



## **The Great Concern**

It is only natural to wonder what really happens to a person after he dies. When you close your eyes in death, is that the end of consciousness and existence for you? If not, what kind of realm does one enter and who is out there? Is there a living, personal, holy God to face? Is there a Heaven of exhilarating happiness and a hell of excruciating suffering forever? If so, what determines which place one enters? How can we know the true answers to such enormously important questions? This is a reasonable concern and requires a reliable source of information to give the answer. No one can

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afford to be wrong about conditions beyond the grave and the eternity that follows.

## **A Shortsighted Assumption**

People who are intelligent and logical in most areas of life strangely assume that whatever religious system they were born into has the truth about God and about life after death. Amazingly, people seldom bother to discover for themselves the basis for the religious beliefs they hold. If there is life after death in Heaven or hell, how can we know what God demands from us in order to secure eternal life in Heaven? Of all the conflicting and competing religious systems in the world, which one really speaks for God? To be wrong on this matter is to doom yourself to an eternity in the pain and suffering of the Lake of Fire. So, how do we decide on what is true in spiritual matters?

## **What People Think - What God Thinks**

All the religious ideas in the world can be classified as either human viewpoint, or divine viewpoint. Human viewpoint is what people assume by their natural reasoning. People share these opinions with each other as if they were unquestionably the truth. Entire religious denominations often base their teachings on nothing more than human viewpoint ideas inherited from their predecessors. Divine viewpoint, on the other hand, is based on an authority beyond man's natural reasoning capacity and consensus. Divine viewpoint is revealed in God's Word, the Bible. The Bible is the only source of divine viewpoint in the world. Human viewpoint radically contradicts the divine viewpoint of the Bible on the matter of securing eternal life in Heaven. One's eternal destiny is determined by what God says, not by what people decide about how one should gain entrance into Heaven.

## **The Biblical Way to Go to Heaven**

The Bible contains some bad news from God for every person born into the human race. First, the Bible declares that everyone is a sinner. God says,

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*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)*

This means that everyone has broken God's moral laws which prohibit things such as lying, stealing, adultery, coveting, murder, and so forth. Some people have broken the moral code less than others, but all who have violated it are guilty and are doomed to hell. No one matches up to what the Bible calls the 'glory of God', which is His moral perfection. This quality is necessary for entrance into Heaven. No matter how good one acts or how hard one tries, he can never rise to God's standard of perfect righteousness. Therefore, he is excluded from Heaven. That's bad news, but it's true.

The second piece of bad news from God, revealed in the Bible, is that the penalty for sin is death. God says,

*For the wages of sin is death. (Romans 6:23).*

Because everyone has sinned, all have earned death, which is conscious suffering of eternal separation from God in hell. There is absolutely nothing a person can do to remove this divine penalty of death.

The Bible, however, contains some very good news from God to morally guilty sinners. First, the Bible says that Jesus Christ died in the sinner's place.

*But God demonstrates His own love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).*

Since we as guilty sinners could do nothing to pay for our moral guilt, God Himself paid the penalty of death for us through the sacrifice of His Son, the sinless God-man Jesus Christ. This sacrifice completely satisfied God's justice, which demands the punishment of death for our sins. It is as if a healthy person took into his body the terminal disease of another so that the sick person would live, while the healthy person died in his place. In the same way, the sinless Jesus Christ took on Himself our cancer of sin and suffered death on the cross as our substitute. He died in our place. After paying the

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penalty of death for our sins, Jesus Christ arose from the dead because He had no moral guilt of His own. Since God's justice against us was satisfied, death could no longer hold Jesus in the tomb. Now, that's good news!

The second piece of good news from God in the Bible is that everyone can now receive eternal life in Heaven as a gift from God by trusting in Jesus Christ as one's personal savior. The Bible says,

*For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is a gift of God; not as a result of works, that no man should boast (Ephesians 2:8-9).*

Salvation comes only through faith in Jesus Christ.

*For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life (John 3:16).*

All human sin has been paid for by God's Son, Jesus Christ, on the cross. Because of this, God the Father can give eternal life in Heaven as a no-strings-attached, free gift to anyone who will receive it by faith in His Son. Faith means to trust in Jesus Christ alone to save one from hell. Faith means to believe what God has said about being received into Heaven through His Son, Jesus Christ, who has paid for all our sins.

