

A dramatic image of a large, weathered hand holding the Earth in space. The Earth is the central focus, showing continents and oceans. A bright sun is visible behind the hand, creating a lens flare effect. The background is a dark, starry space with some nebulae. The text "God's Plan of" is written in a white, serif font with a red outline at the top, and "Salvation" is written in a larger, white, serif font with a black outline at the bottom.

God's Plan of

Salvation

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God's Plan of Salvation

The big question???

The most important question we can ask ourselves is this; **where do I go when I die?** The Bible only gives two options, heaven or hell, and each person chooses where they go. That was the simple answer, but for more details, we will look at the big picture explaining how each person determines their eternal destiny according to God's plan. Our examination of God's plan for mankind begins with the first man and woman, Adam and Eve.



A living soul

In the beginning, God created the world, sun, moon, oceans, mountains, rivers, plants, animals, fish, and the first man Adam in six days. God formed man from the dust and breathed life into him, and Adam became a living soul. Interestingly, the scriptures did not say the body came to life, but that man became a living soul. God created man in his image, so man is a trinity with a body, soul, and spirit.

Genesis 2:7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

The law of sin & death

God created Adam and Eve and gave them dominion over the world with absolute freedom, or “free will,” to do whatever they wanted. All the animals were friendly, the land was fruitful, and it was a beautiful paradise in a perfect world. There were no laws or restrictions of any kind until God gave one commandment, do not eat from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God also warned of the consequences if they ate the forbidden fruit, which was immediate death that day.

Genesis 2:16-17 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

Here is an outline of what we can conclude so far:

- God created Adam a living soul.
- God gave one commandment to Adam.
- Breaking the command was punishable by death.
- Adam and Eve had the freedom to obey or disobey.
- Adam and Eve had a pure conscience up to this point.

The goal of the law is to guard and protect the innocent and punish the lawbreakers. Adam and Eve only had one commandment, obedience is rewarded with life,



while disobedience would result in death. The law is like a chain because if just one link gets broken, it ruins the whole chain. The breaking of just one law makes someone completely guilty. Ultimately, the law brings death.

James 2:10 For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

Romans 7:7-10 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. ... But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead. I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death.

Temptation

The first sign of evil influence came through a talking serpent, who we can identify as Satan (Rev 12:9, 2 Cor 11:3). Satan tempted Eve before she sinned, showing that temptation existed before sin, and we know it will be around until the end of the world. God allows temptations to exist to expose a person's inner character, separating those who choose to obey him from those who do not.

Notice how the serpent, aka Satan, knew the word of God spoken to Adam and twisted those words to deceive Eve. Satan knows the Bible so well that he tried but failed to trick Jesus by using the scriptures. We will identify how Satan played on Eve's weakness and tempted her into willful disobedience to God. Satan first questions the word of God, saying, "has God said?" Then he twists God's words, saying "every tree," when God only mentioned one tree.

Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"

Then Satan contradicts the word of God, saying you will not die, inferring that God lied. Then Satan tempts her with the same sin that caused him to fall, that being grasping after equality with God.

Genesis 3:4-5 Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. "For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

When we examine how the serpent tempted and deceived Eve, we can recognize a pattern that perpetually repeats with every sin. This pattern reveals how we go from temptation to lust, lust to sin, and from sin to death. The cycle feeds on three categories of human weakness coming through the physical body, character, and pride.

The cycle of sin proceeds in the following order:

1. Temptation 2. Lust 3. Sin 4. Death

*James 1:14-15 But every man is **tempted**, when he is drawn away of his own **lust**, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth **sin**: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth **death**.*

Mankind's areas of spiritual weakness:

1. Lust of the Flesh 2. Lust of the Eyes 3. Pride of Life

*1 John 2:6 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*

The serpent mesmerized Eve, and she took his bait, hook, line, and sinker. Eve thought about Satan's suggestions, contemplated the information, rationalized, and justified why she should eat the fruit, and she willfully chose to sin. Let's diagnose Eve's temptation in the light of the cycle of sin and mankind's spiritual weaknesses.

Genesis 3:6-7

Temptation	<i>So, when the woman saw</i>
Lust of the flesh	<i>that the tree was good for food</i>
Lust of the eyes	<i>that it was pleasant to the eyes</i>
Lust	<i>and a tree desirable</i>
Pride of life	<i>to make one wise</i>
Sin	<i>she took of its fruit and ate.</i>
Death	<i>She gave to her husband and he ate.</i>

Spiritual death

God told Adam the day you eat the fruit, you die. Did Adam and Eve die immediately? Adam did not experience immediate physical death but lived to the age of 930 years (Genesis 5:5).

