

# **A Matter of Life or Death**

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## A MATTER OF LIFE OR DEATH

Who do you admire? Is there someone you look up to as a role model? How about when you were young? Remember that person you wanted to be like? I do. I recall imagining I was a famous baseball player. I remember wondering what it would be like to be a great hitter like Dodger player Eric Karros or pitching shut-out innings like Orel Hershiser.

Who is it for you? Maybe you admired a parent, a pro athlete, a teacher, a great musician or singer or even the president. Now that I am an adult with my own child, I may not dream of playing baseball or being a brave police officer, but my admiration for specific role models hasn't changed.

Today I look up to people who serve in our military to protect our freedom and public servants who defend the innocent. I suppose it's because I admire people who

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stand up for truth and justice. I especially want to emulate people who stand up for biblical truth and values.

Even though it is great to want to be like or to admire a certain person or group of people, that is not why I have written this book. However, my prayer and sole purpose for writing this is that you will gain or regain a desire to know the one true God---the One who created you and most importantly, the One whom you will face as Judge after you die. I want to thank you for taking time to check out the most important accomplishment made by any one man in history.

*“Be still, and know that I am God.  
I will be exalted among the nations,  
I will be exalted in the earth!”*  
*Psalm 46:10 (ESV)*

## **BIG QUESTION**

*If God is love, why would He send someone to Hell?*

You may or may not own a Bible or even believe in God. Nevertheless, you probably have heard something about Jesus Christ, God, Heaven and Hell. Maybe you have even heard the statements, "God is love" or "Jesus loves you" and wondered **why a loving God would send people to a place so terrible as Hell for rejecting Jesus Christ as Lord and God?**

The short answer is that God does not *send* people to Hell just for the sake of sending people to Hell. However, Hell is the consequence for rejecting Him. To begin to answer why this is, we need to know who God is. Keep in mind that we will not be able to completely understand who God is because of our finite minds but we can know what God tells us about Himself which we find in His written word, the Bible.

There are basic words that describe the character or nature of God, called attributes. One well-known attribute of God is His love. I believe it is vital to understand that God is love.

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Perhaps you have heard about God's love before. Yet there are attributes of God which are equally important in understanding who God is. These attributes include God's holiness, His justice and perfection. In the paragraphs to follow, I will discuss more about these "forgotten" attributes of God. I will show you how God's holiness, righteousness (or justice) and perfection will not only explain God's love, but can deepen one's understanding of *why* God truly IS love. Getting a better understanding of these key attributes will help to answer our original question concerning Hell and what it means to reject Jesus Christ as Lord and God.

It may be difficult for you to see a God who is loving or perfect. If so, it's understandable when we see so much imperfection, suffering and corruption all around us. We see it on the news each night, in the movies, in the streets, and in our lives. And to make matters worse, if one has been hurt or abused by an earthly father it might even be more difficult to see God as perfect and just. I think this is because we tend to relate God to our own experiences we have with our earthly father. This includes our father's flaws and imperfections. We are

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imperfect people who fail and make mistakes. In fact, all of human nature from birth is the opposite of holiness and perfection. And if you are a parent like me, your kids and spouse probably see imperfections in you more than you can in yourself. You need to look no further than in a typical family home to see this is true. For example, have you ever had to try to explain to your spouse why you "forgot" to wash the dishes after you promised to have them washed, dried and put back in the cupboard? Or have you ever found yourself breaking a promise you had once told your kids not to break? Unfortunately, we break laws and promises more often than we may wish to admit. But because He is the Judge, how God views sin is what matters.

## THE MIRROR

*God's standard is perfect because God is perfect.*

**Would you consider yourself to be a good person based on what you think is right or wrong?** I am sure you basically are. You haven't done anything so bad like Hitler or a terrorist, and you even try to pay your bills on time---you try not to break the law. You're a good citizen overall. Most of us try to be, right? And we SHOULD be doing good. But keep in mind when we compare ourselves to each other we are using human laws and standards to determine what a good person is. Let's answer the question again using a different standard--a much higher standard.

You may have seen the movie ***The Ten Commandments*** with Charlton Heston playing the part of Moses. The Ten Commandments (also called the Moral Law) were given as God's standard for right and wrong and yes, they ARE quite strict. Looking at God's standard will be similar to looking into a mirror to check if there is dirt on our face. The mirror shows the honest truth about whether there is dirt on our face or not. And

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when we look at God's standard we are not only shown the truth about what is right and wrong, we will also get a glimpse of God's holiness (and our unholiness). We'll look at seven commandments now but I encourage you to look at all ten if you haven't before.

