

SALVATION

God's Gift To You

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1

YOU ARE LOVED

If you are asking questions about your purpose, about God, or eternity, or if you have recently received salvation through Jesus Christ, this book is for you.

God really loves you, and He has a plan of peace, purpose, and fulfillment for you as an individual.

It sounds almost too good to be true, like words without reality, but it *is* true; God has a unique purpose for you. This purpose is what salvation is all about. Salvation is a gift that God has already provided for every person. It's up to you to receive it - the gift is there for you to enjoy. There is nothing you have to do - everything has already been provided. Your part is simply to thank God and receive. This gift is so extra-ordinarily good that the Bible calls it an "indescribable gift." In this book you will learn more about this great gift and how God provided it for you.

Every person has wrestled with, or at some time will wrestle with questions about God. You see, as humans, we are structured in such a way that we will seek after God. Yet, we can do so much more than

“seek.” We can know God!

Salvation is God’s love gift to whoever wants to receive it. This gift is described in many different ways in the Bible. Sometimes it is called the “new birth,” or being “born again.” Just as you were born physically into a human family, through salvation, you are born spiritually into God’s family.¹

Salvation is also described as “peace with God.”² At some time, every person without God experiences an inner emptiness. Salvation is God’s answer to that deep human longing for satisfaction and purpose.

Salvation is “fellowship with God.”³ It speaks of the friendship that you can experience in relationship with the Heavenly Father. Many think of God as a judge or a distant divine being. God wants to be your friend, and that friendship is included in the gift of salvation.

“Eternal life” is another expression that describes salvation and its benefits.⁴ The word “eternal” tells us that God’s gift transcends our earthly existence; it is forever! The Bible says that God has placed eternity in every human heart.⁵ This is the reason why people in every culture are wondering about and questioning spiritual and eternal matters.

Salvation gives you the assurance of eternal life. Your search is over when Christ becomes your Savior. You finally find what you have been looking for—peace

with God.

1. John 3:3
2. Colossians 1:20-21
3. 1 John 1:3
4. Romans 6:23
5. Ecclesiastes 3:11

WHY DO YOU NEED SALVATION?

Hundreds of times I have heard people say, “I am sure salvation is good for some, but I have my own life, my own religion, and my own ideas; that’s good enough for me.” Since many feel this way, what gives me the right to tell you that salvation is for you? You may have other ideas. I’m not trying to push my thoughts on you. Only God can reveal the reality of Jesus to you. But I am asking you to allow me to tell the story of God’s salvation. Then you decide how to respond.

To understand salvation, we must first understand God’s original plan for people. God created us for the purpose of fellowship with Him. There are three aspects to our life: spirit, soul, and body. Our spirit is the deepest part of us. It is this part that has the potential to understand and relate to God. Faith in God always comes from our spirit.

The soul consists of our emotions, will, mind, and imagination. Everyone knows what the body is. We are different from animals, because we are spirit beings. An animal has a soul, though not as developed as that of

a human. Animals have emotions, a will, and differing levels of intelligence. We as humans are unique. You could say that we are spirit beings, capable of knowing God. We have souls, and we live in earthly bodies.

When Adam and Eve, the first human beings, sinned in the Garden of Eden, a void was created within their spirits. Their relationship with God died. God's presence was no longer with them.¹ They disobeyed God's Word. The result was horrible. We read, "Through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned."²

The tragedy was not just for Adam and Eve, but for all generations that would follow, because "...all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."³ We also read, "There is none righteous, no, not one."⁴

Some have taken a casual approach to sin, thinking that, after all, we are all in the same boat—we are all sinners. Yes, mankind as a whole is in sin, but sin is a very personal thing. Sin is to not believe in God's love revealed to us through Jesus. Unbelief is the essence of sin.

Has there ever been anything in your life more important than God? Have you ever spoken God's name in disrespectful way? What about other sins? Here is one, "You shall not commit adultery." Jesus said that if you even look in lust at a woman, you have committed

adultery in your heart. What about murder? Jesus said that hatred is just like murder. When we hate someone, we “murder” that person with our thoughts. Whether gossip, lie or covet something from another person, we all know we have sinned. There is a voice inside each one of us that says, “Guilty!”

