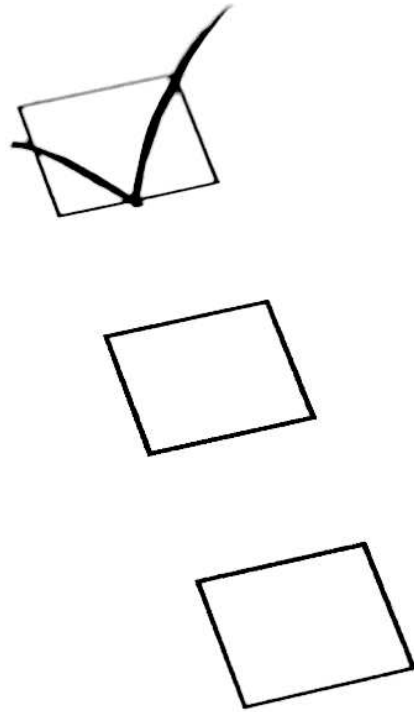


# Is Salvation for You?



*Find out!*



# **THE WORD OF HIS GRACE**

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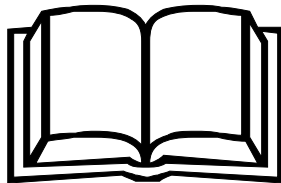
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And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

--Acts 20:32--



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Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the  
KING JAMES VERSION of the Bible.

**H**ave you ever wondered what will happen to you when you die? Will you simply go into oblivion and cease to exist? Will you experience eternal bliss in heaven? Or will you suffer unimaginable anguish forever in hell?

Most people have wondered about these questions, and great thinkers have tried to discover the answers. But frankly, no one can know the answers unless they are given or revealed to him. And the only One who can reveal them is God. He has determined the answers from eternity.

While the Creation makes known that there is a God, the Bible is God's complete and only revelation to man in this age concerning those things necessary for glorifying God in worship and for man's salvation and faith. Although He used many people to write it, it is all the Word of God. The Bible reveals what will happen to you when you die. But it also reveals some other things you should understand first.

### **You Are a Sinner, and So Is Everybody Else**

The Bible reveals that you are a sinner. Here's how we can know this.

The first chapter of the first book of the Bible, Genesis, tells us that God created everything, including man. The second chapter gives us more detail about the man, Adam, and his wife, Eve. It tells us that God placed Adam in a garden called Eden. It also tells us God told Adam he could eat of the fruit from any tree in the garden except the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This command of God was His law for Adam. If Adam disobeyed God's law, he would die.

Chapter three tells us that a serpent (really Satan, the devil, see Revelation 12:9) tricked Eve into eating the forbidden fruit; she gave it to Adam, and—knowing that he was disobeying God—Adam ate it.

The Bible, in 1 John 3:4, tells us, "Sin is the transgression of the law." By breaking or transgressing God's law for him, Adam sinned. And by sinning, he earned death (Genesis 2:17; Romans 6:23a). Before Adam sinned, there was no death. But by sinning, he brought the death sentence upon himself. He would eventually die. More than that, when he sinned, he died spiritually. Spiritual life is a relationship with God, but spiritual death separates us from Him.

You are a sinner because the Bible says, "Wherefore, as by one man [Adam] sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12). Adam's sin, because he was the father and representative of the entire human race, counts as your sin (Romans 5:18), so that you were a sinner even before you were born (Psalm 51:5).

Adam's sin has also corrupted the nature of all his descendents, so that we are continually committing our own sins. The prophet

Jeremiah was inspired to write, "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9).

Since you have inherited a depraved nature that causes you to continually sin, you are by nature a sinner. You naturally disobey God, you are a natural lawbreaker: "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). A few verses earlier, we read, "As it is written, 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).

If there is nothing you can do to please God, if you are "dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1), what will happen to you when you die? Without some sort of intervention, you will remain separated from God for eternity. Although spiritually dead, you will be conscious and will suffer torment. On the Day of Judgment, your name will not be "found written in the book of life"; you will be "cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:15) where you will be tormented forever (Revelation 14:10–11; Matthew 25:30, 41).

