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PRICELESS GIFT



Understanding Salvation

Nancy L. Harry

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A Priceless Gift
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☞ Chapter One ☞

AWESOME GOD

Throughout the Bible – God’s word - he reveals his character, his ways, and his plans. So to begin let me first give you a quick overview of who God is.

What is God’s nature like? What kind of character does he have? In 1 John 4:16 the Bible tells us, “God is love”. In other words, he is the definition of love. Psalm 145:17 tells us, “The Lord is righteous in all his ways and loving toward all he has made.” God's love for you is real and he has so much to give.

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. (James 1:17)

He is the creator:

The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth (Isaiah 40:28). It is I who made the earth and created mankind upon it. My own hands

stretched out the heavens; I marshaled their starry hosts (Isaiah 45:12).

When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female and blessed them. (Genesis 5:1-2)

"You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being." (Revelation 4:11)

He is God:

This is what the Lord says - Israel's King and Redeemer, the Lord Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God. (Isaiah 44:6)

For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. (Deut.10:17)

For the Lord is the great God, the great King above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him. The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land. (Psalm 95:3-5)

Awesome God

"To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?" says the Holy One. Lift your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one, and calls them each by name. (Isaiah 40:25-26)

I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please...What I have said, that will I bring about; what I have planned, that will I do. (Isaiah 46:9-11)

He is compassionate:

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. (Lamentations 3:22-24)

The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love (Psalm 103:8). The Lord is gracious and righteous; our God is full of compassion (Psalm 116:5). He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds (Psalm 147:3).

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He is intellectual:

For the Lord gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. (Proverbs 2:6)

He will not grow tired or weary, and His understanding no one can fathom. (Isaiah 40:28)

He is faithful:

Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; He is the faithful God, keeping His covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love Him and keep His commands. (Deuteronomy 7:9)

Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations. The LORD is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made. (Psalm 145:13)

He is all knowing:

Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit. (Psalm 147:5)

For the Lord searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts. (1 Chronicles 28:9)

He is all powerful:

Awesome God

To the Lord your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it. (Deut. 10:14)

This is what the Lord says, He who appoints the sun to shine by day, who decrees the moon and stars to shine by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar - the Lord Almighty is His name. (Jeremiah 31:35)

The Lord has established His throne in heaven and His kingdom rules over all. (Psalm 103:19)

And this awesome God who is the creator, who is intelligent, faithful, all knowing and all powerful, yet compassionate and loving, says:

“I am waiting for you. Always loving you and waiting. Fill my heart with your praises that I may know you love me too. Sing from the rooftops of my love for you. Sing songs of praise that all may be well. I see your future. I see your past. I am the God that sees all and knows all. So come to me now that I may care for you, that I may bless you and that I may heal you. Come now. Come and rest with me.”

We read in John 3:16-17:

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have

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eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

Jesus of Nazareth said: "If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well...Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:7, 9). He said this because the words he spoke and the miracles he performed represented the works of God the Father.

Peter said of Jesus:

You know...how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him. (Acts 10:37-38)

Throughout the life of Jesus we see his compassion and love for the people. We see his desire that they be well in both body and in mind. We see his dedication to teaching them about God and his ways. God's desire to see mankind healed and blessed, and his desire for all to know his love for them is seen through the life of Jesus.

☞ Chapter Two ☞

THE BEGINNING

If we go all the way back to the beginning of creation, found written in the Bible in the book of Genesis, we find that God created man; male and female. Sometime later, a lying and deceitful serpent came along and planted doubt and mistrust in Eve's mind concerning God. In her deception she chose to believe those lies instead of believing God's truth. Adam chose to follow along, choosing his desires over God's. When he acted deliberately in disobedience to what God had taught him, he opened the door for sin to flood mankind.

Some familiar with the story of the first man and woman, known as Adam and Eve, might ask, "Wasn't Eve the first sinner and didn't she entice Adam to sin?" The Bible says:

The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you

must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die." The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." (Genesis 2:15-18)

From these verses we see that God put Adam in the garden, gave him instruction and then sometime later made the woman called Eve. So Adam received his instruction directly from God, which he passed on later to Eve.

