



**HOPE CHURCH**

**RED BOOK**

# INTRODUCTION

Over 30 years ago I attended my first Bible discussion on a college campus. I was a little tentative about my spiritual condition, but I felt led to commit to the process.

Up to that point in my life, my experiences with God, the Bible and Christianity were similar to my experiences in competitive swimming and water polo. In swimming and water polo I could be in 500,000 gallons of water and still be dehydrated. This was because I had water all around me, but didn't have any of the water inside of me.

So it was for me spiritually, I had grown up attending church and hearing about God and the Bible. I had God's Word and truth around me, but I didn't have it inside of me. As I began to read God's Word in a Bible discussion, I started to understand how to get God's life inside of me. I also began to understand God's will and purpose for mankind and for me personally.

Regardless of where you are in your journey, whether God's truth is outside of you, or inside, I would like to encourage you to commit to the process of studying God's Word. I believe you'll find it challenging and lifegiving.

I hope this Red Book serves as a compass for you as you navigate the map of God's Word in your spiritual journey. The goal is to determine where you are on the map, and where you're headed in this journey.

I believe to get the most out of this experience, you should go through the Red Book with others who can help you along the way. Please take time to discuss your thoughts with others, and allow yourself to be challenged. This is a great time in your life to consider your relationship with God and His Word, the Bible.

Brian R. Smith, Sr.  
Lead Pastor  
Hope Church

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Brian R. Smith, Sr." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B' and 'S'.

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# CHAPTER 1

## GOD'S WORD

### STUDENT STORY

*"I never read the Bible growing up, but I sure did have some opinions about it! I thought it was a boring, irrelevant rule-book, designed to take the fun out of life. I didn't think the Bible could be trusted because man wrote it and man was flawed. But for some reason, I started to read it. I began to see an adventure unfold before me that I didn't know existed and I wasn't finding in my textbooks. I felt closer to God when we read passages in our Bible discussion. I didn't always understand them, but I knew God was there with us in the words we read. This book is unlike any other book I've ever read."*

### THE BIBLE IN YOUR LIFE

WHY DO YOU WANT TO READ THE BIBLE?

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WHAT HAS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BIBLE BEEN?

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God has always wanted us to know Him. In order to express His character and His personality to us, He gave us His Word, the Bible.

### DID YOU KNOW?

God inspired 44 different people from all different backgrounds, countries, and walks of life over a period of 1,600 years to write the Bible.

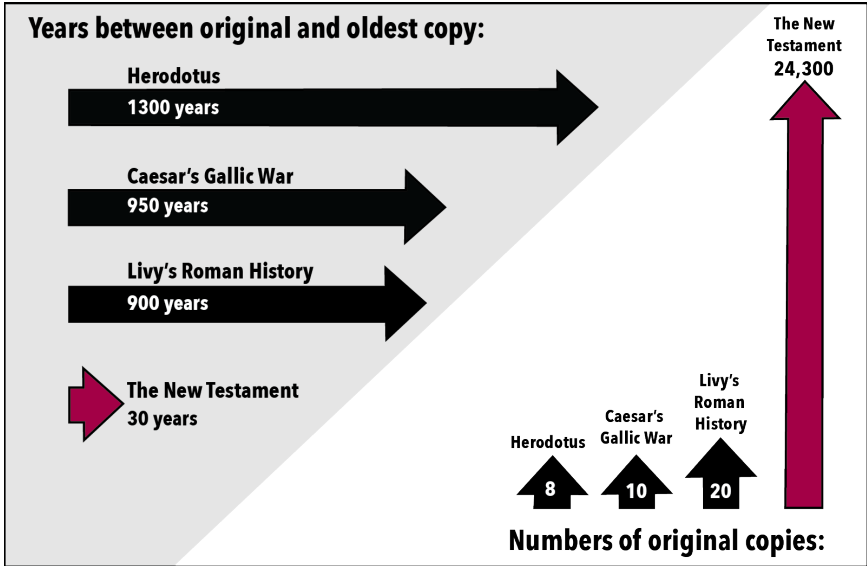
### HOW DID WE GET THE BIBLE?

Some people wonder how we can trust that the Bible is what the original authors wrote. There is evidence inside and outside of the Bible of its validity.

### TEXTUAL CRITICISM

We can be confident in the Bible through a science called Textual Criticism. When you read a book that is a copy of an ancient manuscript, you can ask

two questions to decipher if it's accurate. The first - how quickly after the original did someone make a copy? The second - how many copies are there?



