HOW TO RECEIVE

GOD'S GREATEST GIFT

THE MOST IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR PEOPLE EVERYWHERE

.

© 1983 Gospel Net Ministries as
"How to Receive the Life of God."
Revised © 2015 Gospel Net Ministries.
Revised © 2026 as "How to Receive God's Greatest Gift."

Published by Gospel Net Ministries,
P.O. Box 485, Creswell, Oregon 97426.

Illustrated by David Wilson.
Cover design by David Wilson.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any way by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise—without the prior permission of the copyright holder, except as provided by USA copyright law.

All scriptures used in this booklet are from the Holy Bible: New International Version. Copyright ©1978 by the New York International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506.

ISBN# 9780578418421

HOW TO RECEIVE
GOD'S GREATEST GIFT

THE MOST IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR PEOPLE EVERYWHERE

Wes Daughenbaugh

May I ask you a personal question?

DO YOU HAVE A GOD-GIVEN ASSURANCE IN YOUR SPIRIT - AN ABSOLUTE KNOWING - THAT YOU'D BE ACCEPTED INTO HEAVEN IF YOU DIED?

Some people never seem to think about it. Others hope they will go to heaven. Many assume they will. Others don't think they will. Still others know they won't. **I can relate to all of these.**

Testimony: As a child, I either assumed I would go to heaven or never actually thought about it. Out of curiosity, I began reading the New Testament when I was in the sixth grade. As I read, my assumptions dwindled steadily downward from thinking I wouldn't make it, to finally knowing I wasn't ready for heaven.

The alarming words of Jesus gripped me: **"Unless a man is born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God "** and **"Unless a man is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God, " (John 3:3,5 NIV).**

I knew I had never been born again — so if I couldn't enter heaven, that meant...if I died, I'd go to hell. Naturally, I wanted to become born again — but didn't know how.

The Bible says, **"I write these things so that you may KNOW that you have eternal life," (1 John 5:13 NIV).**

When you receive eternal life, YOU KNOW IT. It is as different as night and day. The day I received eternal life was like standing up into a different world. I was flooded with intense joy, and the weight of my sins was lifted immediately, as if ten tons had been taken off my spirit. I've known ever since that if I died, I'd go to heaven.

God wants you to have that same confidence — to know, you too, have eternal life — the life and nature of God within you now with the full assurance of a home in heaven!

May I share with you how you can know this for sure? Great. First, let me ask you one more question.

IF YOU HAD TO GIVE GOD A REASON WHY YOU SHOULD BE ACCEPTED INTO HEAVEN, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Do your best to give an honest answer. Write it down, then read this little book to see if it was correct. Better to find out now if your answer is wrong than to find out before God!

Your Answer: _____

_____

_____

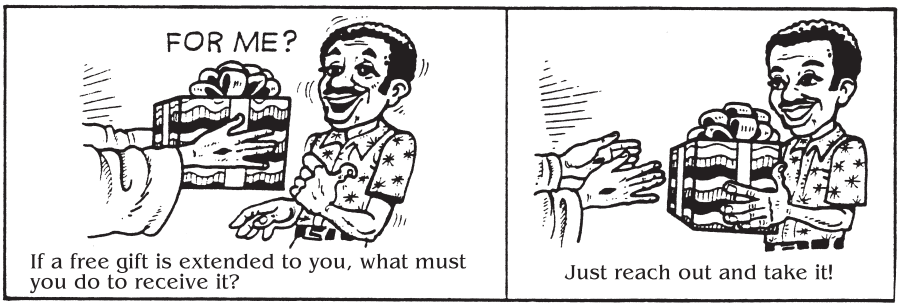
O.K. Here we go. This is going to be the best news you've ever heard!

1. Eternal Life is a free gift. It's not earned or deserved.

God's Word makes it very clear — eternal life is a gift, the following scriptures prove that. Remember that a gift is never earned by the receiver, or it is not a gift. A gift is earned by the **giver.** WAGES ARE EARNED BY THOSE WHO RECEIVE THEM. GIFTS ARE EARNED BY THOSE WHO GIVE THEM. Eternal life has been earned by God and is extended to mankind as a gift.

> **For the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life. (Rom. 6:23) ...those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life... (Rom. 5:17).**
>
> **Whoever is thirsty, let him come, and whoever wishes let him take the free gift of the water of life, (Rev. 22:17).**
>
> **Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift! (2 Cor. 9:15).**

IT IS NOT DESERVED: For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast, (Eph. 2:8-9).



If a free gift is extended to you, what must you do to receive it?

Just reach out and take it!

Wages are something you earn — something you deserve. Our sins have earned us spiritual death. If we are to have eternal life, we must receive it as a gift — something the GIVER earned for us. This makes it easy for mankind to have eternal life, because God has done the hard part and earned this gift for us.

Let's define this gift of eternal life more clearly.

God's Word, the New Testament, was written in Greek and has been translated into many languages from Greek. There are four different Greek words translated "life" in the New Testament.

1st **Psuche —** which means natural or human life.
2nd **Bios —** which means manner of life.
3rd **Anastrophee —** which means confused behavior.
4th **Zoe —** the life and nature of God, eternal life.

Without this **Zoe**, this life of God, you will never get to heaven.

When the Bible speaks of "eternal life,"it is much more than a guaranteed place in heaven. It is having God's own nature implanted in you. This is when God becomes "father" to an individual. It gives the individual many "rights" as a child of God. These many rights apply to life on earth as well as heaven.

