



**Dads' UNI**

Understanding, Nurturing, Imparting

## A CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE TO LIFE



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# IS IT POSSIBLE TO KNOW GOD?

Is it possible for a man to know God? Is this a realistically achievable goal or is it a belief only shared by 'religious fanatics' and 'spiritual gurus'? Some would say they know God, others that it is merely a fanciful pursuit. Some speak God's name but their heart is far from Him, while others continue to quietly persist in showing God's love to the people they meet through their actions. Is there only one way to know God or do all paths lead to the same destination? These questions are valid and deserve to be answered, read below for more.....

After writing recently on the title "Impressions Of Heaven" I have decided to take the heavenly theme one step further, and to introduce you to some concepts that may assist you in knowing God personally. Ultimately it will come down to a personal choice and decision as to whether or not you get to know God personally. If you are adamant that God can NOT be known then there is a very good chance that you won't meet Him, at least not while you are alive. But if you open up your heart to the POSSIBILITY that God can be known, then you have taken an important step forward to achieving that goal. Christian parenting is enabled by each member of the family having a willingness to accept the wisdom and authority found in parenting from the Bible.

Please consider the following reasons from scripture why God may be known:

## **Seeing God through His creation**

Romans 1:18-21 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

## **You already have a knowledge of God**

The knowledge of God's reality is hard-wired into every human being, when we are born on this earth we arrive with the knowledge that we are a created being and we owe our lives to our Creator. This is both a wonderful encouragement and an awesome responsibility because we have to get through our lifetime both protecting that knowledge and fulfilling the destiny we have been given to achieve.

John 1:9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world

## **You have already seen God at some level**

God is clearly seen through the things that He has made. The divine order that holds our world in place is proof of His creative hand. Every day the sun comes up and goes down, every day the tides come in and go out again, gravity holds everything down on the earth so it doesn't fly away into space, clouds form that they may release life-giving water upon the earth, millions of different creatures flow together as part of a complex biological system of life. If we only took

the time to ask Him to show us the truth of His reality we may begin to see His Hand in much of our daily life.

Matthew 5:45 for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

### **You have already understood about God**

The understanding of God's ways is perceived by the heart and not merely by the mind. Man however then has the responsibility to continue in that understanding and not allow it to be pushed out of our mind because of our propensity to live independently from God. If we allow this to happen then we will start to justify our actions through mentally discounting God's reality and the certainty of our lives and actions being judged by Him. The end result of this process is often a complete mental denial of God's existence, when man's thoughts become futile and hearts become darkened from the truth that surrounds them everywhere.

Luke 10:16 He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me."

### **You have a choice to make**

We see from these scriptures that evidence for God's reality surrounds us everyday and yet many in the world continue to miss out on actually getting to know Him personally. For many it is because they refuse to open their hearts to even the possibility of His existence, and because God is a gentleman and will not force Himself upon anyone He allows them to exercise the free will that He gave them even if it is used to reject Him.

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

### **God's ultimate revelation of Himself**

If the hints that we find within creation and within our own hearts are pointers toward God's reality and the fact that He can be known, then the life of His Son Jesus Christ is the undeniable proof of His existence. Jesus came to earth and worked incredible miracles and spoke with amazing wisdom revealing God's purposes and plans for us. But all His lifetime achievements were over-shadowed by His resurrection from the dead after He allowed Himself to be crucified for the sins of all mankind. Jesus laid down His own life for us that we might find new life in Him as our saviour.

John 14:9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

My main aim today is to open your mind to the possibility that maybe God is closer to you than you think. I encourage you to consider that the greatness of God's love as revealed through His Son is worthy to be trusted. Can God be known and is Jesus Christ the only way to achieve that goal of truly finding Him?

In my experience after many years of seeking truth in many different ways I have found that meeting Jesus Christ personally was the fulfillment of my greatest dreams and hopes, and knowing Him more each day is my motivation and passion. It is for this reason that I share my faith with you my readers that you also may share in the joy of knowing God personally.

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

# GRABBING HOLD OF HOPE

Many times in life we arrive at places or find ourselves in circumstances that we wish were different, that we wish we could change. Whether it be a job that leaves us feeling dissatisfied or the boredom of doing the same old things continually, frustration comes to us all. Sometimes while we are giving our best effort in raising children we find ourselves disappointed and discouraged as a parent. Thankfully there are occasions when something arises in our hearts for just a fraction of a second that offers a potential way out, a light at the end of the tunnel. We see it in our hearts and feel the clarity it brings as it rises into our minds, a hope for better things to come.

When hope begins to arise in the human heart different people respond in different ways. Some people see the chance that hope brings, but immediately begin to consider all the reasons why it couldn't happen, or wouldn't happen to them and they change the image of hope in their heart to an image of failure and defeat.

Another person may find themselves in a similar circumstance but respond quite differently when they see the chance that hope brings. They perceive that hope is not just a random thought floating through their mind, but that it comes with power and a sense of destiny attached to it. When the hope arrives in their heart and mind they grab hold of it firmly, like a man clinging to a life-preserver in the midst of a stormy sea. The more they hang onto it the firmer it becomes in their hands, and what began merely as potential begins to grow into an assurance that this can really happen.

The more they ponder and consider the hope that they have seen in their hearts the stronger the image and certainty grows inside them, that there is a way out, that better things can come into their life. I believe that often hope is not just a random thought, but is an encouraging message sent from God, our loving heavenly Father to his child. Hope shines a light upon the path that He knows will lead us out of our current circumstances and into a better future.

There is a scripture written by the Apostle Paul that reveals a powerful principle for life it states that "Hope is an anchor for the soul of man". An anchor is a steadying influence for a ship upon the sea, it keeps it facing in the right direction even in troubled waters, and stops it from being wrecked upon the rocky shoreline.

So what are some practical steps we can take to ensure that we don't lose the chance that hope brings?