Source: Alpha International

Based on the short time between the original and oldest copy, as well as the large amount of original copies, we know that the Bible is accurate and is what the original authors wrote.

## SCRIPTURES TO CONSIDER

Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17

HOW WERE THE SCRIPTURES GIVEN TO US?

All scripture is \_\_\_\_\_ and profitable for \_\_\_\_\_, for \_\_\_\_\_, for \_\_\_\_\_, for training in \_\_\_\_\_; so that the man of God may be adequate, \_\_\_\_\_ for every good work.

Read Hebrews 4:12-13

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF GOD'S WORD IN THESE VERSES?

Read the following verses and describe the impact that reading the Bible will have in your life:

Psalm 119:105 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 119:165 \_\_\_\_\_

Joshua 1:8 \_\_\_\_\_

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.”  
- Matthew 24:35 NASB

God’s Word (which is the Bible) will not pass away; it endures forever.  
For those who choose to follow God, the Bible is the final authority in all areas of life.

AFTER READING THESE SCRIPTURES, HAS YOUR VIEW OF THE BIBLE CHANGED? IF SO, HOW?

HOW IS THE BIBLE DIFFERENT FROM OTHER BOOKS THAT YOU HAVE READ?

IF OBEDIENCE TO THE BIBLE REQUIRED RADICAL CHANGE, WHICH AREA OF YOUR LIFE WOULD BE THE HARDEST TO CHANGE? (EXAMPLES: YOUR PLANS, CIRCLE OF FRIENDS, ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS, POSSESSIONS, MAJOR OR YOUR CAREER)

## ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES & DEFINITIONS

- Reverence - The fear acceptable to God. Not a fear of evil, but a fear that leads to respect. This comes from beholding the power of God’s divine nature and perfection
- The Bible is often referred to as The Sword, The Truth, The Word and Scripture
- Psalm 119:9
- Psalm 119:38
- John 1:1-5

# CHAPTER 2

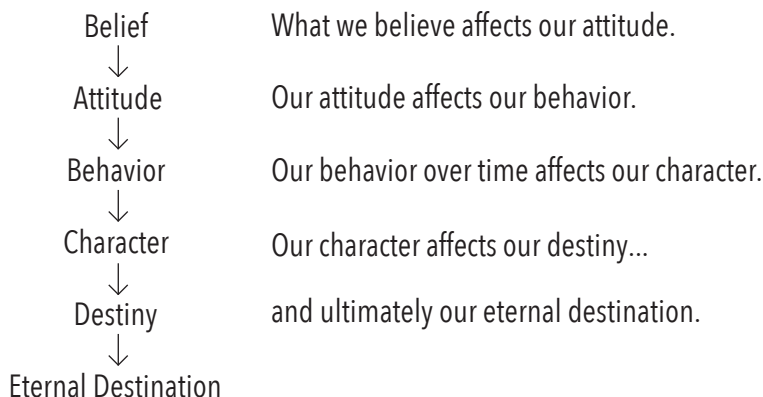
## THE NATURE OF GOD

### STUDENT STORY

*"I grew up hearing about how God created the world and how He was a good and loving God, but I never really understood it. I viewed myself a lot like a slave who had to perform well in order to be accepted. After experiencing troubles in my family, I felt alone and abandoned by the God that was supposed to be good and loving. I decided there was no way that I could believe in a God like that. Then, our family moved and I tried to fill my life with sports and school, but in my heart there was this nagging feeling that something was missing. I got connected with a few people who were Christians and began experiencing the love of God through them. After that, everything changed!"*

Have you ever made a judgment about someone without knowing them? Many of us do this based on what we hear from others. It is common for us to have an opinion about God without studying who He really is. Do you think your beliefs about God are based on the Bible?