*(see page 23 for the Ten Commandments)*

*(These are in no particular order)*

(#9) Have you ever told a lie, even if it's a white lie?

The Bible says all liars will have their part in Hell.

(see Revelation 21:8)

Judging by this outcome I'm guessing God takes sin pretty seriously.

(#7) Jesus said in the book of Matthew that if a person looks with lust, God views it as adultery of the heart.

Have you ever looked at someone with lustful eyes?

(see Matthew. 5:27-30)

(#6) Have you ever hated your brother? God says hatred is like murder to Him. (see 1 John 3:15)

(#3) Have you ever used God's name as a swear or cuss word? If so, according to God's perfect and holy standard He views you as a blasphemer.

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(#5) Have you always honored your parents?

I know I haven't.

(#2) Have you made your own god that suits yourself or desires? If so, that is called idolatry. God says we need to put Him first (#1) and we are not supposed to have any other "gods" in our life (#2).

These are just seven of the Ten Commandments, but I hope you can see there is a big difference between God's standard and the human standard for judging right and wrong. When we look at ourselves in the light of God's standard we see what sin is. (see Romans 7:7-10)

I know I thought of myself as a pretty good person until I saw I had broken God's Moral Law. And not only have I seen that I am a sinner and lawbreaker according to God but now I see just how wretched a sinner I am.

*"Thus says the Lord: 'I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight...'" Jeremiah 9:24 (ESV)*

## **GOD IS JUDGE**

*God is not only perfect, He is the Judge of the universe.*

I have never been called into court but perhaps you have. I imagine it would be intimidating if it were the first time and especially if I knew I was guilty. Pretend with me for minute. You are called into God's holy courtroom after you die and are asked some of the questions I asked using the Ten Commandments as the standard. The Judge of the universe goes down the list and right off the top, the question of lying comes up. God sees our thoughts and knows everything about us, so He knows our guilt whether we admit it publicly or not. So the question is, what is going to happen if you are found guilty? What should the punishment be for a lawbreaker against God? As we briefly looked already, because of God's very nature (or attribute) of holiness, He cannot have sin or evil in His presence. The Bible states that "God is a consuming fire" (see Hebrews 12:29). Because His very essence IS Holy and perfect, God must consume anything that is unholy. The penalty for sin must be paid. Therefore, when God judges us, you and I

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are on track to be consumed by God's wrath and anger because of our sin and unholiness.

Many people do not have much difficulty believing in a Heaven (or a place of goodness in the sky) after death, but Hell is a place many joke about or even use as a curse word in everyday conversation. Perhaps you don't believe Hell exists. Or maybe you would like to go to Heaven and don't care if Hell exists or not. However, if Jesus' warnings about its reality are true, I would be concerned. (see Matthew 5:22; 18:8-9; 23:33; 25:41,46; Mark 9:43,45; Luke 12:5)

Is there something one can *do* to avoid going to Hell? Let's quickly examine some common possibilities. *Maybe if we try not to break any of the Ten Commandments and live a perfect life?* We've seen that can't work because if we're honest with ourselves we know we have broken them and God knows the truth.

*Maybe giving money to charity or doing good deeds? Perhaps our good will outweigh the bad and God will be pleased and then let us into Heaven?* In the Bible we read that all our good deeds to enter Heaven are worth nothing but are like filthy rags or a polluted garment

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before God. (see Isaiah 64:6)

In an earthly courtroom the judge won't be bribed, unless he is a corrupt judge. Similarly, because God is Judge of the universe and the standard for justice, He cannot be bribed either. And as the Ten Commandments test revealed, our unholiness and wretchedness before God clearly makes us doomed to Hell....unless the Judge Himself shows us mercy<sup>1</sup>.

## **GOD IS LOVE**

*God made the ultimate payment for our breaking His Law.*

So how much does God really love if we deserve death and punishment for breaking His Moral Law (the Ten Commandments)? The Bible states that God loves us so much that He provided the only escape that exists, even though we actually deserve Hell. In other words, God made the ultimate payment for us breaking and falling short of His perfect standard.