- Don't negate hope by believing the negatives that arise in your mind
- Realise that hope comes with power to bring itself to fulfilment
- Be patient and continue to believe in the hope in your heart
- Let the hope grow into a step by step plan to a better future
- Be brave enough to act on your plan when the right time comes

Hope may only come as a glimpse, a momentary vision in our hearts but if we continue to believe in that hope it will grow stronger and a plan will begin to form in our mind. Remember that you don't need to see the whole road first before you step out on the new journey that hope brings, every journey begins with a single step in the right direction. Step out in faith knowing that the same One who inspired the hope in your heart will continue to lead you as you travel along the road.

# THE POWER OF BELIEF

Henry Ford the famous inventor and maker of the Model T Ford stated " Whether you think you can or you think you can't, you're right!". What we believe is shaping our life today and will ultimately affect our tomorrow. Belief is often instigated in the realms of the mind and imagination although these are merely the pathways that release a very powerful tool into our individual lives.

Each of us has a picture of ourselves locked deep inside us, and we live and act out of that picture of who we believe we are, as Henry Ford said "if you believe you can, you're right!" If you have a strong self belief that you are able to overcome any challenge that comes your way in life then you will find that the strength required to do that will become available to you, but if you believe that you are weak and useless then you will live out of that image and fail in life. 'As a man thinks in his heart, so is he' is a scripture often used in describing the power of self-image.

Often what we believe about ourselves is shaped by those things we have experienced in life and the words that people have spoken over us. If you grew up in a family where you were abused or belittled constantly by your parents or other family members then your self-image will have been imprinted with at least some of that image, and you may struggle to live a life other than that you have known. But if you grew up in a home of loving support and encouragement where you were told that you could do anything and be anything you wanted in life, then you have a far greater opportunity to achieve highly in your life, for you also will live out of your self-image.

The good news is that we are all able to change the picture that we have of ourselves and by doing that we are able to change our destiny in life. By the correct use of imagination we can begin to re-program those things we believe about ourselves, and by changing the picture we change our future. Filling our mind with positive and encouraging thoughts daily goes a long way toward bringing about a change in our self-image. But there is an even more powerful way to alter our self-image that is not merely relying upon the self-discipline of imagination.

The words that others speak over our life have a deep and abiding impact upon us, they often seem to carry a credibility and weight beyond that which we can build ourselves. The most powerful element of belief is based not merely upon what we believe about ourselves and the world, but who we believe in. The negative words that have been spoken over us in life by imperfect men are most easily dispelled when they are replaced by far more powerful words spoken by the only perfect being, God.

The life and encouragement that is to be found in daily reading of the scriptures in the Bible imprints powerfully upon our self-image and imparts wisdom and hope to a believing heart. Jesus Christ once spoke these wonderful words and changed a man's life forever "If you can believe, all things are possible to him that believes!" Fathers have a wonderful opportunity to build a strong and positive future for their children by passing on the wisdom and hope they receive in reading many of the parenting bible verses. By constantly speaking words of encouragement and faith over our child we will enable them to succeed in life by building resilience and a respect and love for God.

# CLEARING OUT THE VAULT

In human life we go through many experiences, some are wonderfully encouraging while others can be decidedly negative. Throughout our lifetime these experiences are deposited into a vault or repository of the soul that is filled with personal memories and accompanied by many of the emotions we felt through those incidents. We draw from this storehouse of memories and emotions in our everyday interactions with others and to a certain extent they make up who we are and what we believe about ourselves and the world in general. Thankfully it is possible to selectively choose much of what goes into this vault and thereby build up a stronghold of positive memories and emotions from which to draw upon in life.

It is empowering to realise that what we allow to be placed in the vault is what comes out of the vault. Someone somewhere coined the phrase GIGO Good In, Good Out or alternately Garbage In, Garbage Out. It is therefore incredibly important to place a mental guard over the door to and screen everything that is seeking entrance into our soul.

If we could place all our positive and negative memories and emotions on a scale/weighing balance I wonder in which direction they would tip? Would all the positive experiences of our life tip the balance toward the good or have the negative experiences we have faced forced the balance down toward the bad side? Unfortunately in many instances it is the memory of the bad experiences we have faced that seem at times to take precedence in our hearts and weigh us down mentally and emotionally.

How wonderful it would be if we could go into the vault and clean out the bad experiences and their effects upon us. If only we could get a fresh start and begin to replace them with experiences and emotions that would only benefit our lives. What a relief it would be if we could get out from under the weight of our disappointments, our failures and shame or our grief and fears, and walk free from those memories that have held us prisoner for so long. Well the good news is that to a large extent you can!

The answer however is not merely mental or emotional but based in an area that overrides and actually governs these aspects of life. The area I speak of is the spiritual aspect of our humanity, and it is within this area that we will find the freedom we long for. It is freedom that is not found by hiding away in a cave and chanting mantras, or by finding some celestial plain of peace through meditation for each of these pursuits are still based in human endeavour and therefore ultimately destined for failure.

The answer is found in a personal relationship with our Creator and with His Son, Jesus Christ. Only the One who made us truly knows how to fix us when we are broken. To some extent every negative experience we have gone through in life has brought a degree of broken-ness or emotional damage into our lives. To be set free from our past we need to have our hearts transformed and renewed by allowing God our Creator to also become God our Saviour.

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Being born again involves allowing God our Creator to be the Ruler and Saviour of your life, and is accessed by believing in the resurrection of His Son Jesus Christ. Jesus rose from the dead having conquered even 'death' itself and offers a new life to all who believe in and are willing to follow Him. When we are born again God's Holy Spirit enters our lives and takes away the power or hold that those negative experiences had upon our lives. Jesus willing sacrifice on the cross paid the price for our sins and our shame, and by believing in Him we receive God's forgiveness. The new life that begins is the most wonderful adventure, an adventure that is filled with life changing experiences and the blessing of enjoying eternity in Heaven with Him. Christian parenting is enabled through the daily reading of God's Words in the Bible and applying them in family life.