Zoe — Eternal Life — is something God wants everyone to receive, so they can use it and enjoy it in this life and be ready for the next life. God does not intend for anyone to go through years on earth trying to earn heaven by their **Bios** — or manner of life.

> **To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, (John 1:12 KJV).**
> **("Sons," in the original Greek, is the word for " full grown sons.")**

This salvation — eternal life — is the power to grow up into a Christ-like person. To keep salvation after your receive it, just keep desiring to be like Jesus. Satan believes in Jesus, goes to church and wants to go to heaven. But, he doesn't want to BE like Jesus.

False Christians think they have salvation — but they have really laid salvation aside because they only wanted heaven. Like Satan, they did not want to BE like Jesus. When you receive eternal life — know what it is! Value it and never throw it away. It is power to grow in Christ!

Salvation, then, is a free ticket that says,"Give this one power to become a Christ-like person." Those who hold onto that "ticket" will find that it also guarantees to them admittance into heaven.

Why does it have to be free? Why can't we earn it by our good behavior?

2. Man is a sinner and cannot save himself.

You failed to earn righteousness the first time you sinned. If you had never sinned, you could have earned it. You failed to earn it, and so did every person since the world was created.

The Bible makes it very clear that God regards all individuals as sinners who are totally incapable of earning eternal life.

MAN IS A SINNER

Jesus said, "No one is good except God alone," (Mark 10:18).

There is no one righteous, not even one, (Rom. 3:10).

All have turned away...there is no one who does good, not even one, (Rom. 3:12).

Their tongues practice deceit. Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness, (Rom. 3:13-14).

We all, like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way . . . (Isaiah 53:6).

MAN CANNOT SAVE HIMSELF

Man may think he can appease God with righteous acts mixed in with his sin, but this leads to death. **"There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death," (Prov. 14:12).** Man may think he'll stop sinning on his own and cure himself of the disease of sin, but the Bible shows this self-effort of man to be futile.

The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure, (Jer. 17:9).

Can a leopard change its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil, (Jer. 13:23).

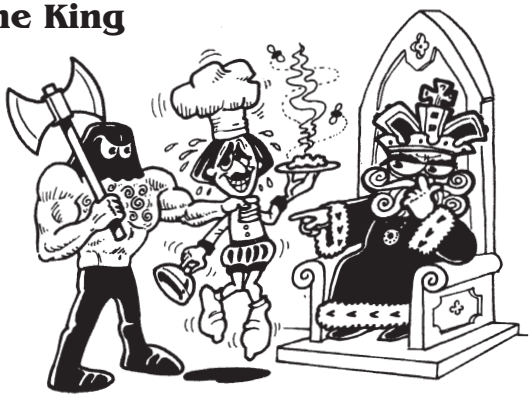
There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins, (Eccl. 7:20).

Who can say, "I have kept my heart pure; I am clean and without sin?" (Prov. 20:9).

If we claim to be without sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us, (I John 1:8).

All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away, (Isaiah 64:6).

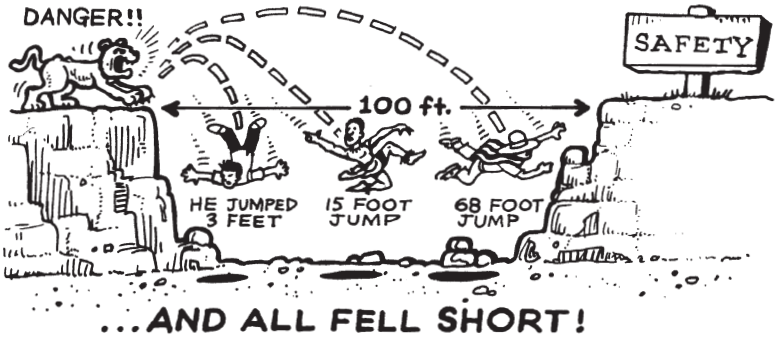
The Chef and The King



Suppose a chef made a special dish, using 70% fresh food and 30% rancid and magot-infested leftovers to serve to a great king. Would it be acceptable because of the 70% good? In the same way — no man can serve up his life to God with a measure of sin mixed in and expect to be accepted by a holy God.

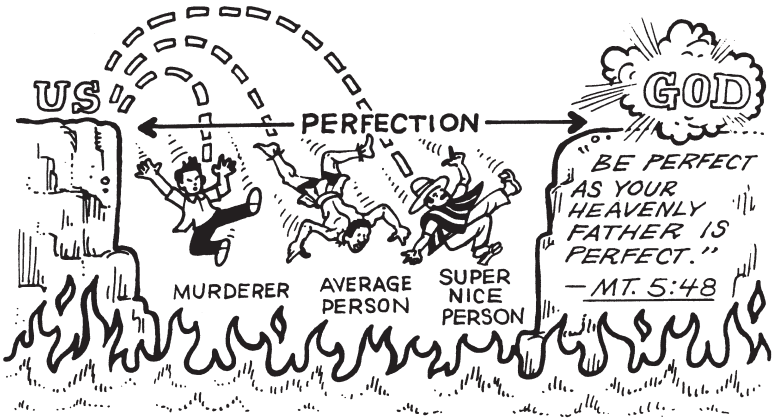
The Bible says, "ALL HAVE SINNED AND FALL SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD," (Rom. 3:23).

The Grand Canyon



Suppose three people were trapped on the edge of a canyon by approaching danger – certain death – and their only escape was to jump to the other side. All three tried, but each one fell short.

