

WHY WE NEED A SAVIOR

MAN

GOD

IN THE BEGINNING . . . The first man and woman, Adam and Eve, were created by God and enjoyed perfect fellowship with Him. They were without sin and lived peacefully in a beautiful garden that supplied all their needs. God gave them only one rule, which was not to eat the fruit of a particular tree. However, Satan tempted them to eat the forbidden fruit by saying it would benefit them. They ate it, and that act of disobedience against God was the first sin. It severed Adam's and Eve's relationships with God because He is holy and cannot have fellowship with evil.

MAN

SIN

GOD

OUR CONDITION TODAY . . . Since we are all Adam's descendants, every child in the world has been born with his fallen nature. Instead of coming into the world desiring to do right, we are all born with an inclination toward sin and evil. Proof of this natural downward tendency is abundantly evident anywhere human beings are found. Our sin results in tremendous pain, sorrow, and suffering. The consequences of sin reach far beyond this life because those who reject God and die in a sinful state will go to Hell and be separated from God eternally.

MAN

JESUS

GOD

GOD'S PLAN . . . God wants to remove sin from our lives so that we can have a relationship with Him and spend eternity in Heaven. However, the penalty for sin is death, and that penalty must be paid. Out of His great love for us, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Savior. Jesus lived as a man and died in our place for our sins. Because of that, if we follow the steps that God has laid out in the Bible, our sins can be forgiven. God will change our desires and give us power to live without sin so we can enjoy eternal life with Him in Heaven one day.

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PARDONED IN PARADISE

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God not only freed Blanche from partying, drinking, and drugs, but He took away the desire for those things in a moment of time.

By Blanche Sifagaloa

My family is from the island of Oahu in Hawaii. Ours was a good home but not a Christian home, though my parents did let my siblings and me go to Sunday school. From the time I was little, someone from the church would pick us up and take us every week, and we would stay for some church services too. I remember seeing our pastor and others cry as they prayed at the altar benches after services. Even though I didn't comprehend what it was all about, I knew that prayer



meant talking to God one-on-one. However, I didn't truly understand what salvation was.

As I entered my teenage years, I went to church less and less. I had my own ideas about what I wanted to do, and that is what I did. I began living a life of partying, drinking, and doing drugs, though my memories from church always stayed with me and I longed to have what I had seen in the lives of the people there. Occasionally I would go back to church, but never consistently.

At age sixteen I became a mother, and eventually had six children. They did not all have the same father and none of the fathers were around for very long. As each of my children grew old enough, people from the church came and picked them up for Sunday school in the same way I had been taken—sometimes it was the children of the people who had brought me years before. I also went with them now and then, and many times I told God I would change my life, but never did.

In my early thirties, I reconnected with a friend from high school named Al, who later became my husband. He was wonderful and he became the father my children never had before. However, Al and I were partiers, and our house was a party house. People from all walks of life came and went around the clock. Our doors were wide open to anything and everything.

My mom passed away in 1997, and that was a very difficult time for me. At that point I had not been to church for quite some time, and at the beginning of 1998, I finally decided I needed to go back. I had just turned thirty-six years old and went to a service with my children. That day, several of the church people helped me pray, and I finally understood that Jesus' death was something that really

happened—Jesus literally shed His Blood for my sins. I knew I had done very bad things, and thinking about that was painful. I was so sorry.

Al and I know that God did not deliver us because of anything we have done; we made a lot of mistakes, but God is good and He showed us the way out of a life of sin and shame.

Right there, I confessed my sins to God and asked Him for forgiveness, and I received salvation! Tears of joy flowed as I realized that God sent His Son not to condemn me, but to save me! I knew I didn't deserve His love and mercy, but my eyes were opened to understand that God loves me, and that He had loved me all along. Still today I cannot understand why God loves me after the way I treated Him, but He does.

I walked out of that church feeling like I was in the clouds! I had been paying for drugs to make me feel good, but salvation from God was better than any drug I had ever used, and it was free! Immediately, all my desires for sinful and worldly pleasures were gone. I quit smoking cigarettes, quit drinking, quit doing drugs, and did it with no treatment plans. I never even had withdrawals. I got saved!

Things in our home changed as well. The doors that had been wide open, closed. I told my party friends, "I love

you, but I don't party anymore." Al was supportive of the changes, too. Though he was not saved, he always supported me in whatever I did, including my new faith. He set up two baby gates in one of the doorways, stacked double high to keep our old friends away. They had to learn that ours was not a party house anymore.

The kids were amazed and so happy about what God had done for me. I had been selfish before, and they suffered because of it. When I received salvation, I began to truly value my children and treat them the right way.

About a year and a half after I was saved, I went to a camp meeting convention at the Apostolic Faith Church in Portland, Oregon. While there, I saw Gretchen Friesen, who had been my Sunday school teacher when I was a little girl. She told me she had been praying for me all those years! I was amazed to hear that, and I know it also encouraged her faith to see that her prayers were answered. Now she is in Heaven and I look forward to seeing her there some day.

In time, Al started coming to church with me. God instantly delivered him from his alcohol addiction, and then saved him at the 2012 Portland camp meeting. God has blessed our home in so many ways, and our walk with Him only gets better. Al and I know that God did not deliver us because of anything we have done; we made a lot of mistakes, but God is good and He showed us the way out of a life of sin and shame. All we had to do was follow Him.

God has brought me so far since He saved me, and I truly appreciate Him and all the people He has used to encourage me in the Gospel. I love these people so much, and most of all I love God for all He has done. My desire is to keep serving Him and to be ready when Jesus calls. ■

STEPS TO DELIVERANCE

ACKNOWLEDGE

Admit that you have sinned and need God's help.

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

CONFESS AND REPENT

Be genuinely sorry for the sins you have committed and ask God to forgive you.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. (Luke 13:3)

FORSAKE

Determine that with God's help you are going to turn away from all sin in your life.

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him . . . for he will abundantly pardon. (Isaiah 55:7)

BELIEVE

When you have honestly and sincerely taken the steps above, then believe that God will hear your prayer and save you.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

RECEIVE

God will let you know that the work is done in your heart.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. (Romans 8:16)

If you are a new Christian, we encourage you to write and request the tract titled "STARTING OUT."

If you are not a Christian or if you have been walking with the Lord for some time, we want to do all we can to help you with your spiritual needs.

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