Adam was a living soul, but the moment he sinned, his soul died spiritually. The soul that sins shall die.

Ezekiel 18:4** [God speaking] "Behold, **all souls are Mine**; The soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine; **The soul who sins shall die.

***Ezekiel 18:20** "The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.*

God created man to be like children in a family relationship with him as our Father, so spiritual death is to be separated or cut off from his presence. This separation leaves Adam's children with lost, empty souls that nothing physical can replace or satisfy. In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, he describes those dead to God as sons of disobedience, children of wrath, without Christ, aliens, and strangers from the covenants of God, without hope, without God, and enemies far from God. Spiritual death is a great gulf that separates souls from God's love, joy, peace, and comfort.

Ephesians 2:1-5** And you He made alive, **who were dead in trespasses and sins**, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air [Satan], the spirit who now works in the **sons of disobedience**, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature **children of wrath

*Ephesians 2:5 ... even when we were **dead in trespasses**, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),*

*Ephesians 2:11-13 ... at that time you were **without Christ**, being **aliens** from the commonwealth of Israel and **strangers from the covenants** of promise, **having no hope and without God in the world**. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were **far off** have been brought near by the blood of Christ.*

*Ephesians 2:17 ... And He came and preached peace to you who were **afar off** and to those who were near.*

*Colossians 1:21-22 And you, who once were **alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works**, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you **holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight**.*

God wants to reconcile all men to himself through Christ and offers to give them eternal life. It is so sad that the people who reject Christ and are separated from God now, at the time of death, their souls will go to hell to experience eternal separation from God in the second death.

*Revelation 21:8 "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars **shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.**"*

Revelation 20:14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

Defiled Conscience

When Adam and Eve sinned and realized their nakedness, their conscience was stricken and defiled, innocence was lost, their eyes were open to sin, and they hid, separating themselves and mankind from God.

Genesis 3:7-10 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?" so he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."

The fig leaf solution that Adam and Eve came up with only superficially covered their outward physical appearance but was of zero value for their spiritual condition. Human efforts and fig leaf religion cannot save mankind. Only God can bring a dead soul back to life. Later God gave Adam and Eve leather clothes, pointing to the fact that an animal had to be put to death and shed its blood sacrificially to make a symbolic covering for the nakedness of their sin.

Genesis 3:21 Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.

God confronted the guilty pair about their sin, starting with Adam. Then Adam blamed Eve, and Eve blamed the serpent, then God was finished asking questions.

Genesis 3:11-13 And He said, "who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?" Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." And the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

Sovereignty & Foreknowledge

God was not shocked or surprised by Adam's sin, and his response was not a spur-of-the-moment reaction but was preplanned in eternity past before the creation of the world. God knew what Adam would do and was ready with the plan to redeem mankind. God also knew before creation who would choose to obey and trust him for salvation and who would be lost. Not because he had preassigned people to their eternal destiny, God did not create robots. God knows who will be in the book of life because he is eternally existent, unrestricted by time, almighty, all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-wise beyond human comprehension, and he knows the future. On our part, the only thing we can comprehend, and all that we need to know, is that God gives an open invitation of salvation to everyone in the world.

John 3:16 "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."

So, God knowing all things, wrote the names of those who would believe in Christ in the book of life, and the plan that began in eternity past will extend into eternity future.

Revelation 13:8 ... written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Ephesians 1:4 ... just as He chose us in Him [Christ] before the foundation of the world

1 Peter 1:18-20 ... knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world

John 1:29 ... John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

Revelation 22:1 ... [Speaking of heaven] And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

The first gospel message

When God passed judgment on the guilty trio, he started with the serpent and cursed him more than all the animals making him crawl and eat dust. But in the midst of judgment, God did not leave mankind without hope.

God declared a prophecy to the three of them by saying that "her seed," a singular seed, one person, would crush the head of the serpent or Satan, but Satan would bruise his heel. That was the first gospel message, the good news, the promise of the coming Messiah, Christ.

*Genesis 3:14-15 So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, **you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field;** On your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust All the days of your life. **And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed;** He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."*

The prophecy mentioned two seeds, "your seed" speaking of Satan and "her seed" speaking of the woman. The theme of the two seeds runs through the Bible, light vs. darkness, wheat vs. tares, sheep vs. goats, believers vs. unbelievers, obedience vs. disobedience, and so forth. The unusual thing about that prophecy is that women cannot produce seeds, but they can only make eggs. That points to the virgin birth of Christ. Mary miraculously conceived and give birth to Christ, the promised "seed" of the woman in fulfillment of the prophecy given in the garden of Eden.

