

God Loves You! † Jesus Lives!

Dear New Believer,

Due to changes in my life, particularly over the past forty years or so, I have come to understand some important things that have greatly impacted my life in a number of ways. As I continue to grow in knowledge and understanding of the serious nature of the Bible and its message, it has come to my attention that I would be forever disturbed in conscience, **if I failed** to share the “**truth**” that has been revealed to me over these past decades. These truths are as sure as the physical death that we all will face one day. Unfortunately, many churches do a very *poor* job of teaching the *entirety* of the Bible and, at times, what they do teach is *false*. The Bible is full of warnings about **false teachers and prophets** – especially in these last days!

The Bible is an amazing and **truly unique** collection of writings that have been preserved by God over thousands of years. It is God’s will or testament to men in all ages, revealing the plan of Almighty God for man here and now, and in the next life. The Bible is a record of God’s dealings with man in the past, present, and future. It expresses His message of eternal salvation for all who believe in, and obey, the gospel of Christ, and, conversely, eternal damnation for all who rebel against or reject the gospel of Christ Jesus. The Bible truly is the power of God unto eternal salvation to all who will believe (**Romans 1:16**). It is also a very present help for one’s body, soul, and spirit. The Bible is **not** a book of chronological events nor is it an unbroken series of divine utterances. It was given, here a little and there a little, to many men of various occupations and backgrounds over a period of time spanning approximately 18 centuries and yet it still maintains a perfect unity. I’ve learned that men should read it to be wise; they should believe it to be safe, and they must **practice** it to be holy. We should read its entirety that it might fill our memory and rule our hearts. We must obey it so that it will guide us in righteousness and true holiness. It should be read slowly, daily and prayerfully. It must be studied carefully and applied constantly, until it becomes a part of our very being. Much of this paragraph is gleaned from Finis Dake’s Annotated Study Bible (KJV).

2 Timothy 2:15 says; “**Study** to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

While man has come out with various new English translations during the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries, the “**original**” **Word of God** has never changed, nor will it ever change. **His Word is infallible**

and unchanging! I recommend only the King James Version or the New King James Version, for those whose language is English. The Dake Annotated Reference Bible (KJV) Large Print Edition is particularly good, since my eyesight is not so good. Dake now offers the Bible in the New King James Version as well (NKJV). For people who desire a newer translation, I recommend only the NKJV and prefer the Dake Study Bible above all other study Bibles. I use **both** the KJV and the NKJV for study purposes and for maximum clarity. Overall, I prefer the KJV for accuracy. If you purchase a study Bible, **be forewarned**, that you will generally run into denominational (doctrinal) issues within the study notes. **You cannot rely on the notes!** You must check all the notes out against the **entirety** of the Bible, due to the various **false doctrines** that abound today and which are widely accepted by mainstream churches. This is sad, but very true. You must study your Bible **diligently** to **know** whether what is in the notes is actually true or not. This is for your own safety! You must always keep in mind what is at stake – **your life**. Remember, **you** are responsible to *develop your own* relationship with God. Remember how the Bereans checked Paul’s teachings against Scripture. I recommend that you follow their pattern. You can always **ignore** any notes that are in doubt.

- **Acts 17:10-11**; “And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming *thither* went into the synagogue of the Jews. ¹¹ **These were more noble** than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, **and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.**”

Bible Warnings: every church *should* warn its people concerning the dangers associated with the **newer** Bible’s) **unfortunately, few do**. Nevertheless, newer is **not always better**.

Almost all (*if* not all) of the “New Versions” of the bible have been badly corrupted, by using (and giving *preference* to) two older but inconsistent manuscripts (Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus). Sadly, this makes them far **less** reliable than the **King James Version**. Actually, I consider them dangerous and patently perverted. The only “New Version” I can recommend is the New King James Version, and that is with the **caveat** that the reader must ignore all notes indicating that some words, verses, or passages are **not** part of “older” or “more reliable” manuscripts. **All notes that omit portions of scripture must be ignored!** I am going to put together a more in-depth article on this issue as soon as I can get to it. Some of the new versions just make changes and omit portions **without even noting it**. These are **NOT RELIABLE!** **Do not trust them!** The newer versions you should not use include the following: (this list is **not** exhaustive)

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Revised Standard (RSV); New International Version (NIV); New American Standard Bible (NASB); American Standard Version (ASV); New Living Translation (NLT); New World Translation (NWT); New English Version (NEV); Living Bible (LB). There are other **bad** (*poor and dangerous* in my opinion) versions out there, but these should **not** be relied upon. Do **not** trust your salvation to any but the KJV or NKJV. The **King James Version** is the **most preferred and most accurate**. The Holy Spirit can guide you into **all** truth.

Psalms 119:89; “For ever, O LORD, Thy word is settled in heaven.”

