

Creation, the Cross, and Eternity

**God's Word is true from
the beginning, is now,
and always will be.**

Harold A. Lerch, Sr.
Word to the World Ministries

Creation, the Cross, and Eternity

A BOOK FOR CHRISTIANS, DISCUSSING MORALITIES, GOD'S
TIMELESS LAW, AND THE FOUNDATIONS ESTABLISHED BY
GOD IN THE BEGINNING.

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Creation, the Present, and Eternity
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Mission Statement

This book is written for readers who want to learn more about the foundations that undergird the Christian faith, beginning with the creation, and how one's belief regarding origins should affect our daily lives (and even the lives of non-Christians) six thousand years later. The author writes in a unique style intended to provide both enjoyable reading and challenging content. Scripture passages are included within the text to help make the Biblical integration most effective.

The author has written this book for all Christians regardless of their denominational background. This book is also for Jews who want to learn how science fits with the fact that God created everything from nothing in six days, as God inspired Moses to record.

Christians and Jews worship the same Creator God, and the Jews are part of God's master plan from the beginning right through the Witnesses of the Book of Revelation. Our Jewish friends might be interested in why Christians accept Jesus Christ as the Messiah. The foundation of the Christian religion is that the Messiah has already come and become the Redeemer of sins for all time, and will return to conquer Satan and all our enemies. We who accept Him as our Redeemer will abide with the Conqueror forever.

Dedication

The author dedicates this book to his parents, the late Mrs. Pearl Lerch and Ralph H. Lerch. Without his parents' direction, the author's soul might be lost.

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FOREWORD

He has made everything beautiful in its time; also he has put eternity into man's mind. Ecclesiastes 3:11a RSV

Farewell to God, My Reasons for Rejecting the Christian Faith. This title on a book by a former evangelist was the second cause of two major effects on my life. The first was when I began to see how modern science, so bent on disproving God, primarily His literal, supernatural creation, is actually digging up the proof pointing toward God and Biblical creation. The exciting news is that Christianity is less of a “blind faith” than since the days our Savior walked the earth. Christianity is alive now more than ever.

However, the enemy is still Satan. He is a clever deceiver. Evolution is his greatest lie. Nice, innocent looking old ladies teach “molecules-to-man” evolution to our children, a religion without a god. Satan’s ruse is to cause us to question God. Look at the Scriptures that retell the account of first sin. Satan’s ploy, essentially is to ask, “Did god really say that?” Let us not believe Satan, let us believe God.

My Christian life started normally. In fact, I was fortunate enough to be born with a “silver spoon” of devout parents. My parents were already Christians before I was born, and were founding members of an independent, fundamental church that opened its doors when I was one year old. Our beliefs and those of this church are that the Bible is the Word of God, that the Bible means what it says, and says what it means.”

As I grew older I encountered the secular world. I started hearing about concepts like evolution; Noah’s flood was local, not worldwide; dinosaurs existed long ages ago, outside of the time frame of the Bible, and; that maybe there was a prior creation that God destroyed before re-creating.

I did not believe any of those theories. I thought that if any one of them were true, the Bible would verify it. But who is really to know? No one was there. No one has proof. So I shrugged it off and thought that it really did not matter. I believed what I believed, they believed what they believed, and it had no effect on me- it did not matter. I did believe that God would reveal the Truth to us in Heaven, and that was enough to satisfy me. I came to find out later that it absolutely does matter! The larger and more joyous surprise was to find that God *has* revealed the Truth to us. The information is here on earth right in front of our noses.

Prior to “my discovery,” my Father and I enjoyed discussing problems concerning the theory of evolution. Neither of us had degrees in science, though I am a professional engineer. However, we both did have some common sense. We would ponder how an eye could evolve when there are so many complex parts that must function together. You need a lens, a cornea, a retina, an optic nerve, and so on. If one component is missing, the others are useless. So how would mother nature click her fingers and make all those components happen at once, in both members of a mating pair, so their offspring could have eyes? And how could virtually the same design appear in so many of the kinds of animals? The common sense conclusion is that nature is the work of a designer, not the product of time and chance.

These discussions went on for years. Then during one Sunday afternoon visit, Dad told me that there are scientists that are Christians that claim there is a large body of evidence that points toward Biblical creation. This was exciting news to me, and it was news that fueled our Sunday chats.

A year or so later during another visit with Dad, he popped a tape into the VCR and played a lecture by one of the scientists that is a Christian. It turned out that Dad had a set of ten

videos from the organization that this gentleman belongs to. I took them home and watched them all. The information was incredible. The scientific evidence presented fit a "special creation model," not an "evolution model."

A year or so subsequent to that, Dad told me that one of the scientists on the videotapes, Dr. Gary Parker, would soon be speaking at his church. I went to hear Dr. Parker there, and one year later for five nights at a church near my home. He is a wonderful speaker and author. Importantly, he is a paleontologist that, in his own words says, "creation is a faith the facts fit, evolution is a faith the facts fail." Since that time, I have also attended a presentation by the executive director of this organization, Mr. Ken Ham. I have enjoyed many of their books and videos, and their magazine *Creation ex nihilo*. Ex nihilo is Latin for "out of nothing."

"My *great* discovery" came when I realized that what other Christians believe really does matter. I learned over the past few years that what I believed all my life was true; that everything there is or ever was had come about just as told in Genesis chapters 1 and 2. The evidence that is everywhere supports special Creation. Furthermore, I learned that our entire Christian foundation was laid in Genesis.

It was an article in *Creation* magazine that made me see this. The article was of a former well-known evangelist, Charles Templeton (*Creation* vol. 22 no. 3). Charles Templeton, with all his fire for God, and all his knowledge, eventually became convinced that science had proven evolution to be true. Therefore, the Bible was a lie, in his opinion. Ultimately, he wrote a book, the title and subtitle of which tell the story: *Farewell to God, My Reasons for Rejecting the Christian Faith*. The likeness of a sweet-looking senior citizen graces the cover. That picture has been haunting me ever since I first saw it.

Another astounding experience was a conversation with a theologian from a Christian college. I asked what their official position was on creation vs. evolution. His answer was that they believe that God is the Creator, and that He did it using evolution. I told him that I had good news; the facts better fit the concept of a creator. I sent him literature and a note with more good news for the students; they only need to learn 6000 years of events, not billions of years.

This is why I now say that what you believe does matter, and this applies to many more subjects than to our origins.

Harold A. Lerch, Sr. P.E.

Introduction

The author has been stirred by the Biblical creation story for several years. It was Mark Looy, Founding Director of Answers in Genesis, who pointed out that creation is only part of the picture. AiG uses the message of Biblical creation to lead into the evangelical message of our need for Christ and the cross.

The author, having (in his words) “a grasp for the obvious” noticed that most books that deal with the evidence of Biblical creation point out the fallacies of humanistic beliefs, but in general do not expound upon their backgrounds. For this reason, the author set out to write a book containing a less-scientific Biblical creation message, establishing the Creator, and including the Biblical basis of God’s ordained moralities that exist unchanged today. The following is the basis for this book:

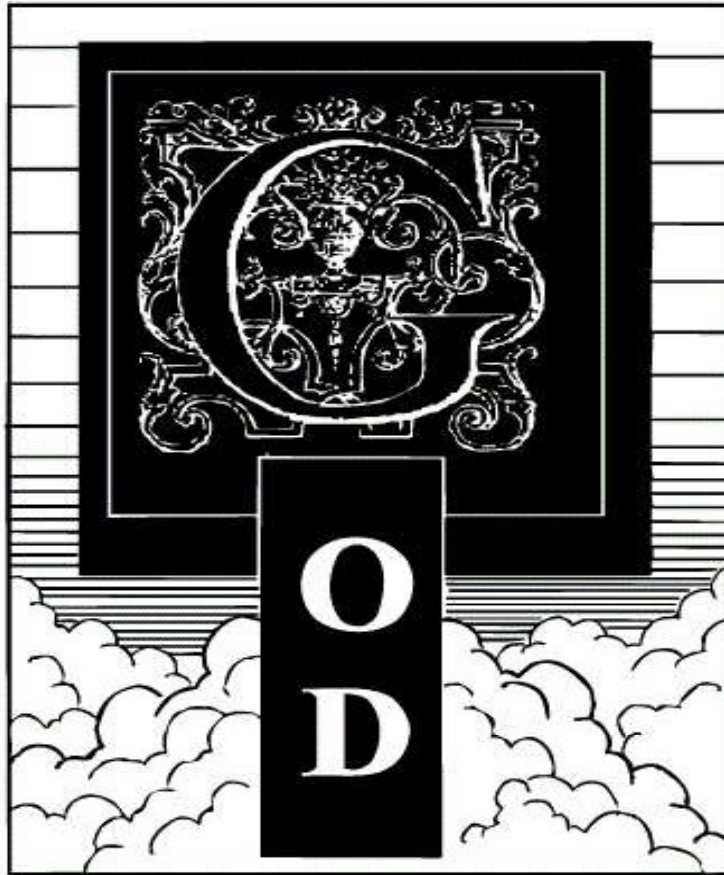
- For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God- Not of works, lest any man should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)
- But as many as received him, to them gave He power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on His name. (John 1:12)
- But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? (James 2:20)

Have you ever heard:

- God loves us. Does what we believe really matter?
- Would God eternally condemn “good” people to an eternal punishment?
- Is it enough just to believe something?
- The Good Lord does not care where you go to church.
- Look, you are saved by grace. Once you are saved it does not matter what you do or how you live.
- God has foreknowledge of everything that is going to happen. The pattern is set. There is no sense doing anything but living how you want to live.
- Should we care what others believe? Did you ever hear of “the elect?” “Predestination?” You do not have to bother witnessing. It is all preset anyway.
- You have to remember that the Bible was written long ago. These are changing times, different times. We must be tolerant of the changes and of the rights of others. The church must change, also. Biblical positions on homosexuality, abortion, marriage, and divorce are just not valid anymore.
- Does where we came from matter? What is the difference if God made us or we evolved? Can science, schools, and church just leave each other alone on the subject of origins?

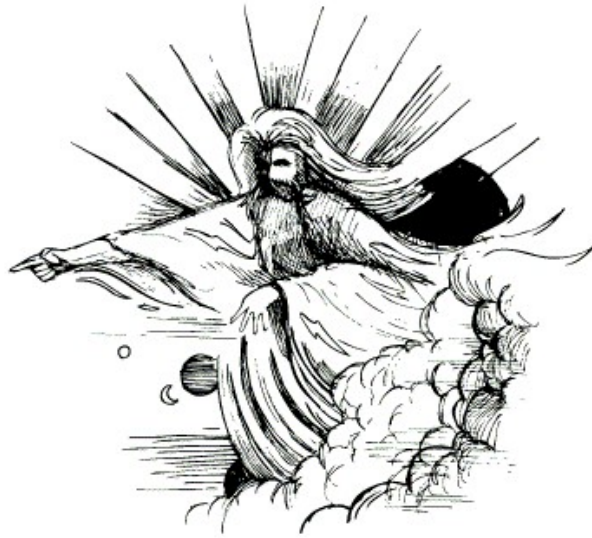
Do you see the contradictions in the selected verses and man’s rationalized questions? The author is strongly convicted that the answers to these questions do matter. Some are a matter of salvation, some of how God wants us to live, and some a matter of God’s Law. What you believe really *does* matter!

PART I IN THE BEGINNING



But ask the beasts, and they will teach you; the birds of the air, and they will tell you; or the plants of the earth, and they will teach you; and the fish of the sea will declare to you. Who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind.
Job 12:7-10 RSV.

Chapter 1: The Breath of Life



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

I recently had the experience of assisting Ken Ham, executive director of Answers in Genesis Ministries, with a series of programs at a Bible college, seminary, and high school. I was intimately familiar with (biblical) creation science beforehand. After hearing most of the presentations, I had the occasion to speak with Ken during a rare break. I shared with him that four indistinct words from the biblical creation account convince me of the truth of special creation: “the breath of life.”

The biblical creation sequence might at first seem illogical to us: light was created before the sun; reptiles were created the same day as mammals and man (evolutionists believe that dinosaurs lived earlier than man), and; birds created before dinosaurs (evolutionists believe birds evolved from dinosaurs). How does a Bible-believing Christian explain this?

If the Bible is true and infallible, it should be easy to prove these “inconsistencies.” So, what evidence do we have one way or the other? Let us start with the “breath of life.”

The moment after a living being dies, the body still contains every essential DNA strand, molecule, organ, and body fluid it possessed while living moments before.

Why did it die? What is the fundamental essence missing that prevent the organized materials from living?

Ken Ham is a scientist. He agrees that this “breath of life” is outside of our human comprehension and perception. This reason alone would allow me to accept intelligent design by a supreme being (God), but there are many other reasons. Some scientists attempt to solve the intelligent design quandary by introducing space men as the intelligent designers; but where would they come from?) What about Cro-Magnon man, Neanderthal, and proof of evolution found in the fossil record? What about the Bible’s stories of a Noachic flood and dinosaurs?

The Discovery Channel aired the production *The Last Neanderthal*, which was about our supposed brutish ancestor. Evolutionists must make Neanderthal fit into their long ages time frame, so they depict Neanderthal as apish. Sit on a bench at the mall; you will see all sorts of shapes walk by, including “Neanderthal” and “Cro-Magnon.” Following is the evolutionist claim, and the creationist response:

- Neanderthals perhaps had complex language (from *The Last Neanderthal*). The Bible teaches that there are only God’s People, not Neanderthals, Cro-Magnons, Homo Africanus, etc. They all spoke from the day of the creation of Adam (creationist position). So, we agree.
- Neanderthals lived in Europe and the Middle East hundreds of thousands of years ago. We agree with the location for early man as indicated by the Bible.
- Lived in small groups. Cared for one another. Hunters/gatherers. Crude tools. Buried their dead. Of course. We descended from 2 people. We were families from the day Adam and Eve had their first son. God gave us every herb for food. We did not eat meat until after the flood.
- Disappeared suddenly. Several possibilities. Those living prior to Noah’s flood were buried in the flood. Others scattered quickly after the confusion at Babel. Others picked up and moved from time to time.
- Neanderthals had large bones, large brains, were muscular. Compare Eskimos to Native Americans to Europeans to Asians. All humans can be built differently including skull shapes.
- A new “predecessor,” Cro Magnon, was found in France. His skull was different than Neanderthal, he was taller, lighter boned, ate a better diet, and made jewelry. Sounds like the USA.
- A second group came “out-of-Africa” and either displaced all others including Neanderthal, or mixed and merged with the others. We mix and merge all the time these days and use the hateful name “half-breed.”