### DID YOU KNOW?



## QUESTION: 2

WHAT KIND OF WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE GOD?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> GREAT (PS. 48:1)       | <input type="checkbox"/> ALL POWERFUL (GEN. 17:1)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LOVING (1 JN 4:8)      | <input type="checkbox"/> ALL KNOWING (1 JN. 3:20)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> KIND (JOEL 2:13)       | <input type="checkbox"/> FAITHFUL (1 COR. 1:9)     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FORGIVING (PS. 103:12) | <input type="checkbox"/> MERCIFUL (DEUT. 4:31)     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PERFECT (MATT. 5:48)   | <input type="checkbox"/> COMPASSIONATE (PS. 86:15) |

## THIS MAY SURPRISE YOU... 2

According to the Bible, all of the answers in the above question are correct. God does have all of these qualities. However, the same Bible also says that God is:

Totally Good (Psalm 106:1)  
Perfectly Holy (Isaiah 6:3)

100% Righteous (Jeremiah 12:1)  
Unable to Lie (Hebrews 6:18)

## SCRIPTURES TO CONSIDER

### God the Good Creator

In this chapter, we see that God is good and we are created for Him. When He first created the world, there was peace, order, and unity; everything was good.

Read Genesis 1:1-5, 26-31

IF THE CREATION IS GOOD, WHAT DOES THAT SHOW US ABOUT THE CREATOR?

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Read Psalm 139:1-18

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT GOD IN THESE VERSES?

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Read Acts 17:24-27

WHAT DO THESE VERSES TELL US ABOUT GOD AND HIS NATURE?

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## **God is a Father**

God has a reason for everything He does and a purpose for everything He creates. What He does is always consistent with who He is. Of all the descriptions of God in the Bible, the most all-inclusive one is the title "Father." His Father's heart motivated Him to create mankind so He could have a family. Let's read Genesis 1:26-28 again and see the four-fold purpose for mankind in creation. Fill them in below:

### **Genesis 1:26-28**

Then God said, " \_\_\_\_\_  
(relationship) in \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_ (reflection or character);  
and \_\_\_\_\_ (rulership) over the fish  
of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the  
earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." God created  
man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and  
female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (reproduction) and  
fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the  
birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

As you can see, fulfilling our God-given destiny starts with a relationship with God. It's only from having a relationship with God through Jesus Christ that we can become like Him and live the way we were created to live.

**1. Relationship** - "Let Us make man..."

God wanted a family of children to share life with and get to know in a personal way (Genesis 1:26).

**2. Reflection or Character** - "in Our image, according to Our likeness..."

God wanted His children to look like Him on the inside, to bear the family "image and likeness" (Genesis 1:26).

**3. Rulership** - "and let them rule..."

God wanted His children to share in the family business (Genesis 1:26).

**4. Reproduction** - "Be fruitful and multiply..."

God wanted His children to reproduce more children to be in the family (Genesis 1:28).

WHAT DO THESE VERSES SHOW US ABOUT GOD AS A FATHER?

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The only way that any of us will be able to find fulfillment in life is to discover the reasons why we were created. Just as using a saw to hammer nails or trying to use a car to fly will not be successful, so mankind living for reasons other than those God intended will only lead to frustration and failure.

## **God is Just**

God's love is completely just, and His justice is completely loving. In other words, God's love works together with His justice. God must rule justly in order to maintain His perfect righteousness, which is the foundation of His throne (Psalm 89:14). However, God is also merciful; therefore, He desires to forgive our sins. Since God is righteous, He cannot forgive sin arbitrarily or unfairly. He must forgive sin in a way that satisfies His justice and His mercy at the same time.

Read Romans 2:5-11

WHAT DO THESE VERSES SHOW US ABOUT GOD'S JUSTICE AND HOW IT RELATES TO MAN?

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## **God is Holy: The Ten Commandments**

The 10 Commandments are found in Exodus 20:3-17. Write them out below:

### **Commandments Relating to God:**

1. "You shall have no \_\_\_\_\_.
2. You shall not make for yourself an \_\_\_\_\_, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.  
<sup>5</sup>You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, <sup>6</sup>but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.
3. You shall not take the \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, for the Lord will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.
4. Remember the \_\_\_\_\_ day, to keep it holy. <sup>9</sup>Six days you shall labor and do all your work, <sup>10</sup>but the seventh day is a sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. <sup>11</sup>For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.

### **Commandments Relating to Man:**

5. \_\_\_\_\_, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the Lord your God gives you.
6. You shall not \_\_\_\_\_.
7. You shall not commit \_\_\_\_\_.
8. You shall not \_\_\_\_\_.
9. You shall not bear \_\_\_\_\_ against your neighbor.
10. You shall not \_\_\_\_\_ your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

HAVE YOU BROKEN ANY OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS?

WOULD YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF A "GOOD PERSON"?

WOULD YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF HOLY ACCORDING TO GOD'S STANDARDS?

Read Galatians 3:19-24. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW?

