

Don't Stub Your Toe



IT COULD BE
THE **LAST** THING
YOU EVER DO

TODD FRIEL

A woman in the Midwest recently stubbed her toe so hard it caused a blood clot that released to her brain and killed her. Admittedly, death from toe stubbing doesn't happen every day, but it should serve as a reminder that life is fleeting and any of us could die at any moment. Why?

Why do we die?

Why do we live?

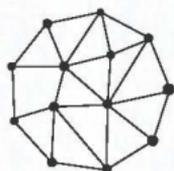
What is the point?

Why does evil exist?

What happens when we die?

Why does the world operate the way it does?

Congratulations for being thoughtful enough to set aside a few moments to ponder the big questions of life... before you stub your toe.



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You Are Not Lucky Primordial Soup



Despite what you have been told in science class, you are not here by accident; time and chance have not determined your existence.

Are you willing to be open-minded enough to consider an option that is both true and better? Here it is: You were created by God, and for God.¹ You are an image bearer of the Maker of heaven and earth. And that explains why you are the way you are.

You see, every created object reflects aspects of its creator. You are no different. Just as art is a faint reflection of the artist, and a building reflects something of the architect,

you bear a resemblance to the God who created you.²

- You live because God is alive.
- You think because God thinks.
- You work because God is at work.

Design reveals something about the designer. Your designer is the God of the Bible. While you are not a god, you are made in the likeness of God Himself and you share some of His attributes.

- You see and hear because God sees and hears.
- You communicate because God communicates.
- You have emotions because God has emotions.

Not only has the Creator of the universe intricately designed you, He thought of you before time began, and He knows you even better than you know yourself.³ God knows your birth date, death date, and every date in

between. He sustains your life and is intimately involved in every detail.

Your God, whether you acknowledge Him as such or not, knows what you are going to think, speak, and do before you do. Absolutely nothing about you is a secret to Him. That raises a question: what exactly does He see when He looks at you?

Twenty-five years ago, I would have answered that question the same way you probably did: “Overall, God sees me as a pretty good person.” Will you permit me to challenge your answer? You do not need to pass your paper to the front of the class; this is strictly between you and God.

Are You Sure You Are a Good Person?

While this might sound counterintuitive, the most horrifying sentence you will ever hear is, “God is good.” God is thoroughly righteous, holy, just, and loving. While that sounds like good news, if we consider this more deeply, it is not good news for us at all.

Because God is good, He loves everything that is good: kindness, generosity, love, faithfulness, patience, grace, mercy, charity, gentleness, compassion, honesty, etc.

Because God loves all things that are good, He necessarily hates everything that is not good: cruelty, murder, theft, violence, hatred, lying, greed, bullying, immorality, unrighteous anger, etc.

God did not write the standard of right and wrong; He is the standard of right and wrong. Morality did not evolve, it exists because God is moral, and our programmer has hardwired us with His moral code. We have a name for that: the conscience.

This explains why you and I feel guilty when we do something wrong. This also explains why you and I have an intuitive fear of death; we sense that something bad could happen on the other side. There is a reason for that too.

Because the foundation of God's throne is righteousness and justice,⁴ God cannot and will not let unrighteous acts go unpunished.

- We have courtrooms because God is going to have a day in court with every human who has ever lived.⁵
- We have judges because God is the ultimate supreme court justice.
- We have prisons because God has an eternal prison prepared for lawbreakers.

“It is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment.”⁶ Unlike earthly courts where clever lawyers can manipulate the laws, God will not be fooled. There will be no lost evidence, no perjury, and no confusion.

- Every dirty fantasy will be revealed.
- Every mean thought will be exposed.
- Every deed done in darkness will be brought into the light.
- Every violation of God’s perfect, holy law will be judged for what it is: sin.

While this might make you uncomfortable, isn’t it better to examine yourself today, rather than wait until it is too late to do any-

thing about it? So let's go to the courtroom of God's justice and see how you will do.