The prophecies about the promised "seed" that would crush Satan's head did not end in the garden of Eden. God also promised Abraham that his seed, obtained by faith, would make him the father of many nations, as numerous as the sand and the stars. God also promised King David that his seed would have an everlasting kingdom and would rule the nations with a rod of iron.

Every time, and in each promise and prophecy, the "seed" spoke of the same person, Christ.

Galatians 3:16, 29 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ. ... And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

*Romans 1:3-4 concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was **born of the seed of David** according to the flesh, and **declared to be the Son of God** with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the **resurrection from the dead.***

*2 Timothy 2:8 Remember that **Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel,***

Curse of Sickness & Death

Adam and Eve received a perfect world, but when they sinned, there were consequences. Adam caused a curse to come upon the earth, producing thorns, and the animals became wild and dangerous. The curse brought mankind under subjection to hard labor, difficulty in childbirth, and marital issues. The curse also made man physically subject to corruption, sickness, infirmities, deterioration, aging, and death of the body that decomposes into dust.

Genesis 3:16-19 ... To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you." Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face, you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; For dust you are, and to dust you shall return."

The good news is that Jesus lived a life of perfect obedience to God the Father in sinless perfection. Since Jesus was sinless when he died on the cross, the curse of sin and death had no power over him, and it was not possible for death and corruption to hold him. Jesus defeated sin, death, and the Devil, and we are partakers of his victory by faith in him.

Acts 2:24, 30-32 [Speaking of Jesus]. "whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. "Therefore, [king David] 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. "This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.

Satan & Worldliness

On the day Adam and Eve disobeyed God and fell under the curse of sin and death, another earth-shattering change happened. Adam's dominion over the earth was lost and forfeited to the devil. The scriptures tell us that your master is who you obey (Romans 6:16), so when Adam and Eve obeyed Satan's voice, they forfeited earth's dominion over to him.

God rules over everything, including Satan, but God has allowed Satan to have limited power over the world for a predetermined time. Satan is called the ruler or prince of this world, and he has a kingdom system with a hierarchy of fallen angelic powers, principalities, rulers, and demons. Satan tempted Jesus by offering to give him all the "kingdoms of the world," and Jesus did not dispute his claim of rulership. When Jesus said a kingdom divided cannot stand, he was referring to Satan's kingdom.

***Matthew 4:8-9** Again, **the devil** took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and **showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory**. And he said to Him, "**All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.**"*

Mark 3:23-24** So He [Jesus] called them to Himself and said to them in parables: "**How can Satan cast out Satan? 'If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

John 12:31** [Jesus' speaking] "**Now is the judgment of this world; now **the ruler of this world** [Satan] will be cast out.

John 14:30 [Jesus' speaking] "I will no longer talk much with you, for **the ruler of this world** [Satan] is coming, and he has nothing in Me.

2 Corinthians 4:3,4 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom **the god of this world** [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not (Amplified Version)

Ephesians 2:1-2 And you **He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to [Satan] the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,**

Because Satan assumed rulership, he has set up an invisible evil kingdom that rules over the earth by influencing governments, cultures, morals, philosophies, and individuals. The Bible refers to this as "this world" or "worldliness," it is the sinful governmental and social systems spiritually influenced by Satan which impacts the physical planet.

Ephesians 6:12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood [contending only with physical opponents], but against the **rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this [present] darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly (supernatural) places.** (Amplified Version)

The Devil's way of ruling is through the world's cultures and appealing to the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life to create a mindset that opposes and undermines everything that honors God or his kingdom.

***1 John 2:15-17** Do not love **the world** nor 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** and the **lust of the eyes** and the **boastful pride of life**, is not from the Father, but is from **the world**. **The world** is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever. (NASB)*

***Romans 12:2** Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

Previously we saw the two seeds mentioned in the prophecy, and we focused on the promise of Christ, the Messiah. Now we will look at Satan's seed who reject God and rebel against him and are called the children of the Devil, children of wrath or disobedience.

God grants everyone free will, and each person chooses to identify with God or the Devil by obedience and faith or by rebellion and sin. The children's paternity is recognizable by their resemblance to their father. Spiritually the father's likeness is recognizable by manifesting the character of the spiritual father, God or Satan.