In Genesis 3:1-4 we find the serpent spreading his poison of mistrust; the questioning of God's motives and the serpent's direct lies opposing the words of God. The woman began to doubt that what she had been taught was true, and as a result she ate fruit from the forbidden tree.

Genesis 3:6 says, "She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it." The man, who God had instructed personally, did not stand firm on the direct words from God. He did not intervene for Eve and protect her from this evil one. Instead he chose to go along with her in direct disobedience to God's instruction.

Both Adam and Eve came under judgment as a result of this turning from God, the one who created them and loved them. See Genesis 3:16-19. But it was through Adam that the door for sin was opened to all

mankind. From him, we have all received a sin nature; a pull towards evil instead of good.

Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned. (Romans 5:12)

The result of one trespass was condemnation for all men. (Romans 5:18)

Through the disobedience of the one man [Adam] the many were made sinners. (Romans 5:19)

Through science today, we know that the DNA in our blood comes from our father. DNA contains our genetic code and transmits the hereditary pattern. The sin nature is a hereditary pattern that has been passed down through the generations from Adam.

This nature can even be seen in our children. Leave them to themselves without any guidance and they can find all kinds of trouble to get into. This is why there is the need for the family structure. This is why it is important to train your children; to teach them, guide them, direct and lead them.

The Bible goes on to tell us in Isaiah 59:2 that “your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.” A separation between God and mankind has risen up and stands between us.

In essence, mankind has turned their back on their creator. They have decided to choose their own way rather than the righteous ways of God, often being deceived or believing lies rather than the truth of God. And because of God’s love, he has given mankind that option to choose – though he asks us and wants us to choose life. He desires for us to come close to him.

It doesn't matter how good you are or how many good things you do, you can't earn your own salvation. Salvation means deliverance from sin and from the penalties of sin. And what is that penalty? “The wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23).

Understand that just one sin in your life makes you guilty of them all because any sin receives the same penalty - the end result is the same. James explained this in James 2:10, “For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.”

But there is hope ahead. So don't become discouraged. A loving God would not leave us without hope or a way out.



When there is no way out,
let God in!



☞ Chapter Three ☞

A SINLESS LIFE

Jesus lived a sinless, righteous life in every way and this qualified him to receive eternal life. We find this recorded in 1 Peter 2:22, “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” John writes:

Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. But you know that he [Jesus] appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. (1 John 3:4-6)

The writer of Hebrews says, “we have one [Jesus] who has been tempted in every way, just as we are - yet was without sin” (Hebrews 4:15).

Does the question arise - how can Jesus be sinless when the Bible says we are all sinners? Let me try to explain.

When Mary, who was a virgin, conceived Jesus by the Holy Spirit, she passed her humanness on to him. But his DNA - his hereditary pattern - came from God. As a result of this, Jesus wasn't born with an inherent sin

nature, just as Adam and Eve weren't created with this sin nature. But as the rest of us, he still had the choice whether to choose sin or righteousness.

In my own mind, I wondered if we are born sinners if we are born with a sin nature. The answer is no. A sin nature or tendency is not the same as being a sinner. Even Jesus was tempted like the rest of us, but without sin. The performing of the sin in your mind or in actuality is when sin is brought forth.

If you or I would have lived a sinless life, we would have saved our own self but no one else. How is it then that when Jesus, the Christ, paid the penalty for sin, which is death, he saved all of us? That includes you and me, and everyone down through the generations who would accept him as their Savior.

Remember he had no sin. He had no penalty to pay. As he died, God placed the sins of mankind upon him. The answer to - how could he pay for all of our sins - lies in the fact that his life was worth more than all of us put together. His life was worth more than all of mankind.

How can this be, you ask? Think of the Bible as a treasure map leading the way to the treasure. Jesus will be the treasure, because it is through him that we receive eternal life in the presence of a loving God with joys unspeakable for evermore.