## **A Fatal Mixture**

Placing your faith in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation also implies not adding any human works in payment for your sin. Works like water baptism, church membership, prayers, good works, moral conduct, kind deeds, penance, observing sacraments, or religious rituals are not part of God's plan of salvation. If any such human works are added to the payment for sin made by Jesus Christ, God cannot give salvation purely as a grace gift. Since grace is the only way God will save a person, adding any human work means the

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sinner remains lost and doomed to hell, no matter how sincere he may be. We cannot pay God for our salvation with human works.

If we are to receive salvation as an unearned gift from God, our human good deeds cannot be added to God's grace. The Bible therefore says:

*Now to the one who works, his wage is not reckoned as a favor, but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness (Romans 4:4-5).*

Also, we read:

*But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace (Romans 11:6)*

Many people today who think or hope they are going to Heaven after death will never make it. They have added some human work to the death of Jesus Christ to secure favor with God for salvation. The payment of Jesus Christ for the sins of the world is a finished work, never to be repeated, and to which nothing can be added. The Bible is very clear about this point.

*For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit (1 Peter 3:18).*

Any attempt to sacrifice Jesus Christ again for sin in a bloodless ceremony is blasphemy. Any attempt to add human good works to the sacrifice of Christ is an insult to the grace of God. He will give salvation only as a grace gift or He will not give it at all. You cannot mix God's grace and your own works and still go to Heaven. If this is what you are now doing in your religion, then you should know that you are headed for hell. These are tough words, but it should be made clear that God's justice will not let you into Heaven on any basis other than faith in the saving work of Christ on the cross, and that alone.

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## **Small Door and Narrow Path**

One of the most common and dangerous human viewpoint misconceptions is that there are several ways to enter Heaven. The idea is widely held that different religions, churches, and denominations are all traveling up the mountain to Heaven by different paths, but all will arrive at the top. The objection is made that there cannot be just one way to get into Heaven, otherwise, most of the human race with its differing and conflicting plans of salvation will not make it. Human viewpoint finds it inconceivable that most of humanity would end up in hell. Certainly, most people in the world do not depend on the Biblical view of salvation through Jesus Christ alone. The concept of multiple ways to enter Heaven is absolutely condemned in the Bible. God has provided only one way into Heaven.

The Lord Jesus Christ Himself made this clear when He said,

*Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it (Matthew 7:13-14).*

Jesus identifies the small door into eternal life as Himself.

*I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture (John 10:9).*

Jesus also identifies the narrow pathway into Heaven to be Himself.

*Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through me" (John 14:6).*

Most people, Jesus says, will miss this small gate and narrow path into Heaven. They choose, instead, to enter the wide door and follow the broad way invented by arrogant human reason.

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This human viewpoint plan of salvation, in effect, says that any sincerely followed path will be accepted by God. Jesus, however, says that a salvation plan based on a wide gate of entrance and a broad path of travel will lead one into eternal destruction in hell. Most of the human race is on the broad road, leading into the Lake of Fire. Only the Bible's plan of salvation by grace through Jesus Christ is the correct way into Heaven.

*For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony borne at the proper time. (1 Timothy 2:5-6).*

Only a few will follow God's path into Heaven. By reading this document, you have been given an opportunity to be one of them!

### **Is The Bible Totally True?**

If a person is going to trust his eternal future after death entirely to what the Bible teaches about the matter, it is essential to verify that the Bible is indeed a reliable book of information from God. The Bible was written by about forty human authors over a period of 1500 years. It claims that these men were supervised by God the Holy Spirit as they wrote to preserve them from recording anything which was not true. The Bible is a book produced by the supernatural power of God and is unique in that it is inerrant: totally free of any error or falsehood whatsoever. This, of course, is essential if the Bible is to be the final authority about how to go to Heaven. A book which is partly true and partly false would be dependent on human reason to separate the two. This would be unreliable at best and the subjective conclusions reached would differ from person to person. If God is omnipotent and intends to communicate His divine viewpoint to mankind, He would have no problem producing a perfect book which does not require editing by sinful, finite human beings. The Bible is indeed the Word of God and not the word of man and therefore is completely trustworthy.

## **Source of Information**

The Bible declares that the contents of each of its sixty-six books came to the human authors from God by divine inspiration. This fact is pointed out in 2 Timothy 3:6 in the statement “All Scripture is inspired by God.” The word 'inspired' in the Greek language (in which the New Testament Scriptures were written) means “God-breathed.” This indicates that the Bible authors recorded what was breathed into their minds by God Himself. They did not invent the subject matter of the Bible on their own. What the bible teaches was revealed to them by God and thus it is divine viewpoint truth. The Bible, therefore, is not merely a record of the religious experiences and ideals of fallible human authors. It is truly the Word of God because God Himself is the author. The plan of salvation it presents is the only plan acceptable to God.