THIS IS THE WAY IT IS SPIRITUALLY!



We try to approach God through our best efforts – but we all fall short of perfection. **"ALL HAVE SINNED AND FALL SHORT"** – some shorter than others, but all failing the test. Remember Jesus' words, **"No one is good except God alone," (Mark 10:18).**

Man's predicament is especially serious because of the nature of the one who will judge us — GOD!

3. God's nature is loving and merciful – He doesn't want to punish us.

The following scriptures reveal God's nature to us.

I have loved you with an evertastlng love; I have drawn you with loving kindness, (Jer.31:3).

Whoever does not love does not know God, because God Is love, (1 John 4:8).

Then the Lord came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the Lord. And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin . . ." (Exodus 34:5-7).

The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, (James 5:11).

Even the hairs of your head are all numbered, (Matt. 10:30).

You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity, (Jonah 4:2).

He tends his flock like a shepherd: he carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young, (Isaiah 40:11).

You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy, (Micah 7:18).

God is full of justice and must punish sin.

Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished: he punishes . . . (Exodus 34:7b).

I will punish their sin with the rod, their iniquity with flogging; (Psalm 89:32).

God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment . . . He did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people . . . He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly, (2 Peter 2:4-6).

If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sin is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God, (Hebrews 10:26-27).

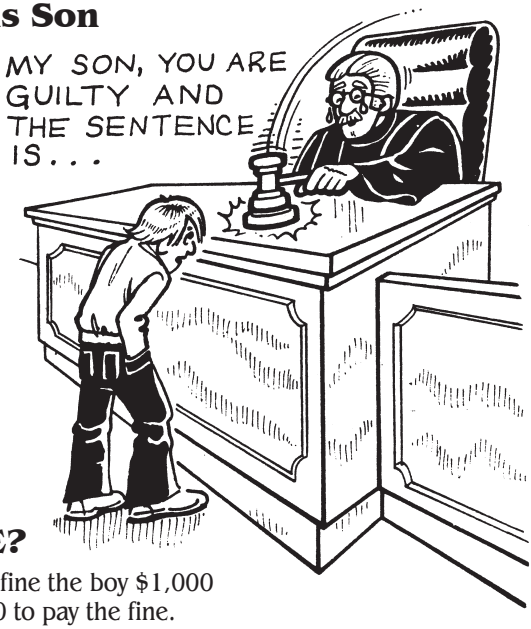
It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, (Hebrews 10:31).

Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men, (2 Cor. 5:11 KJV).

Behold then the kindness and severity of God, (Rom. 11 :22 NASB).

The Judge and His Son

Suppose there was a righteous judge with a great reputation for justice and his own son was brought before him on a misdemeanor. His heart would go out to his son, but if the evidence said guilty – he'd have to pronounce his own son guilty and sentence him.



HOW COULD THE JUDGE SATISFY BOTH HIS LOVE AND HIS JUSTICE?

Perhaps the judge could fine the boy $1,000 and then give him the $1,000 to pay the fine.

Our heavenly Father, the one who is the "Judge of all the earth" (Gen. 18:25) faced a worse problem. We — the objects of his love, his most special creation — sinned. The evidence abounds to convict us, and the PENALTY IS DEATH. Death has two stages: the death of the body and the second death which is eternity in the lake of fire.

THE SOUL THAT SINS, IT SHALL DIE, (Ezek. 18:4).

HOW DID GOD SATISFY BOTH HIS LOVE AND HIS JUSTICE?

4. God's answer — JESUS CHRIST!

God the Father sentenced us to death. Then God the Son, the Son of God, took upon himself the form of man by being conceived in the womb of a virgin girl by the power of the Holy Spirit. He was born in a stable, lived a life of obedience to his parents, and at the age of thirty was baptized by the Holy Spirit to begin his earthly ministry. He went about doing good, healing all who were oppressed by the devil, (Acts 10:38) **and lived a totally sinless life.**

Then, he died in our place. As the Scripture says, **"He tasted death for every man," (Hebrews 2:9).** He rose from the dead on the third day and showed himself alive by many infallible proofs for 40 days. Then he ascended back into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. He will remain there until God the Father gives the word, and then he will come back. He will bring with him those who died and went to heaven and resurrect our bodies at the same time — totally triumphing over death! (1 Thes. 4:13-18).

> **Jesus said, "I am going to prepare a place for you. And If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am," (John 14:2-3).**

HIS SECOND COMING WILL ALSO BE A TIME OF JUDGMENT ON THE WICKED.

> **He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and who do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, (2 Thes. 1:6-8).**

THEN, HE WILL RULE THE EARTH FOR 1000 YEARS OF PEACE. AFTER THAT, THE BIBLE SAYS THERE WILL BE A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH — BUT JESUS' KINGDOM WILL NEVER END.

BY HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION, JESUS PURCHASED US FOR HIMSELF.

> **You are not your own, you are bought with a price, (1 Cor. 6:19.20).**

> **For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from our forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect, (1 Peter 1:18-19).**

YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE THIS GOOD NEWS AND ACT UPON IT, BY RECEIVING THIS ETERNAL LIFE AS A FREE GIFT!

BELIEVING THAT JESUS CHRIST IS GOD THE SON IN HUMAN FORM IS AN ABSOLUTE NECESSITY TO RECEIVING SALVATION.

