

GOOD NEWS

SALVATION! What is it? Many have heard the word but have never taken the time to find out what salvation is really all about. *'What is it to be saved, and what is it that one is saved from? And for that matter, how does one get saved and is salvation really necessary? Do I need it?'* These questions are often the first to be asked when the issue of salvation is raised but seldom, if ever, do they receive answers that are compatible with what the Word of God says. Many people take the following approach to things 'religious': *'I believe that religion is ok for some people but personally I don't have a need for it. I don't see anything that wrong with my life. I work hard, I'm good to my wife/husband and the children. I'm not perfect but I've never killed anyone or done anything to really hurt anyone. I give to charity and try my best to always be there when people need help. I'm quite content with my life and happy within myself and to be honest, I think I'm just as moral as the next person—even a religious one'.* An attitude and life-view such as this displays an ignorance of what God is about and what salvation is.

The True Christian Faith is not a religion, nor is it primarily a lifestyle. Religion weighs a person down with ceremony and duties which one must perform to get into 'God's good books', and anybody can change their lifestyle, reform and become a 'new person' *whether they get involved in religion or not.* **Christianity is all about a Message, God's Message: the Gospel.** In this Gospel, God reveals the spiritual condition of man and God's Way of Salvation. In this pamphlet we will explain what salvation is, why it is so necessary, what a person needs to be saved from and how a person is saved. In essence, we shall present the reader with God's Gospel: **God's Good News.**

The first question we need to deal with is, *'What is salvation?'* Salvation is deliverance. It means to be rescued or freed from a place of danger and brought to a place of safety. It also means to be preserved, to be kept. The salvation that God gives saves, or rescues, a person from eternal damnation and punishment for sin and transfers them to a state of eternal safety and security, of blessing and eternal happiness in His Presence.

Now let us spend some time looking at *'why salvation is necessary'*. To do this we need to see what **God** says about the spiritual state, or condition, of man. To find out what **God** says on this issue, and any other issue for that matter, we need to go to His Word, the Bible. Through the Word of God comes awareness and understanding of what God says: ***"The entrance of Thy Words giveth Light; It giveth understanding unto the simple"*** (Psalm 119:130). Please note that we are not attempting to lead you into a 'church' or to one particular religious group or anything of the kind. We are not quoting 'great religious leaders' of the past or present. We are not offering you man's opinions, which are often founded on non Bible-based religious traditions. We will simply lead you straight to God's Word and see what **GOD** has to say on the matter. In the early chapters of the Book of Genesis, the first Book of the Bible, we see the account of Adam and Eve. They were given a beautiful Garden by God to live in and enjoy, with wonderful trees providing succulent fruits. Their life was one of peace with God and of tranquil days of love, happiness and contentment. God said they could eat from any tree in the Garden, ***"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die"*** (Genesis 2:17). What God meant here is that if Adam and Eve were to disobey God and indeed eat from the forbidden tree, then they would surely die.

Death, previously unknown, would enter their lives. Not merely physical death but also *spiritual* death: **an eternal state of separation from God.** Adam and Eve *did* eat of the forbidden fruit and death *did* enter their lives that very day, as God had promised. Physically, they did not die immediately but the ageing process of decay and corruption, the breakdown of their physical bodies, did begin that day. However, they did *immediately* die spiritually. They were no longer acceptable to God and could no longer walk with Him in unison for they had become sinners, imperfect and unclean in God's sight.

A gulf had been established between man and God. Just as a sin cannot be undone, this gulf could not be crossed. They had chosen to disobey God and go their own way. This *death*, both physical and spiritual, has passed on to every person ever since: "**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). "**...by one man's disobedience (the) many (that he represented) were made sinners...**" (Romans 5:19). This is due to the fact that Adam, the first man, was the representative of all mankind. We are all products of Adam in the sense that we all descended from him. Our ancestry can be traced back to him as the original source and this helps us to understand why we too are sinners. **The evidence for this is that all have sinned.** The fact that both you and I sin offers undeniable proof that we are sinners and shows that we come from the sin seed which began with Adam. **The seed determines what will come from it.** Just as a grass seed will only produce grass, so too, the sin seed will only produce sinners.