## **The Means of Transmission**

The Bible explains that after God gave human authors the information to be recorded in the books of the Bible, God the Holy Spirit guided the writers as they wrote their books. In 2 Peter 1:21, we are told that “men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.” In the Greek language, the word 'moved' means to be carried along as a sailboat is moved by the wind. The human authors of Scripture not only received their information from God, but also were guided in the actual writing down of this information to prevent the recording of any falsehood. These writers were not functioning merely under their own human ability, which was prone to record error as well as truth. While each Bible author wrote in his own vocabulary and literary style, when his book was completed, it was a perfect record of the mind of God. The Bible, therefore, quite properly claims to be inspired by God in every word recorded and in all that it says. It is the only reliable source of information available to mankind about how to go to Heaven.

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## **Proof The Bible is Inspired by God**

The Bible claims it is inspired by God and so is without error in all that it teaches. Someone might ask, “Why believe the Bible's claim that it possesses absolute truth?” One would answer, “Because, the Bible is inspired and so is absolutely true about what it claims.” Some people view this as reasoning in a circle. Can we really be certain of the biblical claim of inspiration so that we may confidently trust the Bible to guide us to eternal life in Heaven? Has the Bible ever been proved false or in error?

The integrity of the Bible is certainly shown by the fact that it has a unity and consistency in its message even though it was produced over a time span of many centuries by many different authors. These men sometimes never even read the books of the other writers. Yet, in spite of those conditions, there are no contradictions in the Bible. This is not true of any of the sacred writings of the religions of the world even when written by one person. It is true of the Bible alone because it is the only official, sacred book from God. He alone was the author and as God, He cannot contradict Himself.

Another clear evidence confirming the Bible's claim to divine inspiration is the fulfillment of the prophecies recorded in the Bible. About twenty-five percent of the Bible is prophecy. Most of these predictions have already been fulfilled; furthermore, they have always been fulfilled literally in precise detail. Many of these fulfilled biblical predictions were about things destined to happen centuries in the future so they could not have been fortunate short-term guesses nor humanly executed by the prophet himself.

## **God Alone Knows the Future**

God, in His Bible, clearly declares His exclusive power to foretell future events because He alone can cause them to happen. God, speaking through Isaiah the prophet, says:

*Remember the former things long past, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, declaring the end from the beginning*

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*and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying, "My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure" (Isaiah 46:9-10).*

God furthermore points out that the ability to predict future events with detailed accuracy is the supreme evidence that deity is the One speaking and not merely some finite human author. The living, Creator God therefore challenges those claiming to have divine powers when He says,

*Let them bring forth and declare to us what is going to take place; as for the former events, declare what they were, that we may consider them and know their outcome; or announce to us what is coming. Declare the things that are going to come afterward, that we may know that you are gods (Isaiah 41:22-23a).*

Prophecy in the Bible is designed by God to prove that the Bible is a communication of true information from God to man. Only the omniscient God can tell what is going to happen in the future with total accuracy every time. Men can not even make short-term predictions with total accuracy, let alone those dealing with events hundreds of years in the future as the Bible does. The prophecies of the Bible prove that it is a supernatural book in origin and not the product of man alone. The Bible is, in truth, the very Word of God.

### **God's Prediction About Tyre**

One example of Bible prophecy which proves the supernatural origin of the Bible is the judgment of God pronounced 2,500 years ago against the ancient city of Tyre on the Mediterranean Sea. The prophet Ezekiel was told by God that the sinful city would be destroyed by a series of invading nations and the very site of the city would be scraped bare.

*"And they will destroy the walls of Tyre and break down her towers; and I will scrape her debris from her and make her a bare rock. She will be a place*

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*for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken,” declares the Lord God, “and she will become a spoil for the nations” (Ezekiel 26:4-5).*

God also told Ezekiel that the city would never be rebuilt.

*“You will be built no more, for I the Lord have spoken,” declared the Lord (Ezekiel 26:14b).*

Sixteen years after Ezekiel's prophecy, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon plundered and destroyed Tyre, leaving it a pile of rubble. Then, 250 years later, the Macedonian conqueror Alexander the Great scraped the debris of Tyre into the sea to build a causeway to an offshore island. The site of the ancient Tyre was left a bare rock and is used to this day by fishermen to dry their nets just as the Bible had predicted. Tyre has never been rebuilt on its ancient site.