The Court Room

Imagine you are standing before your Creator. The One who spoke the universe into existence opens the books to the pages that bear your name. Your record of lawbreaking is chronicled in perfect detail. Permit me to open the books to just five of God's laws.

First Commandment: "You shall have no other gods before Me"⁷

It is only right that our primary affections go to the One who made us. When we love anything more than God (even good things), those objects effectively become our idols.

Should we love our spouse and children? Yes. Can we enjoy a good meal or own a nice home? Of course. But when we love the gifts more than the Giver, then we have violated this commandment. Can any of us say that our primary affections have always been directed toward the God who made us?

Third Commandment: “You shall not take the name of God in vain”⁸

Have you ever used God’s name flippantly, as in “OMG”? Instead of using a four-letter filth word, have you used God’s holy name to curse or express disgust? Is it any wonder God says, “The LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain”⁹?

Fifth Commandment: “Honor your father and your mother”¹⁰

Did you always happily obey and honor your parents? Were you ever disobedient or disrespectful? You and I were no different than the little monster children we see at a McDonald’s Playland. Every person on the planet has broken this law, including you.

Sixth Commandment: “You shall not murder”¹¹

Undoubtedly you think you are safe on this one, but Jesus said, “Everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court . . . and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell.”¹²

The Bible says that “everyone who hates his brother is a murderer.”¹³ How many times did you call your siblings names? Have you ever been mad at another driver? Have you ever gossiped and impugned another’s reputation? Then God views you as a murderer at heart, because He sees more than our actions; He sees our thought life.

Seventh Commandment: “You shall not commit adultery”¹⁴

Perhaps you are relieved that you have never had an affair. Read these words of Jesus carefully:

“You have heard that it was said, ‘YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY’; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”¹⁵

How many sexual thoughts have you had that you would prefer your mother didn’t know about? How many times have you stared at pornography? God has recorded

every sinful sexual thought you have ever had.

How Did You Do?

That was just five of the Ten Commandments. If you have broken any of God's laws, then you are just like the rest of us: a sinner who has rebelled against the sovereign King of creation.

- We feel guilty because we are guilty.
- We feel shame because we have done shameful things.
- We are afraid to die because our consciences tell us we are in big trouble with our Maker.

When we take inventory of our violations against God's law, we see that we have a warehouse full of sins. Our day in court looks rather bleak.

Objection!



There you are, standing before God with no loved ones, no lawyer, and no excuses. The all-knowing Judge of the world not only heard the evidence of your crimes; He is an eyewitness to your lawbreaking. You and I are guilty beyond the shadow of a doubt.

The King of kings is about to bring down the mallet of His justice and pass sentence. If you are guilty, you will be sent to an eternity in God's prison—a very real place called hell. Your fate is about to be decided and there are no appeals. As God prepares to render your eternal verdict, you feel a desperate need to plead your case.

“Objection, Your Honor, I didn’t know You existed.”

God has made it abundantly clear that He exists.

- Every human intuitively knows there is an afterlife.¹⁶
- God has hardwired humans to innately know He exists.¹⁷
- In creating the universe, God has made His presence inexcusably obvious.¹⁸
- God has given us a conscience to know we have sinned against our Maker.¹⁹

When we claim that God doesn’t exist, we are merely suppressing the obvious truth, “because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.”²⁰

Objection overruled.

“Objection, Your Honor, I’m not as bad as other people.”

Michael Ross, known as the Roadside Strangler, murdered eight teens and young women

between 1981 and 1984. In an interview before his execution in 2005, he said, “I’m not a big serial killer by the way. Eight people—that’s nothing. There’s a lot of other guys you can go see.”²¹ In other words, if you think I am bad murderer, there are a lot of other serial killers who are worse than me.

Just like Michael Ross, we deceive ourselves when we think we are okay because we are not as bad as other people. That is why the Bible says, “The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?”²²

You think you are not as bad as a crackhead, the crackhead thinks he is better than his dealer, the dealer thinks he is better than the rapist, the rapist thinks he is not as bad as Charles Manson, and Charles Manson thinks he is better than Genghis Khan. Unfortunately, the standard by which we will be judged is God’s holy standard, not our own standard.