After reading this, we can begin to understand the spiritual condition that man finds himself in. We are all sinful creatures. **None of us are without sin.** God testifies to this in the Bible: "**For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not**" (Ecclesiastes 7:20). "**If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves...**" (1 John 1:8). Most people readily admit to the fact that they are not perfect, that they do sin, but what comforts most people is that they see themselves as only minor sinners. Most people's assessment of themselves, despite their admission of being sinners, is '*basically I am a good person.*' Most people are in the habit of judging or evaluating themselves by comparing themselves with others and according to this standard, they judge themselves to be *basically good people.* '*I know I'm not perfect*' they say, '*but at least I'm not as bad as that person.*' Everyone can always find someone who has sinned worse than they have and with whom they are keen to compare themselves. Many do not see themselves as having committed any serious sin, which they consider to be something like murder or other such crimes of extreme violence. While it is true that some have sinned more than others, and to worse degrees, the reality of the situation is that **we have all sinned against God,** are spiritually dead, without God and therefore without hope in this world. The standard that we *are* to judge ourselves by is the one that God has set: **perfection.** And if we are honest, we can see that we are all imperfect. We all fail the test no matter how 'good' we are or how much better than others we believe ourselves to be. The greatest commandment is to love God with all our being and our neighbour as ourselves (Matthew 22:37-40). No one, not even the most religious person around, would dare say he has loved God perfectly or his fellow man as himself.

So we see then that, far from being guilty of only 'minor sins', we all stand guilty of the greatest sin, which is not loving God perfectly and our neighbour as ourselves. Left to ourselves, there is no hope of getting back into a right relationship with God and being

acceptable in His sight. According to God's Word, there is no way we can make up for past sins by trying to obey God now, for obedience, perfect obedience, is what we should have done from the beginning. **Doing what we should can never make up for doing what we should not have done.** There's no use telling the policeman who has just pulled you over for speeding that from now on you will not speed again, in an effort to escape the penalty, because staying at or keeping under the speed limit is the law and you should never have broken it in the first place. You can never change the fact that you have been speeding and you must now pay the penalty. As the saying goes, *'if you do the crime you've got to do the time'*. In other words, if we break man's laws we must pay the penalty. The very fabric of society would come apart at the seams were it not held together by its laws. Society cannot afford to have its people going about doing whatever they please with no regard to the law. Imagine living in such an environment. **Imagine a sport without rules!** One must have laws which must be abided by and boundaries which must be adhered to if one is to have order. It is no different with God. He has laws which man must follow perfectly or man must suffer the consequences. We have sinned against God and there is now a penalty to be paid.

Man is trapped inside a slippery ball of darkness with no way of seeing the way out, let alone being able to reach it! An awful and horrible eternity awaits the person whose life ends in this state. **What is there left for man to do, when not even a sincere moral change or dedicated religious effort can make up for his sin and make him acceptable to God?** Quite a predicament isn't it? Is there anything we can do to rescue ourselves from this condition or are we all doomed to remain such as we are? God would be fully justified to leave us all in this miserable state, for He is the offended party. It is God Himself Whom we have sinned against by choosing to go our own way, by living our lives the way *we* see fit and following religious and moral views which God does not teach. **There is nothing more serious than having sinned against God.** Even Jesus Christ's disciples asked Him, *"...who then can be saved?"* Jesus replied by saying *"...With men it is IMPOSSIBLE, but not with God: for with God all things are possible"* (Mark 10:26, 27). Only with God is salvation possible. The **best** a man can do to come to God, or to recommend himself to God, is nothing but vanity. The Bible says *"...we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses (good deeds) are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities (sins), like the wind, have taken us away"* (Isaiah 64:6). Notice that this verse of Scripture is not talking about our *bad deeds* being unacceptable, but that our **very best deeds** are as filthy rags in the sight of the Holy God. This is because we are sinners and all we do is imperfect and, therefore, unacceptable to a Perfect God. When speaking to the most religious people of His day, Jesus told them *"...ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity"* (Matthew 23:28). Man judges according to the *outward* appearance but God judges according to what is in man: *"...for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart"* (1 Samuel 16:7), and at the core of every man is the sin seed. *"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"* (Jeremiah 17:9). No matter how 'good' a man can become, all his efforts fail to address the root problem: **his sin nature.**

If I may use the following illustration, man trying to get to God by what he does is like a man who has one foot nailed to the floor. **No matter how much the man runs, all he can ever do is to go around in circles! He never gets anywhere because the root problem, the reason why**

he runs around in circles and never achieves anything, is not being addressed! He must address the root problem, which in this case is that his foot is anchored to the floor. The fact that we are sinners is that which condemns us and it is a fact which none of us can change. Nothing we do or don't do or stop doing can alter our sinful nature one bit. **A rotten apple, no matter how fragrant its aroma may be, can never alter the fact that it is ROTTEN!** And no one is going to accept a rotten apple to eat, no matter how fragrant it is! So too, God will never accept an imperfect and sinful man, no matter how many 'good things' he might do, because his good deeds can never do away with his rotten sinful state. Man's condition and the fact that he can do nothing to change his state before God, is highlighted by God Himself in this next verse: *"Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil"* (Jeremiah 13:23). *"...verily every man AT HIS BEST state is altogether vanity"* (Psalm 39:5). *"...there is none that doeth good, no, not one"* (Romans 3:12). Where there is imperfection there is sin and where there is sin there can never be perfection, and therefore **no grounds for acceptance with God.**