☞ Chapter Four ☞

OUR TRUE TREASURE

When you follow a treasure map, it takes you from place to place, picking up clues along the way until you reach your destination - the treasure. So let's get started.

The first spot on our treasure map is Genesis: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). In the Hebrew, the word translated "God" is "Elohiym" which is a plural noun. Familiar words that we use in our language today that are considered plural nouns are such words as church, sheep, and family. They are each a singular word but they mean more than one member.

Now let's go on in Genesis, "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, in our likeness (Genesis 1:26). Here again we see the use of the words "us" and "our" indicating God is plural.

Following our map we move on to the book of John:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was

God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. (John 1:1-4)

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)

For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known. (John 1:17-18)

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! ...I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God." (John 1:29, 34)

Regarding his Son...who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 1:3, 4)

These verses make it very clear that Jesus was originally a member of the Godhead. We have found our true treasure. But just to confirm this, follow our map to Hebrews:

He has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe ...But about the Son he says, 'Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom. (Hebrews 1:2, 8)

Now, let's follow our treasure map and see that Jesus was also truly human. Mary was the chosen mother of Jesus. She was a virgin and engaged to a man named Joseph who was a descendent of David. An angel of God came to her saying, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you...Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God (Luke 1:28, 30).

The angel continued speaking to her about the conception of Jesus coming from impregnation by the Holy Spirit. (See Luke 1:26-35.) Concerning the future of Mary's son, the angel said: "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High..." (Luke 1:32).

The fact that Jesus Christ was born of a woman shows us that even though his origins were divine, he had put that position to the side to become human:

But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law... (Galatians 4:4)

Regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David,... (Romans 1:3)

What does all this mean? It means Christ's life, as a member of the Godhead, was worth more than all of humanities. And, because he lived a perfect life without sin as a human man, he could step in and take your place. You no longer have to pay the penalty for sin yourself. When you accept Jesus, the Christ and Messiah, as your Savior - it means you will be pardoned. His death will be applied to your sin. The penalty has been paid for you. The prison door has been opened. You are freed!

For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men. (1 Timothy 2:5)

For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. (Romans 8:3)

Thank you Jesus for what you did for us; for your great sacrifice!

☞ Chapter Five ☞

THE ONLY WAY

You have seen that because of your sin you were separated from God. But God didn't want that separation between you and him. Jesus' sacrifice was the answer to this problem.

God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

God's love for you caused him to sacrifice his own son, so your relationship with him could be restored. When you believe in Jesus, the Bible says your sins are forgiven, you won't perish and you'll have eternal life. That is: eternal life in God's loving presence for ever.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

The word of God tells us that Jesus is the only way to eternal life. Jesus told his disciple Thomas, "I am the

way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6).

Speaking about Jesus, Peter said to the people:

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved. (Acts 4:12)

Paul said:

For if the many died by the trespass of the one man [Adam], how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! (Romans 5:15)

Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. For just as through the disobedience of the one man [Adam] the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man [Jesus] the many will be made righteous. (Romans 5:18-19)

When Paul and Silas were asked what to do in order to be saved, they replied: "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and

you will be saved - you and your household' (Acts 16:31).

Paul added:

If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9-10)

Peter replies to the question, "What shall we do?"

Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38)

Repent means to be sorry for or to feel regret for your sins to the point of wanting to change and deciding to change. The Holy Spirit also gives the desire and the ability to overcome certain habits that many wouldn't otherwise be able to do on their own.

Baptism is a ceremony to demonstrate a person's acceptance of Christ. Water is used as a symbol of washing away sin as you go under the water, and of starting a new life as you are raised out of the water.