God had originally created a perfect world where people lived in a harmonious relationship with Him. The devil came on the scene in the form of a serpent, and the first humans willingly listened to him and followed his advice. The Bible describes it like this: “Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, ‘Indeed,’ has God said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’”⁵

The devil deceived Adam and Eve by causing distrust in God’s Word. Distrusting God is sin. The results of sin were terrible: more sin, pain, loneliness, fear, hatred, jealousy, murder, sickness, depression, and eternal separation from God.

Everything negative and destructive has its root in sin. When a baby is born, that baby has within itself the contamination of sin. “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”³

This is called “spiritual death.” Man is left with a void on the inside. When a person is born again, we are

not speaking of physical birth but of spiritual rebirth. The part of man—his spirit—which has been separated from God through sin, is reborn through the goodness of God. We who were “...dead in trespasses and sins...” are now “...made alive through Jesus Christ.”⁶

The condition of sin is universal, therefore salvation is not for a select group or for individuals with “special” religious needs. It is very much for everyone. We are all in the same boat. No one is righteous or able to live perfectly. The whole world stands guilty.

By now you may be quite depressed reading about the miserable human condition, but I assure you that our message is not bad news, but “good news.” The “good news” is that God has provided a gift that solves the human problem of sin and alienation from God. That gift is salvation.

Think about it this way. How did we become sinners? Were we with Adam and Eve in Eden? Did you personally disobey God’s instructions? Of course not. We became sinners by what Adam did, by his disobedience. Adam was our imperfect representative. In a sense, we all became sinners undeservedly, and without any effort of our own.

That’s how we receive the new life in Jesus Christ, undeservedly and effortlessly. We are made righteous by Jesus’ obedience. Just like Adam was our imperfect rep-

representative, Jesus is our perfect substitute. The apostle Paul writes, “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous.”⁷

Whatever the sins: lying, stealing, gossiping or any other sin, these are not the real problem. As we will see later, Jesus has already put away these sins; they are dealt with “once for all.”⁸ Now there is only one sin that gets us into trouble – the sin of not believing in what Jesus has done for us.⁹ Your sins are already paid for. The only question is if we want to receive from God. Read on, and you will establish a firm foundation and gain understanding about the gift of salvation, how it works, and how you can enjoy its benefits every day.

1. Genesis Chapter 3
2. Romans 5:12
3. Romans 3:23
4. Romans 3:10
5. Genesis 3:1
6. Ephesians 2:5-8
7. Romans 5:19
8. Hebrews 9:26
9. John 16:8-11

3

GOD HAS ALREADY DONE HIS PART TO SAVE YOU

The human situation is hopeless without God, because man does not have the capability to lift himself out of sin. No matter how hard a person tries, no one can live perfectly. I mentioned in the last chapter that Jesus has already dealt with your sins. All we have to do is to receive what He did. However, that doesn't mean that sins don't matter. Sin is a very terrible thing to God. If someone were given a \$100 fine for a crime, we would think that the crime was not very serious. If, on the other hand, a person were given multiple life sentences, then everyone would know that a serious crime had been committed. How serious a crime is sin?

Sin didn't carry a \$100 fine or multiple life sentences. God has said that the wages of sin is death—eternal death.¹ If we realize how seriously God views sin, then we will realize how awesome it is what Jesus has done for us.

God's solution to the dilemma of human sin was a substitute. There had to be someone without sin that

would “stand in the place of,” or be a “substitute” for the human race. No one was eligible. Every human being, on every continent, of every race, and of every creed, was contaminated by sin. You see, just as one thief cannot go to jail for another thief, or a murderer cannot be punished on behalf of another murderer, so one sinner cannot take the punishment of another sinner.

Now we come to the very core of the message. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”² God could have turned His back on humanity. He could have said, “I gave Adam and Eve an opportunity not to sin and they blew it, so forget about them.” The “good news” is God is love. Divine love caused God to make a way for people to be restored into peace, fellowship, and friendship with God.