The fossil record consists of dead animals whose living cells were replaced by minerals over a period of time. To fossilize, a dead animal or plant must be covered by mud quickly before it is eaten or decomposes. Evolutionary scientists are not consistent with this process. They count the layers in the same rocks and conclude ages of millions of years. They accept the improbable notion that dead animals lay uncovered for long ages (without being eaten or rotting) and then fossilized. The Bible tells us that a worldwide flood covered the entire earth. This would have killed and fossilized every air-breathing creature except for those on the ark. The fossil record therefore fits the biblical account better than the evolutionary account.

What else rings true of a flood? The sunken cities found in the oceans (also the subject of a Discovery Channel production) have presented investigators with an enigma. Who built them? When? How? What happened to them? I believe the simple solution is that these cities were destroyed by Noah’s flood, and remain covered by the now-deeper oceans.

Can dinosaurs fit with the Bible? Absolutely. The Bible speaks of “dragons,” just as does medieval history. God speaks of dinosaurs with Job:

Lo, now, (Behemoth- perhaps Diplodocus) strength is in his loins, and his force is in the muscles of his belly. He moveth his tail like a cedar. His bones are like bars of iron. He is the chief of the ways of God. Behold he drinketh up a river, and hasteneth not. Job 40:15-19, 23. Canst

thou draw out Leviathan (perhaps t. Rex) with a hook? Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons, or his head with fish spears? None is so fierce that dares stir him up; I will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor his comely proportion. His teeth are terrible round about. His scales are his pride. By his sneezings a light doth shine. Out of his mouth go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out. Out of his nostrils goeth smoke. His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth. When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid. Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear. Job 41: 1, 7, 10, 12, 14-15, 18-21, 25, 33.

Evolution is a form of religion. It is a preformed system of beliefs. The Bible says:

Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water. 2 Peter 3:3-5.

The religion of evolution has as its trinity Time, Chance, and Struggle & Death. As its bible, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*, as its televangelist, Nova, and its periodical, *National Geographic*. The saints of evolution include of course Charles Darwin, Thomas Huxley, Ernst Haeckel, and Carl Sagan. The fundamental scripture, a quote from the late Carl Sagan, is “The cosmos is all there is and ever will be.”

The incredulous premise of evolution is that “in the beginning” there was a “big bang” after which all else came to be. After millions or billions of years, a serendipitous arrangement of molecules gave rise to a proper environment to support life. Other molecules by chance resulted in a living cell. Then after millions or billions of additional years, through time, chance, struggle, and death—voila! Catastrophes and climactic changes caused extinctions. Man alone arose to a supreme level, having evolved from a lower, apelike animal.

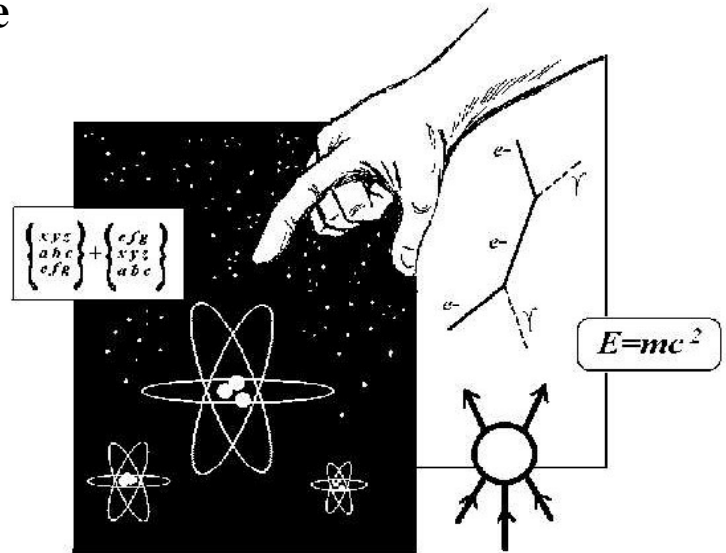
There is no room or need for a personal, creator God in the naturalistic religion of evolution. In fact, evolution is perhaps Satan’s most clever lie. Unlike Satan’s temptations such as, “did God really say that,” in the lie of evolution we are told, “we don’t need God,” or “there is no God.” Satan must snicker every time a Christian says, “I believe that God created everything, and evolution is how He did it.” Sadly, I fear that a majority of Christians believe just that. The reason a Christian would believe in evolution is because that is what we are being taught by the secular world, and we are not being exposed to the fallacies of evolution in church. Evolution is a faith the facts fail.

Creation is a faith the facts fit. You can believe that the Bible is God’s infallible word. It contains truth and it is truth. The Bible is not fairy tales or just stories to channel our morals. If you are not a Christian, you might not be aware of the very best news from the Bible; that is, Salvation and eternal life in Heaven with God according to His promises:

- *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 6:23.*
- *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. Ephesians 2:8-9.*
- *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. John 14:1-3.*

If you want eternal life, accept Jesus as your Savior. Pray these words, *“Dear Father in Heaven, I know I am a sinner and have sinned against you. I am sorry for my sins and sinful nature, and ask that you will forgive me. I accept Jesus now as my Savior who shed His blood for me. I give my life to you and will strive to live for you. Thank you, LORD, for saving my soul. In Jesus name I pray, Amen.”*

Chapter 2: God in a Test Tube



Tycoon Believer: "Prove God"

If we could only prove the existence of God! That is the thought of well-intended believer Sir John Templeton, the former business tycoon now investing his money to prove God¹. Mr. Templeton obviously feels a burden for the unsaved. His generosity is commendable, but he is squandering his money.

The "proof" is already in front of our noses. How do woodpeckers (and so many other animals) evolve an eye to see where to fly, an ear to hear its prey, a long sticky tongue to nab its quarry, a sheath wrapped around its head so it can put the tongue away, a hard bill, a shock-absorbing skull, the reflex to blink with every peck so its eyes don't pop out? How could arms become wings, skin, hair, or scales become feathers? Who wrote the code for DNA?

You see, the problem is that "proof" is only seen through the glasses with which one looks. Biblical glasses show that the preceding evidence points to intelligent design, and to the written historic claim that a supernatural God willed this creation into being in six literal days.

The polarization of humanistic glasses filters out the image of God. Humanists do not want to owe their existence to a God who established laws and moralities that offend the good times they enjoy brought on by sin.

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. 2 Timothy 4:3-5.

We can spin circles, with our imperfect human minds, and debate God, creation, and evolution. One might think he has the incontestable proof; that the other side has to concede; but

remember, each side examines the facts through their “glasses,” or bias. Ken Ham, executive director of Answers in Genesis, in his question and answer book with the intriguing title *Did Adam Have a Belly Button*,² relates the following:

“I’ve had lots of people over the years say that if we could only find Noah’s ark, then we could convince people the Bible’s true.” Mr. Ham continues, “I’m reminded of a professor who once said to me after I spoke at a (non-Christian) college- ‘I don’t care if they do find a big boat on the top of Mt. Ararat and drag it down Main Street, I still won’t believe it’s Noah’s ark.’ At another meeting, a man said to me, ‘Who’s to say some priests didn’t build a big boat on Mt. Ararat because they wanted people to believe the story in the Bible.’”

How can two intelligent people examine the same facts and result in diametric conclusions? It is a fact to look at a fossil and say, “This is a fossil.” It is non factual to look at a fossil and determine what year it lived and died, what color its skin was, etc. The examiners are filling in the intangibles with assumptions. A Christian might look at a fossil and estimate that it lived 5000 years ago based on belief that the period of creation was 6000 years ago. A scientist-evolutionist might examine the same fossil and conclude that the animal lived millions of years ago because of how that would fit within their evolutionary time frame (and perhaps because of the faulty dating methods used). Both views cannot be right.

For one thing, remember that we do have frail minds. Even the most qualified of scientists, Christian or non-Christian, has a fallible mind. Neither was there when “The Beginning” happened. This does give the Christian a leg up, or should. The Christian should believe that there was an eye witness, an infallible eye witness, who did what He did and had it all plainly recorded for us. Of course, a non-Christian will not believe this. What is our excuse?

Some of us Christians are duped into saying that the Bible is wrong because the mortal scientists who weren’t there at the start, who don’t know what happened, who don’t know how it happened, who don’t believe in God, have said they proved their theory using their corrupt human brains, their unsound methods, and their imperfect equipment.

I recently had a conversation with a medical doctor, a specialist. On his office wall was a diagram showing a complicated organ about which he is expert. I pointed to the chart and asked, “Evolution or design?” Not knowing my angle, the doctor tried to dodge the question. Upon my pressing for an off-the-record answer he said, “A lot of people have sat down and discussed this issue. The majority seems to think that evolution is the answer.” He then said, “I guess it’s whatever you believe in.”

In Jesus’ day, many saw Him, the Son of God, and believed not. How can scientific proof be more convincing?

²⁴*And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.* ^{25a}*And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed...* ²⁶*Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive:* ²⁷*For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.* ²⁸*Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.* Acts 28:24-28.

And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from Heaven, tempting him. And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation. Mark 8:11-12.

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. John 6:35-36.

Big bang, progressive creation, theistic evolution, chaotic inflation, little green men from outer space- there are many thoughts and theories that have arisen to explain what might have happened for us to happen to be here. All of those “ideas” take a whole lot of faith. Is it so hard to believe that a supernatural God willed everything into existence in six ordinary days?

What Sir John Templeton wants us to discover in the end is not science but Salvation:

- *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 6:23.*
- *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. Ephesians 2:8-9.*
- *Salvation from our sins is for anyone who will accept God's gift. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: John 1:12.*

¹AP, Williamsport (PA) Sun Gazette, 4/7/2002, p. A-4.

²Ham, Ken, Did Adam Have a Belly Button?” Green Forest, Arkansas, Master Books, 1999.

Chapter 3: Daddy, Who Made Me?



How do you answer your child when he or she asks you to reconcile the creation account taught in Sunday School against the stunning productions aired on television: Dinosaurs, Allosaurus, Neanderthal, Real Eve, the series Nova, and similar technical wonders?

The answer most Christians give today, I fear, is that “God made us and evolution is how He did it.” Why is that the answer given so commonly among Christians? Is it because we are now better able to translate the ancient biblical texts and have found our previous beliefs to be unfounded? Is it because science has proven evolution indisputable? Would it have to be one or the other to overturn a basic religious belief that has stood for thousands of years?

The answer to origins is the same today as when Peter recorded, Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. 2 Peter 3:3-7.

The answer is that God created everything in six literal days, including man on day 6, as His Word reveals. The evidence supports this. The world is seeking another answer.

ON THE SIDE OF SCIENCE

It is difficult to approach a subject such as our origins in a brief forum; but, we will look at some basics.

Big Bang: Science must explain where the universe came from, but cannot. The only non-biblical solution is to say that there was a big glob of “stuff” that blew up and resulted in all of the galaxies, solar systems, stars, moons, planets, comets, etc. They have not figured where the “stuff” that the Big Bang started with came from.

Fossils: Plants and animals died. Over years and centuries it is believed they were covered by earth and fossilized. The notion is that the oldest species are on the bottom, and as we come up the geologic column we find the more recent species that evolved from the earlier ones.

Dinosaurs: Ancient creatures that dominated the planet until a large meteor, 2 miles in diameter, landed in the Gulf of Mexico, starting a chain reaction that brought the dinosaurs to extinction.

Eve: Scientists believe that, based on the study of mitochondrial DNA, we are all ancestors of one woman, “The Real Eve.”

Millions and Billions of Years: For the Big Bang to occur and “stabilize” (my words), for the entire geologic column to be laid down with the resulting fossil record, for dinosaurs to evolve and then achieve extinction, long ages (including eons of struggle-and-death evolution) would have been necessary.

THE BIBLICAL SIDE

We should be indebted to all of the scientific findings that are supportive of the biblical creation account.

Big Bang: I really would like to know where the matter came from. Is it easier to believe there always was a God or there always was matter? Is it easier to trust scientists than God? Since the question in this book is more so, “did God use evolution,” we will skip those points. A basic problem with the Big Bang comes from the laws of physics, specifically the Law of Conservation of Angular Momentum. When a figure skater begins to spin in a circle, his or her angular speed increases as he or she tucks more tightly into a spin. Essentially, conservation of angular momentum means a relationship between energy and the distance from the center of the skater must be kept. In the same way, the central objects in solar systems should be spinning at tremendous speeds, but they are not. This basic law then goes against the Big Bang.

Fossils: How do fossils form? If you could see this occur for yourself it would be most easily understood. The next time you pass a road kill, retrieve it and place it in your front yard. Wait for it to be covered with dust and dirt over time, then allow years for fossilization (mineralization), then dig it back up. Better yet, place several specimens in your yard. Do you think that other animals and insects might eat a few carcasses before they can be covered? Might the remainder decompose first? If you think this you are right. The animals would need to be covered fast. What could do that?

The fossil record is most likely the result of Noah’s flood. Plants and animals would have been covered quickly, all over the earth. That is also why marine fossils are found on the tops of many tall mountains. The ark was large enough to carry dinosaurs, too. Genesis 6:15-16 indicates the ark had more floor space than two football fields.

