

Three Things God Cannot Do

There are three things that God cannot do. First, He cannot lie. The Bible reads, ***In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;*** (Titus 1:2). Second, He cannot change. The Word of God also states, ***For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed*** (Malachi 3:6). Thirdly, He cannot allow anyone into Heaven unless they have been born-again. The Bible affirms this truth, ***Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God*** (John 3:3). Dear reader, ***ETERNITY IS A VERY LONG TIME TO BE WRONG!*** It is my prayer that you will read carefully what God's Word, the Holy Bible has to say about your eternal destination.

The Holy Bible

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16). This brief editorial has been included to help clarify the authenticity of the Bible. This article was found in the *Shanksville Tribune* on the first anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers.

If the world is looking for a sign of hope in the turmoil that erupted on September 11, 2001, it may have found it. Teams of emergency personnel who responded to the crash of Flight 93 near Shanksville made an amazing discovery that shocked and inspired them. Resting not far from the smoldering, 25-foot-deep crater where 40 innocent victims perished, firefighters found a Bible that was barely singed.

This remarkable article reveals that God has preserved His Word in this contemporary world so we can know His mind. ***For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ*** (1 Corinthians 2:16). Critics have discredited the Bible, the devil questioned it, haters of God have tried to burn it, educators ridicule it and our federal government has tried to remove it from all government institutions, but God has preserved it forever! It could be that God just wanted to show the world that even a literal fire that consumed everything in just minutes could not burn what He has established as truth! ***THE BIBLE IS THE MIND OF GOD THROUGH THE MOUTH OF JESUS. For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding*** (Proverbs 2:6).

It is the Word of God that has delivered mankind God's redemption plan—***...and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God...*** (Amos 4:12). The Bible clearly explains how to be

prepared to meet God face to face, ***Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever*** (1 Peter 1:23). *The Bible is the only textbook that the Author is present every time it is studied!* —S. Franklin Logsdon

Bible Christianity is not just another religion to choose from, but it is a personal relationship with the God of Heaven through Jesus Christ, God the Son and confirmed in the hearts of Christians by God the Holy Spirit.

In John 14:6 the Bible tells us that Jesus Christ is the only way to Heaven. ***Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me*** (John 14:6). It is very important to understand why Jesus has the authority to say He is the only way to God the Father. (underline emphasis added by author)

Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. (Colossians 1:12-20)

This passage in the Word of God clearly explains that Jesus is the creator of the all things. Genesis 1:1 says, ***In the beginning God created...*** thus, Jesus is not only the Son of God, but He is God the Son. The Apostle Paul again makes this clear in 1 Timothy 3:14-16:

These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. (1 Timothy 3:14-16)

Again, the Apostle Paul affirms the truth that Jesus is God the Son to the believers in the church of Corinth.

Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him (Jesus) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (2 Corinthians 5:20, 21). (emphasis added)

Born Once, Die Twice, Born Twice, Die Once

Now that the Scriptures have established who the man Jesus Christ is, if He says, ***...ye must be born again...***, to go to Heaven, then it is of the ***UTMOST IMPORTANCE*** to discover exactly what it means to be ***born-again!***

The express purpose of God's Word is for all mankind to know who God is and how to spend eternity with Him. In John chapter three, Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, had a conversation with Nicodemus, a religious man and ruler of the Jews, concerning this very matter. Jesus told him specifically what it takes to go to Heaven. ***Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God*** (John 3:3). Nicodemus, who did not understand the spiritual truth of being born-again, asked the simple question, ***...How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?*** (John 3:4). Jesus then explain to him the two births that must be present in his life in order to go to Heaven:

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again (John 3:5-7).

Nicodemus did not understand what Jesus was telling him because at the time of the conversation, he only had experienced the first birth. Due to the spiritual nature of the discussion, Nicodemus could not comprehend what Jesus was saying. The Bible explains the reason why he could not grasp the spiritual truth of Jesus' answer, ***But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned*** (1 Corinthians 2:14). The spiritual part of a man must be made alive, born-again, in order to understand these truths. This is simply accomplished by, ***...repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ*** (Acts 20:21).

The first birth is to be **born of water**. Dr. Jeffrey Utz, a pediatric neuroscientist at Allegheny University says that each individual has different percentages of their bodies made up of water. Babies have the most, being born at about 78%. While a child is in the mother's womb, he/she is being developed in a sack of water, although the amniotic fluid is not solely water, water is part of the components. When the water breaks, the baby is born—the **first birth**.

The fundamental truth of Bible Christianity is found in the Trinity, **For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one** (1 John 5:7). This verse gives assurance that each person of the Godhead has Its own individuality. They function separately from each other but will **NEVER** contradict the Others in any way. Because there are three different persons, God is sometimes referred to as the **TRIUNE GOD**.