WHO IS JESUS?

Jesus, God’s Son, who was without sin, became the perfect substitute for the sins of everyone. “For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”³ Jesus was born as a human. This is a mystery; Jesus was fully God and also fully human. His name means “savior” or “rescuer.” Jesus was God in the flesh or “God with us.” “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a

Son, and they shall call His name ‘Emmanuel,’ which is translated, ‘God with us.’”⁴ The angel Gabriel said of Mary, the virgin mother of Jesus, “And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”⁵

JESUS SHOWS US GOD

Jesus lived as a human on earth for just over 33 years, and during that time He demonstrated who God is. “He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.”⁶ His whole life was good and perfect. He never sinned, but only reached out and forgave others. He healed the sick, and “...great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all.”⁷

Jesus came not only to live a perfect life of goodness and of helping others; He came to take the sin of every human being that had ever lived, including you and me. He who was without sin became sin for us. But that’s not all. Then we through Jesus become the righteousness of God.³ When we receive Jesus, a miracle happens; God puts Jesus’ perfect righteousness in us.

Seven hundred years earlier, a prophet called Isaiah described what Jesus would do, “He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He

was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.”⁸

When Jesus was beaten, and a crown of thorns was placed on His head, people did not realize that He was suffering for the sins of the world. They thought He was being “smitten by God,” that He had done something evil, and that God was now punishing Him. Of course, Jesus had done no evil. No – He suffered for “our transgressions” and “our iniquities.” Jesus became our substitute. It was *our* sins that nailed Him to the cross. According to God’s justice, because we had all sinned, we deserved the cross and its punishment. But Jesus took our place. This is the “Good News”, the foundation of salvation. Our good works, our good behavior, or our attempts at doing good religious deeds are totally insufficient. We cannot save ourselves by good works. Jesus established a reliable and complete foundation for eternal life. By dying on the cross, He took the wages of sin, which is death, and then rose again in victory.

JESUS LIVES NOW

Praise God! Today, Jesus is alive. One writer sum-

marized the gospel this way: “Christ died for our sins... was buried and rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures.”⁹

The bottom line is this; your sins are no longer a problem. Jesus put them away “once for all.”¹⁰ John the Baptist exclaimed that Jesus was the Lamb of God who “takes away the sins of the world.”¹¹ The Good News is that Jesus succeeded. He did it. Our sins are gone. Now the question is, what we do concerning Jesus? “If we have Jesus, we have life”,¹² so go ahead and receive Him.” The very one who put away our sins and paid for them, is now alive. This is not a theory. It is now. Jesus Christ wants to live in you today by His Spirit. That’s awesome, spectacular; a wonder.

1. Romans 6:23
2. John 3:16
3. 2 Corinthians 5:21
4. Matthew 1:23
5. Matthew 1:21
6. Acts 10:38
7. Matthew 12:15
8. Isaiah 53:3-5
9. 1 Corinthians 15:3-4
10. Hebrews 9:26,28
11. John 1:29
12. John 3:36; 5:24

4

YOUR PART IS RECEIVING AND FOLLOWING

Salvation is like a successful marriage. It takes two. It is not enough if only the man or only the woman is committed. One partner can be full of love and enthusiasm, while the other is cold and distant. Of course, this will not work. If you want to enjoy the benefits of human love, you have to receive it.

This is also true concerning God's love. You have to willingly receive what Jesus did when He took your sins. He did this for us whether we choose to receive it or not. We can open our hearts to it, or remain closed and indifferent. I believe the reason you are reading this book is because you want to experience God's love, or because you have already received Jesus as your Lord. Receiving salvation is not a passive acknowledgment that Jesus died for you. It is an active, willful decision to trust in Him and know that He died and rose again for you.

A COMPLETE TURNAROUND

Let me share a few biblical steps about how we receive.

The first step is **repentance**. This is not just an emotion or a feeling of sorrow for having trusted in our own good deeds. Repentance cuts deeper. It means that you willfully turn from self-effort and self-reliance. Now you recognize Jesus Christ as the Lord of your life. To some people this is a concept, but it is much more; it is a reality.