Developing a relationship with Jesus Christ is done through daily prayer and study of His Word as written in The Bible. Through the Bible we begin to understand what life was truly meant to be and still can be within the blessing of living in God's will for our lives. Bit by bit, day by day we begin to restock the repository of our life and are enabled then to live out of the new experiences and beliefs that come through knowing Jesus Christ. Christian parenting grows considerably easier the closer we get to God in our personal relationship.

# PURSUIING HEAVEN

When your wife's pregnancy is complete and a child is born into the world they arrive with a perception of God's reality, however it is often in the midst of life's difficulties that some people choose to reject that knowledge. This process involves a subtle decision being made, a decision whether or not to believe in God and to pursue Heaven, or to mentally allocate 'spiritual' things as unreal or unknowable. These decisions once made will either validate our choice to believe or attempt to justify our choice Not to believe.

In the Gospel Of Mark (4:3-20) Jesus spoke a parable revealing how the truth of God's Word reaches every person in the world in some way, and shows that it is their own responses to that truth that ultimately determine whether or not they attain eternal life. In the Parable of the Sower Jesus lists 4 different heart responses and reactions to hearing the Word of God.

## **The seeds that fell by the wayside**

The good news of the salvation that is available through Jesus Christ (God's Son), is spoken of throughout the whole world. For some people the gospel merely seems like a 'fairy story' or a 'religious legend' and it does not resonate within their heart, this is because they have already made an unconscious decision and compartmentalized the gospel as 'not being true' and have therefore rejected it. The Bible states in Mark's Gospel that the devil comes immediately to steal the truth away from those people, lest they be saved.

## **The seeds that fell on stony ground**

For others the story of Jesus Christ and salvation seems like a pretty good idea, so they immediately say: 'I'll give it a go!' But because these people don't take the time to consider the importance and implications of such a decision, they lack the inner strength or commitment required for their faith to survive through times of adversity. The Bible states that these people stumble immediately when any adversity arises and reject their faith. These people often become those who say "Been there, done that" when they are approached by someone trying to encourage them to believe and be saved.

## **The seeds that fell among thorns**

The third heart response we see Jesus speak of is those who hear the message of salvation and accept it, but they maintain a degree of independence. The ability to live for God successfully is stifled, because the room required in their heart to love God fully is cluttered with other things. The cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things entering into their hearts actually choke out the effectiveness of the word. By not choosing to put God first in their lives they are unable to bear fruit for the kingdom of God and eventually they fall away from the faith.

## **The seeds that fell on good ground**

The last heart response that Jesus spoke about identified the group of people who are able to succeed in this most important area of life. They are those who fully accept the truth of God's word, allowing His will and purposes in their hearts and lifestyle. Loving God becomes their daily desire, and because they have made room for Him in their hearts they experience the joy of bearing fruit that will remain into eternity. To these people the pursuit of heaven becomes a

passion which is outworked joyfully in their daily lives. To them the difficulties we all face are merely hurdles to be jumped because they have 'an eternal perspective' on life. Eternity holds no terrors for them for the Holy Spirit has given them an assurance of God's goodness and mercy awaiting them in heaven.

I'm often saddened by the number of people who say they believe in God and yet by their own admission are living a lifestyle that they know does not match that belief. Some I'm sure secretly have the thought that they will live the life they choose here on earth, and then get right with God when they are on their death-bed. The trouble with this strategy of getting into heaven, is that sin has a way of constantly hardening our hearts against God, and eventually we become unable to change and choose the Christian life we know we should.

Life is full of choices, and making the right choices leads to right outcomes, while making wrong choices takes us into areas that we may very well regret. As fathers we have a huge amount of influence upon the lives of our children, and it is for this reason that I encourage all men to teach their children the Bible stories at a young age. Ultimately they, like us, will have to make their own decision whether or not to believe in and follow Jesus Christ but by teaching them God's word we give them the best chance of enjoying eternity with us.

As someone said recently 'Eternity is a long time to be wrong!'

# A LIFE OF REPENTANCE

One of the topics I don't hear much of these days around many church circles, is the word 'repentance'. Many 'modern' or 'contemporary' churches no longer use this scriptural word, in the fear that it might offend someone, or stop them coming forward on an altar call for those wanting to receive Jesus Christ. As a strategic thinker and Christian parent I find this method of presenting the gospel disturbing.

Although I appreciate that the gospel needs to be preached in different ways to reach different people, yet I am left with a sense of foreboding as to the spiritual state of these 'converts'. It seems that often these days the gospel is presented more like 'joining a club' than laying your own life down and following Jesus.

The foundation of any building will ultimately effect whether it stands or falls in the years ahead. If the foundation is laid well and all the correct procedures are followed, the building will be strong and stable, and able to withstand the pressures that will naturally come against it. But if the builder 'cuts corners' or 'takes the easy way out', there is little doubt that a disaster will eventually occur.

When I was converted to Christianity many years ago now, those witnessing to me were wise enough and trusted God enough, to let the Holy Spirit have 'His' way in my life. They simply preached the uncompromising 'Word of God' and prayed a lot for a lost soul, that desperately needed saving. They made sure they told me the parable of the man who set out to build a house, got half way through and could not finish, as they wanted me to 'count the cost' of following Christ.

Jesus also spoke of the danger of those 'hearing the word' without having their heart prepared to receive it, that they are like seeds that fall on stony ground, they endure for a time, but then when difficulties arise they lose their faith.

One of the main problems I perceive with the 'soft' approach of preaching the gospel is that those who have been only partly challenged with the requirements of living for Jesus and then fall away, think they have 'already heard it all' and are then twice as hard to convert the second time. I believe we are not doing these people any favours by withholding vital information from them.