Jesus said, **"If you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins," (John 8:23-24).**

Jesus said, **"Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned," (Mark 16: 15-16).**

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

Then Jesus declared, **"I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry . . . for my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day," (John 6:35, 40).**

Receiving eternal life means that if you die physically, your spirit will go right to heaven. Jesus will even resurrect our mortal bodies and change them into glorified bodies at the end of the age — the last day! (1 Cor. 15).

Then, Jesus cried out, **"When a man believes in me, he does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. When he looks at me, he sees the one who sent me. I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness," (John 12:44).**

REPEATING — Jesus said, "If you don't believe I'm the one I claim to be, you'll indeed die in your sins." SO BELIEVING DOESN'T MEAN ACKNOWLEDGING JESUS EXISTED, WAS A TEACHER, A GOOD MAN, OR EVEN A MIRACLE WORKER. IT MEANS BELIEVING HE IS GOD THE SON IN HUMAN FORM.

Who Jesus Christ Is —

GOD THE SON IN HUMAN FORM.

JESUS PRE-EXISTED AS GOD THE SON BEFORE HIS BIRTH ON EARTH.

The following Scriptures show that Jesus existed as the eternal Son of God before he came to earth as the baby born of a virgin.

But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come

for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from old, from ancient times, (Micah 5:2).

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men . . . The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth, (John 1:1-4,14).

In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word, (Heb. 1:1-3).

"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" (John 8:58).

THE PROPHETS SPOKE OF THE MESSIAH AS BEING GOD

For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called WONDERFUL, COUNSELOR, MIGHTY GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER, PRINCE OF PEACE, (Isaiah 9:6).

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel, (Isaiah 7:14).

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet, "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel which means, "GOD WITH US," (Matt. 1:22-23).

NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES CALL JESUS GOD

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope - the glorious appearing of OUR GREAT GOD AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST, (Titus 2:11-13).

God was manifest in the flesh, (1 Tim. 3:16 KJV).

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death - even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father, (Phil. 2:5-11).

FOR IN CHRIST ALL THE FULLNESS OF DEITY LIVES IN BODILY FORM, (Col. 2:9).

WHAT JESUS SAID ABOUT HIMSELF

"I AND THE FATHER ARE ONE," (John 10:30).

Then they all said, "Are You then the Son of God?" So He said to them, "You rightly say that I am," (Luke 22:70 NKJV).

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

JESUS RECEIVES WORSHIP WITH GRACE AND EASE

When Jesus rebuked Satan during his time of temptation, he said, **"Away from me, Satan! For it is written: Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only," (Matt. 4:10).**

Yet Jesus himself receives worship — proving he is God manifest in the flesh — the eternal Son of God. REMEMBER — there is no record in Scripture of any man or angel or created being rightfully receiving worship. To receive worship or desire it when you are a created being is the very sin for which Satan was cast out of heaven! *It would be blasphemy for Jesus to receive worship if he was not indeed God in human form.* The apostles refused the worship of ignorant people, (Acts 14:11-18). The angel who spoke to the Apostle John did not allow John to worship but said, **"Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and all who keep the words of this book. Worship God!" (Rev. 22:8-9).**

HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF JESUS RECEIVING WORSHIP

Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshipped him, (John 9:38).

Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." Thomas said unto him, "My Lord and my God," (John 20:27-28).

Other examples include his triumphant entry into Jerusalem. The children were praising him, and the indignant religious leaders told him to rebuke his followers — rebuke them for worshiping him! But he said, **"I tell you, if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out," (Luke 19:36-40).**

Then in Revelation 5:8,11-14, we see all the host of heaven — men and angels worshiping and praising the Lamb who sits at the Father's right hand . . . **JESUS!**

THAT IS WHO JESUS IS. NOW THIS IS WHAT HE DID!

The Books That Prove Man's Guilt

The Bible says, **"Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire," (Rev. 20:11-15).**

The book of life contains only names. It is a roll book. It contains all the names of those who believed and acted upon God's promise and received eternal life.

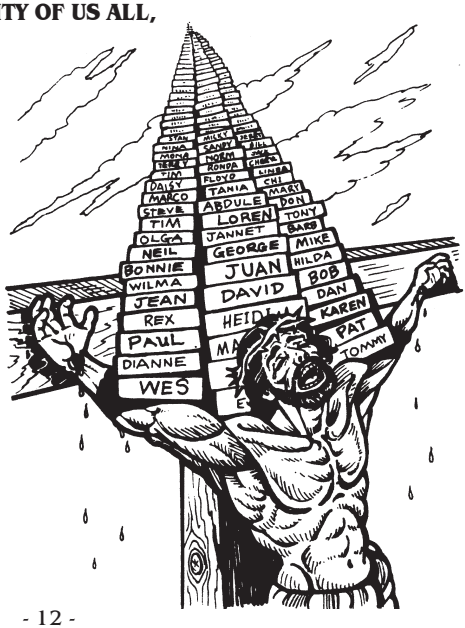
The other **books** are record books of sin and failure kept on each person, one book for each person. If you are judged from the record book kept on you — you'll be cast into the lake of fire.

NOTE THESE VERSES

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all, (Isaiah 53:6).

Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed . . . THE LORD LAID ON HIM THE INIQUITY OF US ALL, (Isaiah 53:4-6).

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God, (2 Cor. 5:21).



<u>All the iniquity contained in all the books was laid upon Jesus.</u> He paid the penalty for it.

This is the way God satisfied both his love and his justice. God, the judge of the whole world, found us guilty and sentenced us to death. This satisfied his justice. Then to satisfy his love, God the Son came down and took

the death penalty for us . . . *dying* for our sins although he himself had none!