Repentance is accepting that Jesus and what He did on the cross for you is your only salvation. It is a one hundred and eighty-degree turnaround. We turn from self-reliance to 100% reliance on Jesus. What matters now is what *He* did and what *He* wants for your life.

TRUST IN GOD'S WORD

God tells us to **believe**. Basically, that means to believe the things we talked about in the previous chapter. Believe that Jesus Christ died for you, that He rose again and is alive today. Believing is more than mental acknowledgment. It means trust in and complete reliance on Christ. If you have trouble believing, ask God to help you – He is the One who gives you faith.

TELL SOMEONE

Another component in receiving salvation is **confession**. “That 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. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”¹ Something powerful happens when your mouth speaks the conviction and assurance of your heart. It is a public declaration that Jesus is Lord.

If you have just given your life to Jesus and have not told anybody yet, find someone right now, and tell him or her what Christ has done for you. When you obey something that God has told you to do, tremendous joy results. I am not talking about getting into a religious discussion; rather, tell someone that Jesus has become the Savior and Lord of your life, and that you now follow Him. When you do this, some people may want to compare one religion with another. Don't be sidetracked. Stay on the topic of your confession, which is the person of Jesus Christ. Talk about what He means to you, and what He has done for you.

It is time to rejoice. Lift up your hands and begin to thank God that you are saved, that you are His child, and that you have eternal life.

1. Romans 10:9-10

KNOW YOUR BENEFITS

Once you are saved, you will very quickly come to realize that you have an enemy—the devil. He has now lost his grip over you and doesn't like it. The devil's only tool against you is deception. He is a pretender, that's all. Since Jesus took away all our sins, the devil has nothing to accuse us of. In the same moment that Jesus removed our sins, He also removed everything the devil had to accuse us of. You see, the devil likes to bring up our failures and sins and use them against us to show us how “useless” we are. Jesus has effectively removed all the devil's ammunition against us.

You can resist the enemy and overcome every temptation he throws your way by using the name of Jesus and the Word of God. Unless you let him, he **cannot** steal the gift of salvation God has given you. So don't let him.

Since the devil is totally defeated, he cannot steal the gift of God from you. Instead, he will try to deceive you concerning this gift. He will try to make it seem less than it really is. It is important that you know what

the benefits of salvation really are.

Your sins are forgiven. The Bible says, “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.”¹ Whatever happened in your past, whatever mistakes were made, you are now forgiven. God remembers them no more, so why should you?

A miracle has taken place. Your name has been recorded in the Book of Life in heaven. You have gone from death to life. You have been translated from one kingdom into another—from darkness into the kingdom of Jesus Christ.²

Just as you are subject to new laws when you enter another country, so you are now subject to the laws and benefits of God. You don’t have to live in guilt or fear anymore. You are free. I encourage you to take a moment every day, and praise God for this freedom.

Not only do you have forgiveness from sin, but you also have healing for your body. When Jesus died on the cross, He not only took your sins, but He also took your sicknesses. “Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses.”³ Jesus became the substitute for our sins and our sicknesses. Whenever disease or pain attacks your life, in whatever form, you have a legal right to go to God and receive healing. God “forgives

all your iniquities” and “heals all your diseases.”⁴ This includes any form of human disease or ailment, be it cancer or the common cold.

Not only do we have God’s promises in the Bible for this — we also have seen thousands of people supernaturally healed, even when doctors had given up hope. Take a moment and praise God for this great benefit of healing for your body.

The power to live free. Salvation brings deliverance and freedom from evil bondage. Sometimes, over a long period of time, people develop habits that they cannot break. The Bible tells us that demonic spirits from hell use human weaknesses to try to get a hold on a person’s life. This is often called compulsive behavior. In other words, it is when people do something negative, and they cannot stop themselves from doing it. They have lost control. Through Jesus’ blood and what He did on the cross, you are free from any such habits in your life. In the name of Jesus, renounce any evil and anything that may be contrary to God’s Word. Begin to praise Him for the victory that is yours now.