We learn from all this that man is a sinner, hopelessly destined to spend an eternity in hell for having sinned against God. There is nothing man can do to get himself out of this mess, for all his attempts are tainted with his sinfulness. He is like a man with grease covered hands, vainly attempting to wipe away the grease stains from his clothing! Man's efforts at obedience are all imperfect, and far from being something which recommends us to God, they are a constant reminder to us that we are sinners by nature. **Our imperfection** (inadequacy or inferiority) **is the evidence that we all fall far short of the mark which God has set.** God puts it this way: *"...by the deeds of the law* (obedience to God's commands) *there shall no flesh be justified* (made righteous and judged acceptable) *in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin"* (Romans 3:20). The real function of God's Laws is to make men realize that they are imperfect sinners, that they can never obey perfectly even *one* of God's Laws, let alone *all* of them, and that they need to abandon *themselves* and look **outside of themselves** for something that *will* make them acceptable to God. God's Word says, *"...the Law was our schoolmaster* (teacher) *to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith"* (Galatians 3:24) and it also says that without true God-given faith it is impossible to please Him (Hebrews 11:6). Religions abound in their thousands which claim to teach what it is that man can do to *'make up with God'*. Religious devotion and sincere dedication combined with moral reformation, are taught as the remedy to man's sinful predicament and something which will impress God so much He will forgive sins and open the Gates of Heaven to all who live their lives in such a way.

There is nothing further from the truth than such teaching. To teach or believe that man is capable of doing something, anything, to gain acceptance with God, of being able to work his way to Heaven by a change of lifestyle or attitude, is the very sin that deceives every lost man. If man were able to do something which would make him right with God or if he could contribute even in the slightest degree to his salvation, then salvation would be something gained, not entirely by the grace and mercy of God, but by a work—something performed or achieved by man. This contradicts what we have learned God says about man's condition and, according to God, is a massive lie which denies and opposes His Truth: *"For by GRACE* (unmerited favor) *are ye saved through faith; and that* (faith) *NOT OF YOURSELVES: it is the GIFT of God: NOT of WORKS, lest any man should boast"* (Ephesians 2:8,9). *"...a man is NOT justified by the works of the law,* (deeds of obedience) *but by the Faith of Jesus Christ...for by the works of*

the law shall no flesh be justified" (Galatians 2:16). The Word of God says that the saved person is *"...justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus"* (Romans 3:24). The Bible describes the blessedness of the man *"...unto whom God imputeth (charges or credits) righteousness WITHOUT works"* (Romans 4:6). *"So then it (salvation) is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but OF GOD that sheweth MERCY"* (Romans 9:16). Salvation comes not as the result of human will or human effort. Salvation is not given as a reward for strenuous religious endeavour and a disciplined moral lifestyle. Salvation is dependant solely on God's having mercy on a person. Despite all of man's enthusiastic religious efforts and moral strivings, God says *"...There is NONE righteous, no, not one: there is NONE that understandeth, there is NONE that seeketh after God. They are ALL gone out of the way, they are together become UNPROFITABLE; there is NONE that doeth good, no, NOT ONE"* (Romans 3:10-12).

Since no one can do anything to make up for his sin or to change his sinful state at all, it is obvious that if any are to be saved **GOD Himself** must do the saving. He must be the one to provide the remedy, for man by nature does not know of one. It is **GOD Himself** Who must provide the solution to man's dilemma **and** put it into effect. Just as a man who has been informed of his ailment must listen to his doctor if he wants to learn of the cure, so too, man, after learning of his sinful spiritual condition, **MUST look to God** for the remedy. He must trust in what God has to say and not allow himself to be deceived into putting his trust in any man or any man-made institution. He must resist religious traditions and turn away from everything he hears or is taught about salvation, if it contradicts God's Mighty Gospel. **When you face God on Judgement Day, you will stand with no one else, no religious group, no religious leader, not father or mother, not friends or loved ones of any kind. You will be held responsible and accountable for having trusted in that which you believed would save you. YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO LAY THE BLAME ON ANYONE FOR WHAT YOU BELIEVED! It will just be you and God and that which you have put your trust in to save you!** Let me warn you that you will not impress God one bit by your faithfulness to some false religious teaching handed down by your parents or which was part of your cultural heritage. Far from recommending you to God, any dedication no matter how genuine, to a false gospel preached by a man you thought, however sincerely, was from God, or to any religious institution you were convinced was representing God and presenting His Truth but which promoted a false gospel, will condemn you for all eternity. **It will be among the evidence which will be used against you in God's Court of Law.**