We need to allow them to soberly face the prerequisites that Jesus spoke of, so they have every opportunity of laying a solid foundation for their own Christian walk.

Both Jesus Christ and John The Baptist began their ministry saying the same thing, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand". Repentance is a crucial foundation stone in every Christian believer's life, and without it Christianity is just a religion, and not an intimate relationship with our creator.

## **But what then is Repentance?**

To repent is to acknowledge that the way you were going was wrong and to choose to turn around and follow Jesus Christ and His teachings, forsaking your old worldly ways.

Repentance is a daily lifestyle for those desiring to walk close to God. Repentance makes the room in our hearts, for the Holy Spirit to come and fill daily. The foundation for each days living is "repentance from dead works" and "faith toward God".

## **Suggested Scriptures**

(Luke 14 v 27)

And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it" lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.'

(Matthew 4 v 17)

From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

(Matthew 3v1-12)

In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying:

'The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord;

Make His paths straight."

Now John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, 'Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not think to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our father." For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

(Matthew 13 v 3-9)

Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

(Matthew 13 v 20-21)

But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.

(Hebrews 6 v 1-2)

Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

# IMPRESSIONS OF HEAVEN

Throughout the ages there has probably never been a more important yet elusive question as that about the existence of Heaven. Is Heaven real, what happens after we die, do we merely cease to be or is there an after-life? These are the very real questions that I believe every person born asks themselves sometime throughout their life. The evidence for the reality of Heaven is available everywhere but must be perceived by the heart and not merely understood by the mind alone. Even the fact that every member of the human family asks themselves questions about Heaven is a clue we should not discount lightly.

What follows is a short list containing some specific insights into what the Bible teaches about Heaven. There are however far more biblical insights about Heaven available for those who would like to study them in scripture.

## **Many mansions**

John 14:2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

This is a wonderfully comforting scripture which reveals that God has room for everyone and Jesus has ensured us that there is a place for every believer, no matter how many come seeking entrance into this place of eternal peace and joy. The kingdom of God is open to every nationality and ethnic group, all are welcome in God's house.

Heaven is both inclusive and exclusive, inclusive in the way it welcomes every person as an honoured member and exclusive in the fact that it is a place for believers only. Those who have mocked God and Heavens reality and lived their lives apart from Him have already made their choice and excluded themselves from the eternal joys found in Heaven. Although even those unbelievers have the opportunity while they still live to change their mind about God and their eternal destination will also change accordingly.

## **Angelic life**

Matthew 22:30 For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven.

I have previously been informed about comments on this scripture that it in some way lessens the value of Heaven in people's eyes, because they would not be able to enjoy the physical pleasures associated with our humanity. It is however important to understand that our sexuality was given to us as a means of procreation when we were told to "Be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it" (Genesis 1:28) Once we have left this world behind and stepped into the joys of Heaven, the ties to our natural bodies are broken and the physical desires that dwelt within them are also broken. Heavens unending joy will supersede any and all desires we previously had for the things of this world.

## **Gate of Heaven**

Genesis 28:10-12 Now Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran. So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep. Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

Genesis 28:17 And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!"

Our life upon the earth is our God-given opportunity to decide whether or not we desire to live in God's presence forever in Heaven. We stand at the threshold of Heaven everyday and by our beliefs and actions we choose our eternal path and influence others in their choices also. God's angels are busy in this world trying to protect us along our life's journey and to thwart the plans that the evil one, the Devil has for you. We are however given a free will by God to make our own choices and we alone are responsible for those choices.

## **God's breath in man**

Genesis 2:7 And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

God is spirit, and as spirit is not bound by the constraints of natural life as we know it here on earth, for it is He who made us and the world we live in. God is also eternal and lives outside of what we understand as 'time' and when He breathed into man we became a spiritual and eternal being as well. It is for this reason that it is vitally important for each of us to ensure that we choose wisely when we are deciding our eternal home, for where ever we choose to spend it, it will be forever.

## **All sorrow gone**

Revelation 21:4 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

Not only are the external joys of Heaven something to be seen with our eyes, but in truth they are realised in our hearts and experienced inside our soul. The greatest joy will be found in our release from every pain and suffering we have endured upon the earth and in the eternal thrill of meeting our Creator in person.

## **Eternity already in our hearts**

Ecclesiastes 3:11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.

This is clearly one of the greatest clues we can acknowledge when looking for insights into Heaven. This fact alone deserves serious consideration, that throughout the history of man there has always been an understanding of and a pursuit of Heaven. In every place and at every time Mankind has been aware of Heaven's existence, and in that awareness has sought to know God.

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Matthew 6:9-13

In this manner, therefore, pray:

Our Father in heaven,  
Hallowed be Your name.  
Your kingdom come.  
Your will be done  
On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts,  
As we forgive our debtors.  
And do not lead us into temptation,  
But deliver us from the evil one.  
For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever Amen.

The Lord's Prayer above is one of the most well-known verses of scripture and clearly articulates 4 specific aspects of Heaven for us to understand.

1. God dwells in Heaven, it is His Throne Room
2. We see that God's will is done in Heaven and He desires for His will to be done here on earth as well, especially in the lives of every believer.
3. We see that God's kingdom is coming here to earth
4. We see that God's kingdom (which we will share with Him) will last forever.

### **Jesus opens the door**

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

When God sent His beloved Son Jesus into the earth to pay the price for our sins, it was so that we as a fallen creation could be brought back into God's eternal blessing and enjoy the joys of walking with Him eternally in Heaven. Jesus victory on the cross (paying for our sins) and overcoming death itself (in His resurrection) opened the door for everyone who believes in Him to follow Him into Heaven as His beloved children.