God's purpose in giving us the Commandments is to show us His standard of holiness and righteousness. The goal is the open our eyes to see how much we have failed to live up to God's standard. They also make it clear how futile it is to trust in our own efforts to be holy before God. Even though we all fall short of God's perfection, He made a way for us to have a relationship with Him.

## ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES & DEFINITIONS

- Other gods - Any person or thing that is given a title or place of a god to which power is attributed. Any "god" besides the Lord God of the Bible
- Idolatry - The worship of anything that is not God (idols, images, anything man-made); excessive attachment or veneration for anything other than God
- Vanity - Emptiness, worthlessness; the quality of having no substance, value, or importance
- Sabbath - Intermission, cease, desist from labor, rest, to sit still
- Honor - To glorify
- Murder - Slay, kill, hate
- Adultery - To have sexual relations with someone other than your spouse. See what Jesus says about adultery in Matthew 5:28
- Steal - To carry away, to go by stealth, to deceive
- False witness - To lie or deceive about a testimony or evidence
- Covet - To desire inordinately; to desire that which it is unlawful to obtain or possess (in a bad sense)
- Holiness - Being complete in moral character and perfect purity. To be separated from evil and consecrated to God
- Psalm 5:4-5
- Isaiah 64:6
- Romans 1:18-20
- Romans 12:2
- Colossians 1:15-16
- James 2:10-13
- 1 Peter 1:14-16

# CHAPTER 3

## THE NATURE OF MAN

### STUDENT STORY

*"Growing up, I always thought I was a Christian because I was raised with good morals and saw myself as a good person. I began reading the Bible and realized that how it described my nature was very different than how I saw myself, which struck me because I never thought of myself as evil or immoral. When I looked at my life and the way of mankind through the eyes of the Bible, the pieces came together and I knew I could never live up to God's standards."*

Have you ever made a choice that had consequences greater than you expected? In the midst of the goodness of God's creation, Adam and Eve made a choice that affected all of mankind. It's been said, "You can choose your sin, but you can't choose your consequences..."

### QUESTION 1:<sup>2</sup>

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT YOU WILL GO TO HEAVEN WHEN YOU DIE?

- |                              |                                       |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> I HOPE SO    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No  | <input type="checkbox"/> I'M NOT SURE |

### QUESTION 2:<sup>2</sup>

WHY DO YOU BELIEVE THIS? CHECK AS MANY AS APPLY.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'VE TRIED TO KEEP THE 10<br>COMMANDMENTS (JAMES 2:10) | <input type="checkbox"/> I'M BASICALLY A GOOD PERSON (ROMANS 3:12) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I GO TO CHURCH (TITUS 3:5)                             | <input type="checkbox"/> I'VE DONE THE BEST I COULD (MATT 5:48)    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I BELIEVE IN GOD (JAMES 2:19)                          | <input type="checkbox"/> I'VE NEVER HURT ANYONE (MATT 5:21-22)     |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: _____                              |

### THIS MAY SURPRISE YOU...

According to the Bible, none of the answers printed in question 2 will get someone into heaven.<sup>2</sup>

## QUESTION 3:<sup>2</sup>

WHAT KIND OF WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE MAN?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> BASICALLY GOOD (ROM 3:12) | <input type="checkbox"/> DESTRUCTIVE (ROM 3:16) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> RIGHTEOUS (ISA 64:6)      | <input type="checkbox"/> UNFAITHFUL (PS 5:9)    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> KIND (ROM 1:29)           | <input type="checkbox"/> PROUD (ROM 1:30)       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GIVING (ROM 1:29)         | <input type="checkbox"/> GREEDY (ROM 1:29)      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LOVING (2 TIM 3:2)        | <input type="checkbox"/> SELFISH (PHIL 2:21)    |

## THIS MAY SURPRISE YOU...

According to the Bible, only the answers in the right hand column are correct. The same Bible also says that man is:<sup>2</sup>

Not good (Rom 3:12)

Unholy (2 Tim 3:2)

Disobedient (Isa 53:6)

Dishonest (Jer 17:9)

## SCRIPTURES TO CONSIDER

Read Genesis 2:15-17. God wanted Adam and Eve to trust Him for their entire lives.

WHAT ACTION WOULD DEMONSTRATE THAT THEY CHOSE TO NO LONGER TRUST GOD?

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Read Genesis 3:1-13

HOW DID ADAM AND EVE REACT WHEN GOD FOUND THEM AFTER THEY DISOBEYED?