The Lord Jesus Christ declares *"...Except a man be born again; he cannot see the kingdom of God"* (John 3:3). Jesus is not speaking here of being *physically* reborn, that would be ridiculous. He is speaking about being *spiritually* reborn, of being made **alive again** to God. Being born again is not the result of some feeling or experience. You won't hear angels harps or feel lightheaded or anything of the kind. **The ONLY way to be born again is to be born of God's Word: His Gospel.** That is, just as we are born physically from man's seed, a person is born spiritually **only** by God's Seed, which is His Gospel. One must *hear* this Gospel and *understand* it and *believe* it if one is to be born again: *"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, BY THE WORD OF GOD, which liveth and abideth forever....and this is the Word which BY THE GOSPEL is preached unto you"* (1 Peter 1:23,25). One of the truths which the Gospel teaches is that all those who will spend eternity with God were **chosen by**

God, elected to be His children, before the world even began! This was not done according to how a man would live his life. It was not done according to God's *foreseeing* how good a man would be and how religiously dedicated he would become, for we have learned that God says man at his BEST state is nothing but vanity (*empty* or *unsatisfactory*). Being chosen for salvation is not something which is earned or merited, it is not a reward but is something done by God solely according to His Will: His mercy and grace and His wise purpose: "(God) *hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, NOT ACCORDING TO OUR WORKS, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began*" (2 Timothy 1:9); "...*He has chosen us in Him (Jesus) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will*" (Ephesians 1:4,5). What many say after hearing this is, 'If its up to God to save people, why hasn't He saved everybody?'

The real issue here is that God was under no obligation to save anybody in the first place and that He is to be praised and worshipped for the fact that He has chosen to be so gracious and merciful in saving some. **God owes man nothing but to condemn him for his sin!** God is God and is free to do whatever He chooses and man has no right to complain, or has any ground upon which to take issue with God, over this or any other matter. **We haven't got a leg to stand on, as the saying goes, for we are all guilty before God and deserving of nothing but the torments of Hell.** We have no right to complain to God, because *He* is the offended party and *we* are the offenders! God says "*...I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion*" (Romans 9:15). So then, we have learned of man's spiritual state before a Holy God and that he can do nothing to get himself out of this sinful condition. We have also seen that if any are to be saved, it must be God Himself Who is to do the saving. The Gospel is about **God coming to man**, a fact consistent with God electing those who would become His people before the world began. **True Christianity is not about what man must do to get saved but what Christ Jesus the Lord has done TO save!**

In order for there to be salvation, to be right with God, God's Law must be obeyed perfectly, His Justice, which demands full payment for sin, must be satisfied and His wrath/anger, which demands punishment for all sinners, must be appeased. To break one of God's laws is to break the whole and God says that the soul that sins must surely die: "*For whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all*" (James 2:10). It is true that God is merciful and kind and that He is Love but it must also be pointed out that God is a Just God and what He does must be in perfect conformity with His Holy Character, or He would cease to be God. God is Love, but "*God does not sacrifice His Holiness to His love.*" God declares "*... The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin...WILL BY NO MEANS CLEAR THE GUILTY...*" (Exodus 34:6, 7). Society often gets into an uproar when a judge lets a criminal off with just a warning or hands down a light sentence. We all know instinctively that if one commits a crime, that person should pay the penalty for their crime. **Where there is sin, there must be payment made for that sin, before there can be any thought of salvation**, of being justified and free from the punishment that sin carries. For God's Justice to be satisfied, full payment must be made for sin or there can be no grounds for reconciliation. And for God's wrath to be appeased, there must be atonement made, something must be done to swallow up

God's anger towards man and his sinfulness. **God's answer to all this is NOT religion, it is not ceremony or daily religious duties which are aimed at building up points for the sinner and eventually causing him to find favor in God's eyes.** Not at all! God has only **one** solution to man's sin problem, for only **one** solution is necessary: **God's Way to salvation is His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ!**