Heaven itself, that greatest of human questions, is glimpsed in many different snapshots in the scriptures of the Bible. The short list that I have mentioned is like placing only the tip of a toe into the great sea of eternity. Of one thing we can be sure, Heaven is a wonderful place and

each and every one of us has a personal invitation from God to come and make our eternal home with Him.

# HOLLYWOOD OR HEAVENWARD

Probably one of the greatest influences our generation faces is the rise and rise of Hollywood. Its subtle persuasion reaches into the core of our humanity and identity. One hundred years ago society lauded great achievers in the areas of science or invention, they praised the bravery of explorers and were moved by the works of great painters or authors. Today there are still great things being achieved in these areas, but they have been relegated in the minds of many, due to the shining brightness of Hollywood.

Those who have been born with beauty have transcended those who have been born with brains. The actors and models of this world have become the elite of humanity in the eyes of this generation, and their every word or gesture is recorded and reported to the masses. Many people live out their lives vicariously through “the stars”, wishing and dreaming they could be like them.

The profound influence of Hollywood can be seen in its significant effect on the younger generation. Now I enjoy a good action movie or thriller as much as the rest of us, but I wouldn't ask Arnold Schwarzenegger for his insight into rocket science, or The Rolling Stones how to perform brain surgery.

Movie stars and rock musicians are not any better qualified to give opinions in these areas than others who are raising children, and yet they are idolised by the masses and their views are sought after and accepted as wisdom by many. Now if they were to give advice about their chosen area of expertise (Movies or Music) their words would have more relevance. But when they give their opinions on areas such as morality, ethics and godliness I would seriously question if they have much truth to share with us.

Now many of the “stars” are involved in good works programs, although the way that some of them ensure that those good works are publicised widely, does seem more focused upon building notoriety, rather than really ‘serving’ others out of pure motives.

If any society is to prosper it must exalt the best influences in that society, and continually rise with the improvements that come forth. A persons’ ‘character’ should be the major test applied to those who achieve notoriety, as to whether they are ‘worthy’ of honour or not. When people of dubious or blatantly low character are honoured in society we all, as a society, lose.

Moral and ethical character, are foundational stones in our society and therefore must always be preserved and protected. The ‘character’ of each individual should be the standard by which they are judged in society and not their ‘looks only’.

# HOW DOES HEAVEN SEE YOU?

I think one of the more interesting questions we could ask ourselves occasionally is "How does heaven see me?" Being able to find the heart and mind of God on this and many other subjects is not always easy, but there are some insights available that can assist along the way to finding this out.

Often as men we can unconsciously fall into the habit of judging ourselves merely by the results we may or may not be currently seeing in our life. Often for a man the results we look for can be in ministry or business, or in our personal life at home. Are we achieving what we hoped to achieve? Are we providing well for our family? Am I making good parenting decisions? Is my life with God on track? How am I really doing as a father? Do I really have a good marriage?

As important as all these areas are in our lives as a man, they are still external results, and if we merely stay on the merry-go-round of achieving results all our lives we may miss our divine destiny. I would suggest that there is an insight that is found in our belief system that can release much of the pressure that a 'results mentality' brings.

When the eyes of heaven look down upon us what do they see? Do they see a failure? Do they see a success? Do they see a man who is struggling to do his best in difficult circumstances? I believe the answer to all these questions is No!

Heaven does not see our lives as we see them. The eyes of heaven see beyond human achievements or failures, and judge according to eternal heavenly values and not as men judge. One of the most powerful insights I have received into how heaven really operates, I received from my grandmother.

She was not theologically trained, and probably couldn't recite all the books of the bible in order, and position them in a historical time-line in under fifteen seconds, but she possessed a quality that I long for in my own life, and have rarely glimpsed within the modern church.

The quality of spirit she possessed was that of grace and love. All my family felt it and responded to it, we all knew that no matter what went wrong in our lives or what mistakes we made, that 'grandma' would always be there with a listening ear. I think that unconsciously we all knew that no matter what, she accepted us and loved us just how we were.

She didn't try to change us, or to make us conform to some family standard, she just loved us and left the rest up to God. You know, heaven is like that too, it doesn't require results from us for acceptance or place burdens upon us that we can't bear.

When the eyes of heaven look down upon us they are filled with love, a love that is so powerful that it can reach into a human heart and fill it with peace and hope.

When the eyes of heaven look down upon us they are filled with grace and understanding that we are merely made of dust and are destined for many struggles and failures in life, and yet we are accepted and cherished as heavens dear children.

When the eyes of heaven look down upon us they are filled with hope and joy, because they know that God's own power and ability is strong enough to bring us through any trial we must face on this earth and present us without fault in His presence.

# FATHERING THROUGH THE LORD'S PRAYER

## **The Lord's Prayer**

Matthew 6:9-13

In this manner, therefore, pray:

Our Father in heaven,  
Hallowed be Your name.  
Your kingdom come.  
Your will be done  
On earth as it is in Heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts,  
As we forgive our debtors.  
And do not lead us into temptation,  
But deliver us from the evil one.  
For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

When the Disciples of Christ asked Him to teach them how to pray, Jesus revealed a snapshot of how heaven operates. In the Lord's Prayer we see a blueprint of the way our heavenly Father runs His family. We can learn important principles for a successful family through what was revealed in this prayer. God is our Heavenly Father and we are His family, how He deals with us as His children gives us insights into how we as fathers should interact with our own family.

### **"Our Father in Heaven"**

When Jesus spoke these words He revealed one of the most profound secrets of eternity, showing that God Himself loves us as a Father. Accepting Him as our Father by receiving Christ as our saviour opens up all the benefits of heaven to each and every human being. It also entails looking up to Him as your leader and Lord. Every family needs to have a leader, not a dictator or a tyrant, but someone who leads through servant hood and by example. God has given the role of leader to the husband/father in family life.