Imagine a man who embezzled two million dollars saying to a judge, “Your Honor, I know I stole two million, but Bernie Madoff embezzled \$65 billion.” Now imagine if the

judge said, “I never thought of that; you are free to go.” If you think that is too ridiculous to be true, you are correct.

Your objection is overruled and God is now prepared to sentence you.

“Objection, Your Honor, I’ve done good things.”

You are not the first person to think your good deeds will outweigh your bad. But the question is not whether a criminal has done anything good; it’s whether he has broken the law.

If your son hit his sister in the eye, would you let him off the hook because he made his bed that morning? His “good deeds” do not offset his crimes.

Imagine a criminal who said, “Judge, I murdered my wife, but I washed your car windows on the way into court.” That has nothing to do with his crime. A good judge will not only disdain the criminal’s bribery, he would be offended. Just like God.

God dismisses your objection and is now prepared to render His verdict.

“Objection, Your Honor, You should let me go because You are good.”

Let's say your neighbor committed horrendous crimes, stood in court and pleaded, “Judge, I know I am guilty, but I think you are a really good man and you should overlook my offenses.”

The judge would say, “I am indeed good, and that is precisely why I must punish you for your crimes. Because I am good, I am going to give you exactly what you deserve.”

“Objection, Your Honor, I haven't committed a lot of sins.”

It takes only one criminal act to make a person a criminal; and it takes only one violation of God's commandments to be considered a lawbreaker.²³ But truthfully, who of us can say we haven't committed tons of sins?

Is it fair to say that you have committed at least three sins per day since you were old enough to know what sin is, say, 15 years of age? Let's do some math.

| Present age | Total # of years sinning | Total # of sins |
|-------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 20 | 5 | 5,475 |
| 30 | 15 | 16,425 |
| 40 | 25 | 27,375 |
| 50 | 35 | 38,325 |
| 60 | 45 | 49,275 |
| 70 | 55 | 60,225 |

As you can see, you have committed a staggering number of crimes against God. If God let a criminal like you go free, He would not be good at all; He would be wicked. And He isn't.

“Objection, Your Honor, I haven't committed any big sins like rape or murder.”

While that may be the case, what makes our “little sins” damnable is not the nature of the sin per se, but the One against whom the sin has been committed.

Think of it like this: if I tell a lie to my teenaged son, nothing is going to happen to me. If I lie to my wife, I sleep on the couch. If

I lie to my boss, I get fired. If I lie to the government, I could go to jail. Same crime, different punishment. Why? Because of the one against whom I have committed the crime.

You may think you have committed little sins, but those little offenses have been committed against a supremely holy and righteous God. That offended deity is not persuaded by your objection.

“Objection, Your Honor, an eternity in hell is unreasonable.”

It is obvious to everyone but ourselves that eternity in hell is the correct sentence for lawbreakers. A preacher once said, “The moment when you take your first step through the gates of hell, the only thing you will hear is all of creation standing to its feet and applauding and praising God because God has rid the earth of you. That’s how not good you are.”

You and I minimize our sins because we cannot see ourselves clearly. We are so entangled in sin that we don’t realize how wicked

we are. The sinless Creator is the One best able to determine the punishment for guilty criminals, not the criminals themselves.

Not only does God see sin as exceedingly sinful, He is the One against whom each and every offense is primarily committed. If anyone should be angry about sin, it is God Himself. And He is. And that anger will last for an eternity.

“Objection, Your Honor, you are too loving to send me to hell.”

Imagine a son who broke many laws and found himself in the courtroom of his father, the judge. How would you feel if the judge dismissed his guilty son's case because the child pleaded, “Daddy, if you love me you will let me go.”

Perhaps it would be loving toward the child if the father set him free, but it would not be loving toward everyone else. God's holiness demands that justice is served, and that is the most loving thing He could do.

You are out of excuses and objections.