Jesus Himself says "*...I am the WAY, the TRUTH, and the LIFE: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me*" (John 14:6). Buddha is not the Truth, Krishna is not the Life and Allah is not the Way to God! Yoga is not the remedy. Hinduism will not rescue anyone. Neither is Roman Catholicism or Protestantism, Mormonism or the Jehovah's Witnesses, Freemasonry or Seventh Day Adventism, nor the Charismatic and Pentecostal movements God's solution to man's sin problem. **The only way to salvation and eternal life is Jesus Christ; the only Truth is Jesus Christ and the only way to God the Father is through God the Son, Jesus Christ.** This gets rid of the teachings and sermons, schemes and plans, methods and ways to salvation which religion offers. It does away with all the lies and all the man-made systems and religious strategies that have been concocted to get to God and to find happiness and freedom etc. It does away with man-made religions, which aren't so much interested in truth as they are in filling their buildings every weekend with as many people as they can so they can preach to them soft, even vague, messages which are carefully constructed so as to not offend anyone. It does away with religions which try and endear themselves to the masses with 'positive' teachings that put man first and are careful not to offend. **Religion which has been designed to appeal to men is empty and has never saved anyone.** It has made a lot of people feel 'good' and 'spiritual' but religion has never saved anyone. No, my friends, Jesus Christ—**Who He is and what He has done**—is all a person needs in order to be saved. **Jesus is the Savior.** His very name means "*...He shall save His people from their sins*" (Matthew 1:21). Anything less than Christ will not do and anything which anybody says must be added to the Person of Christ and what He has done for the sinner to secure salvation, is a lie and a denial of Christ as sole Savior.

If Jesus Christ has stated that HE is the Way to God, then there is no other. Jesus says that HE is the Way to salvation, not you AND He! Either salvation is obtainable or achievable by following whatever religion one takes a fancy to, or salvation comes by believing the truth about One Person: Jesus Christ.

The popular, yet false, belief that there are many religious paths one can travel but that all lead to the same God, is a lie from hell which continues to deceive people to this day. How can one group, for instance, which teaches that Jesus is not God and another which teaches that Jesus is God both be right and leading people to the same God? Once something like this is pointed out it becomes clear that all the different religions or faiths do not lead to the same God, for not only do they differ greatly in what they say about God and the way to salvation but they totally contradict each other. God warns that many "*...pray unto a god that CANNOT save*" and that "*...there is no God else beside Me; a Just God and a Savior; there is none beside Me. Look unto ME, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else*" (Isaiah 45:20-22). Speaking of religious paths, Jesus says: "*Enter ye in at the strait (narrow) gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that find it*" (Matthew 7:13). The broad way Jesus is speaking of here is false religion which comes in God's name but does not teach God's Gospel.

Many people conveniently place all things religious into the *'too hard basket'* simply because there are a multitude of religions with a vast array of views and contradictory teachings. To their minds, this justifies never thinking about God or taking the matter of Heaven and Hell seriously. Some might say in answer to this booklet, *'Every religion thinks they've got the truth, so what makes what you're saying so different?'* Are we to infer that just because everyone thinks they have the truth, no one really has? Surely there is a True God and a True way to Salvation? How ludicrous is it to reason that simply because a thousand people claim to have the right answer, no one has? This way of thinking makes as much sense as that which would discount the fact there is only one absolute true answer to $2 + 2$, just because there is a never ending array of answers one could come up with if one did not know the true answer. That there are many wrong answers that can be given to a question can never deny the existence of the one and only true answer! **Wrong answers and beliefs are held to by the ignorant. The truth is held to by those who have been properly taught and informed.** Just as there are many wrong answers that can be given to a mathematical question but only one TRUE answer, so too, there are many false gods and many false christs in religion's supermarket, but there is only ONE TRUE God, there is only ONE TRUE Christ, and what you believe about God and about Jesus Christ will show if you believe in the True or in one of the many counterfeits which cannot save. *"Whosoever transgresseth (sins), and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ (is not content with what He taught), hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ (His Gospel), he hath both the Father and the Son"* (2 John 9).

God sent Jesus His Son into the world to save all those whom God had given Him. God chose a predetermined number of people to receive His grace and to live eternally with Him. Jesus Christ was born of a virgin and therefore did not carry within him the stain, or seed, of sin. He is not descended from Adam but is of the Holy Spirit and therefore pure, clean and Holy, without sin and wholly acceptable unto God. **This is the Savior Whom God has provided!** Just as Adam is a representative, so too, is Christ. But while Adam is the representative of all mankind, Jesus Christ is the Representative of all for whom He was sent to save—those God chose unto salvation before the world began. Christ lived the perfect life which none of them could live, thus establishing the perfect obedience which none of them could ever achieve: *"For as by one man's (Adam's) disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one (Jesus) shall (the) many be made righteous"* (Romans 5:19). Christ died and was resurrected from the dead, thus proving He was no ordinary man and that death could not hold Him—for He had never sinned. This way, God's Law has been obeyed perfectly, perfect Righteousness has been established and God is well pleased. *"...by the Righteousness of One the FREE GIFT (salvation) came upon all men (who believe) unto justification of life"* (Romans 5:18).