### **"Hallowed be your name"**

We as Christians are to honour and respect God's Name, as He is our Lord and Creator and deserves all our thanks for His mercy in our lives. In a similar way the role of 'father' in each family should be honoured and respected for their 'positions' sake. When we honor our own father in life we honour the fact that God gave him that position and in turn we honor God.

### **"Your kingdom come"**

God's Kingdom is His overall goal for creation, His plan and purpose that has been revealed throughout the bible and will be fulfilled at Christ's return. The father in each family should set the direction of that family, its goals and purposes (This should be done in discussion/agreement with his wife) and may also include the spiritual and relational environment within the home. Ultimately the responsibility for the family's success or failure will fall upon the father, so this should not be undertaken without due consideration.

## **“Your will be done”**

Submitting to our Heavenly Father’s will is a major key in our Christian walk, only through submission can we find the freedom we long for, to live for and with God. In a similar way, the will of the father in each home needs to be accepted whether or not it is agreed with. There is no authority without responsibility, and because the father ‘shoulders’ the responsibility he also has the God given authority. This is conditional upon the father submitting to God’s will as revealed in the scriptures of the Bible. If a father is abusive or violent then he is no longer acting in the ‘role’ of father, and therefore does not deserve to be submitted to. When a father refuses to take the responsibility of fatherhood he abdicates his authority in the family also.

## **“On earth as it is in Heaven”**

(Here is the key!) How God does it, is how we should do it as fathers!

Jesus clearly stated the principle, we as fathers are to run our families as closely as possible to how God runs His family. We are to learn from our own heavenly relationship with God and bring the wisdom and grace from it into our own family. As God deals with us as our loving Father so are we to deal with our children.

Sometimes God disciplines us, sometimes He encourages us, sometimes He allows us to learn from our mistakes, but always He loves us unconditionally and has our very best in mind. The scriptures in the Bible reveal the nature and purpose of God for you and your children, reading it daily can help us grow more like Him in our role as a father.

## **Give us this day our daily bread**

One of the major roles of a father is to be the “bread winner” for the family, the provider for the household. It is his task to work and bring in enough income to enable all the families’ needs to be met. This role is to be accepted in partnership with God Himself as your provider. As our heavenly Father provides for you, you can then provide for your family. Even those fathers who are unable to “work” for legitimate reasons (such as illness or injury etc) can play a major role in providing for their family through believing prayer to God.

## **Forgive us our debts(sins) as we forgive our debtors**

Being the ‘peacemaker’ in the home is a time consuming process initially, until the foundational principles are established in the ‘life’ of the family. The father needs to define the ‘boundaries’ in family life and bring the whole family into agreement with them. Explaining clearly how ‘we’ do life in this family is vital for agreement to come. Treating each other with respect and forgiving each other quickly goes a long way toward having peace in the home. The father should lead by example by asking for forgiveness quickly when he makes a mistake. This is a sign of spiritual strength and ‘proves’ that you mean what you say, and are willing to ‘walk the talk’. Teaching your children about the giving and receiving of forgiveness is a huge step toward successful family life.

## **Do not lead us into temptation**

King David started off in life as a shepherd, taking care of his fathers’ flock of sheep. He learned to lead them from place to place where the grazing was good, and to move on at the right time when the grass was becoming scarce. He also knew where all the local water holes were, and

the safest path to travel there. In Psalm 23 we see that David had a revelation that God was also present in 'his' life shepherding him. Leading him in the way he should go, guiding his footsteps and helping him choose the right path in life. We as fathers need to be aware of our children's decisions and assist them with gentle wisdom and guidance to help them make the 'right' choices in life.

### **Deliver us from the evil one**

Part of King David's role as a shepherd was protecting his sheep from danger, whether it was along dangerous paths or the attack of mountain lions. David developed skills with stones and a sling, so he could effectively protect his flock. We as fathers can also develop skills such as awareness and discernment that will assist us in our role as protector in the family. There is no doubt that we live in a world where evil is present, and the precious lives of your children are worth protecting at all costs.

Being aware of who your children 'hang out' with, and where they go is a start to being able to protect them from evil. Not allowing computers in bedrooms is a wise step toward protecting them from the dangers of the internet. Making sure that they are safe each day to the best of your ability is how a father can deliver his children from the evil one.

### **Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever**

Maintaining the family focus toward Christ continually will keep it from going off track. This should include if possible regular church attendance, daily bible study and family prayer times. Praying each night for your children as they go to bed sets a good pattern for later life and assists them in experiencing the 'reality' of God's love in their lives. In a thousand years time your children will still be thanking you for helping them know God and entering His eternal kingdom. Christian parenting is parenting with God's help and the wisdom He provides in the bible verses.

# 5 THINGS THE BIBLE REVEALS ABOUT EVIL

You have only to turn on the television any day of the week and watch the news, to realise that we live in a world where 'Evil' is present. The subject of 'Evil' in the world is often discussed but its' true causes are rarely identified. Some even go as far as blaming God for every evil thing that happens on the earth by saying "If God is such a good God why does He allow all these terrible things to happen?". But where does 'Evil' really come from and who is really to blame? What do the Bible verses reveal on the subject of Evil?

## **The origin of evil**

(Ezekiel 28:15)

You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created,  
Till iniquity was found in you.

'Evil' is not just a mystical form without substance or without origin. The Bible reveals that 'Evil' actually proceeds from and is centred around the being called the Devil/Satan, and that he has many minions called demons serving him. Satan used to be called Lucifer when he was originally one of God's Archangels in Heaven, but when he formed sin and rebellion within himself he was judged by God and was cast out of Heaven.

## **The influence of evil**

(1 John 3:8)

He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

When Satan fell to the earth because of his rebellion against God he devised a scheme to corrupt the purity of God's creation, and in particular Mankind. Man had been made in God's image and likeness, and given authority to rule the world by God. After deceiving man into disobeying God in the Paradise of Eden, Satan took the ruler-ship of the earth from man, and began to distort men into his own perverted image spiritually. Satan's sin nature came into man when we disobeyed God and now all men are influenced at times by desires to do evil.