### **Your Need**

Obviously, if you cannot do anything about this awful situation yourself, then you need help. You need to be rescued or saved from your sins and their penalty of eternal damnation.

Make no mistake about it. God is a just God, and justice demands that lawbreaking, or sin, be punished. God will not simply forgive your sins without making sure that His law is satisfied.

Before the foundation of the world, God provided a perfect plan to save His people while maintaining His justice. In His love and mercy, God would save His people through His Son. He would have His Son born into the world as a man—Jesus Christ—live a sinless life, and then be sacrificed to pay the penalty for the sins of all who will believe on Jesus Christ as their only Savior.

### **Jesus Christ, Our Savior**

Remember: We are all hopeless sinners who can do no good works that will save us. But 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).

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Christians living in the city of Corinth, "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that

he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

The above is a brief account of the Gospel, or good news, of what God did through Jesus Christ to save His people. Before Jesus was born, an angel announced to Joseph, "And [Mary] shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). Jesus means, "Jehovah [the Lord] is salvation."

But how could Jesus pay the penalty for our sins? He could do this because He is "the Christ [the anointed of God], the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16). In fact, writing of Jesus, the apostle John says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:1, 14). Jesus Christ is God the Son, the second Person of the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit).

Jesus is God in both Person and nature. To save us, He added a human nature to His God nature (Philippians 2:6-8). Being born into this world, He lived a sinless life (1 Peter 2:22; 1 John 3:5), took on Himself our sins and God's just wrath for those sins (2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13), and was crucified on a cross (Matthew 27:35; 1 Corinthians 2:2), dying in our place (1 Peter 3:18). By doing this, He satisfied the law and paid the penalty for our sins (Matthew 20:28; Hebrews 9:28; 1 Peter 2:24). Also, He satisfied God's wrath against us (Ephesians 5:2; Romans 5:9). Not only that, He also cleansed us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:7). Still more, He has caused us to be dead to the law and married to Him (Romans 7:1-4)!

Because Jesus was God (yet with a human nature) and had no sins of His own, He was able to bear our sins on the cross and pay the death penalty for them. On the third day after his death, He rose from the grave, proving that our sins are gone and that we are justified before God (Romans 4:25).

By living a sinless life, Jesus also did something else. His sinless life is applied to, or imputed to, all His people. Just as Adam's sin is imputed to the entire human race, so Jesus Christ's sinlessness is imputed to His people, the elect of God, those God has called out of this world and "into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Colossians 1:13). The Greek word, *ekklēsia*, literally means "called out," and it is the word translated "church" in most English Bibles. The *ekklēsia* is composed of the people who believe that Jesus alone is their Savior. Romans 5:19 says, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." So then, because of Jesus Christ's death, we receive a "not

guilty” verdict before God’s throne, and because of His sinless life, we are declared “righteous.” But how does Jesus’ death and sinlessness come to be applied to you? You must believe that Jesus Christ alone is your Savior. But since believing this is a good work, and you are a sinner, how can you do this good work of believing?

### **Saved by Grace**

You can do this work of believing because of God’s grace. God’s saving us even though we don’t deserve it is grace. And part of what He does for us by grace is to give us the gift of faith, or believing: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8–9).

This Scripture passage tells us that we are saved by grace, not our works, and that grace comes through faith. This does not make faith a work we must perform in order to be saved, because the Scripture also says that the faith we need to be saved is a gift from God.

If you believe that Jesus Christ’s sacrifice has completely paid for your sins it is because God has worked a miracle in your mind—He has given you the gift of faith.

Along with and inseparable to faith is the gift of repentance—the change of mind from sinful unbelief and rebellion toward God to a recognition of your sinfulness, belief of the Gospel, and submission toward God (Job 42:6; Acts 20:21; 11:18).

The miracle in your mind by which you have faith and repentance is called regeneration or being born again. It is a renewal of your mind and is caused by God acting through the Holy Spirit. Whereas before being born again you were spiritually dead, after regeneration you are spiritually alive.