Abundance. The list of your salvation benefits could go on and on. Let me summarize several of these blessings under this heading called “Abun-

dance.” Abundance means that once you are saved, you have access to God’s blessings in your life socially, emotionally, and financially—in every way. God’s gift of salvation has brought us under the umbrella of His blessings. Count on His blessings for your family, your finances, your job—whatever you set your hand to do.⁵

1. Romans 8:1
2. Colossians 1:13
3. Matthew 8:17
4. Psalms 103:3
- 5: Deuteronomy 28:1-14; Ephesians 1:3

6

YOU ARE A WINNER

Now you might think that this new life is all benefits, joy, and blessing, without any opposition. Nothing can be further from the truth! You have received something precious from God, and the devil wants to steal it from you. You will have temptations and opposition. You will especially be tempted to not really believe in the Good News that Jesus put away your sins “once for all.” It may seem too good to be true. The devil will want to remind you of any shortcoming in your life. Some may ridicule you for your newfound faith, but remember that you are an overcomer. “This is the victory that has overcome the world — our faith.”¹

If someone ridicules your faith or tries to talk you out of living for Jesus, remember that Jesus said that everyone who lives godly will suffer persecution.² Some of those who ridicule you will, in time, become believers. All who have followed Jesus, from His first twelve disciples to believers today, have endured some opposition. This opposition will only serve to make you stronger. It will give you spiritual backbone. Maybe

until now you have allowed yourself to be governed by the opinions of others. That has changed. Jesus is now Lord, and it is His thoughts and opinions that now govern your life.

Remember, you are a “new creation; old things have passed away.”³ That means there is going to be a difference between you and those who are not believers. This is understandable because the Spirit of God that is in you is not yet in them. This does not mean that they cannot be nice people or that you should not be nice to them; it just means that they have not yet received this gift of salvation. If you encounter opposition, keep looking to Jesus. Talk to Him every day in prayer, read His Word, and fellowship with others who love and serve Him.

Temptations in all forms are attacks on your new-found life in Christ. Temptations come to everyone. God promises that you will not be tempted above what you can bear, but He will make a way of escape for you.⁴

Even Jesus was tempted while on earth, so He is sympathetic to our temptations.⁵ Remember, Jesus understands, and if you stay focused on Him, He will help you be an overcomer. It is not a sin to have a temptation, so don't let the devil condemn you if you do. Go to God in prayer, and thank Him for His help. You can rest in the victory Jesus Christ has provided for you.

Perhaps you have been living a life in which you have been used to giving in to every temptation—at least if you felt that you could get away with it. That lifestyle of negative habits has now been broken. Now you belong to Jesus. You have an inner strength, and when you draw on it, you are victorious. Don't let the devil rob you of victory. It is yours, so hold on to it.

In summary, your keys of victory are:

- a. Read the Word of God daily and ask God to help you understand what you read.
- b. Talk to God in prayer daily.
- c. Have fellowship with other believers.

1. 1 John 5:4
2. 2 Timothy 3:12
3. 2 Corinthians 5:17
4. 1 Corinthians 10:13
5. Hebrews 4:15

THE LOCAL CHURCH —A SPIRITUAL HOME

Your new life is not a one-time experience. It is life! You keep growing and learning every day. God has a channel through which He operates on planet earth. It is called the church. It is easy to be deceived in this area, because there are many organizations called “church.”

How can you know which church is the right one? Many say, “It doesn’t really matter which church you go to, as long as you go to one.” God has given us a measuring standard, the Bible, by which we can know what is right and what is wrong. You need to attend a church that teaches and believes everything the Bible says.

The first five books of the New Testament are Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts. You should be able to read through those books, and then go into a church service and recognize a similarity between what you have read and what you hear and see in that meeting. These first five books of the New Testament describe

the teaching and the works of Jesus. A local church should major on these works and teachings. Then the local church should teach the epistles. These were written after Jesus' death and resurrection, so they are particularly relevant to believers in Jesus.