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Death does not mean ceasing to exist; rather, it means a separation from the source of life. In Genesis 2:15-17, God told Adam and Eve they would die. This meant they would be separated from God, who is the source of life. According to the Bible, there are 3 types of death:

Physical Death: separation of soul & spirit from the body. (Heb 9:27)

Spiritual Death: separation of man from God (Eph 2:1)

Eternal Death: separation of man from God for eternity (Hell). (Matthew 13:40-43)

This is our great problem. All of us are born spiritually dead, separated from God, and if we die physically in that state, we'll experience Eternal Death and be in Hell forever.

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Read Genesis 3:14-24

WHAT WAS THE DEATH (SEPARATION) ADAM AND EVE EXPERIENCED THE DAY THEY DISOBEYED GOD?

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Read Romans 5:12, 18-19

WHAT IS THE EFFECT OF ADAM AND EVE'S DISOBEDIENCE ON THE REST OF MANKIND?

---

Read Psalm 51:5

WHAT DOES THIS SHOW US ABOUT OUR SPIRITUAL NATURE BY BIRTH?

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Read Romans 3:23

IS THERE ANY PERSON WHO HAS NOT SINNED?

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The Bible teaches that man is a spirit, has a soul, and lives in a body.

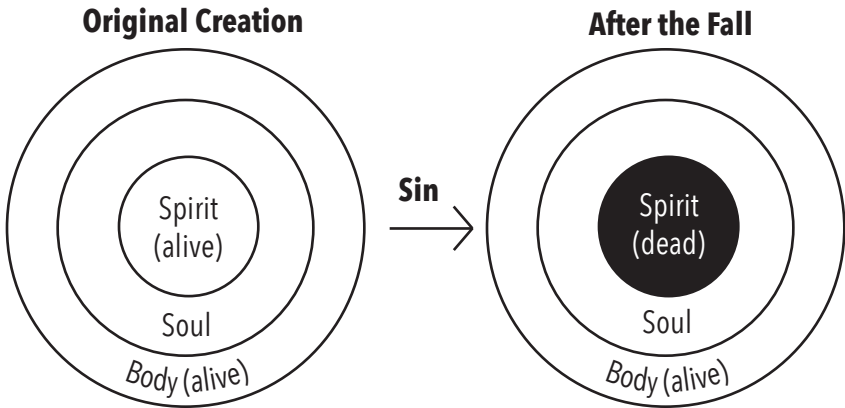
The **spirit** is the God-conscious part of man.

The **soul** is the self-conscious part of man (mind, will, emotions).

The **body** is the senses or world-conscious part of man.



The dilemma for all of mankind is that we are born physically alive and spiritually dead.



Read Isaiah 59:1-2

ACCORDING TO THESE VERSES, HOW DOES SIN AFFECT OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD?

### THE BIBLE'S CONCLUSION<sup>1</sup>

<p>It is impossible for this kind of perfect God:</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Totally good Perfectly holy 100% righteous Unable to lie</p>	<p>To live with this kind of sinful man:</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Not good Unholy Disobedient Dishonest</p>
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**Sinful man could never live with a holy God, not even for a second.**

Read Isaiah 64:6

WHAT GOOD OR RELIGIOUS ACTS ARE THERE THAT CAN MAKE US RIGHTEOUS?

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

HAVE YOU EVER FELT LIKE YOU WERE SEPARATED FROM GOD? IF SO, WHY?

Read Romans 6:23

DOES THIS SAME SPIRITUAL DEATH APPLY TO YOU?

IF YOU'RE SPIRITUALLY DEAD, HOW DO YOU HOPE TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF YOUR SPIRITUAL DEATH?

## ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES & DEFINITIONS

- Iniquity - A sin, any act of injustice, or to do wrong. Closely related to perversity and depravity. It is sometimes referred to as guilt contracted by sinning
- Transgression - Another synonym of sin. To transgress is to rebel or trespass against the word or will of God
- Law - When written as "law" it refers to anything established as a rule of action prescribed by reason. When capitalized as "Law" it often refers back to the situation before Christ when people looked at obedience to the commandments as the way of acceptance with God
- Genesis 6:5
- Isaiah 64:6
- Matthew 7:21-23
- Romans 1:18-25
- Romans 3:10-12
- Romans 5:6,8,12-21
- Galatians 3:26
- Galatians 5:19-21
- Revelation 20:11-15

# CHAPTER 4

## THE PRICE GOD PAID

### STUDENT STORY

*"One day I was challenged to try and picture what Jesus went through in His death on the cross. As I sat there and thought about His sacrifice, I was almost brought to tears. After the magnitude of that sunk in, I began to consider how sinful I was and how I didn't deserve that sacrifice. Jesus died for my sin, and my response to that was... well... pathetic. I gave in to sin time and time again, yet felt very little remorse. I needed to change, and decided to look at the concept of repentance differently."*

God determined the just punishment for sin was death (eternal separation from His presence). Since all men have sinned, they all deserve to be punished. But God did not want to send man to hell.