John 8:44 "You are of **your father the devil**, and the desires of **your father** you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for **he is a liar and the father of it.**

Hebrews 12:6-8 For whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives." If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? **But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are bastards and not sons.**

First Adam, Second Adam

Adam and Eve polluted the entire human race with the knowledge of evil, sin, guilt, sickness, and death. The root of all human misery, suffering, and torments can be traced back to Adam's sin, so just one sin resulted in the avalanche of sins that continues to multiply. That is why Jesus came, to be the second Adam and restore everything the first Adam lost.

Romans 5:12-19 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so, death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift.

For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of... one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

Free will & faith

Adam and Eve's sons had the promise regarding Eve's seed that the future Messiah, Christ, would come to take their sins. And somehow, Abel understood the principle of a substitute sacrifice, that the penalty for sin is death, so putting an animal to death in his place would symbolically pay the penalty for his sin, life for life. So, Abel sacrificed an animal to God, and God was pleased with him. But Cain offered some plants as a bloodless sacrifice, which did not gain any respect from God.

Genesis 4:3-5 And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD. Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, but He did not ...

... Respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

Free will, or the freedom to choose, was evident from the beginning with the first brothers born in the world. God's warning to Cain to master his anger shows how sin is our choice and that we either control sin or it will control us. Your master is who you obey, God or sin.

Genesis 4:6-7 So, the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? ***"If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it."***

Romans 6:16-18 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And ***having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.***

With Cain and Abel, we see the world's first two religions, the first produced a murderer, and the second a martyr. Cain killed Abel over religious jealousy, which shows another principle, the flesh wars against the Spirit.

Genesis 4:8 Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that ***Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.***

Galatians 4:29 *But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now.*

Galatians 5:17 *For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.*

As we just saw, there are two types of people, and Cain exemplifies a lost soul who lives without consideration for God or man. After he killed his brother, God passed judgment and gave him his sentence to be a fugitive and a vagabond, and Cain said his punishment would be unbearable. That again points to separation from God and others as the worst possible punishment, also known as hell.

Genesis 4:13-16 *And Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is greater than I can bear! "Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will happen that anyone who finds me will kill me." ... And the LORD set a mark on Cain, lest anyone finding him should kill him. Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden.*

The Apostle John confirmed that Cain was a child of the wicked one, and makes a distinction between the children of God and the Devil.

1 John 3:8-14. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose, the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God. In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who ... does not love his brother. For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brothers righteous. ... We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.

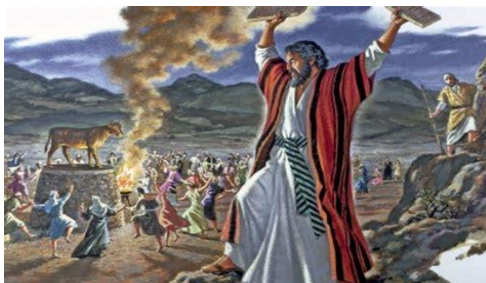
The law, traditions of men

Years later, God looked to establish a people for himself, making a covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God gave Jacob the name Israel, and he had 12 sons, which later became the nation of Israel. When Moses became their leader, God made a covenant with Israel and gave them the ten commandments with 613 laws. These laws distinguished Israel and set them apart from the other nations because the Law instructed them on living a healthy, moral life while serving only one God, the true and living God.



But, while Moses was on Mt. Sinai receiving the ten commandments, written by the finger of God on stone tablets, the Israelites were at the bottom of the mountain,

dancing around a golden calf worshipping another god. Israel violated the covenant and broke the Law as Moses was receiving it. So, when



Moses came down the mountain, he smashed the stone tablets into pieces and ground them to powder. Israel not only broke the Law but completely obliterated it. Like Adam and Eve, with one Law and Israel with 613 Laws, the Law will always fail because it has a weak human partner. Nobody can be righteous before God by keeping Laws, religious rules, and routines.

Galatians 3:10, 11 *For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, to perform them.”*

Romans 3:19-20 *... it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God ... for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.*

Galatians 3:23-24 *Now before faith came, we were kept in custody under the Law, [perpetually] imprisoned [in preparation] for the faith that was destined to be revealed, with the result that **the Law has become our tutor and our disciplinarian to guide us to Christ***

Galatians 2:20 *... by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.*

Those who are zealous about keeping the laws and traditions of men become self-righteous, legalistic, judgmental, and full of religious arrogance. Which only makes them worse sinners, more condemned, and hypocritical fools, according to Jesus (Mathew 23). Jesus gave scorching criticisms and loathed the pompous religious leaders but showed mercy and compassion to the worst of sinners.