In the local church you should be able to experience physical healing, blessing, and victorious living. You may live in an area where there may not be a church like the one I am describing. If you have to drive a distance to be a part of a church where you know the pastor and the people have an absolute reliance on God's Word, it will be worth the drive. A good church will have a sense of victory in it. Jesus said, "I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."¹

Having said all these things about a "good" church, we must still realize that there is no "perfect" church. Rather, a "good" church is made up of people with a strong reliance on what Jesus has done for them.

If you receive Jesus in a church service or through a person sharing Jesus with you, it may be that God is directing you to be a part of that particular local church. If you are open to receive direction from the Lord, I know He will guide you in this very important area. Some say, "I just believe God in a private way and don't need a church." The Bible says, "...not forsaking

the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”² Even when the church doesn’t quite measure up, it is important that you stay involved and committed. After all, it is Jesus’ church.

WATER BAPTISM

In the local church you will be taught about water baptism. Jesus says, “He who believes and is baptized will be saved.”³ The word “baptism” is a Greek word, which literally means “immersion” or “burial.” It takes a lot of water for you to be immersed. This is why a local church uses a baptismal tank or an outdoor body of water. John the Baptist baptized Jesus in exactly the same manner.

What is the significance of baptism?

Not only is baptism an act of direct obedience to the words of Jesus, but it is also an outward act that describes what has happened on the inside. When we are baptized, we are buried with Christ,⁴ meaning that we have died to the old life with its lusts and ungodly ideas. When you are lowered into the water, it is this burial that is symbolized.

When you are raised out of the water, it symbolizes

the resurrection of Jesus. Just as He rose from the dead, you are raised into a new life. You are a new person, a new creation in Him.

Don't put off water baptism. According to the Bible, the one who waited the longest to be baptized was the Apostle Paul, and he waited only three days. Water baptism services are always powerful, filled with joy and God's favor.

THE WORD—YOUR SPIRITUAL FOOD

Because of the new life in you, you will want to develop good habits. The Word of God is your source of strength. Just as the physical body is weak without food, so your spiritual life will be weak without spiritual food. You can receive strong Bible teaching in the local church, often several times a week, but that will not compensate for your own personal reading of the Word of God. If you are new to the Bible, begin with the fourth book of the New Testament, the Gospel of John, which gives you the message of who Jesus really is. Then study the book of Acts and writings of the apostle Paul. Maybe you want to read the book of Ephesians, but I caution you; read slowly and think about the awesome truths you are discovering.

Then of course, start from the beginning of the New Testament, and read all of its twenty-seven books.

Eventually you will want to read the entire Bible from beginning to end. In your local church there will be a pastor or a friend who can guide you in your Bible studies so you can receive maximum benefit.

PRAYER—TALKING TO AND HEARING FROM GOD

Because of the new life in you, you will want to make prayer a daily habit. You will not want to be without it. To some people, prayer is simply a religious act. Others pray because it gives them a sense of relief. Through prayer they verbally express their problems, but prayer is much more.

Prayer is talking to God in total trust, knowing that He already has provided the answer by what Jesus did on the cross. Jesus said, “Ask, and it will be given to you.”⁵ This is the first level of prayer, where you bring your requests to God. Be assured that He will hear and answer as you pray according to His promises.

There is another level of prayer where you just spend time with God. If you have a very good friend, you like to spend time with that person, often for no specific reason. That is the way it is with God. Yes, I bring prayer requests to God, but most of my prayer time is spent just being in His presence. I worship Him, tell Him how much I love Him, and praise Him for what He has done for me. Also, by simply being in

God's presence in prayer, He speaks quietly inside me, bringing words of strength or correction into my life. Most of all, this is an opportunity to experience God's love even deeper.

As you develop in prayer, it will become a powerful source of strength. You can talk to God at any time and anywhere—in your bedroom, in your car, or even when you are out for a walk.