Twenty-five hundred years ago, God recorded in the Bible the future history of Tyre. It has all been fulfilled in detail. The odds of these prophesied details all happening by chance has been estimated at one in 75,000,000! The Bible is indeed the Word of God, not the word of a man making fortunate guesses and recording the opinions of mere human reason.

## **The Course of World History**

Another example of Bible prophecy comes from the author of the Old Testament book of Daniel, who lived in the sixth century before Christ. God revealed to the prophet Daniel the future progress of world empires from his day onward. Daniel lived at the time when Babylon dominated the world. Under divine inspiration, Daniel described three world empires that were to follow the Babylonian empire. As the centuries passed, these proved to be the empires of Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. Daniel was right on target in all details, even to the fact that the Roman Empire would divide into western and eastern portions.

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There are many other predictions in the book of Daniel which also have been precisely fulfilled and some still to be fulfilled in the future. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, confirmed the reliability of the book of Daniel by quoting from it and calling Daniel a “prophet” (Matthew 24:15).

## **Bible Prophecies About Jesus Christ**

One of the most convincing evidences of the supernatural origin of the Bible are the predictions it contains about Jesus Christ, the Savior of mankind. These were made hundreds of years before their fulfillment, so no human being on his own could possibly have made such accurate, detailed predictions. The author's information had to come from God who knows it all and has recorded it without error in the Bible.

### His Birthplace

Seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus Christ, the prophet Micah under divine guidance revealed the future birthplace of Jesus. Michael wrote,

*But as for you, Bethlehem Ephratah, too little to be among the class of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler of Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity (Micah 5:2).*

The New Testament indicates that this prophecy concerning the birthplace of the divine Savior Jesus Christ was fulfilled precisely 700 years later. Although his mother Mary and her husband Joseph lived in Nazareth in the north of Palestine, an edict of the Roman government necessitated a trip south to Bethlehem where Jesus was born in a stable.

*Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king ... (Matthew 2:1a).*

King Herod asked the Jewish priests where the Bible had predicted the promised Messiah Savior would be born. They answered by quoting the prophet Micah.

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*And they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea: for so it has been written by the prophet" (Matthew 2:5).*

### His Virgin Birth

The fact that the Messiah Savior was to be born to a virgin woman was predicted by the prophet Isaiah 700 years before it happened.

*Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel! (Isaiah 7:14)*

The angel Gabriel tells the virgin Mary that she is to bear a son who would be the true God in human form. Mary's response was that since she was not married and a virgin she could not conceive a child.

*And Mary said to the angel, "How can this be since I am a virgin?" (Luke 1:34)*

Mary was told her conception would be a supernatural act of God and that she would bear the God-man Jesus and indeed she did.

*And she gave birth to her first-born son; and she wrapped him in cloths ... (Luke 2:7a)*

Thus, what the prophet Isaiah recorded 700 years before by divine inspiration was fulfilled precisely. The New Testament records:

*"And she will bear a son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins. Now all of this took place that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, 'Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which translated means God be with us' " (Matthew 1:21-23).*

The Bible is certainly God's book of true information.

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## His Suffering

The nature of the suffering to be endured by God's future Savior as He was put to death on the cross in payment for the sins of the world is described by Isaiah 700 years beforehand.

*I gave My back to those who strike Me, and My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover my face from humiliation and spitting. (Isaiah 50:6)*

The fulfillment of this prediction is found in the New Testament written 700 years later.

*Then they spat in His face and beat him with their fists, and others slapped Him. (Matthew 26:67)*

The crucifixion of Jesus Christ is described in detail in Psalm 22 one thousand years before the event took place. Crucifixion was not a method of execution used by the Jews, but would be used by the Romans on Jesus. The Psalm accurately describes the physical stress and pain produced by crucifixion even though the Jewish author was not acquainted with such a method of execution. It also describes the mental abuse to be suffered by Jesus as he bore the penalty for the sins of the world on the cross.

Psalm 22 predicted the very words of the sinless God-man Jesus would utter in His agony on the cross.

*My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? (Psalm 22:1)*

The fulfillment 1000 years later is recorded in the New Testament Gospel of Matthew.

*And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice saying, "Eli, Eli lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:46)*

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Psalm 22 predicted that nails would pierce the hands and feet of Jesus and that the Roman guards would cast lots for His clothing.

*They pierced my hands and my feet (Psalm 22:16c)*

*They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots (Psalm 22:18).*

The fulfillment of this prophecy 1000 years later is recorded in the New Testament.