When you were spiritually dead, you could do no good works, including the good work of believing in Jesus Christ alone as your Savior. When you are born again, you (really God working in you) can do good works. You begin your good works by believing the Gospel about what Jesus Christ has done for His people. Of the Jews of His day who did not accept His message because they were not born again, Jesus declared, “For this people’s heart [mind] is waxed gross [become dull], and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them” (Matthew 13:15). Jesus was speaking of the spiritual blindness of the people because they were spiritually dead. If you will read John 12:37–40, you will see that Jesus

clearly taught that this spiritual blindness comes from God, "He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart." Jesus also said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). When God regenerates our minds, we can perceive the things of the kingdom of God and believe. Therefore, if you believe the Gospel message you have just been reading—if you believe that you are a helpless and miserable sinner in need of saving and that Jesus Christ alone is your Savior—then you have been born again and you are demonstrating the inward gifts of repentance and faith. So, you are born again—you have new spiritual life, you have repentance and faith, and God has outwardly declared you legally justified, or "not guilty" and "righteous." But God is not finished with you yet. He will continue to save you in an inner work called sanctification.

### **The Christian Life**

Sanctification means to make holy or to set apart for holy use. As this writer says, this begins (but doesn't end) with our being born again:

Now, then, unregenerate humanity sins habitually. Not only are the overt actions sinful, but even those acts which most people would not call sinful, are so because of evil motivation.... Then the Holy Spirit comes upon this individual and instills into him different habits. These new habits, though they may and will develop by practice, are not produced by practice. The Spirit immediately forms the habit for him. Such is regeneration.... The regenerated sinner now has desires and thoughts he never had before.... The Holy Spirit has regenerated us and changed our mind.

—Gordon H. Clark, *The Holy Spirit*  
(Hobbs, N. Mex.: The Trinity Foundation, 1993), 34

And God continues to work in us and change us. Through the inner work of sanctification, God saves us from the power of sin and begins to make us holy. How does God do this? Concerning His followers, Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth" (John 17:17). Commenting on this verse, Charles H. Spurgeon said, "We cannot afford to give up God's inspired Word, because it is a means of our sanctification; and if this be taken away, it is not such-and-such a dogma, as they call it, put into the background, but it is truth that would sanctify us which is discarded, it is God's own Word that is flung to the dogs; and that must never be" (Sermon "Christ's Care of His Disciples," delivered in 1857).

When we read God's Word, the Bible, or hear it rightly taught, God's thoughts begin to become our thoughts. We are nourished spiritually. As Jesus said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). I cannot emphasize enough how important it is for Christians to be reading the Bible daily. God's Word is our spiritual manna. Jesus said He is the spiritual bread from heaven (John 6:32-35). He is also the Word of God made flesh (John 1:1, 14). Philippians 2:5 tells us, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." We do this when we read the written word, the Bible. In this way, we see that, in reality, it is Jesus Christ "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Corinthians 1:30).

Some people make the mistake of saying that our good works sanctify us. This is not correct. Sanctification is a part of our salvation, and salvation is all of grace. Sanctification is a work that God works in us through His Word and the Holy Spirit working in our minds. Immediately after explaining that we are not saved by works, but by grace, Paul writes, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).

We must be careful, however, not to fall into the error of thinking that our sanctification, or any part of our salvation rests on our good works. Our salvation rests entirely upon the finished work of Jesus Christ. The good works you perform are merely the result of the salvation Jesus Christ bought for you on the Cross and which God is now working in you: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13).

As is true of all Christians, there will certainly be times when it will seem that you are doing no good works, and you will have times when you slip into sin. But you can take comfort in the fact that your salvation is in Jesus Christ and that God will never abandon the work He has begun in you: "I thank God for every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:3-6). Once we are saved, we cannot lose our salvation. After all, our salvation is God's work and He can't fail.

Don't ever let anyone tell you that God will turn from you or that you can lose your salvation because of sin. He may chastise you as a father chastens his child in love (Hebrews 12:6), but He will never leave you or remove His salvation from you: "For I am persuaded," wrote Paul, "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities,



nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38–39).