The Inevitable Verdict

There is one word you do not want to hear thundered from God's bench: "Guilty." But that is precisely what God will say to all criminals with a rap sheet. If you think I am trying to scare you, well, you are right. My friend, you should be afraid. "It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God."²⁴

When God makes His irrevocable decision and slams down His gavel of justice, your eternal fate will be sealed. Isn't it better to know what your verdict will be before it is too late?

If God finds you guilty, and He will, you will be instantly whisked off to God's eternal prison, hell. This is your final resting place, but there will be no rest. God's righteous, holy, indignant wrath will rest on you for all of eternity.

Your first day of activities involves weeping, gnashing your teeth, and torment.²⁵ Your ten-thousandth day is no different from your first; your suffering will never decrease in intensity. You would give anything for a

drop of water or a ray of sunshine, but it never comes. Ever.

You will find no comfort in being surrounded with friends. Hell will not be an eternal party; it will be eternal punishment. And the One inflicting the punishment will be the One against whom you have committed all of your crimes: God Himself.

God, the just judge of the entire world, is going to judge you, and He is willing and able to pour out His anger and wrath on you forever and ever and ever.²⁶ His holiness, righteousness, and love demand it.

You will receive only ongoing, unrelenting, and intense misery—eternal, conscious torment with no reprieve. You will forever receive the just reward for the unrighteous life you have willingly and knowingly lived.

Is there any hope for sinners like you and me? Is there any way we can escape the horrors of hell?

It Is Not Too Late



One of the best words in the Bible is “but.” You and I are lawbreakers who have earned an eternity of God’s wrath... *but*...

But God, being rich in mercy, **because of His great love** with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.²⁷

The simple conjunction “but” rescues us. God is love;²⁸ He is rich in mercy and He does not desire the death of the wicked.²⁹

God desires all men everywhere to be saved.³⁰ That includes you. Because God is loving, kind, and merciful, He wants to save you from the punishment you deserve.³¹

Tension

There is tremendous tension in this scenario. You are a guilty sinner and God must punish you. But He is also filled with mercy, grace, and lovingkindness, and He desires to forgive you and rescue you. However, if God simply dismissed the cases of guilty criminals, He would not be just. So how can God be just and yet forgiving at the same time? There is one word that breaks that tension: the gospel.

The Gospel

The gospel is as simple as this: you have broken God's laws, but Jesus Christ has paid your fine. Your court case can be dismissed because Jesus Christ has paid your debt to justice. You, a guilty criminal, can go free because the Judge accepts the payment of the death of Jesus Christ on your behalf.

This is why the gospel is called good news. In fact, it is the best news ever. Our biggest problem (facing God on Judgment Day) has been solved. Guilty criminals can have their criminal record expunged, but justice must be satisfied in order for that to happen.

The Bible teaches “without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness” of sins.³² In order for sins to be forgiven, blood has to be shed—either yours or someone else’s.

You could die a thousand deaths and not pay for a single sin because you are a sinful human being. An animal sacrifice cannot pay your debt because sins cannot be forgiven by the sacrifice of a lesser thing. You need a perfect, sinless human representative.

At the same time, because your sins have been committed against God, you also need a divine representative. In other words, you need a God-man to pay for your crimes against God. That is precisely who Jesus Christ is: the God-man who acts as your representative, who is able to offer a divine sacrifice to appease the wrath of God.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came to this earth on a rescue mission to seek and save lost people. Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, took on human flesh, became man, lived a perfect life, and died a brutal death so your sins can be forgiven.

Only the sacrifice of the God-man, Jesus Christ, is sufficient to save you from the wrath of God Himself. Only the death of God the Son can satisfy the wrath of God the Father.

- Jesus had to become a human to represent the human race.
- Jesus had to be God to pay the penalty for your infinitely sinful actions against an infinitely holy God.

Because of His great love, God the Father sent God the Son to pay the penalty for your sins and mine. Jesus Christ received the full fury of God's wrath on the cross so you could be forgiven and set free from the bondage of sin. This was no small price to pay.