When we believe in Jesus as our Savior, the Holy Spirit is also imparted to us witnessing to our spirit that we now have eternal life:

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation Having believed

you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance (Ephesians 1:13-14)

The Bible tells us:

- Through the sacrificial death of Jesus, our sins are forgiven. (See Romans 4:25)
- By the resurrection of Jesus, we receive the gift of eternal life. (See Romans 6:22)
- After His resurrection, Jesus ascended to Heaven to sit at the right hand of God the Father. (See Ephesians 1:20)
- The Holy Spirit was then sent and made available to us. (See John 16:7)
- By the spilling of Christ's blood the veil or the curtain that separated you from the Father because of your sins was torn. This now allows you to go directly to God the Father in prayer. (See Luke 23:44-46, Hebrews 9:12, 24, 10:19-22)
- You become God's child when you accept his son as your Lord and Savior. (See John 1:12)

He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5)

☞ Chapter Six ☞

GUILTY OR INNOCENT

What if one of us did live that perfect life without sin, then what? Then that person would receive eternal life. Since he didn't sin, he wouldn't have to pay the penalty of eternal death - separation from God's presence forever. But he would have saved his own life and no one else's.

So why does the Bible say you can't be saved by your works. It is because sin has been found in everyone. 1 John 1:8 says, "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." So it doesn't matter how good you try to be or how good you are - that one imperfection - that one sin - qualifies you to pay the penalty.

For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. (James 2:10)

One sin is so offensive to God, so against his nature that it cancels out and overrides all the good you have done or could do. So as a sinner, or in other words

because of sin in your life, you've lost the opportunity for eternal life in God's kingdom.

Are you beginning to understand why you can't work your way into the kingdom of heaven? It's because of sin. And sin is the violation of God's law. It's those things that aren't pleasing to him. It's those things that are done that hurt God, you or others. The Ten Commandments that were originally written on tablets of stone by God's own hand show you how to love him and how to love others.

When the LORD finished speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai, he gave him the two tablets of the Testimony, the tablets of stone inscribed by the finger of God. (Exodus 31:18)

And God spoke all these words:

- 1. "You shall have no other gods before me.*
- 2. "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them...*
- 3. "You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.*

4. *"Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. . .*
5. *"Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land 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 give false testimony against your neighbor.*
10. *"You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor." (Exodus 20:2-17)*

God's law makes known to you your weaknesses and ingrains in you your desperate need for a Savior. His law represents his character and his love for his creation.

The writer of Psalms 119 says,

"Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long...How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" (Psalms 119:97, 103)

God says you can show your love for him by your obedience.

This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world. (1 John 5:3-4)

So even though you can't do enough to gain salvation, God still expects you to be doing what is right and good in his eyes. "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works. . ." (Ephesians 2:10)

An expert in the law asked Jesus which was the greatest commandment. He replied:

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love you neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments. (Matthew 22:37-40)

Stated a different way, Jesus said in Matthew 7:12, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you..." Many will recognize this verse as what is known as the "golden rule".

Paul writes:

Guilty or Innocent

“Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law... Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law” (Romans 13:8, 10).

It is because God first loved you by sending his son to save you that you desire to love him and are able to love others. 1 John 4:19 says, “We love because he first loved us.”

But what will happen to those who won't accept God's love; that won't accept the sacrifice Jesus made for them so they could have their sins forgiven? The scripture itself answers this question:

Consider the blameless, observe the upright; there is a future for the man of peace. But all sinners will be destroyed; the future of the wicked will be cut off. (Psalm 37:37-38)

The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry; the face of the Lord is against those who do evil, to cut off the memory of them from the earth. (Psalm 34:15-16)

Do not fret because of evil men or be envious of the wicked, for the evil man has no future hope, and the lamp of the

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wicked will be snuffed out. (Proverbs 24:19-20)

“Whoever believes in him [Jesus] is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. (John 3:18)

I heard it told of a man with quite a lot of material wealth and quite a title after his name say he didn't need saved, because he had everything he wanted and he was happy. Could you be one who thinks you don't need a Savior as well? Do you think because you have everything you want or because you are happy, you don't need Jesus? God wants you to be happy and have the things you want. But you need to remember God hates your sin. He despises sin because he's a God of love.

God yearns for all to be saved. To those who repent and trust in the salvation of God, David writes:

He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. (Psalm 103:10-12)

Can you begin to understand, even a little bit, how awesome and great God's love is for you? He looked

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down upon you and saw all your sins, all your wrong doing, yet he had mercy on you. Compassion for you flowed from his heart. Despite the things you did, he still loved you. You broke his heart and you kindled his anger against you when you went down the wrong path. But still, he continued to care about you and love you.