### ***Jesus died for lawbreakers and sinners***

In the Old Testament of the Bible, many thousands and perhaps millions of lambs were sacrificed as offerings which could only *cover* the people's sins. Now, Jesus who is God manifest in the flesh, is holy, perfect and without sin and has become the Lamb sacrifice for us. No more lambs need to be killed because Jesus is the ultimate Lamb of God. Jesus Christ stepped into His holy courtroom nearly 2000 years ago and paid the penalty for us breaking His perfect law. The

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God-man, Jesus Christ was willingly beaten, murdered and sacrificed on a cross to die for yours and my sins committed against Himself. God's wrath and anger against sin was poured out upon Jesus Christ on that cross. The prophet Isaiah records it this way:

*“He was wounded for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His stripes we are healed.” Isaiah 53:5 (ESV)*

No appeasement, no bribes, no charity, no religious activities, and no religion of any kind can pay for sin. And to complete the love payment as our Savior, Jesus Christ conquered sin and death when He rose from the grave after three days. Jesus Christ is alive today and the tomb where He was buried is empty!

*“God loved the world so much that He gave His one and only Son Jesus Christ, that anyone who believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16 (NLT)*

## TALK TO GOD

*Talking to God on a personal level is known as prayer.*

Not everyone will believe God's sacrifice for the remission of sins and put their trust in Jesus Christ. But those who do recognize their need for a Savior, will want to express gratefulness by talking (praying) to the God who saves. Perhaps you have heard about a prayer called "the sinners prayer" or you may have even recited one. However, I don't think a recited prayer should replace a heart and mind that is truly thankful to God for His salvation from the deserved punishment for breaking His laws. Rather, I would suggest that if you desire to pray, talk to Him as you would talk with a friend. Thank God for sending Jesus and taking the punishment of sin for you. Thank Him for His unmerited forgiveness. Cry out to Him with your whole heart. You might not even understand everything I've written about, but Jesus has given a promise:

*"He who loves Me will be loved by My Father,  
and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."*

*John 14:21 (NKJV)*

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God's desire is for a genuine heart of humbleness and repentance about one's own sin toward God. (*To repent of sin simply means with God's help you are putting action to your words and turn away from what displeases Him*). Keep in mind, if you talk with God and ask for His forgiveness of your sin, you might not see flashes of light or hear a great chorus of angels playing pretty "hallelujah" music. But you will be given a new life. (This new life is sometimes referred to as being born again or rebirth<sup>2</sup>). As a born again Christian you will be given new desires and seek to please God.

And if you have put your trust in Jesus, please don't hesitate to tell someone else who has also professed faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Then you'll want to get yourself a Bible and with God's help, obey and read it everyday. Remember, God is faithful even when we're not. (For additional resources pertaining to the Christian life, don't forget to check out my website [www.areyougood.us](http://www.areyougood.us)).

## THE PARACHUTE

*The Christian isn't following Christ for a better life---just life eternal.*

Consider this anecdote. You and I are traveling on a large plane 30,000 feet up in the air. This particular plane is filled with exciting earthly pleasures and entertainment. The adult beverages are flowing, the kids are playing in a large ball pit and toward the back of the plane a band is playing rockin tunes by request. If that weren't enough, our choice of movies seem endless and the elaborate food buffet including, lobster-tail, organic veggie or steak wraps, hot oven-baked pizza and a wide array of house chowders is fabulous. And the fun doesn't end with great food. On this flight, a live theatrical production of "My Fair Lady" is wowing an audience on the third floor. Then it happens. You hear the captain make a brief announcement over the intercom. He informs us that the plane has lost a portion of its left wing and the plane is going to crash. You look out the window and notice fire and smoke trailing off the wing as we continue to rapidly descend. Kids and adults alike begin

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screaming and yelling as mass terror seems to erupt all around us. Suddenly, amid all the panic something wonderful happens. The captain comes back on the intercom system and informs us that there is a parachute located just beneath each seat. This is good news (you can stop screaming). So now we've learned there is a parachute under the seat....do you put yours on? Remember, it might be a little uncomfortable, a bit bulky and awkward fitting. Now you must decide between being uncomfortable and saving your life or riding the plane to your death.

In spiritual terms becoming a follower of Jesus Christ and living the Christian life isn't supposed to be comfortable or easy. In fact, becoming a Christian will probably be hard, and at times painful and a life filled with trials. (As I write this, I experience such a trial in the form of cancer<sup>3</sup>).