The Triune God

God the Father

The first person of the Triune God is **God the Father**. The man Christ Jesus explains in the book of John where He originated, **I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father** (John 16:28). Notice how Jesus clearly states that God the Father was still in Heaven while He was conducting His earthly ministry. Also note another attribute of God the Father in John 4:24, **God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth**. God the Father is a Spirit!

God the Son

The second person of the Triune God is **God the Son**. **In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God** (John 1:1). In this passage, we see how Jesus, God in the flesh, took the form of a human being so He could pay for the sins of all mankind, **And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth** (John 1:14). The Word is capitalized because it is one of the many proper names given to Jesus, **...the Word was made flesh...**, that is Jesus! As previously stated in Colossians chapter 1, Jesus, **Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:** (Colossians 1:15,16). (underline added) Because Jesus is God and since He lived a sinless life while on the earth, He had the ability to

sacrifice His sinless body for the sins of all mankind. ***For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*** (2 Corinthians 5:21).

There are many passages in the Bible that clearly teach the doctrine of Jesus Christ being God in the Flesh. Here is another example of this truth, ***But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever...*** (Hebrews 1:6). Jesus, ***the Firstbegotten***, is the original image of a human being before creation; Adam, the first created person, was simply modeled after Jesus and ***by His breath, Adam became a living soul, And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...*** (Genesis 1:26). Jesus, God in the flesh, has no beginning or ending: He was merely brought into the world in the form of man through the virgin birth. Notice in this verse that God calls the Son, ***God—But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever*** (Hebrews 1:6). **THE MAJOR SEPARATING FACTOR FROM ALL OTHER RELIGIONS AND BIBLE CHRISTIANITY IS THE FACT THAT JESUS IS GOD!**

God the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit

In the previous paragraph, we established the authority that Jesus holds as God the Son. Now we see Him in John 14 giving the Third Person of the Triune God the title, ***God the Holy Ghost. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you*** (John 14:26). Observe in this passage all three distinct parts of the Trinity—The Father sent the Holy Ghost in the name of Jesus. Next, notice that Jesus, the image of the invisible God, was teaching His disciples concerning His death, burial and resurrection when He said this, ***And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever. Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you*** (John 14:16, 17). When God the Holy Ghost dwells in the heart of a man, He is able to easily instruct that man's spirit in the paths of righteousness. Of course, it is then up to the soul of a man, the decision-making part, to choose to live according to the Holy Spirit's direction.

In the previous paragraphs, we have discussed the Trinity, the first birth and the need of the second birth. The second and most important birth is the spiritual (new) birth. When God created man, He made him in His own image. ***And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...*** (Genesis 1:26). Notice the plurality of this statement, ***...Let us make man in our image...*** This does not mean that we all look like God in a physical sense, but we have the same triune structure; three different parts. Just like God is made up of three distinct parts, every living

human being consists of three different parts as well; a spirit, soul and body. We will explore each individual part of man as the study continues.

Created in His Image

We have seen the three individual persons of God; now let's look at the makeup of the human being to understand how we were created in His triune image. In the closing comments of the second letter to the Thessalonians, the Apostle Paul said this, ***And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*** (1 Thessalonians 5:23). Like the Triune God, man is made up of three parts—the spirit (listed first due to its importance) then, the soul and the body.

The Body

The **body** leaves little to explain—it is simply our physical being. Our body houses our spirit and soul while we are still breathing. God gives us this short span of time in our earthy body determine where we will spend eternity. If God would force men to believe, then He would simply be a dictator playing with His creation. The truth is, He will teach us through the Word of God how to go from His creation to become His child—***But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name*** (John 1:12). It has been said that we are all God's children; this is wishful thinking! According to this text, one becomes as son of God after they receive Jesus as their personal Lord and Saviour. The Bible is very clear who is the father of all unbelievers. Jesus was having a discussion with the religious leader of the day when He recorded this truth:

Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. (John 8:42-44)

The Soul

The **soul** is who you are—it is your mind, the place where all of your decisions are made; it is your will and your intellect. It is the place where you sense pain, you have vision and hearing, your

memory exists and you have concern for others. The eyes are the physical instruments that gathers light, but it is your soul that puts the light together to give you the vision of the object. Let's look at the Bible to show this truth. Luke 16:19-31 tells the story of two men; one a poor beggar named Lazarus, a real name for a real person, and the other known as a **rich man**. Lazarus did not go to Heaven because he was a poor beggar; he went because he had been born-again. (explanations are underlined and noted in parentheses)

There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried (his physical body was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, (pain) and seeth (vision) Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, (he heard Abraham speak) Son, remember (memory) that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment (compassion for the lost). Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead. (Luke 16:19-31) (emphasis added)

Notice the events recorded for us in this passage. First, the rich man died, was buried and his dead body was placed in a tomb after his physical death. Second, observe that the rich man has sight, hearing, a memory, sensation of pain and displays compassion on his lost family. At the time of his death, his eternal soul, the part of man that contains all his emotions such as his ability to see, hear, think, feel pain and have compassion on the lost, was immediately in torment. It is clearly stated in verse 23 that his memory was also very sharp; he called the beggar by name. The fact that Jesus recorded the name of Lazarus is proof that this is an actual historical event and not a parable, as some would wrongly say.