The most frightening thing for zealous law-keepers is that they have self-inflicted blindness keeping them from seeing faults in themselves, with their pride, hypocrisy, sin, and how they fail to live up to their own standards. Being religious can be destructive and dangerous because the judgments we use in criticizing others testify against us, making us guilty before God. The bottom line is that keeping the Ten Commandments, laws, traditions, and church attendance cannot save anyone. Salvation is only by faith in Christ, who alone was perfect in obedience to the Law, so he alone cancels the curse and judgments of the Law against us.

***Mark 7:6-9, 13** He answered and said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you **hypocrites**, as it is written: 'This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And **in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.**' "For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men ... He said to them, "All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition. ... "making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do."*

Colossians 2:8 Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.

Galatians 3:11-13 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "the just shall live by faith." Yet the law is not of faith, but "the man who does them shall live by them." Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"),

Good works, religious pride

Some may think they can earn entrance into heaven as payback for all the good deeds done in their lifetime. The Almighty God, who created the heavens and the earth, is not astonished or impressed by our service or works, but He is concerned about our motives. Doing religious activities thinking that we can earn righteousness by our goodness before a holy God is a big deception and arrogance. Only the work of Christ makes anyone righteous before God, and all of our most noble feats of righteousness are like filthy rags before an infinitely holy God.

Isaiah 64:6 For we all have become like one who is [ceremonially] unclean [like a leper], And all our deeds of righteousness are like filthy rags; We all wither and decay like a leaf, and our wickedness [our sin, our injustice, our wrongdoing], like the wind, takes us away [carrying us far from God's favor, toward destruction].

Matthew 7:21-23 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. **Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’**”

1 Corinthians 13:1-3 *If I speak with human eloquence and angelic ecstasy but don't love, I'm nothing but the creaking of a rusty gate. If I speak God's Word with power, revealing all his mysteries and making everything plain as day, and if I have faith that says to a mountain, "Jump," and it jumps, but I don't love, I'm nothing. If I give everything I own to the poor and even go to the stake to be burned as a martyr, but I don't love, I've gotten nowhere. So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I'm bankrupt without love. (The Message)*

The enemies of God

It's popular to say we are all children of God, but that's not true. We look like our spiritual father, so if you lie, cheat, steal, or sin even one time, guess what? The Devil is your spiritual father! Except if you have been born again, and God the Father has adopted you into his family. Even if you profess to be a child of God, you must form the character of Christ in your life and accept correction when you do wrong. And if you reject his discipline, you are not his child.

Ephesian 5:1-6 *Therefore become imitators of God [copy Him and follow His example], as well-beloved children [imitate their father]; ... the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience [those who habitually sin].*

Hebrews 12:3-11 *Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? If you are not disciplined and everyone undergoes discipline then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but **God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness***

John 8:44 *You are of your father the devil, and it is your will to practice the desires [which are characteristic] of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks what it natural to him, for **he is a liar and the father of lies and half-truths.** (Ephesians 4:17-19)*

1 John 3:10 *In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.*

Everything up to this point reveals how all mankind has sinned and is spiritually dead to God; until they experience a spiritual new birth. The worst part is that most people are spiritually blind or have chosen to enjoy sin rather than have a relationship with God. Here are the facts one more time:

- **We are born under the curse of sin and death.**
- **We are spiritually dead, needing to be born again.**
- **This world system is under Satan's influence**
- **We cannot keep the law without sinning.**
- **Our good works cannot earn salvation.**
- **All have sinned and cannot save themselves.**

After reading that list, you might think that salvation is impossible and out of reach for everyone! You would be right! The disciples of Jesus felt the same thing and asked Jesus about it.

Matthew 19:25, 26** When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, **“Who then can be saved?”** But Jesus looked at them and said to them, **“With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

Salvation is impossible for all men because all have sinned, all will die, and all will be judged guilty and sent to hell, with only one way of obtaining mercy, forgiveness, and salvation. Jesus is the way, the truth, and life, and no one goes to heaven apart from him.

John 14:6** Jesus said to him, **“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

Acts 4:12 [speaking of Jesus] "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

God's Plan of Salvation

From eternity God planned the perfect solution for the fallen race of Adam, he would humble himself, taking the form of a man, and God would become their Savior. Then Christ would restore everything Adam lost while defeating sin, death, and the Devil.