He earned the gift you could never earn, and everyone who receives this gift of eternal life will never be judged from a record book of sin. Their names will be in God's roll book, **THE BOOK OF LIFE.**

The Scale of Justice

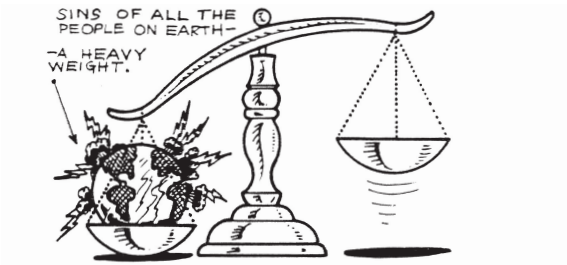
The Bible says, **"You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. . . God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were yet sinners Christ died for us," (Rom. 5:6-8).** Also, **"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life," (John 3:16).**

Mentally, I could never grasp why in the mind of God one man could die in the place of millions and call that fair. Why didn't he have to die over and over and over — one time for each of us?

One night in prayer, I asked God to explain it to me, so I could explain it to others. Here is the illustration he gave me.

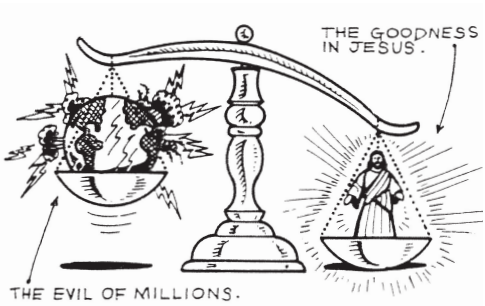
PICTURE A SCALE OF JUSTICE

On one side of this scale of justice is a heap of all the sins committed by the millions who live, have lived, and who will live on planet earth. Lust, lies, greed, cursing, murders, cruelty, apathy, laziness, gluttony, etc — all heaped on one side.



GOD WANTED TO BALANCE THIS EVIL WITH GOOD. SO ON THE OTHER SIDE GOD PLACES THE GOODNESS OF ONLY ONE MAN, JESUS!

BECAUSE JESUS IS GOD IN HUMAN FORM, HIS GOODNESS IS INFINITE! The truth, beauty, love, loyalty, self control, purity, etc. that fill Christ is without limit! It not only balances the scale — but totally outweighs the evil!



WHEN JESUS DIED FOR THE SINS OF THE WORLD, INFINITE GOODNESS DIED IN THE PLACE OF LIMITED SIN! As great as our sins are, God can

count them all up and number them. But there is no way God could calculate the goodness in his own son.

FOR IN CHRIST ALL THE FULLNESS OF DEITY LIVES IN BODILY FORM! (Col 2:9).

It Is Paid In Full

That is why when Jesus died on the cross, he cried out, **"It is finished!" (John 19:30).** The Greek word used in the original text is *tetelestai.* It was a commercial word that meant **"PAID IN FULL."**

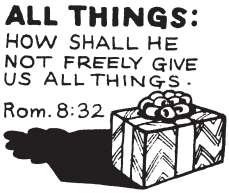
$1,000,000.00 For A $5.00 Debt

Suppose I came to you and said, "Please give me $5.00. I borrowed $5.00 from a man. It's due him, and I'm afraid of him." Suppose you smiled and said, "Here's a million dollars — go pay your debt with this . . . **AND KEEP THE CHANGE!"**

This is what happened when Christ paid the debt of your sin and the rest of the world's debt of sin. **So much goodness was left over, that God was justified in raising Jesus from the dead!**

> **But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him, (Acts 2:24).**
>
> **He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification, (Romans 4:25).**

SO MUCH GOODNESS WAS LEFT OVER AFTER RAISING JESUS FROM THE DEAD THAT GOD PURCHASED FOR US . . .



He who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all, how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? (Rom. 8:32).

<u>So great was the sacrifice of Christ, that it will take an of eternity for God to give us all that the blood of Jesus bought for us!</u>

And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus, (Eph. 2:6-7).

WHAT CHRIST DID

He gave himself as a ransom for all men! (1 Tim. 2:6).

He purchased men for God with his own blood! (Rev. 5:9-10).

He provided purification for our sins, (Hebrews 1:3).

He redeemed from us wickedness and purified for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good, (Titus 2:14).

He justified us by His blood and saved us from God's wrath, (Rom. 5:6-8.9).

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit, (Gal. 3:13-14).

How shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation? (Hebrews 2:3).

How do we receive the gift of Eternal Life Jesus bought for us?

5 By Faith

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not of works so that no one can boast, (Eph. 2:8-9).

Before you understand what real saving faith is, you must understand what it is not.

FAITH IS NOT MERE MENTAL ASSENT

The Bible says, **"You believe there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that — and shudder," (James 2:19).** Even the demons believe mentally that Jesus is God's Son. They spoke through a demon-possessed man and said to Jesus, **"What do you want with us, Son of God? Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?" (Matt. 8:29).**

Don't assume just because you mentally believe Jesus is the Son of God that you are safe.