**Redemption** - The action of regaining or gaining possession of something in exchange for payment, or clearing a debt.

**Reconciliation** - To restore two parties who are at odds back into agreement and relationship.

All of mankind is held captive by sin resulting in death. In order for God to repurchase our lives from spiritual death and into life, a price had to be paid...

### SCRIPTURES TO CONSIDER

"Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many [paying the price to set them free from the penalty of sin]." - Matthew 20:28 AMP

Read Romans 5:6-10 and 2 Corinthians 5:21

WHAT WAS THE PRICE THAT HAD TO BE PAID?

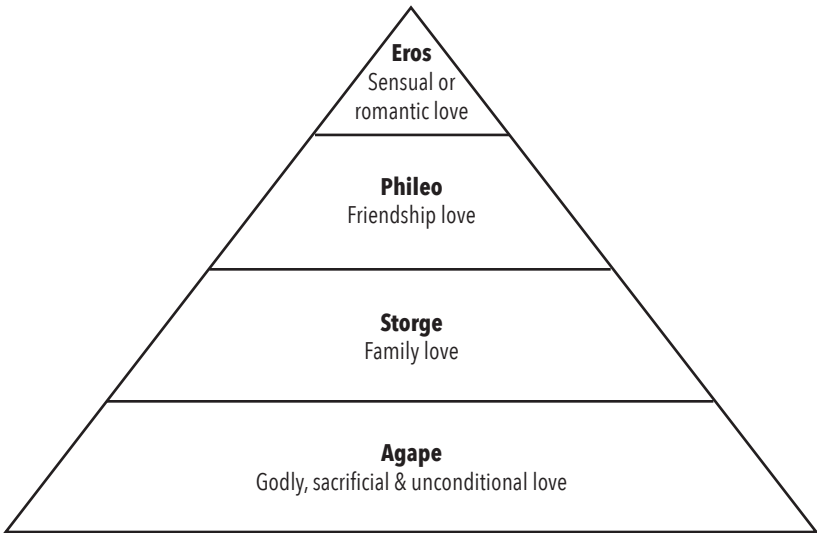
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WHY DO YOU THINK JESUS WAS WILLING TO PAY THAT PRICE?

---

## DID YOU KNOW?

According to the Bible, there are four different kinds of love:



God's Agape love was on display when He chose to create us and later die for us. This kind of love does not originate in the human heart, it only comes from a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. God's love is the foundation on which relationships should be built.

## SCRIPTURES TO CONSIDER

Read 1 John 4:7-10 and John 3:16-18.

WHAT DO THESE VERSES TELL US ABOUT GOD?

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God chose to give His life as full payment toward the penalty of death in exchange for our lives (redemption). He did this because of His great love for us in order to restore us into relationship with Him (reconciliation).

Read Isaiah 53:3-10

HOW DOES IT MAKE YOU FEEL TO KNOW THAT JESUS DIED FOR YOU REGARDLESS OF WHETHER OR NOT YOU CHOOSE TO FOLLOW HIM?

Even though Jesus died a painful death to pay for our sins, He was pleased to offer His life because of His love for us. This is the good news of the Bible.

God devised a plan that placed the death penalty for sin upon the only person in the universe who could take your place, God Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ. Though Jesus didn't deserve it, He suffered and died on the cross in our place, providing the only way for you and I to have eternal life and go to heaven.<sup>2</sup>

Christ's death and resurrection enables us to be forgiven for our sins and gives us the power to no longer be controlled by sin.<sup>2</sup>

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

WHAT IS YOUR INITIAL REACTION TO GOD'S SACRIFICE IN GIVING HIS SON TO US?

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF JESUS' LIFE DID HE GIVE FOR US ON THE CROSS?

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE PROPER RESPONSE TO THAT SACRIFICE?

## ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES & DEFINITIONS

- Propitiation - Propitiation is to satisfy the justice of God. It is the means of appeasing punishment or righteous wrath from God. This happens through an acceptable substitute that is sacrificed as an offering to God for atonement
- Hebrews 2:9
- 1 Peter 1:18-20
- 1 John 2:2

# CHAPTER 5

## GOD'S SOLUTION

### STUDENT STORY

*"When I got to ASU, I started living a destructive lifestyle of drinking, sex and drugs. Although I knew about the Bible, I didn't fully understand what it meant to be a Christian. Thankfully, a friend of mine helped me realize that the way I was living was holding me back from having a real relationship with God. After counting the cost of whether it was worth the changes I'd have to make to follow Jesus, I decided to repent and put my trust in Him."*

### SCRIPTURES TO CONSIDER

Read Ephesians 2:8-9. According to the Bible, grace is God's unearned, unmerited favor. It's when a person receives something good that they don't deserve.

Read the story of the "Prodigal Son" in Luke 15:11-32.

DO YOU THINK HE DESERVED WHAT HIS FATHER GAVE HIM?

---

WHAT WAS THE PRODIGAL SON'S RESPONSE TO THE GRACE HIS FATHER OFFERED?

---

Read Mark 1:14-15

To **repent** means to change direction or to change your thinking. To become a Christian we must turn away from independence and we must be dependent on God. It is the surrender of our lives to Christ.

To **believe** in the Gospel is to put the full weight of our trust in Jesus Christ's death and resurrection alone for our salvation as the only way to be forgiven.

Read Mark 1:16-18

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT SIMON AND ANDREW'S RESPONSE TO JESUS?

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Read Luke 9:23-25

WHAT WOULD IT COST YOU TO FOLLOW JESUS?

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Read 2 Corinthians 7:9-10

WHAT DOES IT MEAN THAT WORLDLY SORROW PRODUCES DEATH?

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WHAT IS REPENTANCE WITHOUT REGRET?

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## **BECOMING A PART OF GOD'S FAMILY**

Read John 1:9-13 and John 3:3-6.

WHAT MUST HAPPEN IN ORDER TO BE PART OF GOD'S FAMILY?

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The family is one of the most significant illustrations of God's love. God loves us so much that He wants an intimate relationship with us. He wants us in His family and calls us His children.

Some people have a hard time seeing themselves as children of God.

Instead, they view themselves as slaves of God. We can compare some of the differences between being a son and a slave. Here are some of them:

<b>Slave</b>	<b>Son</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exists only to serve</li><li>• Has value because of his abilities</li><li>• Is secure only as long as he accomplishes something</li><li>• Master gives orders</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exists by birthright</li><li>• Has value because of his position</li><li>• Is secure because of who his father is</li><li>• Father explains the business</li></ul>

DO YOU CURRENTLY VIEW YOURSELF AS A SLAVE OF GOD OR A SON OF GOD?

## CONCLUSION

Read Romans 10:8-11

WHAT HAPPENS INTERNALLY? WHAT HAPPENS EXTERNALLY?

---

### God will only give salvation to those who:

1. Are sorry for their sins

Internal Response: Humility before God → External Response: Confession

Humility = lowliness of mind; a deep sense of one's own unworthiness in the sight of God

Read Luke 18:9-14

WHICH MAN HAD TRUE HUMILITY BEFORE GOD?

---

WHAT DID THE TAX COLLECTOR DO THAT SHOWED THAT HE WAS HUMBLE?

---



2. Are willing to turn away from their sins

Internal Response:                      External Response:  
Submission to Jesus as Lord → Repentance

Submit = to yield, resign, or surrender to the power, will or authority of another

Read Matthew 7:21-23

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO SUBMIT TO JESUS AS LORD?

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3. Have faith, completely trust in Jesus Christ

Internal Response: Faith → External Response: Prayer of Faith

Read Hebrews 11:1-3

WHAT IS FAITH?

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Read Hebrews 4:2

WHAT PREVENTS US FROM RECEIVING THE GOSPEL?