Perhaps you've experienced similar trials whether you think of yourself as a Christian or not. If you have, you know these times of sadness and hardship are not the least bit fun to experience. However, since this "pleasure plane" called earth and all that it contains is

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going to crash<sup>4</sup>, it really only matters WHO you have trusted in to save you before God's judgment comes.

*“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.”*

1 Peter 1:3-9

The Apostle Peter

## THANK YOU

While death is commonplace on the news and in our lives, people are murdered, and lives are destroyed by various abuses or diseases, I hope my point has been made clear that the Christian doesn't follow Christ for a better life on earth---just eternal life. And while the true Christian isn't relying on good works, religious activities or faith in oneself for salvation, he does rely on the Master<sup>5</sup> of his life---Jesus Christ. Therefore, because of what God has accomplished in Jesus Christ, a true Christian will not face God's judgment in Hell. Instead he has a relationship with the Creator of the universe and the Judge Himself...do you?

For some of you, I've left you with a lot you need to consider. Maybe you'll even want to further examine the claims concerning Jesus as God incarnate, Heaven and Hell, etc. However, for some of you, the things I've written about will not be something you examine beyond this book. Nevertheless, whatever you may find yourself thinking about, I want to thank you for taking some time to read this important warning message. After all, what

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happens to you after you die is a matter of life or death.

On the following pages you will find a list of a few places I have referenced (from the Bible) and have arranged according to their subject or topic as they were discussed in this book. *(If you do not have access to a Bible and you would like one please let me know and I will see that you are given one).*

*“And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.”*

*1 John 5:20*

## **The Ten Commandments** (God's Moral Law)

"And God spoke all these words, saying,

"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

#1 "You shall have no other gods before me.

#2 "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

#3 "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

#4 "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God.

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On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

#5 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

#6 "You shall not murder.

#7 "You shall not commit adultery.

#8 "You shall not steal.

#9 "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

#10 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's."

*Exodus 20:1-17 (ESV)*

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“What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, '*You shall not covet.*' But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin *is* dead. I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive and I died; and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me.”

*Romans 7:7-10*

“Whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.”

*James 2:10*

“The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; There is no one who does good.”

*Psalms 14:1*

## **All Have Sinned and Are Enemies of God**

“For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard.” *Romans 3:23 (NLT)*

“We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.”  
*Isaiah 64:6 (ESV)*

“But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”

*Revelation 21:8 (ESV)*

“For if while 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.”

*Romans 5:10*

## **God is Judge** (Day of Judgment)

“I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak...”

*Matthew 12:36 (ESV)*

“He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.” *Acts 17:30,31 (NKJV)*

"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire."

*Matthew 5:21,22 (ESV)*

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"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart." *Matthew 5:27,28 (ESV)*

"You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God."

*Luke 16:15 (ESV)*

"...Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters."

*Revelation 14:7*

"Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God." *1 Corinthians 6:9,10 (ESV)*

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“He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.”

*John 3:18,19*

“And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God *to be* Judge of the living and the dead.”

*Acts 10:42 (NKJV)*

“For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment...”

*John 5:26,27 (NKJV)*

## God is Holy

“...Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For *You* alone *are* holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been manifested.”

*Revelation 15:4 (NKJV)*

“For you are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with you.”

*Psalms 5:4 (ESV)*

“The LORD tests the righteous, but the wicked and the one who loves violence His soul hates.”

*Psalms 11:5 (NKJV)*

“He said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, ‘You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?’ ”

*Luke 3:7 (ESV)*

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“But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.”

*Romans 2:5 (ESV)*

“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.” *John 3:36 (ESV)*

“Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.” *Ephesians 5:6 (NASB)*

“...These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power...” *2 Thessalonians 1:9 (NKJV)*

“God is a consuming fire.” *Hebrews 12:29*

## **Jesus Christ: The Ultimate Sin Sacrifice**

“He was wounded for our transgressions;  
He was crushed for our iniquities;  
upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace,  
and with His stripes we are healed.  
All we like sheep have gone astray;  
we have turned---every one---to his own way;  
and the LORD has laid on Him  
the iniquity of us all.  
He was oppressed, and He was afflicted,  
yet He opened not his mouth;  
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,  
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,  
so He opened not His mouth.” *Isaiah 53:5-7*

“There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other  
name under heaven given among men by which we  
must be saved.” *Acts 4:12 (ESV)*

“How shall we escape if we neglect such a great  
salvation?” *Hebrews 2:3 (ESV)*

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“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.”