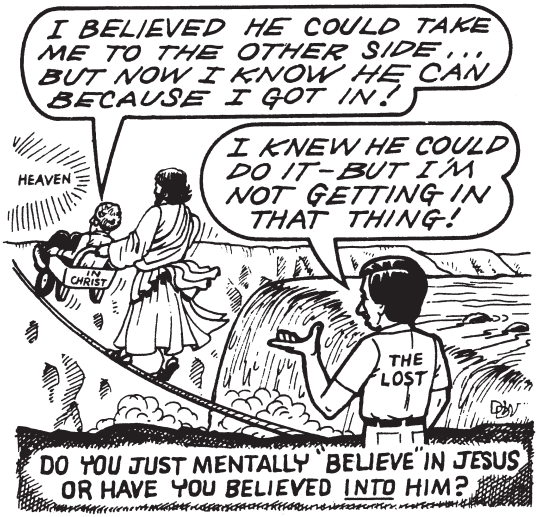
The Wheelbarrow and The Tight Rope

Picture this in your mind: A great crowd of people are gathered at the edge of Niagara Falls to see a man walk a tight rope across to the other side. He crosses and returns safely. Then he says, "How many **believe** I can wheel a wheelbarrow across?" The crowd cheers its approval.

So he wheels the wheelbarrow across and comes back safely to the cheers of the crowd.

"How many believe I can wheel a man across in this wheelbarrow?" he cries. The crowd roars in delight. They all believe. Then the man points to one nearby who is cheering the loudest. **"You — get in!"**

NOW NOTICE



If you have **MENTAL ASSENT,** you will be yelling with the rest of the crowd. "I believe." You may "believe" in Jesus, but not enough to trust him with anything.

FAITH FOR THINGS is one step higher. It trusts Jesus with "things" — such as the people who believed the man could wheel the wheelbarrow across the tight rope without losing it into the river. Examples of this kind of faith would be people who pray to God for earthly things such as food, finances, or protection. They trust God for "things", but they refuse to trust God with their eternity and rely on him to get them to heaven.

SAVING FAITH IS THE KIND OF BELIEVING THAT INVOLVES TOTAL COMMITMENT TO YOUR BELIEF. IT IS BELIEVING INTO JESUS, TOTALLY TRUSTING HIM TO TAKE YOU TO HEAVEN — ON HIS MERITS, NOT YOUR OWN!

Just as the man in the wheelbarrow would have to be very still and not move, **SAVING FAITH** rests and receives eternal life rather than striving to earn it by works of human righteousness.

As the Scripture says, **"Everyone who trusts in him (Jesus) will never be put to shame," (Rom. 10:11).**

Do you remember the question at the beginning of this book? (If you stand before God and he asked, "Why should I let you into my heaven?" — What would you say?) Look at your answer. If it said something like, "I'm a good person," this shows you were trusting in yourself rather than Jesus. Remember, someone will be the nicest person to end up in hell. Don't let that be you! Someone will have sinned the least of anyone in hell, but because they trusted in their own good works, they will be forever lost!

Does this make sense to you?

IF SO, WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE THE ETERNAL LIFE THAT JESUS BOUGHT FOR YOU?

1. Here's How: Repent

The Bible says, **" The Lord saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. The Lord was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain," (Gen. 6:5-6).**

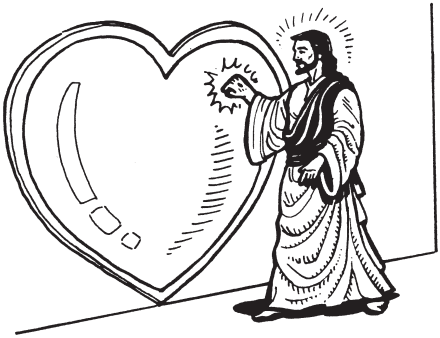
Your sins have helped fill God's heart with pain again. You should be deeply sorry for this.

The Bible says, **"He who conceals his sin does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy," (Prov. 28:13).**

Jesus told of two men who went to pray. One was self — righteous and prayed, **" 'Lord, I thank you that I'm not like other men — robbers, evil doers, adulterers — or even like this tax collector.' But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God have mercy on me, a sinner.' I tell you this man rather than the other went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled and he who humbles himself will be exalted," (Luke 18:9-14).**

Jesus said, **"Unless you repent, you will all perish," (Luke 13:5). SO HUMBLE YOURSELF BY CONFESSING AND RENOUNCING YOUR SINS.** (This is best done by confessing our sin nature and renouncing it by asking God to impart eternal life to you. God realizes you don't even remember all your sins — so repent of that sin nature that causes you to sin.)

2. Then open the door of your heart to Jesus.



Jesus says, **"Be earnest and repent. Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will go in and eat with him and he with me, (Rev. 3:19-20).** (The ones who eat in your home regularly are the ones who live there! This means he'll set up his residence within you!)

AS SOON AS GOD SEES EARNEST REPENTANCE, HE'S RIGHT THERE – READY TO CLEANSE AND IMPART ETERNAL LIFE – HIS OWN NATURE – TO YOU! He gives you the faith to receive him and then all you have to do is say, "Yes, come in" or "No, go away."

YOU CAN'T REACH DOWN YOUR THROAT AND OPEN A TRAP DOOR IN YOUR HEART – SO HOW DO YOU ACTUALLY OPEN THE DOOR? YOU OPEN THE DOOR WITH YOUR MOUTH.

The Bible says, **"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus Is Lord', and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved, (Romans 10:9-10).**

THERE IT IS — GOD'S GLORIOUS PLAN OF SALVATION! GOD HAS SPOKEN TO YOU — HE'S READY IF YOU ARE.

I'd like to lead you in a simple prayer to receive eternal life – Just repeat it after me.