What you deserve and what you receive are two very different things, when you believe his son came to pay the price for your sins and offer you eternal life. God will show you mercy and offer you grace and forgiveness. Why? "Because of His great love for us" (Ephesians 2:4). No, you don't have to receive what you deserve. How great is his love!

Even when you were busy doing your own thing; whether it pleased God or not, even when you were oblivious to God's love and plan for you life, he left his son take your place in the court room and stand in epoxy for you. He went as far as to take his own son's life in your place.

If it wasn't for his great love, his unmerited favor, and his exceptional kindness - he would never have bothered to send his Son in the first place to make your salvation possible. He is full of mercy and grace!



When you are going
in the wrong direction,
God allows u-turns.



☞ Chapter Seven ☞

IT'S A CHOICE

Does salvation just fall into your lap? Are you automatically saved because of the sacrifice of Jesus? You have seen salvation is not by works because it just is impossible for you to ever be good enough. And doing the right things now will not pay the penalty for the sins you did commit. You need a Savior. "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23). Salvation is a gift because we can't earn it; we don't need to work for it.

*For it is by grace you have been saved,
through faith - and this not from
yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by
works, so that no one can boast.
(Ephesians 2:7-8)*

But there is a requirement to be fulfilled in order for the blood he shed to be applied. After receiving the knowledge that you can be saved, you have to have faith in Jesus; you have to believe in him as your Savior.

Let's try to simplify this by picturing a guilty person - any one of us - standing in the court room before the judge. All the testimonies for and against us are in. The verdict of guilty is about to be pronounced. But at the last minute the judge takes pity on us. Because of his kindness he extends mercy towards us and offers us the chance to bring forth one more witness for our defense. Because of his grace - his favor - he has given us one more opportunity to be redeemed.

We are excited, full of hope, believing - knowing there is one more person we can bring in to defend us. We just know this person will be able to save us from the guilty verdict that is about to be pronounced on our life. For us that person is Jesus; he is our defense:

*If anybody does sin, we have one who
speaks to the Father in our defense -
Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is
the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and
not only for ours but also for the sins of
the whole world. (1 John 2:1-2)*

Here in lies the requirement - believing Jesus is your defense. When you believe he can save you, because he took your place and paid the price of death for your wrong deeds, he comes to your defense and the judge pronounces the verdict - not guilty! When you except Jesus, you will receive eternal life. Jesus said: "I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish" (John 10:28).

Believing is a choice you make. God doesn't force anything on you. He has given you free will, but he wants you to choose life. Why, because he loves you and wants to enjoy your company forever.

If you don't accept Jesus as your Savior, you won't receive eternal life with him just because he paid the penalty for you. Faith in what he did for you is required to receive this gift, this promise of salvation.

Here are some examples:

Then Jesus said to her, "your sins are forgiven...Your faith has saved you; go in peace." (Luke 7:48, 50)

We... know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. (Galatians 2:15)

Here is an analogy to help simplify it. The postman comes to your door with a package. He has brought a gift from a friend. You didn't order it or ask for it. You didn't work for it, so you didn't earn it. It's a gift because it is being given to you. Someone cares a great deal about you. It is out of their love for you that you are being given this gift.

But it was sent by certified mail, which means you need to sign for it before you can receive it. The postman can't sign your name for you. You need to show your signature in order to receive the gift from the postman. In the same way, you need to show your faith,

your belief in Jesus, in order to receive the gift of salvation.

And being one full of questions, I then wondered about babies that are aborted or die at a young age. What happens to them? Does God accept them? So one day in prayer I asked God about this matter.

He replied, "I created the heavens and the earth. And I said, 'And it is good. Multiply and fill the earth. What I have made, it is good.' I will tell you the truth. I am telling you that the babies are mine. I am the creator, I give life."

So for those other wondering minds, be at peace. The unborn and born little ones, who leave us before their time, belong to God. He has given them their life, whether living inside or outside the womb, and he will keep them. They have not reached the age of accountability. And only God knows this age for each individual.