Dinosaurs: There is evidence that dinosaurs lived with man. Some footprints of man and dinosaur have been found together. The Bible indicates that man and land animals (such as dinosaurs) were created on the same day (day 6). Job describes creatures that sound like a sauropod and t. Rex. The Schofield Bible suggests perhaps the hippopotamus and crocodile, but read for yourself. **Behemoth:** Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee; He moveth his tail like a cedar: the sinews of his stones are wrapped together. His bones are as strong pieces of brass; his bones are like bars of iron. He is the chief of the ways of God: Behold, he drinketh up a river, and hasteneth not: he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth. (Condensed from Job 40:15-23.) Behemoth fears no man, no beast. **Leviathan:** Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook? Canst thou put an hook into his nose? Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons? or his head with fish spears? None is so fierce that dare stir him up: His scales are his pride, His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth. In his neck remaineth strength, When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid: Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear. (From Job 41:1-33.) David wrote, Thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters. Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people. (From Psalm 74:13-14.) “Dragon” is mentioned throughout the Old Testament. Could

there be credibility to the dragon legends of the middle ages?

Eve: Current, sound science links all of us to a single woman ancestor. In the cytoplasm of our cells are organelles called “mitochondria.” These structures contain some DNA that is only inherited from the woman. In analyzing this DNA in humans all over the globe, scientists showed that all humans on earth inherited this from one woman. Scientists call this woman “Eve.” The Bible calls this woman, “Eve.”

Millions and billions of years- God only took 6 days. What took Him so long? Answer- He had to create time, perhaps His most difficult task. Six thousand years ago is when He did it.

Daddy, and Mommy, God made me on day 6 of the first week. He lovingly formed me with plan and purpose. His literal, biblical creation is how he did it!

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PART II WHAT DOES GOD SAY ABOUT HOW WE LIVE?



Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with all eagerness, examining the scriptures daily to see if these things were so. Acts 17:11 RSV

Chapter 4: Blind Faith



Are you a sighted person? Have you witnessed the beauty within our world? If the answer to the first question is “yes,” the answer to the second is also “yes,” whether you realize it or not.

A vision-impaired individual can ask others to describe our awesome surroundings. We can try to explain what we see, but how do we explain the color green, or a rainbow painted above a water fall to one who has never seen light? So it is said that we take God by blind faith.

As far as I know, I have never seen God physically doing anything. I have never seen photographs of the cross or of Noah’s ark, or spoken to someone who saw Jesus. So as the visually impaired person takes our word about the beauty of a peacock’s plumage, we take God by blind faith, right?

I believe that the civil war took place, though I was not there. I have never spoken to anyone that was there; however, I am 100% certain it happened. I have proof. My grandfather’s father was there when it ensued, and in fact fought against inequality at Gettysburg. I never knew my great grandfather, but I knew someone that knew him. Many accounts have been written about the civil war, including Gettysburg. I toured the battlefield at Gettysburg. I know beyond any doubt that there was a civil war including a battle in the little town of Gettysburg.

It is too bad we cannot prove the existence of God as easily as the physical, oral, and written evidence proves beyond doubt the reality of the civil war (or can we?). So again I ask, we say we take Him by “blind faith,” right?

On a daily basis there are men and women who receive prison sentences, some the death penalty. They are arrested by police and then prosecuted by attorneys, judges, and juries, none of whom were there to witness the crime. Witnesses “blind” to the crime proved their guilt. How can we relate that to blind faith and proving the existence of God?

You could attempt this proof if you could teleport yourself to a vantage point back in time, and see anything and everything that ever happened. You could establish facts by first person witnessing of acts of God that would prove His existence. What would you need to see?

THE CREATION (Genesis 1:1-31)

Do we not see the evidence of creation first hand every day? The only “accepted” alternative is evolution, a theory. Evolution is incredulous. There are no scientific tests or discoveries that “prove” evolution. In fact, the recent science I have seen supports special creation by a designer with purpose. Evolution is a lie.

FIRST SIN (Genesis 3:1-19)

Just as my grandfather knew my great grandfather, someone who knew someone recorded the account of Eve succumbing to Satan's temptation in what was until then a perfect world (Genesis 1:31). This first sin not only happened, it brought the death sentence to mankind along with sickness, hard work, and suffering. The person who knew someone who knew someone knew Adam who knew God.

NOAH'S FLOOD (Genesis chapters 6-8)

Perhaps one day we will find Noah's ark on the mountains of Ararat. We do not have to find the ark to prove a worldwide flood. We have found the evidence of the flood: mats of vegetation turned to coal and oil, marine fossils on the top of the tallest mountains, fossils buried in thick layers of roiled-up earth, fossils found out of evolutionary sequence. The flood evidence ties biblical history to Noah, who knew God.

JESUS' BIRTH (Luke 2:6-14)

Shepherds saw Jesus after He was born. Wise men saw him later. This is documented in written history. At age 12 Jesus amazed teachers at the temple. This corroborates that He was special. Thousands followed Him and received blessings from Him. This is written.

THE CROSS (Luke 23:1-56)

The cross was a big event 2000 years ago. Throngs were interested one way or the other. It was their headline news. Again, there were witnesses and resultant recorded history. No one made this up. Jesus lived, taught, suffered, and then He died.

THE RESURRECTION (Matthew 28:1-10)

Wow! This was big, too. Jesus' loved ones saw Him alive again. Thomas placed his fingers in the nail holes in Christ's body. This event did not just occur, it was prophesied. It would have been very controversial. The event was included in a book called the Bible, which is today being verified as accurate history.

THE ASCENSION (Mark 16:19)

As if rising from the dead would not be enough, Jesus later ascended into heaven, in front of witnesses, to sit at the right hand of God, His Father. Once again, this event is documented history.

MANY CHOOSE not to believe in God. They would question the reliability and

authenticity of the Bible. Remember also that even today there are defense attorneys who try to discredit the solid evidence in a trial, even evidence as ironclad as that in the Bible. Satan was able to deceive Eve, do not let him deceive you. Nevertheless, the evidence does prove the existence of God.

BECAUSE OF FIRST SIN, WE ARE DESTINED TO DIE

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; (Romans 3:23). Even so, God loves us and provided a substitute to pay for our sins: For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16). Salvation from our sins is for anyone who will accept God's gift. It is an exclusive club, but anyone can join: But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: (John 1:12).

Will you "join the club" now? To accept Jesus as your Savior, pray: "Dear Father in Heaven, I know I am a sinner. I am truly sorry for my sins. I repent and ask that you will forgive me and help me turn from my sins. I accept Jesus as my Savior. From this day forward I will strive to live for Him. Dear LORD Jesus, please come into my heart. Amen."

Chapter 5: Saved from What?



Before we go further on the word “saved,” let us consider “Saved from what?” That is, “saved from your sins.” So we need to understand these words: sins, saved, the consequences of being saved or not being saved, and how to be saved. Since it is generally best to start at the beginning, let us start at “sin,” since sin is why we need to be saved.

SIN

Sin is disobedience to God. The first sin was the first disobedience. It occurred in the Garden of Eden:

The serpent said unto the woman (Eve), Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, in the day ye eat thereof, ye shall be as gods. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, she took of the fruit and did eat, and gave also unto her husband; and he did eat. And the Lord God called unto Adam, hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast eaten of the tree, in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. So he drove out the man of the Garden of Eden. From Genesis 3.

Unfortunately for us, God held us all accountable for First Sin. Does that sound fair? I remember in school, sometimes the entire class got in trouble because of a few bigmouths. This punishment for sin seems like the same thing. The difference, in school I never disagreed with the whole class getting in trouble because I was one of the bigmouths. Similarly, I am one of the sinners against God, so I am in familiar territory. Here is what the Bible says about us sinners:

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 6:23.) Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (Romans 5:12.)

We all know the Ten Commandments: 1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me; 2. Do not worship graven images; 3. Do not take the LORD’s name in vain; 4. Keep the Sabbath holy; 5. Honor thy father and mother; 6. Do not kill; 7. Do not commit adultery; 8. Do not steal; 9. Do not lie; 10. Do not be covetous. There are other commandments such as Love thy neighbor, love thine enemies, do unto others, etc. How many of these did you break today? Are you a sinner?

SAVED

We know from scripture that everyone has sinned. This is what we need to be saved from, sin. But what if I just do not sin? Do I need to be saved? What if a bunch of us get with lawyers and plea bargain with God?

The Bible says all have sinned. There goes the first argument. Anyone that says he has not sinned is a liar! That violates the ninth commandment, which is also a sin. Further, with God all have sinned, even a brand new baby is born into sin.

God is a Just God and must condemn us for our sins. And though we are condemned already, God is a God of love and mercy and has provided a substitute to bear the burden of the penalty of our sins, that being His Son, the LORD Jesus. God provided a way for us to be saved.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT BEING SAVED

Let me be blunt. Does the word “Hell” mean anything to you? Fiery furnace? Bottomless pit? Following are some bleak passages:

- *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Matthew 7:21a-23.*
- *But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God. Luke 12:9.*
- *Heaven can be entered only through the narrow gate! The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide enough for all the multitudes who choose its easy way. Matthew 7:13 LVB.*
- *Keep far from a false charge, and do not slay the innocent and righteous, for I will not acquit the wicked. Exodus 23:7 RSV.*
- *But the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. Revelation 21:8.*

THE HOPE IN ONE THAT IS SAVED

This is what awaits the saved:

- *Eternity with God: In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. John 14:2-3.*
- *An eternal, immortal body: Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 1 Corinthians 15:51-53.*
- *Eternal reward: And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the*

first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. Revelation 21:1-4, 7.

- *Peace eternal: And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7.*

HOW TO BE SAVED

When Jesus walked the earth, He taught the concept of sin, so the multitudes knew what sin was. Sin is simply disobeying God. Jesus told them they needed to be saved from their sins. They knew why they needed saved, but not how. When the Apostles Paul and Silas were asked “How?” Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. Acts 16:30b-31.*

The words of Jesus: *If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. John 3:12-18.*

Paul: *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 6:23.*

Paul: *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. Ephesians 2:8-9.*

Salvation from our sins is for anyone who will accept God’s gift. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: John 1:12.*

To accept Jesus as your Savior, pray: *“Dear Father in Heaven, I know I am a sinner. I am truly sorry for my sins. I repent and ask that you will forgive me. I accept Jesus as my Savior. From this day forward I will strive to live for Him. Dear LORD Jesus, please come into my heart. Amen.”*

Chapter 6: Dad's New Body

Dad liked to put on a ball glove and go out back and play “catch.” He was a better athlete in his day than I was, but I was 30 years younger. It was easy for me to jump for a ball I misjudged or chase after one that got away. Dad's shoulder would get sore sometimes and he could not play long. It was too bad he could not get a new body, or at least new parts to replace the worn out ones.



Humor was important in our family, too. A good joke or bit of wit could make up for most shortcomings.

When I was perhaps 10, Dad had an operation to correct a deviated septum. I did not quite know what that was; still do not, except that the doctor had to do something to Dad's nose. When we went to visit Dad at the hospital, it was only natural for me to wear an oversized, false nose.

By age 50, Dad had his nose fixed, a bad shoulder, his appendix was gone, tonsils taken, hair history, he was overweight- you know, typical American. Too bad he could not get a new body. His brain was better than ever. Now I know what it is like to be 50 and a bit how Dad might have felt.

Dad was very active at church, a good Bible-teaching church. He must have come across the following scripture along the way, because I know he held out hope for a new body some day:

For you have a new life. It was not passed on to you from your parents, for the life they gave you will fade away. This new one will last forever, for it comes from Christ, God's ever-living Message to men. Yes, our natural lives will fade as grass does when it becomes all brown and dry. All our greatness is like a flower that droops and falls; but the Word of the Lord will last forever. And his message is the Good News that was preached to you. 1 Peter 1:23-25 The Living Bible

Eventually things got worse for Dad's body. He got diabetes. That took its toll on one of his favorite hobbies- eating. Cookies, ice cream, pies... Then he had to part with his gall bladder. That was even tougher on his hobby. Then he got that dreaded “C” word. We were able to get through everything else, even the diabetes and gall bladder surgery, with some humor. We did not find any humor in this cancerous illness at all. That does not mean Dad did not have

an outlet to ease his sorrows. Although the outcome of the cancer was uncertain, Dad had hope in the conclusion.

He kept a diary. On May 17, 1992, he entered, “When I leave this earth, don’t mourn for me- be prepared to join me at the end of your (life). “ This was written before his first bout with cancer. In 1996, Dad began successive years of fighting cancer. The chemotherapy and other treatments were painful and a lot to bear for a 75 year-old man. Dad was looking forward to his eventual new body as he endured these treatments. Here are the thoughts of a man knowing what God had waiting for him:

- April 24, 1996. “I can’t do much work anymore. To anyone reading this, put your trust in Jesus Christ and come see me and my new body. ”
- May 6, 1996. “I am a coward, even though I know that for me to die is gain. I’m so glad I love Jesus. I’m so glad He loves me.”
- December 18, 1996. “I’m not very confident of my condition. I just have to repeat, I’m so glad there is a Heaven that we are promised.”
- March 7, 1997. “Another not so hot day. Things are sure to get better for me someday.”

Dad knew some other scripture, such as the following, which were implied in his entries:

⁵¹Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵²In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ⁵³For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. ⁵⁴So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. ⁵⁵O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? ⁵⁶The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. ⁵⁷But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:51-57)

In 1997, Dad successfully beat cancer a second time. The following year, on the Fourth of July, Dad had a lump above his left eye. It so happened that all of us kids were home visiting. We took Dad to the hospital where upon visual examination the doctors believed that the lump was an infection. Dad, having feared this to be another bout with the “C” word, was ecstatic. The next day his second great grandson was born. The next day... the next day he found out that the lump *was* a tumor, not conjunctivitis. It would prove to be cancerous.

Dad was able to see his great-grandson, as he had seen the other two great grandchildren before him. He would not see the second and third great granddaughters born a couple years later. I stood by Dad’s bedside the last night of his life on this earth. I don’t know how you personally feel about these things or the writings of Billy Graham’s on angels, but Dad saw someone else in the room with us that night and asked me who it was. I know who I believe it was.

The next day, July 25, 1998, my Dad joined Jesus in Heaven. We who know Jesus as our Savior can take comfort in the same promises that comforted my dad.

Dad left a legacy of kindness. If it were up to Dad, everyone would go to Heaven- everyone. It is not up to Dad. It is up to someone perfect and just. We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. We all deserve death, the wages of sin. But by God’s grace, through the shedding of the blood of His son, we all can have eternal life, and a home in Heaven:

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 6:23).