Christ is the Substitute of all God's chosen. God is satisfied with Christ's obedience for it is perfect, unlike our imperfect and sin-laden attempts at obedience. Christ went to the cross an innocent man, completely guiltless and there He offered Himself to God as a Sacrifice, an offering for the sins of His people in order to satisfy God's Justice, which demands death for all sinners, thus appeasing or satisfying God's anger towards those sinners for whom He died: *"(Jesus) was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification"* (Romans 4:25). God's Word says that all the sins of those for whom He died were **charged** or **imputed** to Christ and that Christ's own perfection or Righteousness would be imputed or charged to those

for whom He died. *"For He hath made Him (Christ) to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him"* (2 Corinthians 5:21); *"...Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute (charge, hold accountable for) sin"* (Romans 4:7,8). Only in this way could God remain Just and at the same time be the Justifier of sinners: *"To declare, I say, at this time HIS Righteousness: that He might be Just and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus"* (Romans 3:26). God not charging a man with his sin is powerful evidence that God *has* charged that sin to someone else. **This other is Jesus Christ the Savior!** This glorious Good News has come about, not because of *our* righteousness, or goodness, but Christ's Righteousness **ALONE!** God does not save the righteous, or the good; *"...in due time Christ died for the UNGODLY"* (Romans 5:6).

We can see from all this how utterly minuscule our feeble little attempts at gaining acceptance with God are, in light of what Christ had to do to obtain acceptance for sinners in God's sight. It also shows us how evil it is in God's sight for us to try and recommend ourselves to Him with what we have done, or by what we do, rather than coming to Him **in the way He has prescribed**— with what **Christ** has done, which is the only acceptable way. Jesus Christ is the **only** way we can ever be made acceptable to God. **There is no way to salvation unless it is God's Way!** Far from being something which we ourselves could attain or maintain, reconciliation with God demanded the very death of God the Son Himself, Jesus Christ. It required **perfect Righteousness** to be established, which only He could produce. **This is why Jesus is called THE Savior, because it is HE Who has saved!** Importantly, He does not share this role with anyone or anything else. He does not share His Role as Savior with any man, nor with what any man has done. He **ALONE—Who HE is and what HE has done**—is Whom we must look to for salvation, for **HE is THE ONLY WAY** to God and there is **no other path** which leads to Him. There is no other avenue by which we can approach God. All roads may lead to Rome, as the saying goes, but **only one Road leads to God: Jesus Christ.**

What we have just shared with you is, in a nutshell, the Gospel, or, Good News of God. There are many religious teachers today who appear to be Christian and who appear to teach the Gospel. Some are more subtle than others. But we can tell you right now that all their teachings about salvation are false, for every religion out there, including those which call themselves 'Christian', has in it's teachings **something which man must do** in order to get saved or stay saved. **This is the identifying mark of a false religion.** Obedience of some kind or another is the only solution men and their false religions can come up with. It makes a man feel good to do something which he has been taught will please God and gain acceptance with Him. One thing you must remember if you plan to come to God with your own 'good deeds', is that you must stand before Him with **EVERYTHING** you have ever done. You cannot come to him with only your 'best', but also with everything you have ever done, be it good or bad. This is because you have not addressed the **ROOT** problem. You have done nothing to remove your own sinfulness, therefore your sin remains with you. Any man who comes to God with his imperfect deeds will be condemned, for his sin is still with him, **it remains charged to his account.** It is not a few deeds done well that is required, **but it is everything done to perfection** which God demands! Only through Christ can a man come to God free of sin and with the perfect Righteousness that Christ established, without which no man can be saved.