Eternal life is available to you through God's son, Jesus. He took the penalty for your sins upon himself and is willing to give you his righteousness. He is the only Savior. By spilling his blood for you and your acceptance of that sacrifice, he releases the hold sin had on you and eternal life becomes yours.

The apostle John tells us:

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right

It's a Choice

to become children of God – children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. (John 1:12-13)

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! (1 John 3:1)

Paul chimes in, “The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children” (Rom 8:16-17).

Are you his child? Are you in a position to receive his promises and blessings? Are you beginning to understand how much he loves you? If you haven't believed in the Lord Jesus for salvation, then now is the time to pray to God and accept Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior. Now is the time to repent of your sins and receive forgiveness. Now is the time to believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead and inherit eternal life with him.

Better still, you don't have to "work" to receive what is waiting to be given to you as a free gift. God loves you and accepts you without reservation, just the way you are right here - right now - at this moment in time. You don't have to clean up your act or even put on a new suit to receive this gift. Jesus didn't wait for you to give up any wrong ways before he was willing to die for you that you might live:

A Priceless Gift

Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners Christ died for us. (Romans 5:7-8)

The Bible says:

That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9)

When you accept Jesus as your Savior, God takes out your sin and covers you with the righteousness of Jesus. He imparts the Holy Spirit to you. If you have never accepted him and received the gift of eternal life, then pray to God now. You can use the following prayer as an example.

Father, I pray to you in the name of Jesus. My sin has offended you. I am guilty of sinning against you. Father, I apologize to you and ask you to forgive me. Thank you for the blood that Jesus Christ shed to cleanse me from my sin.

Lord Jesus, I receive you into my life now. I ask you to break the power of sin and reverse every curse. Thank you for sending your Holy Spirit to live in me. Change my nature and make me

the person you want me to be. I surrender to you and submit to the teachings of the Bible.

Now, I know I am saved and forgiven. Father, I thank you for hearing my prayer and for accepting me. I thank you Lord Jesus for coming into my life. Thank you for loving me and forgiving me. Amen.

Now let me pray for you:

“Father, you’ve heard this prayer and I know you heard from heaven. And now Father, in Jesus name, I know you’ll blot out their sins so they won’t have any left. Father, I ask you to begin to bless them now, bringing joy and richness and all your promises into their life. Heal their bodies and the deep wounds in their hearts.

Thank you for giving them a new nature. Thank you that they are now in your family because your Son is in their life. Thank you that they no longer want to seek after sinfulness but they want holiness, blessings, rejoicing, anointing, and all your promises. Amen.”



Whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.



No one is like you, O Lord;
you are great,
and your name is might in power.
The Lord is the true God;
he is the living God, the eternal King.
(Jeremiah 10:6, 10)

In your hands are strength and power
to exalt and give strength to all.
Now, our God, we give you thanks,
and praise your glorious name.
(1 Chronicles 29:12-13)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Nancy L. Harry is from Pennsylvania, where she also raised her three children.

She founded Eagles Rest Ministries to promote God's love. Her desire is to take the message of God's unconditional love and the impact that love has on our daily lives to all who will listen. With scripture and her experiences from her own Christian walk, she encourages others as they continue in their walk with the Lord.

Her hearts desire is to see healing – physically, emotionally, and spiritually – manifested in the body of Christ. Her prayer is taken from Ephesians 3:17, that all may be rooted and established in love, having the power, to understand how wide and long and high and deep is the love of God.

For more books or articles by Nancy go to:

www.e-eaglesrest.com

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Salvation Explained

Simple Answers to Hard Questions

Discover the Biblical answers
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- How do I know if I will go to heaven?
- I'm a good person. Won't I go to heaven?
- Was Jesus more than a great man?
- How could Jesus pay for my sins?

This is for you - if you:

- Ask, "Why do I need to accept Jesus?"
- Accepted Jesus but have questions.
- Are curious about salvation or eternal life.

Finding the Way to Eternal Life in God's Presence

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