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. (John 14:1-3).

Do you want a new, incorruptible body someday? Salvation and a free new body can be yours. If you want eternal life, accept Jesus as your Savior. Pray these words, “*Dear Father in Heaven, I know I am a sinner and have sinned against you. I am sorry for my sins and sinful nature, and ask that you will forgive me. I accept Jesus now as my Savior who shed His blood for me. I give my life to you and will strive to live for you. Thank you, Lord, for saving my soul. In Jesus name I pray, Amen.*”

Chapter 7: My Parents Were Complete Failures



Jesus taught us to honor our parents. Perhaps it goes against His teachings to complain about our parents, but I do not think other children should have to go through what I went through. I want to expose my parents' mistakes so others can benefit.

When Jesus was 12 years old, He astounded the teachers at the temple. When I was 12 years old, I had a paper route. The \$8 per week from this paper route was to pay for my school lunches, clothing, and other needs. You must understand that my family was not wealthy. Do you agree that my parents were very selfish having me do this hard job and learning the values that came with it? Sometimes the weather was brutal- would it have been better for me to sit in the warm and study?

With such emphasis on money, why did my parents not go into debt and buy a larger house and shinier car? Sometimes our old car and older house embarrassed me. I remember telling my mother that if she were not so lazy she would get a job. Obviously she preferred to lounge about and do whatever the mother of three does. I suppose she needed a little time to prepare to teach her Sunday school and junior church lessons, but someone else could take her place doing that.

MY DAD

Some fathers are not very attentive to their children and leave the family matters to the mother. Apparently my father did not care about us too much. Do you remember, "Spare the rod, and spoil the child?" One day I decided not to go to kindergarten, so I ran off. Dad was all over looking for me. I remember watching him as I lay silently behind a fence. When I was finally caught, Dad took me into the house to spank me. He whispered, "You pretend to cry." He hit the bed with his belt, and I pretended to cry. (I do not think Mom was fooled.) Now what kind of lesson was that for me?

When Fred, the youngest of us was born, Dad had to make supper. Can you imagine what we had to eat? He took a packet of dry Lipton's Noodle Soup, added water and a little can of chicken pieces, and boiled it to death. What kind of meal was that? I suppose we had to eat butter bread with it. To show you the effect this had on me, I vowed not to do this to my family, and in fact became adept at preparing real food- frozen pizza.

Dad used to run out on us. I remember many Sundays that Dad was not home in the

afternoon. Instead he was out with his gospel quartet singing and witnessing in prisons and churches.

I guess to combine cheating on the food bill and to teach me some kind of life lesson, Dad took me hunting when I reached the age. It used to get so cold just sitting and waiting. I remember one time my feet got so cold I could hardly stand it. Dad had me remove my boots and put my feet inside his coat to warm them. (In fact on this trip I was only eleven, we were hunting squirrels, and I was not old enough to shoot yet.) During these hunting trips we would talk and he would teach me things that he could just as well have taught me in the warm. So why did he make me go out in the cold? Regardless, he made me stick it out in the cold, 100%.

Dad taught me other life lessons. It seems, looking back, that he could not just come out and tell me something. The lessons were shrouded- like parables. Dad had a wooden statuette of a child. The child's dog was running along side, racing toward something or someone. The child was looking a bit upward, as if at an adult. I figured that one out right away. It was my sister and her dog Bee Bee welcoming Dad home. I complimented Dad on the statue, hoping he would confirm what I had supposed. Dad just said, "It means something to me." So now I do not know if it was about my sister Jane or Dad and his dog when he was a boy.

When I got my first girlfriend, Dad decided he had better tell me about the facts of life. I had a good idea from what I heard from other kids. Here is what my father told me, "There are three tests to decide if it's the right girl: 1. would you share her toothbrush; 2. would you want her to be the mother of your children, and; 3. some day she'll look like her mother." I do not know what kind of facts those were. I married that same girl 32 years ago. We have a son, daughter, and five grandchildren. Think how well I would have done if Dad told me everything.

MY MOM

In nature we find that a mother protects her offspring at all costs. Rather than nurture, my mother "salted" my wounds. She was squeamish about cuts, blood, and so on, so she was not good about cleaning our wounds. Mom's salty tears cleaned my wounds rather than peroxide. Why would she do that? Did she not care?

Mom had an aunt that suffered from polio when she was young. Aunt Dorothy was not capable of taking total care of herself. As if our house was not small enough, as if our resources were not already meager, Mom took her in. I do not know how that helped us. Why would Mom be so unconcerned about us?

I already told you that it was all about money concerning my paper route and me. Listen to this- Mom bought a set of clippers and cut our hair. How embarrassing. I do not know what she did with the money she saved, but I never saw any of it.

My paper route already cut into my free time. I guess the old school taught Mom that kids should not have fun, and of course there is the adage that idle time is the Devil's workshop. With that in mind, during prime time, Mom led evening devotions. Then she would ask questions. Then we would pray- and it would drag on. Reciting our memory verses would follow this. No- kids were not meant to have fun.

Mom has told Jane, Fred, and I many times that she was a failure. I do not know why. None of us have ever been in prison. None of us are on drugs or are alcoholics. Most importantly, all three of us know Jesus as our Savior and will spend eternity with our "misfit" parents and our LORD.

It was Mom who bowed her head with me when I asked Jesus to be my Savior. Mom has been my most effective and most accurate critic in editing my writings. I have learned by observing my mother that a good Mother has only one critic- herself!

HOW ABOUT YOU?

Will you spend eternity with your mother and father? With our Holy Father? When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they committed First Sin. God had told them that for this sin they would surely die. The only forgiveness for this sin is the shedding of blood. Our Father in Heaven sent His Son to die on the cross for our sins. If we confess that we are sinners, repent of our sins, and accept Jesus as our Savior, we will have eternal life.

Ask Jesus for His free gift of salvation!

Chapter 8: Thor

He patiently
awaits to hear
his master's
voice.



Dogs are remarkable creatures. God created them that way. We cannot know if He made them to do what we have taught them to do, and what we depend on them to do, but God did give them all the tools- strength, speed, keen senses, and most importantly, loyalty to their masters. Dogs are perhaps the only animals that prefer human company to their own kind.

By tradition we call dogs “Man’s best friend.” I agree. I have heard horses referred to as “Man’s favorite friend.” We were very fond of our horses, and our cats, and had feelings for all the critters our children used to bring home. These animals are all God’s creatures, yet there is still not anything in the animal kingdom quite like the affection for and from a dog.

So it was with a huge male Rottweiler named “Thor.” He went well over 100 pounds. He was as gentle as he was large. This powerful breed has often been given a bad reputation as aggressive and dangerous, especially around children. These stories are generally the result of mishandled dogs.

When our son brought his new Rottweiler puppy to our home one day, I admit that I was concerned about the welfare of our future grandchildren. He named the awkward little thing with big feet “Thor.” Though very young, Thor, a gift from our son’s wife, was already as large as his Boston Terrier, Gizmo.

Our son is excellent with animals, a good amateur trainer. The hope for Thor was for him to be a K-9 dog, but he ended up as a family pet. There is a humorous account about Thor and Gizmo catching some real-life bad guys one night, but that is as far as we will go here.

When our first granddaughter was born, my uneasiness of Rottweilers and children was put to the test. Guess what- Thor loved her! Thor became her recliner and stuffed pillow.

Once I had pneumonia and was in bed while our family room (aptly named) was full of family. It usually was full of family every weekend, including Thor and Gizmo; however, we did make the horses stay in the barn. Not wanting to be an outcast like the horses, I mustered enough strength to make it downstairs. I sat on the floor and slouched back against a chair.

Thor sensed my illness. He came to my side to protect me. Thor was not content to just lie beside me, he insisted on having one paw across my legs and his head on my lap. He would not leave my side the remaining time he was there. I felt a special bond with Thor from that day forward. He did not cure me or save my life, but he wanted to. He tried.

Our first grandchild is our daughter's daughter. The next four grandchildren are our son's two sons and two daughters. Thor loved them all. He was their mountain, wrestling partner, and "horse." Thor was their protector.

Large dogs often do not live as long as small dogs. We knew that the day would come when we would have to say goodbye to Thor. The inevitable became more real when Thor started having strokes. He lost his hearing. Sometimes he wandered off and seemed to forget how to get home. Three days ago my son e-mailed us to report that he noticed a large growth on one of Thor's legs.

The Bible does not clearly define what comes of animals after they die. My feeling is that they are merely here to serve us, though my wishes are different than my beliefs. There are those who believe in a "nephish spirit"¹ This spirit is apart from the spirit that the Bible teaches will go to heaven for believers. My wish, with no biblical support, is that the nephish spirit of all creatures that love and were loved will go to heaven.

The day we feared came on July 5, 2003. Thor made his scheduled visit to the veterinarian. The lump on his leg was diagnosed as cancerous.

Thor now lies near the horse barn our son is building, at the corner of a future orchard. What a beautiful setting! This spot pales compared to the beauty of heaven:

I saw a new earth and a new sky, for the present earth and sky had disappeared. And I, John, saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven. It was a glorious sight, beautiful as a bride at her wedding. I heard a loud shout from the throne saying, "Look, the home of God is now among men. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain. All of that has gone forever. I am making all things new! Everyone who conquers will inherit all these blessings, and I will be his God and he will be my son."

In a vision (I saw) that wondrous city. It was filled with the glory of God, and flashed and glowed like a precious gem, crystal clear like jasper. Its walls were broad and high, with three gates on each side--north, south, east, and west. The twelve gates were made of pearls--each gate from a single pearl! And the main street was pure, transparent gold, like glass. The walls had twelve foundation stones.

The city itself was pure, transparent gold like glass! The wall was made of jasper, and was built on twelve layers of foundation stones inlaid with gems: The first layer with jasper; The second with sapphire; The third with chalcedony; The fourth with emerald; The fifth with

¹ Nephish Spirit: Parkhurst says, "it means breath; animal life; a living animal that lives by breathing; the human body though dead; the human soul or spirit as distinguished from the body; the human animal soul; the mind, disposition, particularly as denoting the affections; a human person; and the souls of those who were slain for the word of God." *The Harvest Herald*
http://www.harvestherald.com/istate/chapter_three.htm

sardonyx; The sixth layer with sardus; The seventh with chrysolite; The eighth with beryl; The ninth with topaz; The tenth with chrysopraxe; The eleventh with jacinth; The twelfth with amethyst.

And the city has no need of sun or moon to light it, for the glory of God and of the Lamb illuminate it. Its light will light the nations of the earth, and the rulers of the world will come and bring their glory to it. Its gates never close. Nothing evil will be permitted in it--no one immoral or dishonest--but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. (From Revelation 21 Living Bible.)

The Bible clearly states that people *can* go to heaven:

The words of Jesus: *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.* (John 14:1-3).

How? We do not deserve heaven and eternal life: *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* (Romans 6:23).

Do not be presumptuous: *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.* (Romans 3:23).

There is a clue to the way of salvation beside Thor's picture: "He patiently awaits his master's voice." Open your eyes and heart to your Master's voice: *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.* (Ephesians 2:8-9).

If you want eternal life, accept Jesus as your Savior before it is too late!

Chapter 9: Cop

Cops don't scare people who do good things; only evil-doers should fear. Do you want to be unafraid of authority? Do good things! Then, he will honor you.
Romans 13:3 Simple English Translation



I looked up to police officers, “cops,” when I was very young. As with many other boys, that was what I wanted to be when I grew up, along with cowboy and soldier. In a way a police officer is all three, usually without the horse.

When I got older and was issued my driver’s license, I learned a new fear of “cops.” They seemed to have it in for me, and I (of course) did not deserve it.

What’s wrong with screaming around corners, laying rubber, passing anywhere you want, driving fast but within your youthful capabilities, and blowing stop signs? Do you agree?

With all that aside, here is what those “dirty coppers” do every day:

- They carry old women out of burning buildings.
- Step between irrational, armed spouses during domestic disputes. (Usually one spouse turns on the cop trying to protect him or her.)
- Have nightmares after lifting a dead child and his bicycle from the roadway (themselves being parents).
- Remove abused children from homes while taking abuse themselves.
- Stop a speeder, not knowing if he just robbed a store and is going to shoot him.
- Arrest the punk that is going to sell dope to your child, only to be kicked and spat upon.
- Reach into their own pockets to give some poor kid lunch money.
- Investigate grizzly, fatal accidents.
- Take verbal abuse from a parent while explaining why they were stopped for not having their children in safety restraints. “Why don’t you go after the real criminals?” (See above.)

The preceding is the tip of the iceberg. Think about this the next time some trooper pulls you over for speeding. God sets the rules. Man is to follow them. God ordains “cops”- police, troopers, sheriffs, deputies, and agents- to uphold the rules. God inspired Paul to write as follows:

CIVIL AUTHORITY

¹*Obey the government, for God is the one who has put it there. There is no government anywhere that God has not placed in power.* ²*So those who refuse to obey the laws of the land are refusing to obey God, and punishment will follow.* ³*For the policeman does not frighten people who are doing right; but those doing evil will always fear him. So if you don't want to be*

afraid, keep the laws and you will get along well. ⁴The policeman is sent by God to help you. But if you are doing something wrong, of course you should be afraid, for he will have you punished. He is sent by God for that very purpose. ⁵Obey the laws, then, for two reasons: first, to keep from being punished, and second, just because you know you should.

TAXES AND DEBTS

⁶Pay your taxes too, for these same two reasons. For government workers need to be paid so that they can keep on doing God's work, serving you. ⁷Pay everyone whatever he ought to have: pay your taxes and import duties gladly, obey those over you, and give honor and respect to all those to whom it is due. ⁸Pay all your debts except the debt of love for others--never finish paying that! For if you love them, you will be obeying all of God's laws, fulfilling all his requirements. ⁹If you love your neighbor as much as you love yourself you will not want to harm or cheat him, or kill him or steal from him.