Matthew 24:35; “**Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away.**”

John 16:13; “**Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, *that* shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come.**”

I wish to convey the basic “**Gospel of Jesus Christ**,” but, before I do, it is imperative that you understand that: Every person ever born, (*except Christ*), was born into the world with a “sinful nature”! “For **all** have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (**Romans 3:23**). Therefore, according to **Romans 3:23**, we **all** need to be “saved” spiritually or we will die “lost” and suffer eternal torment in the lake of fire, which is the second (eternal) death. Furthermore, everyone will be judged one day and “God’s righteous judgments endure forever.” (See **Psalm 119:160** – NKJV [or KJV] it is at the top of each page).

Consider the two passages below (Rev. 20:11-15 and Gal. 3:22)

Revelation 20:11-15 “And I saw a great white throne, and **Him** that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. ¹²And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before **God**; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. ¹³And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. ¹⁴And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

Galatians 3:22; “But the scripture hath concluded **all** under sin, that the *promise* by faith of Jesus Christ ***might*** be given to them that believe.”

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The apostle Paul presents a very concise version of the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand: ²By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. ³For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; ⁴And that He was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: ⁵And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: ⁶After that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. ⁷After that, He was seen of James; then of all the apostles. ⁸And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.”

Another topic I address in more detail (in other articles) concerns being “***born again***.” Jesus, in **John 3:3**; told Nicodemus; “**Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**” This being “born again” is a ***spiritual*** birth that **Jesus** accomplishes, within the new believer, **by His Holy Spirit *and* the Word of God**. In addition, **Romans 10:9-10** records; “That **if** thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. ¹⁰For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

Two articles for more details are: “**A 3-Part ‘Mystery’ of the Bible**” (pages 25-29) ***and*** “**Biblical Salvation**” (pages 53-54; and 79-84).

The basic core beliefs for a true believer *should* include the following:

- 1. Jesus Christ is God** and He was “supernaturally” born, **in the flesh**, of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit (see **Luke 1:26-38**), just as foretold by the prophet Isaiah roughly 700 years earlier. **Isaiah 7:14**; “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”
- 2. Jesus suffered and was tempted in the **flesh** as a man and **never** sinned.** He thereby became what John the Baptist called Him in **John 1:29**; “The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold **the Lamb of God**, which taketh away the sin of the world.”
- 3. Jesus was the “spotless Lamb of God.” **He** paid the “death penalty” for all sinners who believe in Him and accept and obey Him and trust in Him as their Lord and Savior. **John 3:16**; “**For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.**”**

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4. Jesus voluntarily gave His life on the cross. **John 10:18** says; “**No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of Myself.**” It was an extremely painful and shameful death. While He was on the cross, God the Father poured out His full wrath upon Jesus (for the sins of mankind) and thereby satisfied the righteous requirement of His law that all sin must be paid for. **Romans 6:23 (NKJV)**; “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
5. After Jesus died on the cross, He was buried in a stone tomb, but on the third day He rose again from the dead, just as predicted by Jesus Himself in **John 2:18-22**. He later ascended to heaven and now sits at the right hand of the Father, as our great High Priest.
6. Because **Jesus alone** suffered, died, and was raised from the dead for us, we can be saved only through Him: **Acts 4:12**; “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”
7. Jesus is coming back to establish His Kingdom and to “**Judge**” the world:
 - **Psalms 96:13**; “Before the LORD: for He cometh, for He cometh to **judge the earth**: He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth.”
 - **Romans 8:34**; “Who is he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”
 - **2 Timothy 4:1**; “I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom;”

When Jesus was resurrected from the dead on that third day, it was confirmation that God accepted His sacrificial death as payment for the death penalty for whosoever will believe in Him and trust in Him as their personal Savior. His resurrection from the dead also gives us confidence that He will also raise His believers from the dead one day, so that they may be with Him in glory forever. This is the “**Good News!**” This is the “**Blessed Hope**” of all true believers that are in Christ, according to **Titus 2:13**; “Looking for that **blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;**”

Romans 12:1-2; “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. ²And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

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When a person commits his life to Jesus and accepts His offer of life everlasting, his life will undergo a tremendous change, and this is only the **beginning of a lifelong process**, as Jesus transforms you from the inside out, as **He** conforms you to the image of Christ Himself. You will experience many trials and struggles during this transformative process. You will (and should **not** be surprised to) suffer in various ways, but it is a small thing when compared to the rewards in the end. **2 Timothy 3:12**; “Yea, and **all** that will **live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.**”

There are some essentials one must realize when you commit to Jesus as a disciple and follower of Him. You must realize that when you enter into **true** relationship with Jesus, you will be entering into a spiritual battle, and it requires **real commitment** on your part. You must understand and count the cost of being His disciple.

Mark 8:34-38; “And when He had called the people *unto Him* with His disciples also, He said unto them, **Whoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.** ³⁵**For whoever will save his life shall lose it; but whoever shall lose his life for My sake and the gospel’s, the same shall save it.** ³⁶**For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?** ³⁷**Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?** ³⁸**Whoever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.**”

You must realize that **this is a battle that must be fought and endured to the end!** Paul expresses it well in **2 Timothy 4:6-8**; “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. ⁷**I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:** ⁸Henceforth there is **laid up for me** a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”

The Apostle Paul, in **2 Corinthians 1:9-10** says; “But we had the sentence of **death** in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: ¹⁰Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us;” As Christians, we should live **every** day as though it is our **last** one, **trusting in God** rather than ourselves, for our deliverance in **every** situation.”