JUST BEFORE THAT PRAYER – LET'S CLARIFY WHAT THIS INVOLVES.

YOU'LL TRANSFER YOUR TRUST TO JESUS. Never again will you "hope you are good enough" in yourself to go to heaven. You admit once and for all that your own righteousness isn't good enough now, and never will be good enough. You admit that you need MERCY and FORGIVENESS and the RIGHT STANDING WITH GOD THAT COMES AS A FREE

GIFT BY FAITH IN JESUS. Then, gladly receive this power to become Christ-like, this eternal life, this glorious free gift!

YOU MUST BE TOTALLY HONEST AND SINCERE WITH GOD. "Be earnest and repent, " he said, (Rev. 3:19).

YOU MUST REALIZE JESUS WILL COME INTO YOU AS LORD — THE BOSS. He's not like a supernatural servant we can command to do our will. When he moves into your heart — *give him his rightful place as Lord.* Surrender your will to his. *Give him total rule in your heart.*

Is this what you really want?

If so, we can go to God in prayer. I'll pray for you, and then I'd like to lead you in a prayer. I'll supply the words, but you must supply the deep sincerity of your heart.

My Prayer For You

Precious Heavenly Father, surround this dear person with your loving presence. Help them to earnestly turn from their sins in repentance. Then flood over them in your cleansing wave of love and give them a brand new heart — impart your own life and nature to them. Let them sense your great love for them and may they come to know more and more how precious they are to you. Give them courage to follow Jesus no matter what the world is doing.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Now Pray With Me

Dear Father,
I come to you in Jesus' name.
I'm sorry for my sins.
I want to be forgiven and cleansed and made pure.
Forgive me now.
I believe Jesus is who he says he is — God's Son.
I believe he rose from the grave and is alive in heaven now.
I hear you knocking at the door of my heart.
And with my mouth, I say,
Come in, Lord Jesus. I open the door!
I receive you now.
You are mine, and I am yours.
I make you the Lord of my life now.
Thank you for saving me.
Thank you for eternal life!
Praise The Lord! I'm saved! AMEN!

Friend, something wonderful has happened on the inside of you if you meant that with all your heart! Eternal life has been imparted to you!

Congratulations — Welcome to the Family of God!

What Now?

READ AT LEAST ONE CHAPTER OF THE BIBLE A DAY.

Try to remember what you read and think about it. The more of the Word you get into your mind and heart, the more you'll know how to defeat sin and circumstances in every area of life. There's more you need to know and you find it in the Bible. Be sure to do that! Start with the New Testament and also the book of Proverbs.

SPEND LOTS OF TIME WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS.

Find a group of people who have eternal life and who are really lovers of the Word of God. Don't let worldly people drag you back - get with the Lord's crowd.

PRAY DAILY — GOD IS YOUR OWN FATHER NOW.

He'll be listening. Talk to him - share everything with him!

BE BAPTIZED IN WATER.

Your first act of obedience as a Christian is to be baptized in water. A Christian who refuses to be baptized in water is like a bride who refuses a wedding ring. As a ring is the outward symbol of the wedding vows, water baptism is the outward sign to the world that you belong to Christ!

Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned, (Mark 16:16).

WHAT TO DO ABOUT SIN.

Your new nature wants to do what is right. Your old body will still want to do things that are wrong. You must learn how to feed your spirit so that it will be strong and can dominate your body. As you are learning, you will make some mistakes - you'll even sin. (In thought, word, attitude, or action.) When this happens, it doesn't mean you aren't a Christian. It means you need to ask God for forgiveness to restore your broken fellowship. And, the more you grow spiritually, the more you'll please God in every way.

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness, (1 John 1:8-9).

So, hate sin and flee from it. If you do sin, repent with all your heart. If you'll do these things, the Lord will be able to teach you and lead you and bless you.

Love the Lord with all your heart and yearn to please him with complete obedience. Ask God to help you grow up in Christ.

But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved away from the hope held out in the Gospel, (Col. 1:22-23).

This hope is — Christ in you — the hope of glory. So cherish the gift — the power to become a full grown child of God.

Understanding what you have in Christ.

There once was a man who sailed across the ocean on a luxury liner. At meal times, he would return to his room and eat crackers and cheese while the other passengers feasted at banquet tables. On the last day of the cruise, another passenger noticed and asked, "Why aren't you coming to the meals?" The man was embarrassed and replied, "I do not have enough money for meals." The other passenger was amazed and said, "Don't you realize all your meals are included in the price of your ticket? You could have been feasting with us all this time!"

Jesus purchased your ticket that says, **"Give this one power to be Christ-like," (1 John 1:12).** Hang onto that, and it will also get you into heaven. Included in the price of this ticket are many wonderful things to enjoy on earth. The more you pray, read the Word, and attend churches where the Word is preached, the more you'll understand what is rightfully yours. HERE ARE A FEW OF THE BENEFITS THAT COME WITH ETERNAL LIFE.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! (2 Cor. 5:17).

1. A NEW RELATIONSHIP TO GOD

God re-created your human spirit when you received eternal life. He "fathered" you — putting his own life in you.

"For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children," (Rom. 8:15-16).

God is your very own Father. The world may call him God, but when you talk to him, call him "Heavenly Father."

2. A NEW FAMILY

One of the greatest blessings of the Christian walk is the great love and fellowship between believers. You'll find you prefer fellowship with people who love and obey Jesus. (Not all who claim to be Christians are Christlike. But, those who do obey Jesus are the greatest people on earth!) Jesus said, **"Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother," (Matt. 12:50).** These types of people will be like relatives to you — more than friends — WE ARE FAMILY.