John 1:1-3, 14 In the beginning was the Word [Jesus], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. And the Word became 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.

Philippians 2:5-8 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.

Jesus was born without sin. Jesus was truly man and truly God, so he was perfectly sinless, flawless. So, Christ entered the world to become the second Adam and redeem, or buy back God's children through his life of sinless obedience.

1 Corinthians 15:45-47 So it is written [in Scripture], "The first man, Adam, became a living soul (an individual);" the last Adam (Christ) became a life-giving spirit [restoring the dead to life].

Jesus is the second Adam, born without sin, and he lived a life of perfect obedience and therefore became the perfect sacrifice for sin. And by His death, burial, and resurrection, he fulfilled the law, and prophecies, then he defeated sin and death to give the gift of eternal life to those who believe in him. His one sacrifice was sufficient to redeem all mankind, by faith in Him.

Hebrews 10:10-14 By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. ... after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, ... For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified

Acts 4:10-12 "let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole ... "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Jesus – God & Man

When Jesus walked among us, he was truly man and truly God and was the exact representation of God the Father to man. He could empathize with humanity sharing in all of life's experiences. Jesus demonstrated contempt for the hypocritical religious leaders from God's perspective while showing mercy and compassion to the despised and afflicted from a human perspective. He felt hunger, rejection, love, pain, and every human feeling and emotion, so he has compassion, sympathy, and understands our troubles.

***Hebrews 1:2-3** ... but in these last days he (God) has spoken to us by his Son (Jesus), whom he appointed heir of all things, and **through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.** After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.*

Hebrews 4:15** For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have **one (Jesus) who has been tempted in every way, just as we are yet was without sin.

***Hebrews 2:14-15** Since the children have flesh and blood, he (Jesus) too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death that is, the devil and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*

The Cross

Many people look at the cross superstitiously without appreciating how powerful the eternal impact and consequences were for all creation. First, all men are sinners, so what can men do for the forgiveness of sins?

In the Old Testament, they would offer animal sacrifices as a symbolic gesture to appeal for forgiveness and a clear conscience before God. The priest would sacrifice an innocent animal to pay the sin debt as a substitute for the guilty people, life for life. Whenever Israel made animal sacrifices, it reminded them that they were sinners. They could never forget that they had sinned. Animal sacrifices of bulls, goats, and sheep could never purge someone's conscience of sin or cancel Adam's curse of sin and death.

To pay the penalty for the sins of all mankind would require a totally innocent man that has lived in sinless perfection, who had fulfilled over 100 Messianic prophecies for the first coming of Christ as the Son of God and Son of man, the Lamb of God who came to redeem mankind. That narrows it down to one man, the man, Christ Jesus. With one sacrifice on the cross, he redeemed humanity, forgiving all our sins and giving eternal life to those who believe and are born again.

Hebrews 10:5-7 Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me. ... In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. Then I said, 'Behold, I have come in the volume of the book it is written of Me to do Your will, O God.'"

Hebrews 9:9-14 *[speaking of Old Testament sacrifices] It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience, (but Jesus as High Priest) Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*

Nobody could forcibly take Jesus' life, but he voluntarily laid it down as our sacrificial lamb, taking our punishment as our scapegoat. Jesus tasted death for every man, and the price he paid goes beyond human comprehension.

Hebrews 2:9 *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.*

John 10:14-18 *"I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. "As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep ... "Therefore, My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. "No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."*

Of Course, that was all part of God's eternal plan, and he spoke through the Old Testament prophets King David, Hosea, and others that Christ would destroy sin and death.

Psalms 16:9-10 [David speaking] Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol (Hell), nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

Hosea 13:14 "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O Death, I will be your plagues! O Grave, I will be your destruction! Pity is hidden from My eyes.

The cross was a hidden mystery, like a trap, Satan ignorantly thought he would destroy Christ, but the cross was like a nuclear bomb that exploded in his face.

1 Corinthians 2:7-8 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

Absent from sin, death has no power. Since Jesus lived a perfect, sinless life of obedience and flawlessly fulfilled all the law, death did not have a rightful claim on him. So, when Jesus was crucified and died on the cross, death could not hold him, and he conquered sin and death.

After the resurrection and on the day of Pentecost, Peter preached to 3,000 people and quoted from King David's prophecy regarding the resurrection of Christ.

Acts 2:27–31 For You will not leave my soul in Hades, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.' "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 2:23-24 "Him (Jesus), 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.