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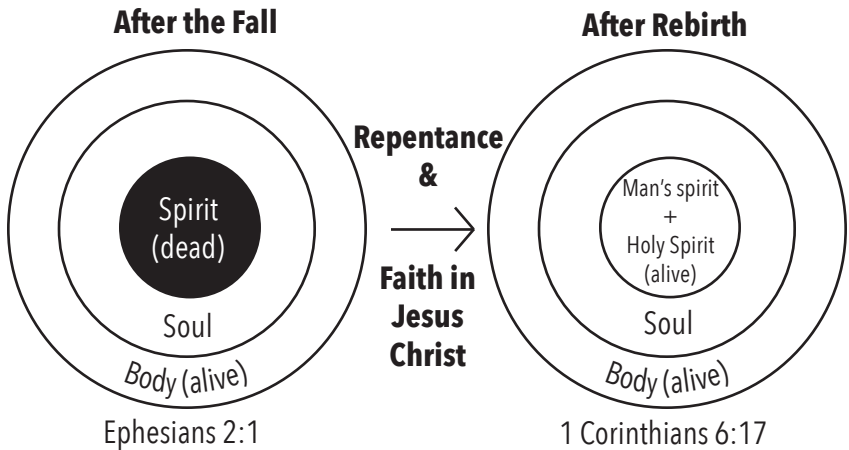
Take this opportunity to examine the three essentials of salvation - humility, submission and faith. Some people have a "conversion" experience, but can only identify with one or two of these aspects.

For example, believing that Jesus died for your sin but not acknowledging that you individually are a sinner destined for hell will not produce a true conversion.

Likewise, confessing sin on a day to day basis without ever submitting to Jesus as the Lord of your life will result in frustration without change.

If you do not actually believe that the blood of Jesus saved you and only hope it did, then you do not really have faith. Faith is the assurance of what God has said.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17



Remember, we are born physically alive but spiritually dead. When we make the decision to repent from a life lived independently from God, follow Jesus with our lives, and stop trusting in our own efforts to please Him and instead put our faith in what He did for us on the cross, we are spiritually born again.

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

READ GALATIANS 2:20-21

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST?

AT THIS TIME, ARE YOU WILLING TO TURN AWAY FROM YOUR SINS AND COMPLETELY TRUST IN JESUS CHRIST?

## **ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES & DEFINITIONS**

- Lord - A lord is a master, king, captain or controller. It is the title of the one whose words have final authority, marked by obedience of ones they are lord over. When capitalized, it refers to the Lord God of all the earth
- Partiality - Favoritism. An inclination to favor one party or one side of a question more than the other; an undue bias of mind toward one party or one side
- Prodigal - Given to extravagant expenditures; expending money or other things without necessity; profuse, lavish
- Ephesians 2:1-10
- Colossians 3:3

# HOW TO FOLLOW JESUS

In order to receive what Jesus Christ has done for you, you must willingly:

1. Stop trusting in your own efforts to please God and begin to trust in what Jesus Christ has already done.
2. Ask Him to forgive you for your sins.
3. Invite Him to come and live inside of you.
4. Ask Him to take His rightful place as Lord and God of your life.
5. Turn away from whatever the Bible says is sin. (This is only possible after Christ has come to live inside of you.)<sup>2</sup>

When you turn from your sins and trust in Jesus, there will be a supernatural change in your heart which the Bible calls, being “born again.” Our good works will never get us into heaven.<sup>2</sup>

You may invite Jesus to come and live inside of you by sincerely praying the following prayer out loud:

*“Lord Jesus, I want to stop trusting in myself and what I can do and start trusting in You and what You have already done when You died for me on the cross. I know that I am a sinner and I am sorry for my sins. I ask You to forgive me and I invite You to come and live inside of me. I want You to be my Savior and my Lord, which means being #1 in my life. I want to repent and turn away from everything You and the Bible call sin and I totally commit myself to obeying You everyday, for the rest of my life. Thank You Jesus.”<sup>2</sup>*

In order for your new personal relationship with God to grow, it is essential that you:<sup>2</sup>

- Spend some time each day praying and worshipping God. <sup>1 Thess. 5:17-18</sup>
- Read the Bible daily. <sup>1 Peter 2:2</sup>
- Find a church that teaches the Bible as 100% the Word of God and encourages a personal relationship with Jesus. <sup>Hebrews 10:25</sup>
- Begin to develop friendships with sincere Christians and be baptized.

<sup>1</sup> John 1:7, Romans 6:4

- Tell other people about your new relationship with God. <sup>Matt. 4:19</sup>

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the following people for their contributions to this publication:

Hope Church members who told their stories to help others come into a relationship with Jesus.

We would also like to acknowledge the following authors from whose writings many of the ideas in this book were adapted:

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# NOTES