> **We know we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers, (1 John 3:14).**

3. A NEW NATURE THAT WANTS TO OBEY GOD

> **I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh. Then they will be careful to keep my laws, (Ezek. 11:19).**

This new spirit wants to obey God and live above sin. Your body is not new — it has sinful desires. You must feed your spirit with God's Word. Your spirit — the real you — will then be able to dominate your body. In this way, you will do what your new nature wants, not what the sinful flesh desires.

4. A NEW AUTHORITY

God gave the first man, Adam, dominion. When Adam chose to obey Satan rather than God, Satan gained Adam's dominion. (Satan is a rebellious evil spirit that at one time was one of God's highest angels.) Satan used this authority to ruin people and keep them in fear and bondage. Jesus' atoning death won the dominion back. He immediately delegated this authority to His believers.

> Jesus said, **"And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons . . . they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover," (Mark 16:17).**

The believer does not ask God to stop Satan and his demon spirits. The believer is to use the authority Jesus won for us. In Jesus' name we can cast out demons. You have the right to use Jesus' name against evil spirits. This authority can be used to overcome spirits of infirmity, the cause of some sicknesses.

5. A NEW WAY TO MAKE DECISIONS

> **Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God, (Rom. 8: 14).**

The number one way God leads all of his children is by the inward witness. The life and nature of God within you will send out alarm signals if you are about to make a wrong decision. This inward intuition will give you a velvety-like feeling — a green light — a go-ahead signal when you consider a decision that agrees with God's will for you.

The more you seek God and listen to that inward intuition, the better you'll become at following God's leading. God will guide you in all the affairs of life — financial as well as spiritual. Your head may not agree with this inward leading. Your head will mislead you. Always obey the leading within your spirit.

6. NEW ATTITUDES

Think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you, (Rom. 12:3).

For this reason, make every effort to add to your faith, goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, (2 Pet. 1:5-8).

God has given you a measure of faith. By feeding on God's Word and acting upon it, your faith will grow just as muscles grow when exercised.

These other qualities come naturally to your new nature. But like faith, they are there in seed form and will grow and increase as you cooperate with God and make an effort. The benefits are great — answered prayer, inner peace, healthy relationships with people, effectiveness and productivity! These qualities contribute greatly to physical health.

7. A NEW POWER SOURCE

Jesus said, **"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses . . . to the ends of the earth, (Acts 1 :8).**

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them, (Acts 2:4).

Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off — for all whom the Lord our God will call, (Acts 2:38-39).

RECEIVING ETERNAL LIFE MAKES YOU READY TO RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT BY FAITH.

The Holy Spirit gives you the ability to pray according to the will of God, (Rom. 8:26-27). In order to do this, God enables your spirit to pray and praise God in a language your mind cannot understand This is called "praying in the spirit," (Eph. 6:18, Jude 1:20, 1 Cor. 14:14).

Jesus, the eternal Son of God, lived on earth not only to redeem us, but to be a pattern for us. He came down from heaven by being conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary. All the while he was growing up, he had the life and nature of God. But when it was time to begin his earthly ministry, he was baptized by the Spirit with an anointing of power for ministry.

In the same way, believers have the life and nature of God implanted in them by the Holy Spirit. This makes them children of God. The same Holy Spirit will endow them with power for ministry. This is God's plan . . . for you to be a child of God not only in nature, but in a supernatural demonstration of God's power.

This anointing of power is also received as a free gift. Just receive the person of the Holy Spirit by faith. When the Holy Spirit comes in, he'll give you the ability to pray in a language your head doesn't understand. Praise and worship God with this new language — it will be your spirit praying in the will and mind of God.

A personal encouragement from the author, Wes Daughenbaugh

The Apostle Paul wrote**, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes"** (Romans 1:16).

This little book presents the gospel (good news) of Jesus Christ very clearly. I hope you will boldly share this book and its message with many others. It is a message every person needs to hear and understand. May God give you that boldness by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Leading someone to Jesus Christ will be the most significant, memorable, and rewarding thing you ever do in this life. Ask God to use you to lead many others to Christ. Pray for this in the Name of Jesus Christ. Remember that Jesus said, **"Come, follow me, and I will send you out to fish for people"** (Mathew 4:19).

Recommendations for
How to Receive God's Greatest Gift:

"*For many years we have used this booklet as a trusted tool to introduce people to the life-changing message of Jesus Christ. Its simple, biblical presentation of the Gospel removes unnecessary barriers and clearly leads people to understand God's love, man's need, Christ's sacrifice, and the invitation to receive His gift of salvation. We have witnessed many sincere professions of faith through this booklet and have confidently placed it in the hands of seekers, new believers, and those sharing their faith with others. I wholeheartedly recommend it as an effective resource for both personal evangelism and discipleship."*

Pastor Denise Satrape
Christian Life Church, Elliot, Maine
Founder, CrossRenewed Ministries

"I remember the first time I saw this little book written by Wes, I simply felt my Spirit say, Wow, this is a tool, and a gift that I can use to bring the lost to Jesus. I would love to knock on doors, or just meet people, and say, 'I would love for you to read this little book with all these great pictures. Then would it be okay if I got together with you again and discuss what it says?' In 48 years of ministry, it has been with the Bible my best evangelistic tool."

Pastor Dan Henshaw
Spokane, Washington