As was said earlier, Christianity is not religion. The word *religion* comes from the Latin word *religare* meaning *to tie up*, or *to bind*. Religion locks you into a system of superstition to which you become enslaved by laws, duties and ceremonies which must be obeyed if you are to see Heaven, and if disobeyed will condemn you to Hell. True Christianity releases a person from the ties and lies of religion and frees them to believe the truth that salvation is a **free gift** from God and is conditioned on the Obedience of Jesus Christ and no other: "*..the Truth shall make you FREE....If the Son therefore shall make you FREE, ye shall be FREE indeed*" (John 8:32,36). **Many false religions include Jesus in their teachings and attribute much about the True Jesus to their false Jesus. But none are teaching the True Jesus who do not teach that it is Who He is and what He has done which saves. Any straying from faith in Him alone—Who He is and what He has done—as Savior, as the sole reason one is saved and remains saved, is an evidence of lostness.** Anyone to whom the Gospel is not revealed is lost. The apostle Paul said "*...if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost*" (2 Corinthians 4:3). God's solution is the only one which points solely to His Glorious Son, Jesus, and attaches **no conditions to be met on man's part** in order to reach or maintain a state of salvation, **for all the conditions have been fully met by Jesus Christ. God's solution, HIS Way to Salvation, is the only one which gives Him ALL the Glory and credit.** ALL false religions give man a share in that credit and glory. Only faith, which is a God-given Gift, in Jesus Christ, will save a man and not any deed which man can do: "*Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith WITHOUT the deeds of the law*" (Romans 3:27,28). This means that there is nothing man can boast of having done to save himself or keep himself saved. From this we conclude that a man's justification before God is not because of anything the individual has done, but according to his God-given Faith in Jesus Christ and what **HE** has done, **alone**: "*...to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, HIS FAITH is counted for righteousness*" (Romans 4:5). If this were not true, if salvation does not come solely because of the grace of God through the faith in Christ which He gives, then God says that His Son died needlessly: "*...if righteousness (right standing, or acceptance, with God) come by the law (by anything which man can do), then Christ is dead in vain*" (Galatians 2:21).

Can you begin to see how diametrically opposed the two ways are? How one cannot come to God with one's good deeds and expect Christ to be on his side? Either you claim salvation according to His mercy and grace or by your good deeds. Just like oil and water, the two cannot, indeed will not, mix. If one truly has Christ and has put his faith in Who He is and what He has done, one will completely disown and separate oneself from one's own 'good deeds' as that which saves or maintains a state of salvation. Now, please do not misunderstand. We are not teaching that obedience is not important or necessary in one's life, that one can simply believe in Christ and then live as one pleases (see Romans 6:1,2). Not at all. Obedience to God plays a very big part in the life of a saved sinner, **but obedience on the sinner's part is NOT what his salvation is conditioned on.** It is the obedience of another— Jesus Christ—upon which a sinner's salvation is conditioned, based, and completely dependant. **IT'S NOT WHAT WE DO, BUT WHO HE IS AND WHAT HE HAS DONE!** God says "*...BY THE OBEDIENCE OF ONE (Jesus Christ) shall many be made righteous*" (Romans 5:19) and it is because of this that a Christian is "*...COMPLETE in Him...*" (Colossians 2:10). **There is nothing that the Christian lacks which Christ his Savior has not provided.** It is by the Righteousness of one that the free gift of salvation has come. Being made righteous means to be in right standing with

God, to be acceptable unto Him and to be justified in His sight. **It is only because of Christ that a man is saved and remains saved.** What better news could there possibly be for man, who struggles with sin in his daily efforts to be good and obedient to God, than to learn that salvation, which demands perfection, is not conditioned on him but on the Savior, Jesus Christ, and what He has done for His people! This is God's Message of salvation—this is God's Good News.

Any who do not believe God's Gospel shall perish. Jesus Himself says: ***"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned"*** (Mark 16:16). To be damned means to be condemned to Hell forever. If you believe that you, or anyone, can be, is or was, saved by believing in any other way to salvation than that which God testifies to, you are denying the Lord Jesus Christ as being the only way to God and are therefore believing in another gospel which is not from God and which cannot save. **In essence, you are calling God a liar and have chosen to believe in another way to salvation which can be of no benefit to you.** Hell is full of shattered and utterly devastated people who placed their trust in everything but the True God and His one and only Gospel. The apostle Paul, inspired by God to write much of the New Testament, told the Jews of his day that even if they claimed to believe in Christ yet added something as seemingly insignificant as circumcision, an Old Testament religious custom among the Jews which evidenced their being of God, to what Christ had done, they would nevertheless be damned: ***"...if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing"*** (Galatians 5:3). This means that if anyone thinks they are, or can be, justified in the sight of God by anything they do, whether they claim to believe in Christ Jesus or not, that Savior Whom God has sent will not profit that person: ***"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law (by anything you do)..."*** (Galatians 5:4).