## **The responsibility for evil**

(2 Corinthians 5:10)

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Although Satan originally deceived man to fall into sin, man is not without fault before God. Man was given a free will and the ability to make his own choices when God breathed life into him. These choices were meant to be made within the safe boundaries of the will of God, but when man fell into disobedience he became estranged from God because of sin. Man was free to make his own choices, but was not free from the consequences of those choices and therefore we also carry responsibility for our own sins before God.

## **The judgement of evil**

(John 12:31)

Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

Through the Death, Burial and Resurrection of Jesus Christ God accomplished an exchange and brought man back legally from under the rulership and influence of Satan's kingdom. The perfect Son of God willingly paid the penalty for mankind by allowing Himself to be crucified as a sacrifice and sin offering before God. The 'sinless Christ' paid the price for 'sinful' man, and because He was sinless He was also able to conquer the ultimate result of sin, namely death. Now all men who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour are forgiven of their sins before God and released from the dominating power of evil.

## **The conclusion of evil**

(Revelation 20:10)

The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

The Bible reveals that just as Evil had a moment of beginning in the heart of Satan so it will ultimately have an end. Throughout many places in the Bible the downfall of Satan's kingdom is spoken about and foretold. Although all men are offered the possibility of eternal salvation in Christ, still many choose to live apart from God's saving grace. Satan has already been found guilty before the Throne of God but his final sentence is carried out when he and his demons are cast into The Lake Of Fire for eternity. It is important to realise that for man there are only two possible destinations in eternity, Heaven or Hell/Lake of Fire. The Bible is very clear in stating that sinful men who reject the salvation found only in Jesus Christ will join Satan in the Lake of Fire.

This important subject has been portrayed to you clearly stating what the Bible says, not to scare you but to inform you of the current reality that you and all mankind face together. The choice is still yours, but understand that your children will often follow you into your eternal destination, where ever that may be.

# 5 THINGS THE BIBLE REVEALS ABOUT GOD

We live in a generation where the knowledge of what is actually written in the bible is no longer widespread within the community. Many people have vague recollections of some mis-quoted scripture that somebody mentioned years ago and that often makes up the extent of their individual bible knowledge. Here are some important facts that the Bible reveals about God.

## **God is revealed as Creator**

(Genesis 1:1) In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

The Book Of Genesis reveals that God was always there, even before everything we know ever existed. God has the ability to speak creatively and by using that ability He created the earth, the heavens, the stars and all life upon the earth, even man. Man is the pinnacle of God's creation and it was for us that He made the world to enjoy. The bible reveals that man was originally made "In God's image and after God's likeness" and the world was given to us to take care of. We continued in this role and in constant communication with God until we were deceived by Evil and fell into disobedience and sin, and as we fell out of relationship with God we were excluded from the Paradise of Eden.

## **God is revealed as holy**

(Isaiah 6:3) "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!"

Many times throughout the scriptures God is revealed as Holy, this word has many meanings but when it is used to speak of God Himself it has the connotation of His Sinless Purity and Perfection and that He is Exalted in that perfection far above all that man can understand. When His holiness is revealed to man we can only behold Him in awe and wonder. For this reason Man was excluded from God's Paradise, for in our sinful state we could no longer stay in His Holy presence.

## **God is revealed as love**

(1 John 4:8) He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

All that man knows of real love comes from God. God does not just 'love people', He is Love. Love is part of His very nature, it is one of the things that make Him who and what He is. It was His great love for mankind that compelled Him to design a plan that would lead us back into relationship with Him after we fell into sin. Even though man had chosen to rebel against God, because of who and what He is, God chose to create a way back to Himself for those who desired it.

## **God is revealed as Saviour**

(Luke 1:47) And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Saviour.

The Plan Of Redemption that God devised was to be outworked over thousands of years, as He firstly showed man what sin was, and then ultimately provided the way for mankind to overcome sin and separation from Himself. The Bible reveals God as a 'Trinity' namely God The Father, God The Son and God The Holy Spirit. In God's great love for man He sent His own Son, Jesus Christ to die for our sins and pay the price for man to be restored back into relationship with Himself. Jesus took the punishment that was due to us for our sins, upon His own sinless body and became the way of eternal salvation.

## **God is revealed as Judge**

(2 Timothy 4:1) I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom

Sin cannot live in God's presence because He is Holy, and therefore sin must be judged by Him and dealt with eternally. If sin was allowed into Heaven its heavenly perfection would be marred, and it would be Heaven no longer. All men are given the opportunity to receive God's salvation through accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, but those who reject God's way of salvation condemn themselves and can not be allowed to stay in Heaven. They must therefore be judged and be eternally separated from God and His Kingdom by being sent to Hell/Lake Of Fire. God did not make Hell for men but for the devil and fallen angels/demons, but those who reject Christ's free gift of salvation leave God with no alternative as the Judge of Mankind.

Remember that our children will usually follow in our footsteps, whether they lead to life or death.

# 5 THINGS THE BIBLE REVEALS ABOUT MANKIND

The role of mankind in creation and in eternity is probably one of the most misunderstood and fought over questions in the world. Who are we, where did we come from, and where are we going as a species? Everybody it seems has an opinion on the subject, but far fewer have a realization of the spiritual reality in which we live and which influences those opinions.

## **Mankind is eternal**

Genesis 2:7

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

From the moment God breathed His life into mankind we were always going to live forever. God is 'spirit' and as He breathed into us He created us as a 'spiritual being' too. It has been said "Man is a spirit, who lives in a body and has a soul", and this statement is biblically correct. The moment you die physically and leave your body you step into your spiritual eternity, and you will live forever somewhere. The question that must be foremost upon our minds is where will we spend that eternity?

