

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

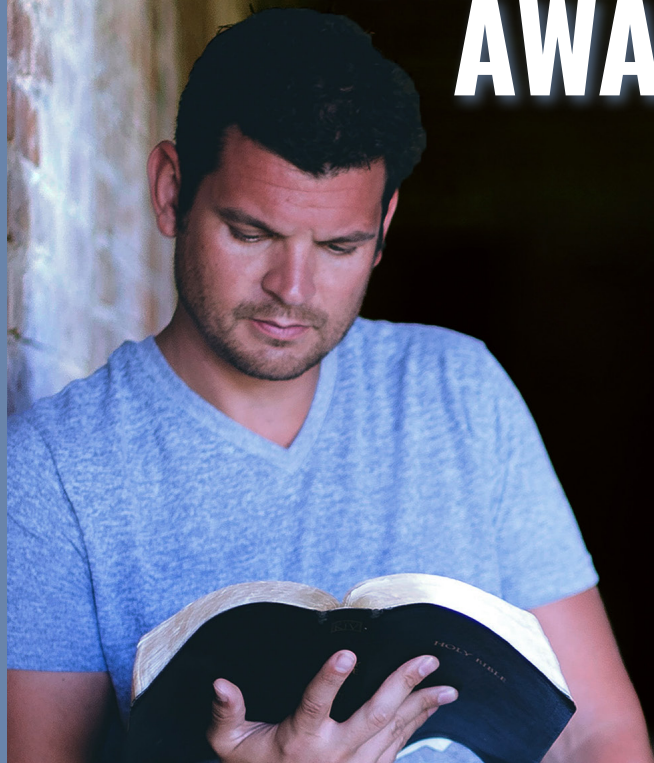
JESUS

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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TURNING BACK AFTER TURNING AWAY



TURNING BACK AFTER TURNING AWAY

God didn't give me what I deserved.
He gave me mercy.

By Jeff Yellott

As a child growing up, I had a loving and caring mother, but God did not have a proper place in our home. Meanwhile, I had a wonderful Christian grandmother, and when I was at her house, she was faithful to take every opportunity to teach me about the Lord. It seemed she often had a number of my cousins at her home, and at night, she would always gather us around while she read the Bible. Then we would all get down on our knees and pray. That gave me a tremendous advantage going through life because I always believed in God, even though I did not know Him in a personal way.



Later, in my teenage years, I actually lived with my grandmother for a while, and again she was faithful to do what she could to speak a word for the Lord here and

there. She had a way of bringing Heaven so close as she talked about the goodness and glory of God. Sometimes, after partying all night, I would come home as daylight was dawning. Upon entering the front door, I would stop and listen. Many times, she was on her knees, and I could hear her praying. I'm sure many of those prayers were for me.

That same grandmother gave me some Christian literature, and when I was in my late teens, my job included working at night and often by myself. Interestingly enough, I would read what she had given me. As I did, the Lord began to deal with my heart. One night, as I was reading that literature and considering what it said, I just looked up and with a very simple prayer asked the Lord to make me right with Him. While it was just a simple prayer, it was from my heart. God's Spirit came down in a wonderful and powerful way, and I knew I was washed clean and forgiven of my sins. Nobody was there with me, but I didn't need anyone to say, "Hey, Jeff, that's the Lord." I just knew.

It was a wonderful experience, and after that I started listening to Christian radio and began attending church services. When I would pray at the altars after the services, many times the Lord would meet me there, and it was so good.

I went along for years like that. By then I had married the woman I loved, and we had three little boys. Yet as time went on, I slowly began to take my life back, just a little at a time, until I compromised to the point where I didn't feel like I was doing the Lord any favors by calling myself a Christian. Then I made the decision to turn and go away from the good life that the Lord had given me. It seems unbelievable now, but it was definitely a trick of the enemy to get me to that point. I know I could have turned to the

Lord at that time for help, and He would have straightened it all out, but I didn't. Instead, I went away for over ten years.

Even so, God was always faithful to me. He sent people my way who testified to me of Him. He reminded me every day—I don't think there was one day that passed that I didn't think about the Lord and truly wish that I was saved. But the further I went, the more impossible getting back to God seemed to become. The sins built up and wove their way around me, and my wife as well.

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Sometimes at night I would dream, and during whatever was happening in my dreams, I would cry out to God and ask for help. I would be reminded of the peace and the witness that was down in my heart when I had been saved. But when I woke up in the morning, my life was always the same.

On Sundays, I dropped my boys off at church for Sunday school. Then I began attending the Sunday morning services sometimes, and started reading the Bible a little and secretly praying. God was dealing with me in His wonderful way, bringing me back to where I needed to be, even though I did not realize it at the time.

On March 19, 1999, I came home after work, and some events transpired that the Lord used to bring me to a crossroads—one that I could really see. Again, I was by myself, and He spoke to my heart. He let me know that if I would turn to Him, He would help me. As I thought about

that, still I waited. For a moment I thought, If I turn away now—I had gone so far—where will I be if He ever calls me again? And then I thought, Well, this is like an opportunity and an invitation just from the Lord, so I decided to go to church. It was a Friday night, and I went to the service still dressed in my work clothes. I sat and listened to the sermon, just wishing that the minister would stop so I could go forward and pray.

During that service, the enemy of my soul was battling, putting thoughts in my mind like, What if the Lord doesn't actually save you? You've gotten to this point, what if He won't do it? It was more lies of the enemy, because God did not bring me all that way to give me what I deserved; He was calling after my heart in mercy.

At the end of the service, everyone was invited to pray, and I poured my heart out to God. I said, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner," and told Him I was sorry for all my sins. I told Him I was sorry for ever turning away. The Lord came down and put peace in my heart, and I grabbed onto that. Years before I had injured my back, and after I had been kneeling in prayer for a while and then stood up, I thought the Lord had healed it. Although He actually had not healed my back, He had removed the burden of sin. I didn't realize how heavy it was until the Lord took it off. It was wonderful!

The next day I woke up really early, and I knew what had happened to me wasn't a dream. God had restored the relationship that I had broken when I walked away from Him. I didn't deserve it, but I thank God for His mercy and His love.

It has been over twenty years since the day God saved me again. Many events have transpired in my life during that time, yet there has never been a problem, never an issue, and never a concern that I could not give to God by getting down to pray. I thank the Lord for all of His mercy and love to me. ■

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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