*The soldiers therefore, when they had crucified Jesus, took His outer garments and made four parts, a part to every soldier and also the tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven into one piece. They said therefore to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, to decide whose it shall be", that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots." (John 19:23-24)*

## **The Final Authority**

The Bible has repeatedly proven its supernatural origin through its predictions of the future. These have never failed to be fulfilled in precise detail. Nor has the Bible ever recorded any historical, geographic, or scientific error. Any specific challenges to the total accuracy of the Bible have always in time proved to be unfounded. Archaeology has repeatedly made discoveries that have confirmed the absolute truth of the Bible. It has never uncovered anything that clearly contradicts the Bible. None of the other sacred books of mankind claiming to speak for God can claim inerrancy. They all contain some human errors that have been corrected in later printings. Only the Bible can claim to be God's message to mankind. It is the final word in matters pertaining to man's relationship with God and to eternal life in Heaven after death. No religion, church organization, or ecclesiastical leader can determine how a guilty sinner can be forgiven by a holy God in order to be accepted into Heaven. God alone is able to answer this question

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and He has clearly done so in His inerrant Bible. What anyone believes about how to go to Heaven must come from the Bible alone if one is to be absolutely certain that he has the right plan.

This is stressed in the report of Jesus about the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31. Both men died and their living souls went to their appropriate eternal destiny. Since the rich man was an unbeliever, he went into Hades. There, he immediately experienced torment in flames of fire. Lazarus was a spiritually born again man so he immediately entered Paradise, enjoying total happiness. The rich man begged the patriarch Abraham to have Lazarus bring him just a drop of water to cool his burning, parched tongue. He was told, however, that this was not possible since a gulf forever separated him from God and His people. The rich man then asked that Lazarus be sent back to earth to warn the rich man's five brothers of the reality of hell and their need to be born again through faith in God's Savior. He did not want his brothers to join him in the eternal agony of hell.

Abraham responded by reminding the rich man that his brothers had the Bible to warn them about hell and direct them to salvation.

*But Abraham said, "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them!" But he said, "No, Father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!" But he said to him, "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead." (Luke 16:29-31)*

Millions of skeptical people over the centuries have repeated the experience of the rich man in discovering after death how right the Bible is about punishment in hell and salvation by grace alone. Only the Bible can tell us the one true way to go to Heaven. There is no other authority on earth who speaks for God on the matter.

## **Now You Must Decide**

This document has sought to explain what the inerrant Bible reveals about how to go to Heaven. The key to eternal life in Heaven is saving faith in Jesus

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Christ, who was slain on the cross in payment for your sins. The faith that saves a person and results in eternal life in Heaven involves three things.

- Knowledge
- Mental Acceptance
- Faith in Christ Alone

One must first have knowledge about the gospel of the grace of God. The gospel tells us that Jesus Christ died to pay for our sins and was raised again from the dead (1 Cor. 15:3-4). You now have that knowledge. The second thing involved in exercising saving faith is a mental acceptance of the truth of the gospel. This is a personal decision that the Bible gives a true message about how to go to Heaven. Do you believe that the gospel message you have read in this document is true? The third key required in salvation is to receive Christ as one's personal Savior. You must be willing to commit yourself to Him alone for salvation with no contaminating human works added.

The three keys of saving faith may be illustrated by a story of four people facing death on a sinking ship at sea. Their only hope of salvation from death is the lifeboat on board. The first person does not even know there is a lifeboat available, so he goes to a watery grave. He lacked knowledge, like the person that does not know the gospel of the grace of God. The second person knows about the lifeboat, but does not believe it will float. Because of his belief, he does not use the boat and is lost at sea. This person had no mental acceptance of the reliability of the lifeboat, like the person who does not believe that the Bible's grace plan of salvation will work. The third person knows about the lifeboat and believes that it is seaworthy; but for some reason, he does not choose to climb aboard. He too is lost at sea. He took no action, like the person who will not commit himself to Jesus Christ alone to get him into Heaven. The fourth person knows about the lifeboat, believes that it is seaworthy, and enters the boat as his vehicle for salvation from death at sea. He is like the person who knows the gospel, accepts it as true, and then trusts Jesus Christ as the only way to salvation. All his sins (past, present, and future) are forgiven and the absolute righteousness of God is credited to him. This person is irreversibly destined to spend eternity in Heaven with God.