There are hundreds of promises in the Bible concerning prayer. In one of them He says, "Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things which you do not know."⁶

1. Matthew 16:18
2. Hebrews 10:25
3. Mark 16:16
4. Romans 6:3-4
5. Matthew 7:7
6. Jeremiah 33:3

8

THE HOLY SPIRIT, YOUR HELPER

When Jesus walked on the earth with His disciples, He made an amazing statement: “I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.”¹ That Helper is the Holy Spirit. When you receive Christ, the Holy Spirit comes into your life. The Holy Spirit is a person. At times He will speak as a “small inner voice” that brings encouragement, strength, or correction. The Holy Spirit always has the same topic – Jesus. If He is speaking words of strength or encouragement, He will remind you of what Jesus has done for you. His “corrections” are always positive, correcting us away from anything that sidetracks our attention from Jesus. Always be sensitive to this. When you are quiet in prayer, God often wants to speak to you. Whatever He says in your heart will always agree with the Bible.

In the Book of Acts you read how one hundred and twenty people were baptized in the Holy Spirit:

“When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.”²

This was a powerful experience that caused these early believers to begin to operate in a new dimension of power. Just as the Holy Spirit had come upon Jesus during His earthly life, so the Holy Spirit had come upon them. They went out laying hands on the sick and saw them recover. They cast demons out of people. They experienced guidance and direction from the Holy Spirit.

This experience called the “baptism in the Holy Spirit” is available to every believer. “For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”³

When the believers in the Book of Acts were baptized in the Holy Spirit, they spoke with other tongues. We see the same happening today. More than five hundred million people have not only been saved, but also baptized in the Holy Spirit, with the evidence of speaking in tongues. This baptism in the Holy Spirit is like a gateway to the supernatural life. When you speak in tongues, you speak a language you have never studied. You don’t speak by the human mind; you speak words

that come from your spirit, words that are inspired by the Holy Spirit.

There are many benefits to the baptism in the Holy Spirit and to speaking in tongues, but they are too numerous to mention all of them in this book.

However, one of the main benefits is that you build yourself up by strengthening your inward spirit. So often we don't know how to express ourselves to God. Our mother tongue seems insufficient to convey our love for God to Him, or to even express our prayer needs accurately.

This is where praying in tongues or praying in the Spirit helps you. The Bible says, "...the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for...but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."⁴

This dimension of living is available simply by asking in faith. If this is new to you, I encourage you to talk to God about it. Tell God that you want everything He has for you. Ask Him to guide and direct you, and remember—you never have to be afraid of what He gives to you. The Bible says, "If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts

to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”⁵

God is good, and you can expect good things from Him. Develop a relationship with the Holy Spirit, and you will find that the Holy Spirit will be a friend and a helper throughout your entire life in Christ.

As you begin to enjoy salvation, God’s gift to you, you will find that there will be many things to learn.

Your mind will continue to be renewed, and there will be continuous growth in your life. You will find that life is a wonderful experience as God’s plans and purposes are fulfilled in you.

LOOKING INTO ETERNITY

As you look beyond your time on earth, which in the perspective of eternity is just a brief moment, you will be assured that heaven is your home. Heaven is a place where you will forever be with the Lord.

“For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory.”⁶

Eternal life starts now. Whether you live or die, you

now belong to Jesus. Praise God for salvation, God's free gift, valid now and for all eternity.

1. John 16:7
2. Acts 2:1-2
3. Acts 2:39
4. Romans 8:26
5. Luke 11:11-13
6. 1 Corinthians 15:53-54

Ask and You Shall Receive

If you have not already prayed and invited Jesus Christ to be your Savior and Lord, you may pray the following prayer:

God, I come to You in the name of Jesus. I realize that however hard I try, I cannot save myself. All my good deeds don't measure up in comparison with Your holiness. So God, I come to You on the basis of what Jesus Christ has done for me. I believe that Jesus died and rose again in my place. I invite You, Lord Jesus, to come into my life. Thank You for putting my sins away 2,000 years ago and for living inside of me. I turn from self-reliance. Jesus, I confess that You are Lord of my life. Because of the new life I receive now, I turn away from the old life. Jesus, I belong to you now. Thank You for the gift of salvation. Amen.

The Bible says, "Everyone who calls on the Name of the Lord shall be saved."¹

Welcome into God's family. Your new life has begun. Don't ever forget that Jesus said, "...I am with you always, even to the end of the age."²

1. Acts 2:21 2. Matthew 28:20

Notes

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