*John 3:16,17*

“God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if while 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.”

*Romans 5:8-10*

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“He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, *I say*, whether things on earth or things in heaven. And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, *engaged* in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach.”

*Colossians 1:13-22*

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“The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

*Romans 6:23 (ESV)*

“For there is one God, *and* one mediator also between God and men, *the* man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all.”

*1 Timothy 2:5,6*

“Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved...”

*Acts 16:31*

“Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.' ”

*John 14:6*

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

*Ephesians 2:8,9 (ESV)*

## **Jesus Christ the Prince of Peace and Lamb of God**

“For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us;  
And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His  
name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.” *Isaiah 9:6*

“He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a  
Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and  
forgiveness of sins.” *Acts 5:31*

“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe  
also in Me.” *John 14:1*

“Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not  
with them when Jesus came. The other disciples  
therefore said to him, 'We have seen the Lord.'  
So he said to them, 'Unless I see in His hands the print of  
the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and  
put my hand into His side, I will not believe.'

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And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, 'Peace to you!' Then He said to Thomas, 'Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.'

And Thomas answered and said to Him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.'

And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book, but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.”

*John 20:24-31 (NKJV)*

“The next day he [John the Baptist] saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, 'Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!' ”

*John 1:29 (ESV)*

## **The Word Became Flesh** (Jesus is God)

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” *John 1:1 (ESV)*

“And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.” *John 1:14*

“Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, for through Him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see---such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through Him and for Him. He existed before anything else and He holds all creation together.” *Colossians 1:15-17 (NLT)*

“To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is God over all, blessed forever.” *Romans 9:5 (ESV)*

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"Of the Son He [God] says, 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of Your kingdom...'" *Hebrews 1:8*

## Repentance and Forgiveness of Sins

"...unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."  
*Luke 13:3 (ESV)*

"Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead." *Acts 17:30,31 (NKJV)*

"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." *Mark 1:15 (ESV)*

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“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.”

*1 John 1:9,10 (NKJV)*

“Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses.”

*Acts 13:38,39*

“Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins.” *Acts 10:43*

“If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.” *Romans 10:9 (NKJV)*

“Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.” *Romans 13:14*

## Model Prayer of Repentance

“Have mercy upon me, O God,  
According to Your loving-kindness;  
According to the multitude of Your tender mercies,  
Blot out my transgressions.  
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,  
And cleanse me from my sin.  
For I acknowledge my transgressions,  
And my sin *is* always before me.  
Against You, You only, have I sinned,  
And done *this* evil in Your sight ---  
That You may be found just when You speak,  
*And* blameless when You judge.  
Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,  
And in sin my mother conceived me.  
Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts,  
And in the hidden *part* You will make me to know  
wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;  
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.  
Make me hear joy and gladness,  
*That* the bones You have broken may rejoice.

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Hide Your face from my sins,  
And blot out all my iniquities.  
Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.  
Do not cast me away from Your presence,  
And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.  
Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,  
And uphold me *by Your* generous Spirit.  
*Then* I will teach transgressors Your ways,  
And sinners shall be converted to You.  
Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God,  
The God of my salvation,  
*And* my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness.  
O Lord, open my lips,  
And my mouth shall show forth Your praise.  
For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give *it*;  
You do not delight in burnt offering.  
The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit,  
A broken and a contrite heart ---  
These, O God, You will not despise.  
Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion;  
Build the walls of Jerusalem.

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Then You shall be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering; then they shall offer bulls on Your altar.”

*Psalm 51 (NKJV)*

### *End Notes*

#### 1. **Mercy** (from page 13)

If I were being accused of a major crime in a modern courtroom and the judge told me I had to pay more than 2 million dollars in fines or get life in prison, I would only be able to respond with tears, knowing I would be getting life in prison. Let's suppose you are accused of a crime and are sentenced to life in prison. As you sit there contemplating life in a cold jail cell, something unexpected happens. The courtroom doors open and someone you don't even know walks in and makes his way toward the judge. The stranger proclaims with authority to the judge, "Your honor, I love the defendant, in fact, I love the defendant so much, I will pay the fine. The judge agrees, the case is closed and you are free to go. Of course this would be great news if this happened in an earthly court and yet this is essentially what God has done (even though God's work is far greater). So in God's courtroom because of His grace and mercy realized in the sacrificial death and resurrection

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of Jesus Christ, the penalty against us is paid. Therefore, rejecting Jesus means you are rejecting God and His mercy.