LOVE AND LAW

And you won't sin with his wife or want what is his, or do anything else the Ten Commandments say is wrong. All ten are wrapped up in this one, to love your neighbor as you love yourself. ¹⁰Love does no wrong to anyone. That's why it fully satisfies all of God's requirements. It is the only law you need.

CHILDREN OF LIGHT

¹¹Another reason for right living is this: you know how late it is; time is running out. Wake up, for the coming of the Lord is nearer now than when we first believed. ¹²⁻¹³The night is far gone, the day of his return will soon be here. So quit the evil deeds of darkness and put on the armor of right living, as we who live in the daylight should! Be decent and true in everything you do so that all can approve your behavior. Don't spend your time in wild parties and getting drunk or in adultery and lust, or fighting, or jealousy. ¹⁴But ask the Lord Jesus Christ to help you live as you should, and don't make plans to enjoy evil. (Romans 13 LVB).

The Simple English Translation of Romans 13:3 interestingly uses the term “evildoers.” Since September 11, 2001, we have heard those words used frequently by President Bush to describe the Godless and things outside of God. The evildoers of September 11 have something to fear. Evildoer is also used many times in the King James and other versions. Here is a sampling”

Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. Trust in the Lord, and do well; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. (Psalm 37:1-3)

Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity? (Psalm 94:16)

Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger, they are gone away backward. (Webster's Bible Isaiah 1:4)

Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. (1 Peter 3:16)

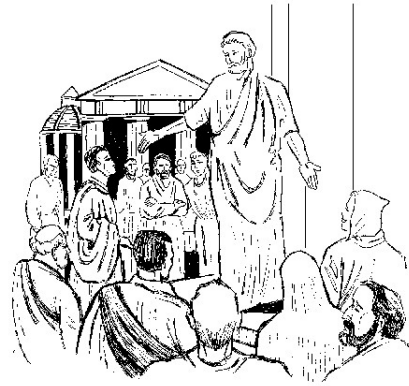
So, respect the “cops” and what they do for you. They are doing God’s work in a non-spiritual nature, nevertheless upholding God’s commandments. When an officer pulls you over for a little “harmless speeding,” remember that he does not know if you have a gun and just robbed a bank. Know that his job is dangerous, and he will treat you with more respect than you show to him. He will give his life for your child.

God’s Son already gave His life for your child and for you. He gave His life so that we might have eternal life. This is a gift, but you must accept it for it to be of value to you:

Because of our sins, we are destined to die: *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)*. Even so, God loves us and provided a substitute to pay for our sins: *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)*. Salvation from our sins is for anyone who will accept God’s gift. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. (John 1:12)*.

To accept Jesus as your Savior, pray: *“Dear Father in Heaven, I know I am a sinner. I am truly sorry for my sins. I repent and ask that you will forgive me. I accept Jesus as my Savior. From this day forward I will strive to live for Him. Dear Lord Jesus, please come into my heart. Amen.”*

Chapter 10: Who Me, Witness?



I have told everyone the Good News that you forgive people's sins. I have not been timid about it, as you well know, O Lord. (Psalms 40:9 LVB).

For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is God's powerful method of bringing all who believe it to heaven. This message was preached first to the Jews alone, but now everyone is invited to come to God in this same way. (Romans 1:16 LVB).

I have been asked, “Why is it that Christians think they have to try to convert everybody?” That absolutely is not true. It should be true. Our LORD commands us to witness. We have the best story to tell in the universe, the only religion that can guarantee me that I am going to see my loved ones again. Yet we tell hardly anyone. How many people did you see today? How many did you tell about the Good News?

Witnessing, simply, is explaining God and why we need Him. The witness must first understand the truth that is found in the entire Bible and be brave enough to witness? Here is the basic truth:

- God is eternal and always was. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever (Hebrews 13:8).
- God created everything from nothing, so He owns everything, including us. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is (Exodus 20:11a).
- Sin corrupted a perfect creation and brought death into the world. God said to the woman, You shall bear children in intense pain and suffering. And to Adam, God said, Because you ate the fruit when I told you not to, I have placed a curse upon the soil. All your life you will struggle to (live) from it. It will grow thorns and thistles. All your life you will sweat to master it, until your dying day. Then you will return to the ground from which you came (Genesis 3:16-19a LVB).
- Jesus Christ, God incarnate, died on the cross for our sins. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom 6:23).
- All who accept Jesus as their Savior shall have eternal life in a perfect (non-corrupt) Heaven with God. A gift is only a gift if you accept it. But to all who received him, he gave the right to become children of God (John 1:12 LVB).
- Salvation without the shedding of Christ's blood is not possible. And almost all things

are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission (Heb 9:22).

- Jesus gives us the bread of life. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst (John 6:35).
- First feed them the bread of life, then the needs of the flesh. And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you (Mark 12:22-23, 29, 31).

Now you know the task, what next? *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature* (Mark 16:15). Jesus' command did not limit us to skipping over to Africa and forgetting about our home area. Is your next-door neighbor less important than someone half a world away? Do you have no concern for your friends? The entire world does need missionaries. Those of us who stay back here in the comfort of democracy making ends meet need to support our missionaries on all continents. These servants of God make sacrifices we will not make and probably cannot imagine. The least we can do is witness to the loved ones the missionaries had to leave behind while they went to follow God's will.

The next hurdle is to conquer your fear. Perhaps you think you have no talent or ability. There is more than one way to witness. You do not have to preach from a street corner or teach a class. We can witness in many other ways that do not require a lot of ability or knowledge and are easy for those who otherwise find it hard to witness:

- PRAY! How many people do you know who are doing God's work? Pray for them. Pastors, their wives, Sunday school teachers, missionaries- they all need our prayers.
- Invite someone to church. "The pastor is speaking about angels," "we're having special music," or "we're having a movie about the Holy Land," etc.
- Ask someone to come to a party at your house to watch Billy Graham on television.
- Similarly, refreshments, friends, and the Jesus film.
- Offer to sponsor a youth to a summer church camp.
- Volunteer to provide transportation to services. There are many people who would love to attend church, especially the elderly, but they cannot get there.
- Take bulletins and an audiotape of that day's service to a shut in.

If you cannot do any of the above on your own, become active in a committee. Five people each doing a little is better than five people individually doing nothing. Let us not think that doing a little is not doing much.

What is the potential contribution of a Christian that leads a drunk to Christ? The drunk turns from his evil ways and eventually becomes a pastor. This pastor leads many more to Christ, and so forth. We have heard stories like this repeatedly. So what do you think about the contribution of the nervous Christian that first approached the drunk about Jesus?

I once was a timid witness, very unsure of myself. I have become braver with every

opportunity. Pray! Do not be afraid! What can happen to you? The apostle Paul wrote the following wonderful divinely inspired letters:

It is God himself, in his mercy, who has given us this wonderful work and so we never give up. We do not try to trick people into believing--we are not interested in fooling anyone. We never try to get anyone to believe that the Bible teaches what it does not. All such shameful methods we forego. We stand in the presence of God as we speak and so we tell the truth, as all who know us will agree. If the Good News we preach is hidden to anyone, it is hidden from the one who is on the road to eternal death. 2 Corinthians 4:1-3 LVB.

Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand safe against all strategies and tricks of Satan. But to do this, you will need the strong belt of truth and the breastplate of God's approval. Wear shoes that are able to speed you on as you preach the Good News of peace with God. In every battle you will need faith as your shield to stop the fiery arrows aimed at you by Satan. And you will need the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit--which is the Word of God. Pray all the time. Ask God for anything in line with the Holy Spirit's wishes. Ephesians 6:11, 14-18a LVB.

Defend your faith. But sanctify the Lord in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear, Having a good conscience, that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good manner of life in Christ. 1 Peter 3:15-16.

You witness to people who do not have personal relationships with Jesus Christ. What if they ask you a tough question like, “Where did Cain get his wife?” Answer: “Be ready always to give an answer.” (See suggested reading.) Know what other faiths believe. How do you discuss “who’s right” if you fail to know what others believe? Do not let them know more about their faith than you know about yours.

Witnessing to young people can be so rewarding! My mother taught Good News Club, Sunday school, Junior Church, and Vacation Bible School. I saw first hand many children accept Christ as Savior. It must have been wonderful for my mother. Children can be so tender and open. No wonder Jesus loved them so. If you cannot teach, volunteer to open your home to children. Sure, some will be noisy. Something might get broken. A beautiful child’s soul might be saved, too. Maybe someone else will teach if you cannot, just open your home.

American youth greatly admire professional athletes. The following organizations can arrange for a Christian athlete to come and fellowship with your impressionable youth.

- Fellowship of Christian Athletes, 8701 Leeds Road, Kansas City MO 64129, Phone 816-921-0909, Web site fca@fca.org
- Unlimited Potential, Inc., P.O. Box 1355, Warsaw IN 46581-1355, Phone 219-267-7988, Web site www.upi.org

Other witnessing material sources:

- American Tract Society, PO Box 462008, Garland TX 75046, 800-548-7228
- Good News Publishers, 9825 West Roosevelt Road, Westchester IL 60153

- Answers in Genesis, PO Box 6330, Florence KY 41022, www.answersingenesis.org
- Word to the World (for free downloadable copies of tracts), PO Box 4, Middleburg, PA 17842 www.word2world.com

Suggested Reading:

Ham, Ken, *Did Adam Have a Belly Button?* Green Forest, Arkansas, Master Books, 1999.
 Ham, Snelling, Wieland, *The Answers Book*, Green Forest, Arkansas, Master Books, 1990.
 Lerch, Harold A. Sr. P.E., *Did God Really Say That?*, Fairfax, Virginia, Xulon Press, 2002.
 Lerch, Harold, *God's People, God's Plan*, Fairfax, Virginia, Xulon Press, 2002.

Do not procrastinate. You can witness in the present, not in the past. There is no assurance that you can witness tomorrow.

Witnessing is not limited to running out and finding heathens to convert, drunks to save, or murderers to reform. Our Christian brethren need ministering at times. Do not forsake your own. Study, be brave, and spread the good news!

Chapter 11: Dear God, Why Won't You Heal Me?

*Dear God,
Why won't you heal me?
Don't you care? Why must
Christians suffer?*



Jesus heals Jairus's Daughter

I am a severe migraine sufferer, and have been for most of my adult life. How many times have I asked God to take these from me? Perhaps ten thousand times: once a day for 25 years?

I have spent many hours over many days for many years throughout several decades lying in bed, writhing in pain, praying yet receiving no relief. Aloud I have asked God countless times why He would not answer my prayer. What good was it doing me or anyone else for me to be in this pain? Family outings spoiled, plans ruined, and even going to church is often interrupted. I still get these headaches. Does God not care for me? I know that He has heard my prayers.

God must care for me because He sent His Son to die for me. (Would I send my son to die for Him?) He must care for me a lot! So, when I prayed 10,000 times, what did God say to me? How did He answer? Why had I not heard an answer for so many years? I worded my pleading prayers every possible way that I could.

One answer to my prayers was to find a doctor that could help. Under the care of Dr. R. Michael Gallagher, one of the world's leading authorities on headaches and treatment, I have greatly improved. I still get a dozen or more migraines per month. Effective abortive medicines have become available in recent years; nonetheless, often these medications are slow or are ineffective on the worst of my headaches, which can last several days.

So, what is God's answer when a Christian is suffering and praying for help? He heals multitudes of sick people. He just does not heal everyone. Though He has the power and authority, He does not for reasons we do not understand. I had a tough time with this discernment until I read "In the Grip of Grace" by Max Lucado. One chapter in this book contemplates an illness or circumstance the apostle Paul had, which is unidentified, but was apparently of major discomfort to Paul. Paul's attitude was unlike mine:

^{5b}I will not boast about myself, except about my weaknesses... ⁷To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. ⁸Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. ⁹But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." ¹⁰Therefore I

will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. ¹¹That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong. 2 Corinthians 12:5b, 7-11 NIV.

When I read this scripture, I immediately realized how trivial my headaches compare to the importance of eternal life. It touched me so I cried and cried, and thanked God for His grace that would allow me to spend eternity with my LORD free of ailments. Sickness, disease, and death are a result of first sin. God has no obligation for the fall of man and the price that came with the fall. However, He provided a substitute to take away our punishment of death.

I shared with my mother what this scripture meant to me. Little did I know that the very same verses got her through a difficult, bedridden pregnancy 45 years earlier. My sister, Jane, was the result of that pregnancy. Jane is the one that told me of a friend, Dr. R. Michael Gallagher, who diagnoses and treats headaches. She convinced me to make the 340 mile round trips to see him. Can you see that God began answering my prayer, through 2 Corinthians chapter 12, decades before I prayed it?

Is spending a joyful eternity with God and other loved ones within the beauty of Heaven more important to you than the trivial trials of this life? God has a master plan and wants eternal life for us. Our sins interrupted God's plan. Therefore, God sent His Son to pay the price of our sins so that we might be saved, if we just accept this gift.

The Bible says:

- *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Romans 6:23.
- *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.* Ephesians 2:8-9.
- *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.* John 14:1-3.

To accept God's gift of salvation, pray, *"Dear Heavenly Father, I am a sinner and I have sinned against you. I am sorry for my sins and sinful nature. I repent of my sins and accept Jesus here and now as my Savior. Jesus, save me by your blood shed for me. Help me turn from my sins. I now give my life to you. In your name I pray, Jesus. Amen."*

Interesting points from Theodore Epp:

- Suffering is a result of sin. It is physical and mental. It can build us- witness Job- and produces spiritual growth.
- Satan hates God and wanted to drive a wedge between himself and God. Man has free will and chose to sin.
- Christ was the supreme sufferer. Although He himself is perfect, His suffering brought us hope and eternal life.
- Sickness tests our faith. If we can overcome our trials, we will find joy within.

- God permits suffering to chasten us. Chastisement can be disciplinary, corrective, educative, or preventive.
- Suffering also can be purifying, fruit bearing, perfecting, and reducing of the ego.
- Learn how to suffer, with and for Christ. We should not despise the chastening. Do not become calloused, “murmur,” criticize God, or give up.
- Renew your confidence in God. Pray. Count your blessings.
- Praise the LORD, love others, and submit yourself to God.
- Glorify God!

