

The  
WORLD'S  
GREATEST



**The message of the World's Greatest Gift starts at the very beginning . . . God created the universe and made mankind unique because He created us in His image.**

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

*Genesis 1:26* Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule 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." 27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

**God gave us the Bible so that He could tell us about Him and how to live life in His image.**

*Psalms 19:7-11* The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. 8 The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. 9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether. 10 They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb. 11 Moreover, by them Your servant is warned; In keeping them there is great reward.

*Psalms 119:11* Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You.

*Isaiah 55:8-11* "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. 9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts. 10 "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, And do not return there without watering the earth And making it bear and sprout, And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; 11 So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.

*Hebrews 4:12-13* For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

*2 Timothy 2:15* Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

We can know God's desire for mankind through His Word, the Bible, and it always accomplishes what He intended it to do, reveal Him to us.

**God gave people some commands to obey so that they would be able to have peace in their lives: peace with Him and with others. Typically they**

## **are called the Ten Commandments:**

God is the only god, Don't serve idols (anything that leads you away from God), Don't use God's name in idle conversation or cursing, Set aside time to worship God, Honor your parents, Don't kill, Don't have sex outside of marriage, Don't steal, Don't lie, Don't desire to take other people's spouses or things. (*paraphrased*)

These are commands but are not to be seen as a burden but a way to live so that you can have peace with God and everyone else in the world. Jesus, God's Son, taught that to even think of doing something that went against God's commandments was the same as doing them. So, no one has kept God's standard. We have all sinned or fell short of God's standard.

*Romans 3:23* for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

*1 John 1:8, 10* 8 If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us...10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

## **Jesus summed all of the commands of God in two thoughts:**

- 1) There is only one God, Love God completely with everything you have available to you: your mind, your body, your possessions, and your very life.
- 2) Love others as much as you love yourself.

*Mark 12:28-31* One of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and

recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, "What commandment is the foremost of all?" 29 Jesus answered, "The foremost is, 'HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD; 30 AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.' 31 "The second is this, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

### **Can anyone be saved?**

Jesus taught that there is nothing that men can do on their own to save themselves...Only God can save us!

*Mark 10:26-27* They were even more astonished and said to Him, "Then who can be saved?" 27 Looking at them, Jesus \*said, "With people it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God."

### **Sin always has a cost. Payment, or atonement, for sin was paid through sacrifice.**

God had people offer sacrifices in order to make atonement for their sins each year. God didn't want people to offer sacrifices and not really change how they lived their lives though...not just follow the rules...but to really want to live at peace with God and others.

*Hosea 6:6* For I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice, And in the knowledge of

God rather than burnt offerings.

*Micah 6:6-8* With what shall I come to the LORD And bow myself before the God on high? Shall I come to Him with burnt offerings, With yearling calves? 7 Does the LORD take delight in thousands of rams, In ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I present my firstborn for my rebellious acts, The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? 8 He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?

***So God offered a final, once for all, sacrifice, His Son Jesus Christ.***

*John 3:16-18* For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. 18 He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

*1 Peter 3:18* For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit

**If we agree with God that we are sinners and ask for forgiveness, He will forgive us.**

*1 John 1:9* If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our

sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

*Romans 10:9-10* that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

**Jesus has paid the penalty (made atonement) for sin, once for all! Jesus also taught that we need to seriously consider what it means to follow God and be His disciple.**

*Matthew 16:24-26* Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. 25 For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

*Luke 14:26-33* "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. 27 Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. 28 For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? 29 Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him,

30 saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' 31 Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand? 32 Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. 33 So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions."

**God wants everyone to be saved! He is patiently waiting for everyone to come to Him seeking forgiveness through faith in His Son Jesus.**

*2 Peter 3:8-9* But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. 9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

**But we do not have eternity to decide. Our life is short, only a few years, and will come to an end.**

*Psalm 90:10-12* As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, Or if due to strength, eighty years, Yet their pride is but labor and sorrow; For soon it is gone and we fly away. 11 Who understands the power of Your anger And Your fury, according to the fear that is due You? 12 So teach us to number our days, That we may present to You a heart of wisdom.

**After Jesus was sacrificed/crucified, His disciples began to teach that Jesus was the final sacrifice that God promised through His prophets. When the people heard them, they asked what they should do.**

*Acts 2:37-39* Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" 38 Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 "For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself."

**So to live a life that pleases God we need to make sure that we aren't just going through the motions, but give our whole life to Him and it starts by changing how we think and live.**

*Romans 12:1-2* Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

*Hebrews 12:1-2* Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who

for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

*Galatians 2:20* I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

**Some people see this as a burden, God doesn't want us to see it that way.**

*Psalms 37:3-5* Trust in the LORD and do good; Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness. 4 Delight yourself in the LORD; And He will give you the desires of your heart. 5 Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, and He will do it.

*1 John 5:14-15* This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. 15 And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.

*Jeremiah 29:11-13* 'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. 12 'Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. 13 'You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.

*Matthew 7:7-11* "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 "For everyone who asks receives, and he

who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 9 "Or what man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone? 10 "Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? 11 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!

**God wants us to delight ourselves in Him and to know that nothing can separate us from His love in Christ.**

*Romans 8:38-39* For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**You need to decide what you are going to do regarding Jesus and God's offer of salvation that He freely makes available to all. The choice is yours . . . but you can't say that you didn't know.**

**Choose today to make Him your Savior and Lord!**

- Pray asking God to forgive you and to accept His offer of salvation.
- Get baptized by immersion, since that is how Jesus and the first Christians were baptized.
- Attend a church where you can worship God with other Christians
- Study God's Word to learn how to live as a disciple of Jesus.

- Tell others about Jesus as you have opportunity.
- Love God with everything you have available to you; Love others as much as you love yourself.

### **Something to consider:**

I am trying to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him (Jesus): 'I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept His claim to be God.' That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic – on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg – or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.

– CS Lewis from *Mere Christianity*