*“I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service, even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus. It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all. Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.”*

*1 Timothy 1:12-16*

*The Apostle Paul*

*End Notes*

**2. Rebirth or Born Again** (from page 17)

Contrary to what many people may think, a Christian's life is not exempt from sin. A battle exists between the sin nature and the new nature (of God) which is given to each person who comes to Christ. (see Ephesians 4:21-24, 2 Corinthians 5:17-18)

Therefore a battle exists as long as the Christian is on the earth. This battle will be between doing what God desires (serving God) and between what the natural sin-loving flesh desires (serving sin). (see Romans 7:7-25)

If one fight wasn't enough, there will also be a battle with Satan himself (God's enemy). Satan hates God and certainly hates the way of escape God has provided from Judgment and Hell. Satan also hates you whether you have put your faith in Jesus Christ or not. Satan would love nothing more than for you to be a slave of himself forever. (And if he can simply distract you from ever trusting Christ for salvation then he has succeeded). But for Christians, Jesus said that just like

### *End Notes*

Himself, believers will be hated by all because of His Name. (see Luke 21:17)

And so the person who puts his faith and trust in Jesus would be spiritually destroyed if it wasn't for supernatural strength and armor provided by God. In the Bible, the spiritual armor He provides a Christian is referred to as the full or whole armor of God and it is given to new believers in Jesus Christ (see Ephesians 6:10-18). This strength and armor is provided through His Holy Spirit (see Romans 8:1-28). Reading the Bible and praying are part of the armor that is essential to fight against Satan's power.

### 3. **Cancer** (from page 19)

In September of 2010 I was diagnosed with testicular cancer and kidney cancer both requiring surgery to remove the damaged organs. As of the writing of this book, I am in a watchful-wait mode which involves CT scans and blood tests every 3-4 months.

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#### 4. **Crash** (from page 20)

“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.”

*2 Peter 3:10 (ESV)*

“You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Your hands; They will perish, but You remain; and they all will become old like a garment, and like a mantle You will roll them up; Like a garment they will also be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not come to an end.”

*Hebrews 1:10-12*

#### 5. **Master** (from page 21)

A true Christian believes that Jesus Christ is Lord of lords and King of kings. He believes Jesus is Lord and Master of his life because of what God did at the cross. Therefore as a follower of Jesus Christ, the Christian has

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become a slave of Christ. In this context to become a slave of Christ means the Christian's desire is to worship God alone. And his desire will not be a desire to serve other "gods" (which includes sin) that might please the sin-loving flesh.

From birth, we are all in "slavery" to doing stuff God hates. Have you ever thought about if you were a slave of sin? Remember the Ten Commandments test? There we learned how imperfect and unholy we are according to God's standard.

Consider this. When we let sin *control* us we're put in bondage (or in slavery) to whatever it is that keeps us from loving God first. If we crave lust, lying, pornography, drinking, or anything that might keep us from loving God, have we not become captives of those things? This is why Jesus says we are a slave of sin until we are set free in Christ. (see John 8:34-36)

On the other hand, a Christian who is a slave of Jesus Christ will have their deepest joy and desire in God. The greatest satisfaction and biggest desire for a

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Christian should be to lift up the Name of Christ, honor Him and give glory to God rather than to glorify sin or anything God hates. After all, his life has been made eternally secure in the one who created him---in Jesus Christ and in Him alone. (see Romans 6:18, 22)

*“Jesus answered, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.’ ” John 8:34*

*“The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.” Romans 8:2*

*“It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.” Galatians 5:1*

*“Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God.”  
1 Peter 2:16*

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### ***Further reading***

Besides the Bible, there are a few books that have provided me great help in drawing closer to God and desiring to seek Him. I have listed them here for your consideration and enjoyment.

***Out of the Comfort Zone*** – Ray Comfort

***The Gospel According to Jesus*** – John MacArthur

***When I Don't Desire God*** – John Piper

***Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*** –

Jonathan Edwards

***Mere Christianity*** – C.S. Lewis

***Classic Christianity*** – Bob George

***It's Time to be Bold*** – Michael W. Smith

***God Doesn't Believe in Atheists*** – Ray Comfort

***Revival's Golden Key*** – Ray Comfort

***God Has a Wonderful Plan for Your Life*** – Ray Comfort

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