

Forgiveness and freedom is only possible because of Jesus. Without Jesus we are each truly lost in sin and heading for physical and spiritual death. Since Adam and Eve rebelled in the garden, the human default has been death and eternal separation from God. Even though we are all born on this highway to hell, there is One exit ramp which leads to eternal paradise, freedom, joy, love, and peace...this is the exit ramp Jesus provides.

THE SIN CONDITION.

- ❖ *"as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10)*
- ❖ *"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23)*
- ❖ *"The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."
They are corrupt, doing abominable iniquity; there is none who does good." (Psalm 53:1)*
- ❖ *"And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness" (Romans 1:28-29a)*
- ❖ *"He will render to each one according to his works: ⁷to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; ⁸but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury." (Romans 2:6-8)*
- ❖ *"There is no fear of God before their eyes." (Romans 3:18)*

BUT.

- ❖ *"For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly." (Romans 5:6)*
- ❖ *"And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ²in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. ⁴But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—" (Ephesians 2:1-5)*
- ❖ *"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and are **justified by his grace as a gift**, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was **to show God's righteousness**, because in **his divine forbearance** he had passed over former sins." (Romans 3:23-25)*
- ❖ *"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹not a result of works, so that no one may boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9)*
- ❖ *"The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); ⁹because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved." (Romans 10:8b-10, 13)*
- ❖ *"the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe." (Romans 3:22a)*

THEREFORE.

Confess and repent of your sins, and believe by faith in Jesus that He is who He said He is, He has the power to forgive your sins if you genuinely repent, and that your sins are forgiven just as He said.

- ❖ *"From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, **"Repent,** for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."* (Matthew 4:17)
- ❖ John the Baptizer said, *"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."* and *"Bear fruit in keeping with repentance."* (Matthew 3:2, 8)
- ❖ *"And Peter said to them, **"Repent** and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."* (Acts 2:38)
- ❖ *"Let us test and examine our ways, and return to the Lord! ⁴¹Let us lift up our hearts and hands to God in heaven: ⁴²"We have transgressed and rebelled,"* (Lamentations 3:40-42a)

The missing piece for most people is genuine repentance. People often justify, make excuses, or fail to realize the seriousness of their sin. (Note that there is a big difference between remorse or regret and genuine repentance.)

And then to live in faith, loving what God loves and hating what God hates. (Note: He hates sin, not people.)

- ❖ *"For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, **"The righteous shall live by faith."*** (Romans 1:17)
- ❖ *"The fear of the Lord is hatred of evil. Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate."* (Proverbs 8:13) To love God is to love what He loves and hate what He hates.
- ❖ *"I love those who love me, and those who seek me diligently find me."* (Proverbs 8:17)
- ❖ *"Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good... ²¹Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."* (Romans 12:9, 21)
- ❖ *"But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires."* (Romans 13:14)

SO THAT.

- ❖ *"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."* (Romans 8:1)
- ❖ *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."* (John 3:16)
- ❖ *"For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace."* (Romans 6:14, 17-18) We can really be free!
- ❖ *"May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."* (Romans 15:5-6)

IN SUMMARY.

It isn't enough to simply repeat a rote prayer and think your salvation is secured. One must have genuine repentance. You must recognize who you are in light of who God is. He is the standard, not other people. He is Holy and, though He hates sin, He has provided one way for us to be in relationship with Him because He loves us.

Evidence of authentic salvation is a heart change and an unwavering belief in Jesus – who He is and what He has done – resulting from genuine repentance which produces sincere gratitude and an intrinsic drive to worship, serve, and be like Him.