What you are doing is setting up your own imperfect obedience against that perfect obedience of Christ, without which no one can be saved. You are guilty of this even if you add your deeds to what Christ has done. **Either way, you are denying the sufficiency of Christ—the Person and what He has done—to be all that is necessary for your salvation.** No one, after purchasing a classic painting by one of the masters, would ever dare think of adding their own touch by including a few brushes of extra color or detail to the painting. So too, no one who truly believes in Jesus Christ for their salvation would *ever* think they need to, or could, add anything to what He has done to get them, or keep them, saved. **The moment you look to anything you have become, or to anything that you have done, you immediately disqualify yourself from any right to call on the Savior, Jesus Christ because you would be trusting in something other than Him alone. Believing the Gospel, which reveals that the only way to salvation is to be found in Christ Jesus alone, is the key to salvation.** Sincerity is not the key, neither is religious dedication or any number of good deeds. **Your best doesn't even come close to what God demands!** Only by believing the Gospel, which reveals Jesus Christ and His Righteousness, will any man proceed into God's Heaven with nothing to fear. If anyone ever had the credentials, according to man's standard, to earn his way to heaven, it was Paul the apostle. No one, Paul said, had more reason to trust in themselves than he. Paul gave various reasons for this, one of which was ***"...touching the righteousness which is in the law, (he was) blameless"*** (Philippians 3:6). Yes, even the apostle Paul, whose whole life was consumed with religion before being granted true salvation by the true God, did not want to be found on Judgement Day with his own good deeds, but only those of the Savior, Jesus Christ. Paul wanted to be ***"...found in Him, not having mine own righteousness (personal obedience), which is of***

the law but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" (Philippians 3:9). It was Christ Jesus to Whom he looked in order to recommend himself to God and nothing that he was or had ever done.

I trust that the reader can see how this Gospel, taught briefly in this pamphlet, is so very different to what religion says. Religion makes many and varied demands on a sinner to reach a certain level of obedience in order *to get saved* and then says that if one falls from that level one can lose that salvation. Almost everyone is under the impression that if they do good, the best that they can do, then all will be well and God will accept them, for what more can a person do than his best? We have learned that this is **not** how God looks at things because God says that man is a sinner and that all fall far short of **His** Standard of acceptability: **"For ALL have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"** (Romans 3:23). Man has missed the mark, or target, and as far as registering points with God goes, man isn't even on the scoreboard! God also says that man at his best state is nothing but vanity and that he has become totally unprofitable in all that he is and in all that he does, meaning that **nothing that we can do in and of ourselves will profit us in any way on judgement day!** **"...in Thy sight shall no man living be justified** (as a result of what he has done)" (Psalm 143:2) Can you see how religion's emphasis on man's *doing* cuts the Savior and His claims out of the picture and shifts the focus from Jesus and what He has done, as man's **only** Hope, to man himself? If salvation is by grace, then it cannot be by a man's obedience, and, if salvation does result from a man's personal efforts at obeying God, then salvation is not by grace. It is either one or the other. **Salvation is either by God's grace or man's works, it is not the result of a corporate enterprise.**

It has been wisely said that *'Christianity is Christ'* and this is precisely what it is. To believe (put your trust) in Jesus one must know Him and there is no place where the True Christ is revealed other than in God's only Gospel: **"And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only True God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent"** (John 17:3). To believe in Christ is to know Him, to know and believe in Who He is and to know and believe in what He has done for the sinner. Christ did not die for everyone as so many believe. For if He did, then salvation would not be dependant on what He has done, it would rest on each individual's acceptance of what He has done. It would depend on man's choosing Him rather than on God's having chosen who would become His children. **The Sacrifice Jesus Christ made to God on the behalf of all whom God had given Him, is something which God, not man, had to accept in order to make what Christ did acceptable AND effectual.** Man's part in salvation, the Bible says, is purely as a receiver, a receptacle. The saved man is referred to as **a vessel of mercy**. Just as a bottle plays no part in producing its contents, so too, the Christian has played no part in his salvation, for this is solely the role of God and His Son. Even man's receiving is a result of God's blessing and the faith with which the true Christian believes does not spring from within, but is a gift from God. Christ did something on the cross and *what He did* actually saved those for whom He did it from the penalty and punishment that their sin had incurred. Everyone for whom He laid Himself down as a Sacrifice has, and will, benefit eternally from what He has done. To say that what Christ has done has failed in any way to save even one sinner for whom He did it, or that our own personal obedience must be added to what Christ has done to ensure salvation, is to deny Him as Savior. Some might ask, *'But surely there must be something we have to do in order to gain, or at the very least maintain, salvation?'* The response, according to biblical reasoning, is *'WHY? Why must we do anything, when Christ Himself has done*

EVERYTHING to gain, maintain and secure salvation for all for whom He died? Again, we are reminded: "*..if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain*" (Galatians 2:21), meaning if salvation comes by our own efforts, by anything that we do, then Christ has died in vain. You might ask 'How will I know if I am elect, if I am one of God's chosen?' My friend, believe the Gospel and you will be saved!

"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth....for therein is the righteousness of God revealed..." (Romans 1:16:17).

Source: <http://www.godsonlygospel.com/God%27s%20Good%20News.htm>