Worse Than You Can Imagine

It has rightly been said that death by cruci-

fixion is the most gruesome form of execution ever invented.

- Jesus was stripped naked and mocked by Roman soldiers.
- Jesus was beaten until His face was beyond recognition.
- Jesus' head was smashed by repeated blows from a wooden staff.
- Jesus was whipped with leather straps that had pottery, nails, and broken glass woven in.
- Jesus' hands and feet were pierced by large metal nails.
- Jesus suffocated to death as He hung on a cross.

Look at Jesus, the Diamond of Heaven, beaten to a pulp. See the blood pouring down His shredded body. Hear Him gasp for air as He hangs on a cross with nails piercing His hands and feet. If an eternity in hell sounds horrible, imagine the agony that Jesus experienced when God laid the sin of the world

on His Son for everyone who would ever believe.³³

For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach.³⁴

The tension is broken. God can now be just and the justifier of those who have sinned against Him.³⁵ Because of Jesus, God's attributes of mercy and justice can co-exist without compromise. But wait, the good news keeps getting better.

Grace Is Even More Amazing

Through His death, Jesus bore our punishment for the forgiveness of sins, but that act simply brings our sin debt to zero. We still have nothing to commend us to God. We need more than forgiveness; we need righteousness. And Jesus provides that too.

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.³⁶

Jesus' death on a cross pays your sin debt. His perfect, sinless life grants you righteous standing before God.

Jesus passively surrendered His life, but He actively lived a perfect life for us too. Jesus never sinned; He kept each and every one of God's commandments perfectly and accumulated mountains of righteousness. That goodness gets credited to your account so you can be righteous in the eyes of God.

Instead of being seen as a guilty, shameful criminal, you can be seen as "citizen of the century."

- You give Jesus your rap sheet; He gives you His résumé.
- You give Jesus your badness; Jesus gives you His goodness.
- You give Jesus your massive sin debt; Jesus gives you His infinite righteousness.

Talk about a great exchange! The benefits of the cross are endless.

- God justifies us, declaring us to be “Not guilty.”³⁷
- God redeems us, buying us out of slavery to sin and the devil.³⁸
- God forgives all of our sins—past, present, and future.³⁹
- God cleanses us and removes the stain of sin,⁴⁰ and makes us righteous.⁴¹
- God brings us into His family as a beloved child.⁴²
- God sanctifies us and gives us His Holy Spirit to empower us to become progressively holy, set apart for His special purposes.⁴³

- God grants us eternal life⁴⁴ and makes us heirs⁴⁵ with an eternal inheritance.⁴⁶
- God declares us saints,⁴⁷ prepares a place for us,⁴⁸ and allows us to reign with Him forever.⁴⁹

All of that is available to you because of the amazing work of Jesus Christ.

- We celebrate the cure to a disease because Jesus has provided the cure from the disease called sin.
- We love reunion stories because Jesus made it possible for us to be restored to a right relationship with our God.

The One who loves you, the Lord Jesus Christ, accomplished all of this for you. This is the purpose of your existence: to be rescued by King Jesus. You were made by God, for God, to know God, and enjoy God forever. That is why you are here. You are a part of God's cosmic redemption story.

- We love hero stories because Jesus is the greatest Hero ever.

- We love rescue stories because Jesus is the most amazing Rescuer ever.
- We love stories of redemption because Jesus is the greatest Redeemer ever.

Complete forgiveness is available to you right now. All of your sins—past, present, and future—can be forgiven, but a legal transaction must take place. You must have the righteousness of Jesus credited to your account. How does that happen?

We are made right in God's sight when we trust in Jesus Christ to take away our sins. And we **all can be saved** in this same way, no matter who we are or what we have done. For all have sinned and fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God now in His **gracious kindness** declares us **not guilty**. He has done this **through Christ Jesus**, who has freed us by taking away our sins. For God sent Jesus to take the punishment for our sins and to satisfy God's anger against us. We are made right with God when we believe that

Jesus shed His blood, sacrificing His life for us.⁵⁰

God Wants to Save You, Not Condemn You

God does not want to send you to hell. God “is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.”⁵¹ God does indeed send sinners to hell, but that is His peculiar work. God prefers to save sinners, not condemn them.