Jesus' victory is universal for all who believe and He is the only salvation, redemption, justification, righteousness, and resurrection to eternal life.

1 Peter 2:24 ... 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 Corinthians 15:55-57 "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?" The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 1:9-10 (Jesus) who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,

The Cross is the power of God

The spiritually dead and blinded unbelievers are unaware of the spiritual realities of the cross and the consequences of rejecting what Jesus did on the cross. They think the cross is foolishness. But when Jesus hung on the cross and cried out, "it is finished," He fulfilled every scripture, took all our sins, removed the curse of the law, bore all our infirmities, and nailed everything that was against us to the cross, where he destroyed all the works of the Devil. Then three days later, he rose from the dead by the power of God.



1 Corinthians 1:18 For the message of the cross is foolishness [absurd and illogical] to those who are perishing and spiritually dead [because they reject it], but to us who are being saved [by God's grace] it is [the manifestation of] the power of God.

1 John 3:8-9 He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

The Cross unites Jews with Gentiles

Salvation is of the Jews (John 4:22), and the Jewish people were very strict about staying separate from the nations that could draw them into worshipping foreign gods. Only after the resurrection of Christ and 8 years after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit did the Apostles receive the revelation that Gentiles (non-Jews) could receive salvation like Jews. And even more shocking to orthodox Jews was that Gentiles would be unified with Jews in one assembly and be fellow heirs of the promises of God. Removing that wall between Jews and Gentiles was only possible through Christ' death on the cross.

Ephesians 2:14-16 For He (Jesus) Himself is our peace, who made both groups (Jews & Gentiles) into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might ...

... reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.

The Cross reconciles enemies to God

God knows everything about us, the good, the bad, and the ugly, what we have done, and what we will do. And even when we were enemies of God, Jesus loved us and died for us. Jesus offers total forgiveness to everyone if they believe he paid the penalty for their sins on the cross and trust in Him.

Colossians 1:19-23 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation.

Romans 5:8-10 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

The Cross - legal charges dismissed

The law contained curses for law breakers, which includes all humanity. Since Jesus fulfilled the letter of the law, the curse was nailed to the cross by his death. When we relate to his death, considering ourselves crucified with Christ, we are dead to the law and free from its curse.

Colossians 2:13-15 When you were dead in your sins God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, **having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.**

Galatians 3:13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree” (the cross) that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

The Cross – Satanic powers defeated

Because Jesus never sinned, death had no power over him, so when Jesus died, he took the keys of death and Hell and defeated the entire realm of Satanic powers and authority.

Hebrews 2:9, 14-15 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, **that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. ...** Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that **by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death that**

is, the devil and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

Colossians 2:13-15 ... And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

The Cross removes guilt

The blood that Jesus shed in giving his life for us enacted a new spiritual law that overrides the previous legal system, granting us freedom from sin, guilt, and condemnation. Jesus' death on the cross is our Declaration of Independence from the Devil or our Emancipation Proclamation from slavery to sin, which brought into force the new covenant, his last will, and testament that took effect after his death. Christ left an inheritance of mercy, forgiveness, and a pure conscience free from condemnation and guilt.

Luke 22:20 Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.

1 John 1:7-9 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Romans 8:1, 2 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to

the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

Hebrews 9:14-18 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! For this reason, Christ is the mediator of a new covenant (testament), that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant. In the case of a will, it is necessary to prove the death of the one who made it, because a will is in force only when somebody has died; it never takes effect while the one who made it is living ...

Jesus the resurrection of life

Jesus has provided forgiveness and eternal life, but He has given everyone the free will to choose whether they receive Christ by faith with the gift of salvation and eternal life. Or if they reject Christ choosing to go to Hell. So, why would anyone reject Christ and eternal life? The reason for most people is that they don't want to give up their sins! We must question that rationale, what could be more important than where you spend eternity?

John 1:10-13 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave

the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 3:16-19 "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. "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

God's plan, the Kingdom

Here is where God's master plan comes into play. God will have a kingdom free from rebellion because he will screen everyone who enters it. Man has a "free will" to make his own decisions and is allowed to choose to accept or reject God. So, everything is **ONE GREAT BIG TEST!!!**

It's like the world is a giant amphitheater, and our lives are the show. There is a myriad of unseen eyes from heaven and earth that never cease from watching us. Mankind daily endures sickness, suffering, sorrow, hunger, injustice, and the like, and each situation reveals character while showing the contrast between God's children and the Devil's. And when this life is over, each one will stand before God to give an account for their life.