Suggested reading:

Lucado, Max, *In the Grip of Grace*, Dallas, TX, Word Publishing, 1996.

Epp, Theodore, *Why Do Christians Suffer? Back to the Bible*, 1970.

Lerch, Harold, *Did God Really Say That?*, Fairfax, Virginia, Xulon Press, 2002.

Lerch, Harold, *God's People, God's Plan*, Fairfax, Virginia, Xulon Press, 2002.

Chapter 12: Precious in His Sight

God created man in His image. We have turned our backs on Creator God and embraced evolution, Satan's great lie. Racism is evolution's most harmful principle. One God made us one race.



God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation. Acts 17:24a, 26.

NO BIBLICAL SUPPORT FOR RACISM

The Bible contains no scripture that would point toward any idea of racism as we view it. The biblical creation account supports that all mankind descends from one original couple, Adam and Eve. Further, the account of Noah's flood supports that we all are descendents of Noah, his wife, their three sons, and three daughters-in-law. The curse of Ham has nothing to do with skin color. Let us consider these issues.

CREATION: ONLY ONE SKIN COLOR

We all have the same skin "color," determined by pigmentation called "melanin." Our genes cause some of us to have more melanin than others, so some are darker, some lighter, in varying "shades." The exceptions are albinos, who have no melanin.

Four genes, two from each parent, determine our skin "shade," represented by upper and lower case A and B on the chart to the right. AABB would be darkest and aabb lightest. This sixteen-square chart shows five possible shades, but skin thickness and the fat beneath the skin can cause further variation.

	AB	Ab	aB	ab
AB	AABB	AABb	AaBB	AaBb
Ab	AABb	AAbb	AaBb	Aabb
aB	AaBB	AaBb	aaBB	aaBb
ab	AaBb	Aabb	aaBb	aabb

CURSE OF HAM

Most of us believe that Ham was cursed, and that because of this curse, when Noah said “Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren,” that Canaan’s descendents were dark skinned. This was a convenient belief for white people who thought dark skinned people were lesser and sanctioned by God to be slaves. Although it was Ham that sinned, *Canaan’s descendents* were cursed. Nowhere is skin color or anything else physical mentioned.

The clue to the curse avowed in Genesis 9 is found in Genesis 10: *And Canaan begat Sidon his firstborn, and Heth, And the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgasite, And the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite, And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite: and afterward were the families of the Canaanites spread abroad. And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest to Gerar, unto Gaza; as thou goest, unto Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, even unto Lasha.* Genesis 10:15-19.

Sodom and Gomorrah! One’s descendents being destined to die by a rain of fire is a pretty bad curse! God by his omniscience and foreknowledge knew this to be their fate, though they had free will. Our sin is the assumption that dark skin is “bad.” In any event, God created dark skin, light skin, and medium skin, *And God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.* (Genesis 1:31).

DESCENDANTS OF ADAM THROUGH NOAH

The latest news from the world of anthropology is the results of DNA research pointing toward a single female ancestor of all humans they call, “Eve.” This fascinating Eve account revolves around mitochondrial DNA exploration. Mitochondria are organelles found in living cells and are *only* inherited from the mother. By sampling mitochondria from peoples around the world, scientists claim to have traced lineages toward a common ancestor.

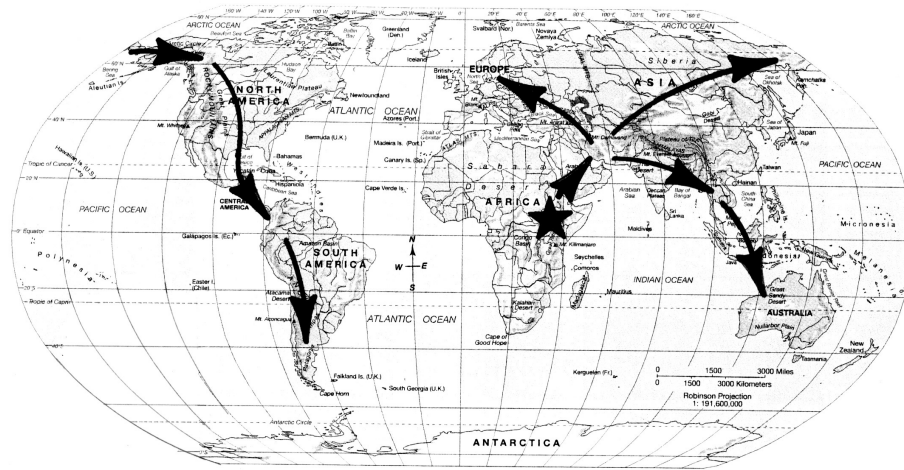
The Discovery Channel aired a special in 2002 about this research dubbed “Real Eve.” The program explains how the descendents of their “Eve,” believed to be from Africa, traveled to the rest of the world. The first migrations were into what are now Yemen and the Middle East, then to Asia, Malaysia, and Australia. Also, some to China and eventually the Americas. Later, descendents living in the Middle East migrated North and West to the Balkans and Europe.

As the migration routes were mapped, one could notice the similarity to how a biblical-creationist could map the spreading of civilization from Ararat, the “dock” of Noah’s ark. The mere difference would be the direction of one arrow from Africa to the Middle East. (See maps.)

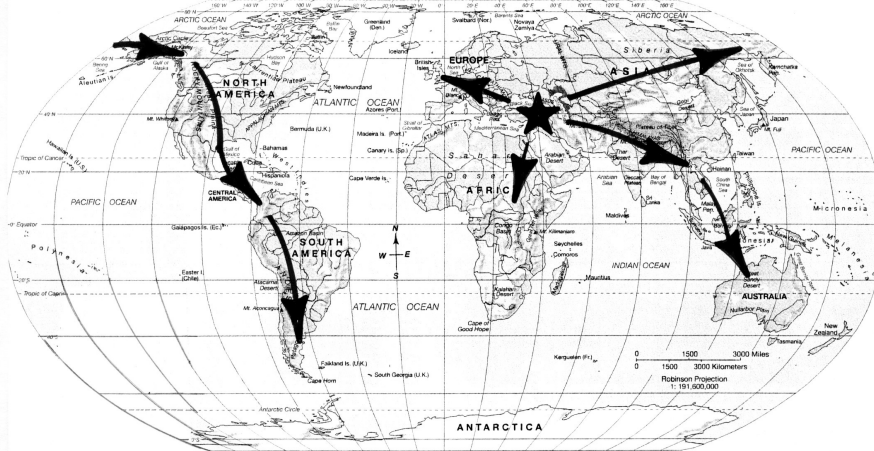
This is quite imaginable because all of the people groups around the world come from Mrs. Noah or one of her three daughters-in-law.

The writers of Real Eve considered the Africans to be older, because of more variations. Could these granddaughters instead be the wives of Noah’s sons?

An interesting point made on Real Eve was, “Under the skin we are all very much the same,” and “If we look at the DNA of all of us...we show less variation than we would find in a small group of (apes).” The view that the first humans were dark skinned was refreshing in contrast to the notion that dark skin came later as a “curse.”



"Eve" or "Out-of-Africa" migration route. From Africa to present day Yemen, then to all points from there.



Possible Biblical migration route from Mount Ararat into all the world.

The Bible certainly agrees that we all came from the real, Real Eve.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Satan hates God and wants to drive a wedge between the Creator and us. His best wedge is the lie of evolution and the hate of racism. Do not fall into Satan's trap. We are already in judgment from sin because of yielding to Satan's tempting.

Because of our sins, we are destined to die: *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;* (Romans 3:23). Even so, God loves us and provided a substitute to pay for our sins: *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* (John 3:16). Salvation from our sins is for anyone who will accept God's gift. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:* (John 1:12).

Chapter 13: Abortion, or Not?

“Abortion (is the) termination of pregnancy before birth, resulting in, or accompanied by, the death of the fetus. Abortion has become one of the most widely debated ethical issues of our time. On one side are pro-choice supporters, individuals who favor a woman’s reproductive rights, including the right to choose to have an abortion. On the other side are the pro-life advocates, who oppose abortion except in extreme circumstances, as when the mother’s life would be threatened by carrying a pregnancy to term. At one end of this ethical spectrum are pro-choice defenders who believe the fetus is only a potential human being until it is viable. Until this time the fetus has no legal rights—the rights belong to the woman carrying the fetus, who can decide whether or not to bring the pregnancy to full term. At the other end of the spectrum are pro-life supporters who believe the fetus is a human being from the time of conception”¹.



THE CONFLICT

I have viewed photographs of aborted babies. They have little hands and little feet. They once were living. As far as viable, what is viable? You could drop me off in the woods and I would survive for a while. How about a 6-month old baby? How would it do on its own? 12 months? The baby would die. So, can we say we can kill a one-year old baby because it is not viable?

These days rationalization for purposes of our own ends can be our god. The pro-choice argument and the possibility of multiple definitions of the word “viable” make the pro-choice view wide open. The pro-life viewpoint allows for a very narrow interpretation and relies primarily on “Thou shalt not kill.” There is hardly room for compromise between the two camps.

THE HUMANISTIC VIEW

The worldview is that we can discard unborn babies at our convenience. A pro-life supporter would use the examples of rape and incest to try to obtain a sympathetic ear from the devoutly religious. Ponder this: rape and incest are evil measures. Murder is an evil measure.

Murder of a baby because of rape and incest is a virtuous measure?

Those that favor abortion speak of instances when the mother's life is in danger. They say they have their "just cause." Then they contradict themselves and include abortion as a means to end unwanted pregnancies. We are teaching our young people that they can go out and be immoral, and if they make a mistake, they can "have it taken care of."

The landmark court decision most responsible for allowing abortion and pro-choice was the 1973 Supreme Court case *Roe v. Wade*. The woman known as Jane Roe in that trial, Norma McCorvey, has changed her mind on abortion. According to an AP release, McCorvey stated, "My case was wrongfully decided, and has caused great harm to the women and children of our nation." McCorvey is active in anti-abortion causes.²

A MATTER OF CONVENIENCE

From another AP article about an AMA recommendation of selling the morning-after pill over-the-counter: Joan Coombs, senior vice president of Planned Parenthood said, "This is a wonderful (recommendation) by the AMA." She said widespread use of the morning-after pill could prevent 1.7 million unplanned pregnancies and 800,000 abortions annually.³

This pill will abort pregnancies if taken within three days of intercourse. This is still murder just as much as if using forceps on a 5-month old fetus. I guess at 3 days, one does not look, feel, or act pregnant, so it appears to be "no big deal." Contrary to the implication by Ms. Coombs, this is still abortion.

Dr. Irvin M. Cushner, as testimony to the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, 97th Congress, First Session, 1983, p. 158, "Over 99% of all U.S. abortions have nothing to do with the life or health of the woman. They are done simply because of her desire for convenience, absence of distress, and her so-called happiness."

HOW THEY KILL THE BABIES

- D&C is a common procedure. The baby is cut into pieces with a sharp scraping instrument after the cervix is dilated with several other instruments.
- Suction Curettage is as above excepting that instead of cutting the baby with a curette, a strong suction tube is used. The suction dismembers the baby and vacuums it into a jar.
- Dilation and Evacuation is a method of killing larger babies of 12-20 weeks of age. Sharp-teethed forceps are used to tear away the baby's body piece by piece. Usually, the baby's head is too large to be extracted whole. In this event, the head must be crushed and drained prior to removal.
- Saline Injection. Still larger babies (after 16 weeks) are killed by saline poisoning. A salt solution is injected through the mother's abdomen into the womb. The baby suffers, kicks and jerks violently for over an hour until it dies. Within 24 hours, labor will begin. Usually the baby is born dead, others need more time of nonattendance to die.
- Just as c-section is used to deliver wanted babies, the same procedure is used to deliver the unwanted. After delivery, the baby is allowed to die by neglect. This procedure is used in the last 3 months of pregnancy. Many of these babies at this stage could live if wanted.

- Chemical Abortion uses chemicals to perform a prostaglandin chemical abortion. The chemicals cause intense contractions so strong that generally the contractions kill the baby. Some of the babies are born alive and allowed to die.
- Partial Birth abortion, the cervix is dilated. The baby is pulled into the birth canal in breech fashion. An incision is made in the baby's head. The brain is removed by suction, collapsing the head. The body is then "delivered."

Can you imagine a human rights group that would stand for this to be done to even the worst criminal?

WHAT DOES GOD SAY?

God is the creator. He set the rules. He obviously considers an embryo a precious being: *For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.* Psalms 139:13-15.

God also said:

- *Thou shalt not kill.* Exodus 20:13.
- *Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked.* Exodus 23:7.
- *Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of one's youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.* Psalm 127:3-5.
- *Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.* Psalm 128:3.
- *Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers.* Proverbs 17:6.
- *Then the word of the Lord came unto me saying, Before I formed thee in the womb, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.* Jeremiah 1:4-5.
- *But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.* Luke 1:13-15.

CHRISTIAN COUNSELING

If you are in a position to recommend counseling to a woman with a pregnancy concern, by all means recommend Christian counseling. A secular medical facility is influenced by

humanistic thought processes and is biased by “of the flesh” mentality- we are just high animal forms responsible only to ourselves. In contrast, read the scriptures.

I am a man writing about a decision I should never have to face; but I do know that the Christian counselors offer a message of love in a time of turmoil. Speak with these tenderhearted women if you have a need. Let them guide you to a responsible decision, an informed decision, and the right decision.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Publicize God’s view on abortion. It is murder. Have your church or group of concerned citizens take out full-page pro-life ads in newspapers. Include pictures of aborted babies. Send copies to your congressmen, both state and federal.