He will hurtle people to hell because He must, but that is not what He delights in. “Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked,” declares the Lord GOD, “rather than that he should turn from his ways and live?”⁵²

God is a kind God. He is a saving God. He is a loving God. And God is so powerful, He can forgive a sinner like you and transform you into the image of His amazing Son, Jesus Christ.

Your God stands ready to save you. Jesus promises, if you will come to Him on His terms, He will by no means cast you out.⁵³

The question is, “What are His terms?”

God's Terms



What must one do to receive the forgiveness (and righteousness) that God freely offers? Guilty criminals do not get to write the terms of their release; God does.

The Bible teaches that you must come to God with correct **knowledge**, correct **motive**, and a correct **response**, or you will not be saved.

1. You must have correct KNOWLEDGE

You must understand God and yourself rightly.⁵⁴ What exactly must you understand?

- a. God is a triune God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) who made the world and everything in it, including you. He owns you.

- b. The God-man Jesus Christ was born of a virgin; He kept the laws perfectly and died a horrific death as the sufficient payment for your sins.
- c. Jesus rose from the dead and ascended into heaven where He sits at the right hand of the Father.
- d. You are sinful by nature and have violated His laws. You justly deserve His temporal and eternal punishment.
- e. You can be forgiven and made white as snow because of Jesus' redemptive work.

But mere knowledge is not enough to save you.

2. You must have the right MOTIVE

You should not become a Christian because you desire the benefits of the faith (joy, peace, comfort, everlasting life, etc.). Repent and put your trust in Jesus because He is the source of all good things. If you come seeking the gifts and not the Giver, you will receive neither.

You should not even follow Jesus because you are afraid of hell. You should follow Jesus because He has been so kind to save you from hell. Follow Jesus because He is God and He is good. Very good.

3. You must have the right RESPONSE

The correct response to the shocking news that Jesus saves sinners is: repentance and faith.⁵⁵

Response number one: Repentance

Imagine you and I are in Nebraska in December and we decide to drive to Texas because it is warmer there. I volunteer to drive because I claim to know how to get there. We hop in the car and drive for eight hours when you begin to sense something is wrong.

Your suspicions are confirmed when you see pine trees, snow, and a sign that reads “Canada: 84 miles.” We are clearly driving in the wrong direction. What would you like me to do?

1. Upon showing me the evidence of my guilt, you undoubtedly want me to agree with you: you are right, and I am wrong.
2. Of course you don't want me to agree with you and keep heading in the wrong direction; you want me to stop.
3. Now that we are pulled safely off the road, you would like a heartfelt apology.
4. Sitting on the side of the road is not where you want to be, so I suspect you want me to turn around.
5. Now that we are headed in the right direction, you don't want me to just sit there, you want me to start driving to our destination.
6. You want me to keep driving until we get to Texas.

That is true biblical repentance. When someone sins against you, you expect no less than those six things; so does God. This is how Charles Spurgeon defined repentance:

Repentance to be true *must be total*. How many will say, “Lord, I will give up this sin and this other one; but there are certain favorite lusts which I must hang on to.” O friends, in God’s name let me tell you, it is not the giving up of one sin, nor fifty sins, which is true repentance; it is the serious giving up of every sin.

If you conceal one of these accursed vipers in your heart, then your repentance is nothing but a fake. If you indulge in only one lust, and give up every other, then that one lust, like one leak in a ship, will sink your soul. It is not sufficient just to give up your outward sins; it is not enough just to give up the most wicked sin of your daily life; it is all or nothing which God demands...

All sin must be given up, or else you will never have Christ: all evil must be renounced, or else the gates of heaven must be locked to keep you out forever.