## **Mankind is greatly loved by God**

Jeremiah 31:3

The Lord has appeared of old to me, saying:  
"Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love;  
Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you.

God created Mankind because He is 'Our Father in Heaven' and He desired to have children to share eternity with. Of all created beings only Mankind fulfilled His hearts desire for family as they were made in His Image and after His Likeness. God who is Love, had desired children to share His love with, and this desire became a reality through the creation of Mankind.

## **Mankind is already under judgement**

Psalms 1:5

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment,  
Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

From the moment that Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the Garden Of Eden they became servants to sin and spiritual children of the one who had deceived them, namely the devil, Satan. By choosing to obey Satan they accepted his rule in their lives and sin entered into the spirit of Mankind. Now every generation born has sin as part of their spiritual DNA. Every man born has the sin nature influencing them, which then culminates in their own personal sins.(Sometimes it just seems easier to do wrong than do right!) Sin and sinful man can not be allowed to live in Heaven or else Heaven would no longer be Heaven, and therefore sin must be judged and those found guilty condemned to an eternity cut off from Heaven.

## **Mankind needs to be reborn spiritually**

John 5:24

“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

Because Mankind is spiritually corrupted he needs to be re-made spiritually if he is to be accepted into an eternity in Heaven. His sin must be dealt with first and that is where Jesus Christ (God’s Son) comes into the picture. God is a just judge and can not merely acquit the guilty or else He would cease being just and fair. God devised a plan where the debt that was due from our own individual sins could be paid for in full by the Death of His own Son Jesus Christ. Those who believe in Jesus and accept His Lordship over their lives are reborn spiritually. Those who are spiritually reborn are no longer children of the devil, Satan and are restored into relationship with God and become His children.

## **Mankind has a glorious future**

Revelation 22:5

There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.

Those who are re-born spiritually become children of God and as His children have a glorious future awaiting them in eternity. The fulfillment of God’s eternal desire for children is found in us and upon us will He pour out His blessings and richness forever. As our Creator He knows exactly what we need and what will bring us satisfaction and joy, and it is His delight to grant us those very things for eternity. The Bible reveals that there will be new heavens and a new earth and we will no longer be influenced by anything evil, but will have our hearts overflowing with God’s goodness and love always.

John 14:2

In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

We all have a choice to make as men, do we continue to live for ourselves under the influence of our sinful nature or do we bow the knee to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and be restored back into our rightful place as children of God? Our children are watching us for leadership, let us ensure that we lead them to an eternity worth living.

# 5 THINGS THE BIBLE REVEALS ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

In 2013 Jesus Christ was named the most significant person ever in history. Wikipedia ranked Jesus Christ(1st) ahead of Napoleon Bonaparte(2nd) and William Shakespeare(3rd) on the impact each person had in influencing people's opinions over history. But who is Jesus Christ really? Did He really live 2,000 years ago and do all those things? What does the Bible really say about Jesus?

## **Prophecy of Jesus coming**

Isaiah 7:14

Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

There were more than 300 prophetic scriptures that Jesus Christ fulfilled in His lifetime, these words were spoken by God's prophets 100's of years previously concerning the coming of the Messiah. Many of these prophecies were 'time specific' and related to historical windows when certain things had to happen for the 'Messiah' to be revealed. Only one person in all history fulfilled each and every prophecy and that was Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was born miraculously of the virgin Mary after the Holy Spirit overshadowed her as foretold by the Angel Gabriel. Jesus although fully a man, was born without the sin nature that had plagued mankind since the fall of Adam and Eve.

## **Jesus' miraculous life**

Acts 10:38

...how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

The life of Jesus Christ was miraculous in the extreme, and it is obvious that God's blessing and favour were upon Him. Jesus displayed incredible abilities as He taught about God's Kingdom throughout the nation of Israel, abilities that even today with all our technology we have no way of emulating. He healed every sickness and disease among the people, He made the lame to walk and the blind to see. On more than one occasion He raised people from the dead and restored them to their families alive and well. He exercised authority over the elements by walking on water and commanding storms to cease, but even this was surpassed when He rose again from the grave, having conquered death.

## **Jesus defeated Satan's power**

John 12:31

Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

Jesus ultimate purpose was to destroy the unending influence and power that the devil, Satan had wielded over all of mankind since our fall in the Garden of Eden. He accomplished this not through sending forth armies into battle, but through the greatest act of love ever seen. Jesus willingly went to the Cross of Calvary to pay the price due for the sins of all mankind,

the sinless Christ dying in the place of sinful man. Through His death He was able to satisfy all the legal requirements of heaven that resulted from our fall into sin.

### **Jesus rose victorious from the grave**

1 Corinthians 15:4

and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,

The greatest enemy that every man born throughout history must face is the certainty of death. Death's inevitability and final victory was assured ever since Mankind fell into sin, and no-one could win against it. No-one that is until Jesus Christ! Death entered into mankind through the sin of Adam but because Jesus Christ was sinless and died in our place, He had the authority to destroy death's dominion. Now all who believe in His resurrection from the dead are bestowed the gift of eternal life by having their sins forgiven by God.

### **Jesus is coming back again**

Acts 1:10-11

And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

Christ's return will be as the King of Kings with great power and authority, and to Him every knee shall bow. The graves shall be opened and every person ever born will stand before God and give an account of the life they lived, and whether they accepted or rejected the Saviour that God had sent, His Son Jesus Christ.

These events have been prophesied for thousands of years and just as 100's of other prophecies of Christ's Birth, Life, Death and Resurrection have been fulfilled, we can be assured that these will too. Our role and choice as a father is to decide whether we want to stand before God forgiven by accepting Christ or condemned for rejecting man's only hope of salvation. This is clearly what the Bible reveals about Jesus Christ.