You can obtain materials on abortion needed for your campaign from the following organizations:

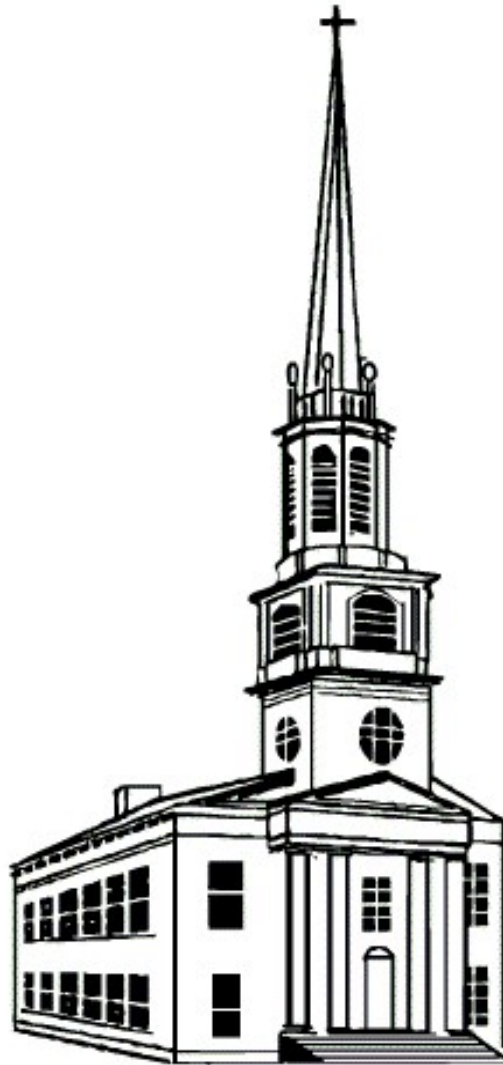
- American Tract Society, PO Box 462008, Garland TX 75046
- Last Days Ministries, Box 40, Lindale TX 75771-0040
- Christian Medical and Dental Society, <http://prnewswire.com>
- “Abortion Alternatives” in the phone book
- Dr. and Mrs. J.C. Willke, Handbook on Abortion, Hayes Publishing Co., 6304 Hamilton Avenue, Cincinnati OH 45224
- Dr. Brian Close, Pro-Life Encyclopedia, Stafford: American Life League
- Pharmacists for Life International, New Abortion Drugs, a Health Threat, PO Box 1281, Powell OH 43065

¹Microsoft® Encarta® Encyclopedia 2001. © 1993-2000 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

²Roe vs. Wade’s Jane Roe files friend-of-court briefs opposing abortion, the Associated Press, The Sentinel, Lewistown, Pa., USA 6/1/01, p. A8.

³Branom, Mike, AMA recommends selling morning-after pill over-the-counter, The Associated Press, The Daily Item, Sunbury, Pa., USA 12/6/00 p. A6.

PART III WHERE ARE WE GOING FROM HERE?

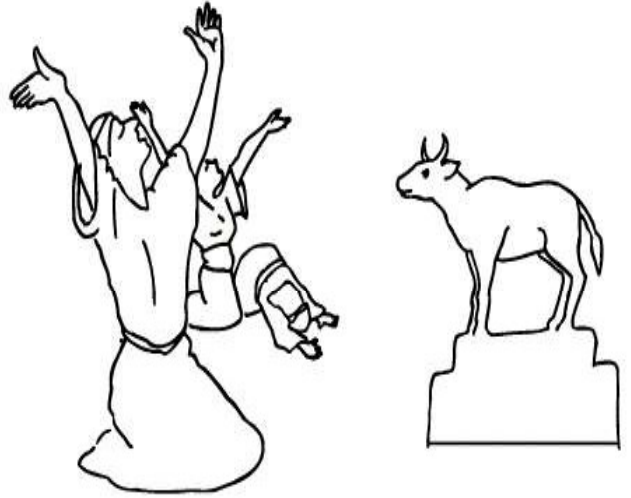


Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen. For therein the elders had witness borne to them. By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear. Hebrews 11:1-3 ASV

Chapter 14: A Heathen's Fate

Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? (Psalms 2:1).

Are we to believe that God created other people in order to condemn them?" (Sister Joan Chittister as quoted by Glembocki, Vicki, "Vow of No Silence, Penn Stater, Penn State Alumni Association, University Park, Pa, January/February 2001, p. 35.)



I remember pondering as a boy, "God wouldn't send the 'heathen' Africans to hell when they die. They do not know about Jesus. They have not had a chance to invite Jesus into their hearts to be their Savior. My misinformed view of African and other cultures was primarily the result of TV in the 1950's, including Tarzan movies. What of the others around the world in South America, China, and so forth that are in the dark concerning God?

A firm belief that the Bible is the authoritative Word of God has allowed me to rethink this issue. If we begin at the beginning, we read that God created everything, including the first man and woman. The first man and woman gave rise to all civilization. Therefore, at one time all of civilization was very aware of the Creator God.

Because of sin and failure to obey God, the people of the world became very corrupt. God decided to destroy all of the living creatures in a great flood. Noah found grace. His family and pairs of living creatures were spared. All of Noah's family knew God. All of today's heathens are descendents of Noah's family. Therefore, all heathens are descendents of Noah, who knew God, and chose to reject God and worship whatever else they wanted to worship.

Using the Word of God as the measuring stick (as it is God who established the rules in the first place) anyone lost has no excuse:

But God shows his anger from heaven against all sinful, evil men who push away the truth from them. For the truth about God is known to them instinctively; God has put this knowledge in their hearts. Since earliest times men have seen the earth and sky and all God made, and have known of his existence and great eternal power. So they will have no excuse [when they stand before God at Judgment Day]. Romans 1:18-20.

Buddhist, your ancestor Noah knew the living God. You rejected him. Muslim, you ignored that Jesus is LORD; he is not a prophet. Mormon, God's Word was concluded with the Revelation of Jesus Christ- you are a cult. Jehovah's Witness, Christian Scientist, Jesus is God. God is Just; there is only one way:

So how many of us have remained true to God? Here is what the world population believes:

Judaism	18,153,000	
Roman Catholic	1,042,501,000	
Protestant	382,374,000	
Orthodox	173,560,000	
Anglican	75,847,000	
<i>TOTAL JUDEO-CHRISTIAN</i>	<i>1,692,435,000</i>	<i>30%</i>
TOTAL ISLAM AND BAHAI	1,020,114,000	18%
Hindu	751,360,000	
Buddhist	334,002,000	
Traditional Chinese	140,956,000	
Sikhism	19,853,000	
Shamanism	10,854,000	
Confucianism	6,230,000	
Jainism	3,927,000	
Shinto's	3,336,000	
TOTAL EASTERN	1,270,508,000	23%
Other "Christianity"	195,470,000	
Tribal Religions	99,736,000	
Other and new religions	142,948,000	
TOTAL OTHER	438,154,000	8%
Non-religious	912,874,000	
Atheist	241,852,000	
TOTAL NON/NO GOD	1,154,726,000	21%
GRAND TOTAL	5,575,947,000	100%

I had wondered how a third of the angels could have fallen with Satan. Well, our record is that 70% of the people on earth do not believe on the LORD Jesus. 20% of us lost faith that there is a God. And all this after 100% of the first people on earth, Adam and Eve, knew there

was a living God? And then 100% again when Noah's family disembarked from the ark. Remember when Moses went to the mountain to receive the Ten Commandments, he returned to find his people worshipping a golden calf. How can we wonder why the "Heathens" are not accountable? What does God tell us?

He hath remembered His covenant forever, the word which He commanded to a thousand generations. (Psalms 105:8). If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself. (II Timothy 2:13). For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven. Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever. (Psalms 119:89,160). Know therefore that the Lord thy God, He is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations; (Deuteronomy 7:9).

Not only is it fair for the heathen to go to eternal punishment, it is fair for all of us to go to eternal punishment. But God has provided a way for us to escape from this destiny. Here is God's way as spoken by His Son Jesus Christ:

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. John 14:1-6.

But why does anyone deserve eternal punishment? *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; (Romans 3:23). For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 6:23).*

What is salvation, and why through Jesus? *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9).*

I have heard so many rationalizations on how one gets to heaven- do the best you can, if you just try, as long as you believe something. Jesus said this: *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Matthew 7:21-23.*

If you accept God's way, then there is a place in Heaven for you. Please do not delay. Life is so uncertain. The great racing driver, Dale Earnhart, was sitting on the top of the world on the last lap of a big race. He never made it to the finish line. Make sure you do! I cannot repeat enough that everyone has the power to be accepted into Heaven, but not everyone will use it: *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: John 1:12.*

Chapter 15: Chief of Sinners

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope; Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. 1 Timothy 1:1-2, 15b.



I finally found a mistake in the Bible. Just as the infallibility of the Scriptures was becoming increasingly well known to me-- I found something wrong. I found that the great Apostle, Paul, bestowed on himself the title of Chief of Sinners. That cannot be true for I am chief of sinners!

WHAT DID PAUL MEAN? WHAT DO I MEAN?

From additional Scripture reading, we see that Paul is speaking of times prior to his finding the grace of our LORD:

According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust. And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen. 1 Timothy 1:11-17.

Paul had been an ignorant sinner. When he came to the Truth, he found mercy through Christ. That is what Paul meant.

How about me? Why am I chief of sinners? How dare I compare myself with Paul?

One day I was conversing with a pastor who at the time did not know me well. I was seeking guidance about a matter of Christian conduct. In the process of the conversation I told him that I was the worst sinner that had ever darkened his church's door. He of course had no idea if I meant I was a bank robber, murderer, drug dealer, or worse. My sin: I was a believer, a Christian, a creature made new in Christ, but one who was as though he were dead.

Would you say that a godless life is expected of the ungodly? Is it so strange for someone such as Paul, who had spoken against Christ, to be chief of sinners? A Christian on the other hand, who knows the grace of God and Salvation through Jesus Christ, has no excuse to live a godless life. I had no excuse.

MY DAYS IN SIN

I was so lucky to be born into a family with a Christian mother and father. The knowledge of salvation and the ways of God were fed to me from a silver spoon. I was a bright boy who absorbed what I heard at Sunday school, church, youth programs, Sunday evening worship, Wednesday prayer meetings, special programs, and evening devotions. By the day I left for college I had a sound Christian background and love for my Savior.

By the time I graduated from college, I did not go to church much. In fact, through my twenties, thirties, and forties, I did nothing for God. I still had head knowledge, I still believed, and- I do not know if this makes sense- did love the LORD. I was not witnessing to others about things of the LORD, I did not shine by example, and I showed nothing of the hope that was in me. Can anything be worse? Can one sin more than that?

PRAYER AND PERSEVERANCE

My parents never lost their faith. They are the ones that dedicated me to the LORD as a child. They prayed for me daily all my life, including the years of my twenties, thirties, and forties. Dad nurtured my interest in the scientific and spoke with me for years about the evidence supporting biblical creation.¹ I suppose everyone has his or her “thing,” and this interested me. I still did believe the ways of the LORD, after all.

Continued prayer and effort on behalf of my parents resulted in an eventual change. Something “clicked” in my head that said, “Hey, God made everything, He set the rules, the rules haven’t changed- this is exciting. I have to tell everybody!”

I am now doing what I should have been doing 30 years ago. I do not know if witnessing is supposed to be fun, but it really is, in an exciting way. I am praying daily for opportunities, and God is responding. I ask for guidance as I witness, and God is responding to that, too.

I put God on a shelf. He patiently waited. Oh, how much I missed out on the past 30 years!

LESSONS FROM PAUL TO TIMOTHY

I have had subsequent conversations with the pastor I mentioned previously. I explained to him that when I told him I was the worst sinner to darken his church’s door, I meant that I was a Christian doing nothing for God. I do not know how there can be worse sin. The pastor mentioned Paul’s words from 1 Timothy. I figure I am worse than Paul. At least his greatest sins were as a non-believer.

Believer, I hope you do not sink as far as I had sunk. It is so wonderful to live for Him. Read Paul’s letters to Timothy and enjoy your walk with God.

From Paul: *Here are my directions: Pray much for others; plead for God's mercy upon them; give thanks for all he is going to do for them.* 1 Timothy 2:1 LVB.

It is a true saying that if a man wants to be a pastor he has a good ambition. For a pastor must be a good man whose life cannot be spoken against. He must have only one wife, and he must be hard working and thoughtful, orderly, and full of good deeds. He must enjoy having guests in his home, and must be a good Bible teacher. 1 Timothy 3:1-2 LVB.

Be sure to use the abilities God has given you through his prophets when the elders of the church laid their hands upon your head. Put these abilities to work; throw yourself into your tasks so that everyone may notice your improvement and progress. Keep a close watch on all you do and think. Stay true to what is right and God will bless you and use you to help others. 1 Timothy 4:14-16 LVB.

This being so, I want to remind you to stir into flame the strength and boldness that is in you, that entered into you when I laid my hands upon your head and blessed you. For the Holy Spirit, God's gift, does not want you to be afraid of people, but to be wise and strong, and to love them and enjoy being with them. If you will stir up this inner power, you will never be afraid to tell others about our Lord, or to let them know that I am your friend even though I am here in jail for Christ's sake. You will be ready to suffer with me for the Lord, for he will give you strength in suffering. 2 Tim. 1:6-8 LVB.

Be strong with the strength Christ Jesus gives you. For you must teach others those things you and many others have heard me speak about. Teach these great truths to trustworthy men who will, in turn, pass them on to others. Work hard so God can say to you, ``well done.'' Be a good workman, one who does not need to be ashamed when God examines your work. Know what his Word says and means.
2 Timothy 2:1-2, 15 LVB.

You may as well know this too that in the last days it is going to be very difficult to be a Christian. For people will love only themselves and their money; they will be proud and boastful, sneering at God, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful to them, and thoroughly bad. 2 Timothy 3:1-2 LVB.

The whole Bible was given to us by inspiration from God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives; it straightens us out and helps us do what is right. It is God's way of making us well prepared at every point, fully equipped to do good to everyone. 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

I solemnly urge you before God and before Christ Jesus--who will some day judge the living and the dead when he appears to set up his Kingdom-- to preach the Word of God urgently at all times, whenever you get the chance, in season and out, when it is convenient and when it is not. Correct and rebuke your people when they need it, encourage them to do right, and all the time be feeding them patiently with God's Word. May the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Farewell, Paul. 2 Timothy 4:1-2, 22 LVB.

