please visit:

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- 1 Cottrell, J., Romans, Vol.1.
- 2 S.B.C. Romans, pg.31.
- 3 A.O.G. USA Position Paper 2017.

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to see people living
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