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The *real* Christian's **journey** is a walk of **love, suffering, faith, and obedience**. If **any** of these four are missing, we will **not** reap the expected reward in the end. It is a **spiritual** walk and you **will** be tempted and will be **challenged often during its course**. You **may stumble and fail, but God is faithful and able to keep you, if you trust Him and call** upon Him. **1 John 1:9**; “**If** we confess our sins, **He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**” Always remember **Ephesians 2:8-9**; “For by **grace** are ye saved **through faith**; and that not of yourselves: *it is the gift of God*: ⁹Not of works, lest any man should boast.” We are **not “saved”** by a water baptism **or** by joining any particular church. **All are saved the same way – “by grace through faith!”** Please, understand I am **not against** water baptism. Jesus commands it in Scripture, but, **it** doesn't “**save**” you. This is covered in **detail** in two of my articles “**[A 3-Part ‘Mystery’ of the Bible](#)**” (pages 25-29) and “**[Biblical Salvation](#)**” (pages 53-54; and 79-84).

This article merely highlights the **key basics** for **eternal** salvation. I have found, and the Bible confirms, that the **serious** followers of Christ embark on a quest that continues until their **last breath**. **If** you quit **or** walk away, you will **not** receive the prize. One may backslide and later come to their senses, but **if** they do **not** repent and be **restored**, they could **lose out** on the **promise** of God (**eternal** life). The struggle is real but the rewards are also real. I highly recommend it to **all!** Usually, the biggest hurdle for most **unsaved** individuals is **acknowledging the realization** that “**they**” are **already on the path to hell**. This is generally because they have not repented for their **sinful** life (often due to **pride**) and they have **not** been spiritually **born again**. **If you** have not made a personal decision to accept Jesus as Lord of your life and to trust Him as your personal Savior, **then you** are on the path toward hell, regardless of how good a life you might **think** you have lived.

The truth of this statement is an **offense** to the **flesh** and to the **pride** of most people. They do **not** want to admit or believe that they are lost and already dead in their sins. I understand that. I've been there myself, but, sometimes the best way to love someone is to speak the truth (**in love**) and pray that he will **accept** the truth and then **act** upon it. You may well have already made this momentous decision and, in fact, I hope that you have. If not, I hope and pray that you will. I understand that **God** must **draw you** or it will just be a fleshly decision that will not last. I just want you to know that I care enough for you that I could not, in good conscience, put off sharing this “**Good News**” with you any longer. **If** you **claim** to be a Christian but you are **not truly excited and thankful** for what Jesus has done for you, let me remind you of what Jesus says about that condition:

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Revelation 3:15–16; “**I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. ¹⁶So then because thou art *lukewarm*, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth.”**

Now, ask yourself this question: “Are you **honestly ready to meet the Lord?**” May **God** greatly **ble**ss you!

P.S. God is good **all** the time. His Word contains many ***promises***, **but** it also contains even ***more warnings***.

If you believe **God is** drawing **you** to give your life to Christ, **then** simply ***pray, repent*** of your **sins**, and ask Him into your life. You **don't** have to use these exact words. They are merely an “***example***” for you.

Dear God in Heaven, I come to **You**, in the name of **Jesus**. I am **so** sorry for my **sins** ***and*** the ***ungodly*** life I have lived. I ask **You** for forgiveness and to cleanse me from **all unrighteousness**, through the blood of Your beloved and only begotten Son, Christ Jesus. **Your Word** says that **if** we confess the Lord Jesus and believe in our heart that God raised Him from the dead, **then** we shall be saved. Right now, I confess Jesus Christ as the **Lord** of my life and soul. At this moment, I accept **Jesus Christ** as my **God**, my **Lord**, and my **Savior**; and, according to **Your word**, I am saved. I ***commit myself*** to ***believing and following Jesus*** for as long as I live. Thank You, **Jesus**, for dying for me and for giving me the ***opportunity*** to live ***with You***, for ***eternity***. Amen.

If you make this ***commitment***, I recommend that you pursue ***active fellowship*** with other **true** believers. Find a church that teaches and preaches the **entirety** of the **Bible**. This is **very** important! **However**, do **not depend** on the ***church*** **or** the ***preacher*** to meet **all** of your ***spiritual*** needs. **Only Jesus** can do this, and **He** does it by **His Word**, by **prayer**, and by the **Holy Spirit**. He ***will*** use others to help you as well. You must ***always pray*** for guidance and ***continually study*** the **Bible**, for it is **His “Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth”** for **all** of mankind. It is important to always ***press in*** for more “***intimacy***” with **Jesus**. The **world** considers Christianity to be a **religion** (or even a ***philosophy***) but, in reality, it is a “***relationship***” between you and your **Creator** – the **one true living God** who created **all** things – whether visible or invisible.

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