Chapter 16: Heaven's Secret Handshake



I stumbled upon scripture regarding a Christian handshake. Is there some slick, secret handshake by which we can enter heaven? Secret handshakes unlock doors in many clubs and organizations. In fact, we seem to be fascinated by secret societies, secret handshakes, and so on. Perhaps this is due to the allure of the unknown, and our speculation about the big secrets that the rest of us cannot know. What about this Christian handshake?

First, there are some fascinating secret organizations around the world. Yale's Skull & Bones Society, the Bilderberger Group, the Illuminati, Knights of Malta, Knights Templar, and so forth, having their secret membership lists which include the rich and famous and perhaps influence the world order. Nonmembers can only hypothesize about these clandestine social orders. One thing is for sure- they *must* have their own secret handshakes! If you know the secret handshake, you can attend the secret meetings and influence important circles around the world.

When you die, your domination of world affairs ends; but maybe along the way you learned a secret handshake to take you to the "next level." Maybe you learned "heaven's secret handshake."

The only source we have to study about heaven is the Bible. The Bible also is known as the Word of God. Therefore, the Bible is the only reliable source we can consult to seek a handshake that will allow us to enter heaven. God gives Peter the keys to heaven, so let us look to Peter for a clue. Here is what Peter wrote about the Christian handshake:

Give each other the handshake of Christian love. Peace is to all of you who are in Christ. (1 Peter 5:14 LVB.)

What is the substance of this handshake? Peter, the keeper of the keys, also wrote, *All honor to God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; for it is his boundless mercy that has given us the privilege of being born again, so that we are now members of God's own family. Now we live in the hope of eternal life because Christ rose again from the dead. And God has reserved for his children the priceless gift of eternal life; it is kept in heaven for you, pure and*

undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay. And God, in his mighty power, will make sure that you get there safely to receive it, because you are trusting him. (1 Peter 1:3-5a LVB.)

So the “secret handshake,” or “Handshake of Christian Love,” is spiritual in nature-not a physical grasping of the arms. It is an embracing of the beliefs mandated by God, taught by His only begotten Son Jesus- this is what can get us into heaven- heaven’s handshake.

These verses summarize the doctrine behind the “secret handshake,” salvation from your sins, God’s gift:

- *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 6:23.)*
- *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9.)*
- *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. (John 14:1-3.)*

To accept Jesus as your Savior, pray: “Dear Father in Heaven, I know I am a sinner. I am truly sorry for my sins and ask that you will forgive me. I accept Jesus as my Savior. From this day forward I will strive to live for Him. Dear Lord Jesus, please come into my heart.”

1 Jesus said, “You are Peter, a stone; and upon this rock I will build my church; and all the powers of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; whatever doors you lock on earth shall be locked in heaven; and whatever doors you open on earth shall be open in heaven!” (Matthew 16:18-19 LVB.)

Chapter 17: Good Enough for Heaven

Can one live a “good enough” life to earn a place in heaven, to balance misbehavior with good conduct? Is there a formula for how many pounds of “good” are needed to outweigh a pound of “bad?” Let us examine the Bible as the resource for the answers to these questions.



From the earliest biblical records, we learn of dreadful consequences from disobedience to God. Adam and Eve, who at first lived in a perfect world, sinned against God and then were forced to work hard in a degraded world, destined to die. Their descendants, all but Noah and his family, were drowned in a catastrophic, worldwide deluge. Sorrows continued throughout the Old Testament, following periods of defiance.

Until the great prophet Isaiah begins his writings in the eighth century B.C., there is not much recorded about salvation. Until then, the Lord is referred to as “rock and salvation,” but in the defeat-our-mortal-enemies sense, such as: *I will hide in God, Who is my rock and my refuge. He is my shield and my salvation, my refuge and high tower. Thank you, O my Savior, for saving me from all my enemies.* (2 Samuel 22:3 LVB.)

Isaiah advanced his strong prophetic messages of the coming messiah. This is when the meaning of “salvation” took on a wondrous new dimension: *But Israel shall be saved by Jehovah with eternal salvation; they shall never be disappointed in their God through all eternity. For Jehovah created the heavens and earth and put everything in place, and he made the world to be lived in, not to be an empty chaos. I am Jehovah, he says, and there is no other!* (Isaiah 45:17-18 LVB.)

So how does this “eternal salvation” thing work and how does one earn it? The Jews were taught that the only means of remission for their sins was the sacrifice and shedding of blood of a clean animal. What are the relationships of good, evil, punishment, and reward to salvation? *Plant the good seeds of righteousness and you will reap a crop of my love; plow the hard ground of your hearts, for now is the time to seek the Lord, that he may come and shower salvation upon you.* (Hosea 10:12 LVB.) That verse, by a contemporary of Isaiah, suggests that we do good things, but that our salvation is from the Lord, not from doing good things. How, then, can we be good enough for heaven?

We must ask the Savior that Isaiah, Hosea, and others prophesied. He, Jesus, followed a string of 17 prophets, fulfilling every messianic prophecy. One night, a Jewish religious leader named Nicodemus came to speak with Jesus. He said, "We all know that God has sent you to teach us. Your miracles prove this." *Jesus replied, "With all the earnestness I possess I tell you this: Unless you are born again, you can never get into the Kingdom of God."* "Born again!" exclaimed Nicodemus. "What do you mean? How can an old man go back into his mother's womb and be born again?" *Jesus replied, "What I am telling you so earnestly is this: Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God. Men can only reproduce human life, but the Holy Spirit gives new life from heaven; so don't be surprised at my statement that you must be born again!"* (John 3:3-7 LVB.)

Jesus' emphatic reply is that physical acts cannot buy a spiritual life. Eternal life in heaven can only be acquired by a spiritual rebirth. Only Jesus can save us. We can never be good enough. *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.* (Romans 3:23.) Our good deeds, "works," cannot do it. *We are saved by God's grace: For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God-- not because of works, lest any man should boast.* (Ephesians 2:8-9 RSV.)

Here is another account from Jesus with a promise of Good News: *"Let not your heart be troubled. You are trusting God, now trust in me. There are many homes up there where my Father lives, and I am going to prepare them for your coming. When everything is ready, then I will come and get you, so that you can always be with me where I am. If this were not so, I would tell you plainly. And you know where I am going and how to get there."* "No, we don't," Thomas, said. "We haven't any idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?" Jesus told him, *"I am the Way--yes, and the Truth and the Life. No one can get to the Father except by means of me."* (John 14:1-6.)

If you want to be "good enough for heaven," you cannot. But you can go there someday. If you would like eternal life, accept Jesus as your Savior today!

Chapter 18: The Door



Wouldn't it be wonderful if there were a door to Heaven that we could open at will? This door could eliminate all of our troubles and sorrows by simply allowing us to unbolt it and enter God's domain. Actually, "the door" is at our fingertips and within our reach. Jesus said, *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me."* (Revelation 3:20 RSV.) Jesus added, *"He who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne."* (Revelation 3:21 RSV.)

Jesus is the doorway to heaven. We cannot enter as we are. We are sinners with sinful, mortal bodies. We must be changed before we can cross the threshold to Heaven. The apostle Paul tells us, *"For this perishable nature must put on the imperishable, and this mortal nature must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?' The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."* (1 Corinthians 15:53-57 RSV.)

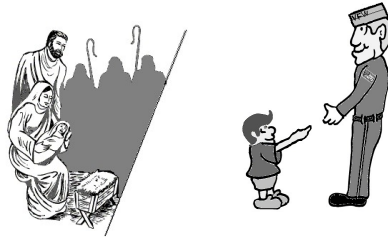
The aged door in the picture above was once a beautiful entrance to my Mother's childhood home. It is testimony to the fact that in the beginning, God wound-up His creation, which is now winding down. By three steps one could enter Mom's home, and by three steps one can enter Heaven:

1. **Confess your sins.** *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* (1 John 1:9 KJV.)
2. **Believe in Christ.** *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.* (Acts 16:31b KJV.)

3. Ask Jesus into your Heart. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: (John 1:12 KJV.)* Jesus can and will save you from your sins, and make a place for you in Heaven: *In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. (John 14:2-3 RSV.)*

If you would like to enter the door to Heaven, pray, “*Dear Father in Heaven, I know I am a sinner and have sinned against you. I am sorry for my sins and sinful nature, and ask that you will forgive me. I accept Jesus now as my Savior, who shed His blood for me. I give my life to you and will strive to live for you. Thank you, LORD, for saving my soul. In Jesus name I pray, Amen.*”

Chapter 19: The Greatest Gifts of All Time



The old warrior was about to leave the elementary school after participating in a Veteran's Day assembly when the father of a young boy approached him. A kindergarten student was fortunate to have his patriotic father on hand that day for the program, and insisted that he speak to a soldier before they got away. The father, young as well in comparison, told the former fighter that his five year old had something to say to him, "But I don't know what it is." The little boy peered skyward toward the soldier's leathered face and said, "Thanks for protecting us and keeping us safe."

A GREAT GIFT

The utmost price ever paid by any human was to give his life to protect the lives of others, and in the case of the free world, to guarantee their liberty and independence. The old soldier mentioned previously was one of the lucky ones to come home, successfully avoiding the perils of war for weeks, months, or years. Because of men like him, we have what we have and enjoy what we enjoy.

Presently, cowards ambush the free world. They are afraid to face our brave men and women. By contrast, not only our military but also our police, firefighters, emergency workers, and others "lay it on the line" for us. Some die nearly every day. Yet, there is one gift even more precious.

A GREATER GIFT

We citizens cannot do what the military, police, firemen, EMT's, and others do for us. We are not qualified. It takes them to save us. It is also wonderful that when our brave men and women die, their lives do not need to stop at "Gone but Not Forgotten." Someone greater than all of us died for him or her, and for us too, to provide an even larger freedom. That is, freedom from Sin and Death.

When Adam and Eve first sinned, they brought death into the world. *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;* (Romans 3:23). God required the shedding of blood for forgiveness of our sins. Because of God's love for us, He provided a blood sacrifice for us, His son, the only one worthy: *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* (John 3:16).

Salvation from our sins is for anyone who will accept God's gift. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:* (John 1:12).

God has promised those that call on the name of His son, Jesus, the messiah, eternal life in heaven with Him: *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.* (John 14:1-3).

God's Son gave His life for you and your family. This is a gift, but you must accept it for it to be of value to you. To accept Jesus as your Savior, pray: *"Dear Father in Heaven, I know I am a sinner. I am truly sorry for my sins. I repent and ask that you will forgive me and help me to turn from my sins. I accept Jesus as my Savior. From this day forward I will strive to live for Him. Dear Lord Jesus, please come into my heart. Amen."*

1 Jesus said, "You are Peter, a stone; and upon this rock I will build my church; and all the powers of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; whatever doors you lock on earth shall be locked in heaven; and whatever doors you open on earth shall be open in heaven!" (Matthew 16:18-19 LVB.)

Recommended Reading

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Chittick, Donald E., Ph.D., *The Puzzle of Ancient Man*, Tualatin, Oregon, Creation Compass, 1997. (Early mankind was much more advanced than we could imagine.)

Epp, Theodore, *Why Do Christians Suffer?*” Lincoln, Nebraska, Back to the Bible Publications, 1970.

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Ham, Ken, *The Great Dinosaur Mystery*, Green Forest, Arkansas, Master Books, 1998.

Ham, Ken, *Genesis and the Decay of the Nations*, Green Forest, Arkansas, Master Books, 1991.

Ham, Ken, *The Lie Evolution*, Green Forest, Arkansas, Master Books, 1987.

Ham, Ken, *Did Adam Have a Belly Button?*” Green Forest, Arkansas, Master Books, 1999. (Answers to 172 tough questions.)

Ham, Ken, Snelling, Andrew, Wieland, Carl, *The Answers Book*, Green Forest, Arkansas, Master Books, 1990. (Answers to the 12 most asked questions on Genesis and creation/evolution.)

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Parker, Gary, Ph.D., *Creation Facts of Life*, Colorado Springs, Colorado, Master Books, 1994.

Sarfati, Jonathan, Ph.D., *Refuting Evolution*, Green Forest, Arkansas, Master Books, 1999.

Creation Science Foundation Ltd., Snelling, Andrew D., Editor, *The Revised Quote Book*, Acacia Ridge DC, Queensland, Australia, Answers in Genesis, 1990.

Recommended Reading for Children

The Great Dinosaur Mystery and the Bible, Paul S. Taylor, Accent Books, PO Box 15337, Denver, CO 80215, copyright 1987, 1989.

From Answers in Genesis, published by Master Books

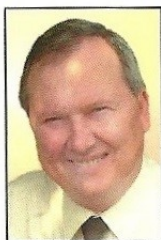
A is for Adam
The Creation
The Caring Creator
D is for Dinosaur
Dinosaurs by Design
Dry Bones and Other Fossils
God the Creator
Skeletons in your Closet

Answers in Genesis, PO Box 6330, Florence, KY 41022 USA
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The author recognizes that God's Word has not changed from the beginning. Satan continues his deceptions. His great tool of our age is the *lie of evolution*. This book challenges that lie, and explains to readers that the foundations of the Christian faith, beginning with the creation, still stand. The author writes in an enjoyable style and includes Scripture passages within the text to effectively explain how one's belief regarding origins affects our daily lives six thousand years later.

This book is written for all Christians, and for Jews who want to learn how science fits with the fact that God created everything from nothing in six days, as God inspired Moses to record. Christians and Jews worship the same Creator God, and the Jews are part of God's master plan. Our Jewish friends might be interested in why Christians accept Jesus Christ as the Messiah.



HAROLD LERCH SR., is a graduate of the Pennsylvania State University, College of Engineering, and is a Professional Engineer. He has been employed in construction administration and management for a major private-industry corporation for the past thirteen years. Prior to that he was Special Projects Manager for the same corporation, specializing in food manufacturing and material handling.

Harold and his wife of over 30 years, Jeanne, reside near Middleburg, PA. Their grown children, Harold, Jr. and Joanne, have blessed them with five grandchildren: Mariah, Christian, Drew, Kylee, and Shelly. It is advisable not to ask, "Tell me about your grandchildren."

Harold is founder of Word to the World Ministries, a concern that publishes and distributes complimentary witnessing resources.

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