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When a person trusts Jesus Christ to save him and take him into Heaven, he has the perfect, absolute righteousness of God credited to him. God the Father sees the believing sinner to be as perfect and holy as his son, Jesus Christ. Our moral guilt is exchanged for Christ's righteousness. The Bible says:

*He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21).*

Thus, a person becomes in God's eyes morally perfect like Jesus Christ and so fully qualified to enter Heaven.

## **Eternal Security**

Once accepted, salvation can never be lost. The Lord Jesus Christ said,

*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me; and I give eternal life to them; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. (John 10:27-29)*

Since salvation is entirely the work of God, with no human contribution from the sinner, the work can never be spoiled or neutralized by man. Anyone who is not certain he is going to Heaven and can only say, "I hope so," is in all likelihood lost and headed for hell. That attitude of uncertainty reveals that the person is depending on something he must do in order to be saved and is not sure he has done enough. What a relief to know that God does it all for us through His son, Jesus Christ! We simply receive salvation as free gift from God who will never take it back.

The permanence of salvation once secured is also indicated by being compared in the Bible to the birth process, which makes us physically the child of our parents. The birth process cannot be reversed so that we cease being their child. Jesus described salvation as a spiritual birth in response to a

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question from the religious ruler Nicodemus. *“Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God’* “ (John 3:3). Once you have been born again spiritually and become a child of God, you cannot stop being His child. God will discipline His children for disobedience, but they remain His children forever. The spiritual birth process is also irreversible.

## **The Great Deception**

Satan has conned millions upon millions of people over the centuries, in sincerity, to trust their eternal destiny to a false plan of salvation. These people viewed themselves as right with God and thought they would go to Heaven. The Bible warns that this will happen to those trusting in a human viewpoint plan.

*Not everyone who says to Me, “Lord, Lord,” will enter the kingdom of Heaven; but he who does the will of My Father, who is in Heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?” And then I will declare to them, “I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.”* (Matthew 7:21-23).

These people obviously had religion, which they associated with the Lord Jesus Christ. They really were calling Him "Lord" and praising Him. They really were casting demons out of people and performing miracles in His name. However, they were not trusting in Christ alone for salvation, by faith alone. They added their own good works and religious rituals to earn merit with God. They had religion, but no relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ. The impressive things they accomplished in their religion were by means of the power of Satan, not God. What horrible, chilling words of rejection to hear when standing before Jesus Christ after death, where there is no second chance to be saved. What agony will be felt and what tears will be shed as the sincere, but deluded person is sent forever into the Lake of Fire. This fate is the result of seeking the answer of how to go to Heaven from some source other than God's word, the Bible.

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The human viewpoint guidance of priest, preacher, church, and denomination to a false plan of salvation will cost a person dearly, forever. Match these beliefs up with what we have shown you the Bible teaches about salvation.

*And they said, Believe in the Lord Jesus and you shall be saved, you and your household. (Acts 16:31)*

*He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him. (John 3:36)*

*These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life. (1John 5:13).*

## **Taking the Step of Faith**

Trusting in the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior is a very private matter between you and God. It does not require some public act such as walking down an aisle in response to an invitation, or raising a hand for prayer to be saved. Such actions have caused untold numbers of sincere people to become confused and view the public move or related action to be the actual requisite step for salvation. They are often led to believe that such an act is required to "confirm" one's salvation. We showed earlier that faith in Christ's sacrifice on the cross alone without any human work or effort is what the Bible clearly indicates is the basis for salvation. No special work or act of "confirmation" is necessary.

If you are ready to receive Jesus Christ as Savior and trust in Him for entrance into Heaven, a simple private, silent prayer to God the Father in these or similar words will suffice.

“Dear God, I know that I am a sinner and spiritually dead. I believe your Son, Jesus Christ, died to pay for my sins and then arose from the dead to give me spiritual life. I now trust in Him as my personal Savior. Thank you for the

Hell or Heaven, Which will it be for you?

forgiveness of my sins, for giving me your perfect righteousness, and for everlasting life. In Jesus' name, Amen.”

## **Taking the Next Step**

We hope you have reacted positively to the above message. Berean Church sermons in MP3 format are a great way to learn the Bible doctrine necessary to live the Christian life to its fullest, [www.bereanmemorialchurch.org](http://www.bereanmemorialchurch.org) .

*There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.  
(Proverbs 14:12)*

Hell or Heaven, Which will it be for you?

DEDICATED TO

All the People of the world for whose sins the Lord Jesus Christ died to give them eternal life in Heaven and who need to know how to receive it.

*“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge ...”*

- Hosea 4:6

Hell or Heaven, Which will it be for you?

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