The courtroom will be filled with multitudes of witnesses, and every thought, word, and action will be called into account before the Judge, God Almighty. Then God will reward or punish each one according to what they have done.



Hebrews 12:1, 2 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Revelations 20:11-15 And 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. And 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. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

1 Corinthians 4:9 For, I think, God has exhibited us apostles at the end of the line, like men sentenced to death [and paraded as prisoners in a procession], because we have become a spectacle to the world [a show in the world's amphitheater], both to angels and to men.

We just read about the Second Death, hell, and the Lake of Fire, which leads to another big question. What prevents you from following Jesus? Whatever it is, is it worth going to hell for? What would it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul? Now is the best time to dedicate your life to Jesus. You don't know what tomorrow will bring, or even if you will have a tomorrow.

2 Corinthians 6:1 "In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

James 4:13 ... you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.

Luke 12:19-21 I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry." But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?' So is the man who stores up treasure for

himself, and is not rich toward God.”

Mark 8:36-38 "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? "Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

Repentance, turning to God

Repentance is always the first step to approach God. John the Baptist, Jesus, and all the Apostles preached repentance as essential to turn to God, (Matthew 3:1, Mark 2:17). Repentance is acknowledging that you have sinned, turning away from that sin, and then making things right. Repentance brings healing, forgiveness, a clear conscience, and draws us closer to God.

2 Corinthians 7:9-11 I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were **made sorrowful to the point of repentance** . . . for the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces **a repentance without regret, leading to salvation**, but the sorrow of the world produces death. For behold what earnestness this very thing, this godly sorrow, has produced in you: what vindication of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what avenging of wrong! **In everything you demonstrated yourselves to be innocent in the matter.**

2 Timothy 2:24-26 ... if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.

God wants us to acknowledge our wrong doing and confess it to him. If you confess your sins to God, he is faithful to forgive and cleanse us, because of what Jesus did on the cross.

1 John 1:7-9 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Born again, a transformation

If you seriously decide to follow Jesus, first turn away from anything that would displease God and ask for forgiveness from God and the people you have wronged. Believe in Jesus for salvation by faith, trusting, and depending on God in every situation, sincerely pray, read the Bible, and your life will change.

Ephesians 2:8-10 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Scripture tells us to “be transformed” by renewing our minds. The word transformed comes from the Greek word metamorphoo, where we get our word **metamorphosis**. An example would be how caterpillars become changed into butterflies. We change our character and lifestyle, from darkness to light, from rebellion to obedience, from Satan to God.



***Romans 12:1-2** Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be **transformed** by the renewing of your mind.*

***II Corinthians 5:17**, Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

If you follow Jesus, your lifestyle will change, and you will develop a hunger for Bible reading and a growing need to talk to God in prayer. Your family and friends should see the difference in you, which will be your opportunity to share Jesus with them.

Jesus is with you; he is faithful to finish the work he begins in your life to present you blameless in God's presence.

Jude 24, Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling or falling into sin, and to present you unblemished [blameless and faultless] in the presence of His glory with triumphant joy and unspeakable delight, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and power, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

Building a relationship with Jesus

Building a relationship with God requires time, commitment, and discipline. We are not suggesting rules or laws, and that's not how you get to know someone. Jesus is the word of God who became flesh, so reading the Bible is one way to spend time with Jesus. Prayer is talking to God, so the more you talk to him, the more you will know him.

The book of Psalms in the Bible has many great examples of prayers, and you can use Bible verses as a prayer script. As far as Christian friends go, pray for wisdom and discernment to have godly friends who are serious about Christ and are grounded in the scriptures. Then live by faith in God.

Call to Action

We are in the end times; our world is changing quickly to line up with Bible prophecy. Jesus said the signs of his

return would be like birth pangs, growing globally in intensity and frequency. We are seeing those signs happening weekly in real-time with wars, food shortages, pandemics, shutdowns, and natural disasters, all leading to global tyranny. There will be global persecution of Christians and Jews, and it's not a question of if, but when. There will also be a great falling away from Christ, and we can see it happening already. So-called churches are already becoming sexually immoral, politically woke, and in bed with the government. As more churches go apostate or get shut down, true believers may have to find or create small groups for fellowship. While we have time and freedom, we should study the scriptures, share the gospel, and watch for Jesus to return.

This book is part of a series of studies that all Christians should know and teach. We call it the "toolbox series" because these studies are tools to equip you to share your faith with others. For free resources and study materials, visit our website at Ears2Hear.online.



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