Let us remember, then, that for repentance to be sincere it must be total repentance.⁵⁶

Think of it like this. You come home and enter the front door with your briefcase and a bag of groceries. As your child runs toward you shrieking for joy, you drop your briefcase and groceries in order to put your arms around something much better, your child. That is repentance. You throw down your sins to receive the best thing there is, Jesus Christ.

Repentance is not about perfection; repentance is about heading in a new direction. While you will commit sins as a Christian, you will not sin with joy. You happily give up your sins out of gratitude for the One who died in payment for your sins.

Response number two: Faith

Faith means that you trust Jesus as your Lord and your Savior. You must believe that He is who He says He is, that He truly suffered, died, and rose from the grave.⁵⁷ You must put all

of your hope in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation.

You must trust Jesus the way you would trust a parachute. If your plane were crashing, you wouldn't merely acknowledge that a parachute could save you; you would put it on. And you must "put on the Lord Jesus Christ"⁵⁸ as if your life depends on it. Because it does.

You must deny the existence of any other deity or religious system as if Jesus is the only true and living God who demands exclusive obedience and trust. Because He does.

The Biggest Question

There is only one question remaining, and it is the biggest question you will ever ponder: What will you do with Jesus Christ and His offer of salvation?

Hurry!



When Jesus came to this planet the first time, He was the Lamb of God who was willingly led to the slaughter. The next time He comes, Jesus returns as a warrior. Prepare for a glimpse into the last days on planet earth when meek and mild Jesus goes to war.

And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. He is clothed with a

robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.

And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”⁵⁹

There is a reason we are so enamored by apocalyptic movies; they are a faint echo of the true apocalypse when Jesus will return, destroy the earth with fire, and judge all nations. It will be a fearsome day.

Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; and they said to the mountains

and to the rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”⁶⁰

Nobody can withstand the terrible day of the Lord; and you don't have to.

Jesus said, “Behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book.”⁶¹ Will you heed this warning? Will Jesus crush you, or will you be hidden in Him and escape that dreadful day? Jesus makes you an offer you truly should not refuse.

Repent and trust in Jesus Christ and He will not go to war with you; He will save you to the uttermost.⁶² “Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time.”⁶³

God Will Save Even You

If you think you are beyond God's mercy, you are wrong. God does not save good people; God saves bad people. In fact, He loves

to save the dirtiest, most horrific, most despicable kinds of people. If you're one of them, He will save even you.

- Are you a fornicator? Flee to the Savior.
- Are you a pornographer? Then run to Jesus.
- Are you a criminal? Let the Savior cleanse you.
- Are you a drunkard? Fall at the feet of your Redeemer.

The grace of Jesus Christ is beyond comprehension. He is willing to save the worst of the worst. You and I would not save the people that Jesus saves.

- Are you a sexual predator? Jesus died for you.
- Are you a pedophile? He will make you white as snow.
- Are you a woman who aborted your baby? God will grant you mercy.

The worse you are, the more glory He receives for saving a filthy person like you.

Come to him, dirty person, He will make you clean. Do not wait to make yourself clean; you can't. You can do nothing to improve your standing before God. Come as you are. Come now.

Come you sinner, poor and needy;
Weak and wounded, sick and sore.
Jesus, ready, stands to save you;
Full of pity, love, and power.

Nobody has ever been kinder to you. Your God has created you, fed you, protected you, provided for you, died for you, and now He wants to forgive you.

As God's partner, **I beg you not to reject this marvelous message of God's great kindness.** For God says, 'At just the right time, I heard you. On the day of salvation, I helped you.' Indeed, God is ready to help you right now. **Today is the day of salvation.**⁶⁴

The King stands ready to pardon. The Judge is willing to dismiss your case. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begot-

ten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”⁶⁵

- Why would you not want to have your guilt and shame removed?
- Why would you not want to be loved with the greatest love there is?
- Why would you not want your life to make sense and be filled with joy?

This offer is not too good to be true. This offer is true. It is for you. Right now. Today.

Rebel, it is time to repent. It is time to flee to your Creator for mercy. He promises He will not cast you out.