You will never become completely holy or sinless in this life. That remains for another work of God, called glorification, when Jesus, returning from heaven, will "change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Philippians 3:21), and, "when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:54–58). Whatever happens, hold on to these words of our Lord Jesus Christ: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5), and "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20).

## Who We Are

I hope this little booklet has been a blessing to you. I was a member of and writer for the Worldwide Church of God until 1991. My wife, Mary, was also a member and a production assistant in the church's television department. But then God began revealing to us the truth of His glorious Gospel of the free gift of grace by Jesus Christ. So, in 1991, we left the Worldwide Church of God, our friends, our worldview, and our employment.

In the mid-1990s, I began writing articles that exposed the heresies and spiritual abuses that were continuing in the Worldwide Church of God even after the death of its founder, Herbert W. Armstrong. These articles appeared in *The Quarterly Journal of the Personal Freedom Outreach*, a well-respected Christian apologetics journal. Many people who read the articles wrote asking for help for themselves or loved ones exiting Armstrongism, to ask doctrinal questions, or to share their experiences in Armstrong-type sects.

I soon came to see that cults and unbiblical teachings are flourishing because too many people are ignorant of the basics of biblical Christianity and only give lip service to following the Bible alone. Toward the end of 2000, I launched *Word of His Grace* to address these issues through both print and our website, [wordofhisgrace.org](http://wordofhisgrace.org).

The website has since grown in impact and respect. Our increasing number of articles are reproduced and favorably cited on websites around the world. We publish Gospel tracts and small books that have been widely requested and used by a number of missionaries and other Christian teachers. We also publish an email newsletter. Everything we write is centered on Jesus Christ and our commitment to take the Bible alone for our doctrine.

We are family-based. Mary and I are truly a team and always thank God for having given us to each other. We try to be good stewards of the resources God provides. To this end, we have recently put all of our literature on our website. This has enabled us to scale-back our print publishing, which had been growing increasingly expensive as costs rise. We now send printed materials only to those who do not have access to the internet.

We trust that as long as we continue to please God in what we teach, and we remain good stewards of what He supplies, He will provide everything needed to continue these activities. We do not ask humans for money, or anything, but bring our needs in prayer to God.

This does not mean that God has not used people to provide our needs. He has. It means that we make our needs known to God, and if He then makes them known to you, well, that is between you and Him. This is a lesson in faith. You can trust in God's promises found in Scripture: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). If you are like-minded with us, we would love to fellowship with you. Email us.

By His grace alone,

Peter Ditzel

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Our TULIP series of booklets have been read by Christians around the world and have been used by missionaries and other teachers to disciple their brothers and sisters in Christ.

### **TULIP SERIES**

#### **Man's Sinfulness, God's Sovereignty, and the New Birth (Book T)**

How sinful is mankind? Are unsaved people sick and in need of a cure? Or is their condition far worse? Can the natural, sinful man accept Jesus Christ as Savior?

#### **What Must You Do to Be Saved? (Book U)**

Is God looking for a few good men or women? Did He look ahead from eternity to see who would respond to the Gospel? What does God want you to do before He will save you?

#### **If Jesus Died for All, Why Are Some Not Saved? (Book L)**

If "God so loved the [whole] world," if He "will have all men to be saved," if He is "not willing that any should perish," why every day do people die unsaved?

#### **Can Anyone Refuse God's Grace? (Book I)**

Is God pleading with and crying over stubborn sinners who won't accept His grace? Can man thwart God's will?

#### **Once Saved, Always Saved? (Book P)**

Can you lose your salvation? Is it arrogant to think you can't? Can you have both security and assurance?

### **OTHER BOOKLETS**

#### **What Is the Gospel?**

Paul warned the Galatians, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." But what is the Gospel? And what are some of the false gospels being promoted?

#### **Is Salvation for You?**

This Gospel tract emphasizes God's sovereignty, man's inability, and Jesus Christ's totally effectual atonement in salvation. It gives enough information to avoid the pitfall of briefer tracts of being so general they either mislead or leave the reader with more questions than answers.

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