God sets Himself against the proud, but He shows favor to the humble. So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw close to God, and God will draw close to you. Wash your hands you sinners; purify your hearts you hypocrites. Let there be tears for the wrong you have done. Let there be sorrow and deep grief. Let there be sadness instead

of laughter, and gloom instead of joy. When you bow down and admit your dependence on Him, He will lift you up and give you honor.⁶⁶

You could be in a right relationship with the One who demonstrated His love by dying for you... even while you were sinning. Call out to Jesus right now. He is mighty to save.

God will not only forgive you, but He will adopt you as His child and become your heavenly Father. He will love you with the same love He has for His Son, Jesus Christ. You have never known such love.

- Join the masses who have been washed, cleansed, and forgiven.
- Join the multitudes who should be cast into hell but have been given heaven.
- Join the millions who will spend eternity with the King who died for rebels.

Today is the day of salvation. Even now, many are pouring into the Kingdom.

Repent and trust Jesus Christ today... before you stub your toe.

Notes

1. Colossians 1:16
2. Genesis 1:26
3. Psalm 139:1–4
4. Psalm 89:14
5. Romans 2: 16; 2 Corinthians 5:10
6. Hebrews 9:27
7. Exodus 20:3
8. Exodus 20:7
9. Exodus 20:7
10. Exodus 20:12
11. Exodus 20:13
12. Matthew 5:22
13. 1 John 3:15
14. Exodus 20:14
15. Matthew 5:27,28
16. Ecclesiastes 3:11
17. Romans 1:19,20
18. Psalm 19:1–4
19. Romans 2:15
20. Romans 1:18,19
21. Lynne Tuohy, “Ross Video Exploits Notoriety,” *Hartford Courant*, May 11, 2005.
22. Jeremiah 17:9
23. James 2:10
24. Hebrews 10:31
25. Matthew 13:42
26. Romans 2:5,6; Jeremiah 7:20
27. Ephesians 2:4–6
28. 1 John 4:8
29. Ezekiel 33:11
30. 1 Timothy 2:4
31. 2 Peter 3:9
32. Hebrews 9:22

33. 1 Peter 2:24
34. Colossians 1:19–22
35. Romans 3:21–26
36. 2 Corinthians 5:21
37. Romans 5:1
38. 1 Peter 1:18,19; Romans 6:17,18
39. Colossians 2:14; 1 John 1:9
40. Hebrews 10:22
41. 2 Corinthians 5:21
42. Romans 8:14–17
43. 1 Corinthians 6:11; 2 Peter 1:3
44. John 11:25,26
45. Romans 8:17
46. 1 Peter 1:3,4
47. Romans 1:7
48. John 14:2,3
49. 2 Timothy 2:12
50. Romans 3:22–26
51. 2 Peter 3:9
52. Ezekiel 18:23
53. John 6:37
54. John 8:23,24
55. Mark 1:15; Acts 20:21
56. C.H. Spurgeon, sermon delivered December 7, 1856, at the Music Hall, Royal Surrey Gardens.
57. 1 Corinthians 15:1–5
58. Romans 13:14
59. Revelation 19:11–16
60. Revelation 6:15–17
61. Revelation 22:7
62. Romans 5:9; Hebrews 7:25
63. 1 Peter 5:6
64. 2 Corinthians 6:1,2
65. John 3:16
66. James 4:6–10

A woman in the Midwest recently stubbed her toe so hard it caused a blood clot that released to her brain and killed her. Admittedly, death from toe stubbing doesn't happen every day, but it should serve as a reminder that life is fleeting and any of us could die at any moment. Why?

Why do we die?

Why do we live?

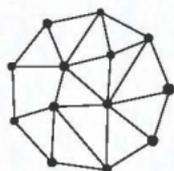
What is the point?

Why does evil exist?

What happens when we die?

Why does the world operate the way it does?

Congratulations for being thoughtful enough to set aside a few moments to ponder the big questions of life... before you stub your toe.



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