The soul of a man is precious to the LORD. ***But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah*** (Psalm 49:15). Many men have led very wicked lives in the past; some have even said they sold their soul to the devil. This has caused them to believe that God would not forgive nor save them. The truth is, the soul does not belong to the individual, it belongs to God—***Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die*** (Ezekiel 18:4). You cannot sell something that is not yours! As long as person is still breathing, they can become a child of God! Sin brought death, but Jesus came to bring life! The Apostle Paul said it like this, ***This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief*** (1Timothy 1:15). God chose to give the Apostle Paul the opportunity to be saved simply because of His love for sinners. Paul made his living by killing and persecuting Christians, but God saved him and used him to pen down over half of the New Testament! Listen carefully to his testimony:

I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities. (Acts 26:9-11)

Do not put God in a box! There is not a man alive, no matter what they have done, that Jesus would not save. Christ died for sinners! Please do not believe the lie of the devil; you too can become a child do God!

The Spirit

The **spirit** of man is the part that communicates with God in all spiritual matters. Keep in mind the reason why a person does not fully understand these Biblical truths, ***But the natural man*** (the person who has not made Jesus their Saviour) ***receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned*** (1 Corinthians 2:14) (explanation added in parentheses).

Once God the Spirit has communicated with the spirit of a man, that person then will make a conscience decision in his/her soul to act upon the spiritual truth or ignore it. The spirit and soul are and inseparable!

Final Judgment

Please note that the man in Hell is only known as *the rich man*. The Scripture is clear concerning the reason his name is not mentioned—***Therefore, behold, I, even I, will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, and cast you out of my presence*** (Jeremiah 23:39). ***Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous*** (Psalm 69:28). Heaven could not be a place of worship and rejoicing if we knew our loved ones were in Hell. They will be wiped from our memory and worse yet, God's memory! The moment a sinner puts their faith in Christ alone for salvation, their names are recorded in the ***Book of Life***. This book gives them their free reservation in Heaven for all eternity.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:15)

It is very important to understand that only those who did not receive the free gift of eternal life, the spiritually dead, will be judged for their sins recorded in the other books. For the born-again Christian, all of their evil deeds were paid for by the Blood of Jesus—***And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more*** (Hebrews 10:17).

The account of Lazarus and the rich man acknowledges the Biblical truth of a literal, eternal place of torment. According to Scripture, the body of the rich man was buried. The Word of God declares that there will be a day when the body will be reunited with the soul to stand before the final judgment, known as the Great White Throne Judgment—***And the sea gave up the dead which were in it (the physical body); and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them (the living soul): and they were judged every man according to their works*** (Revelation 20:13) (explanations added in parentheses). The bodies of all the dead will be reunited with their souls to stand before God for their final judgment. Once verdict has been pronounced, the dead spirit and the living soul and body will be cast into the eternal flames—***And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death*** (Revelation 20:14). Some believe that the devil will rule in Hell, but the truth is, he will be tormented for all eternity—***And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever*** (Revelation 20:10).

YOU MAY OR MAY NOT BELIEVE IN HELL, BUT WHETHER YOU BELIEVE IT OR NOT DOES NOT CHANGE THE FACT OF ITS EXISTENCE! ETERNITY IS A LONG TIME TO BE WRONG!

Ye Must Be Born-Again, The Second Birth

The first and by far the most important part of man is his spirit. ***The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him*** (Zechariah 12:1). God formed the spirit of man and reserved this place so He could take up residency inside of the believer. This is the place where God and man meet, commune and fellowship and is where all spiritual direction is given. ***God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth*** (John 4:24). It is one thing to know and believe there is a God and another thing to have Him as your Saviour (being born-again). ***Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble*** (James 2:19). The spirit of man is where God makes known His presence in the life of a true believer. The statement has been said, *God spoke to my heart*; the Spirit of God communicates to the spirit of man to make Himself known in the life of the believer. ***Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth...*** (John 16:13).

The First Sin

Now that we have established the Biblical truth of the Godhead and how man was created in His image, let's begin way back in the Garden of Eden to see where the first sin took place. Adam and Eve were created by God and placed in the Garden of Eden to commune with Him. God gave them access to everything in the Garden with the exception of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. ***And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*** (Genesis 2:16, 17). Satan, deceived Eve into eating of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil by getting her to question God's Word. ***For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.*** (Genesis 3:5). She listened to Satan's temptation, added her own human reasoning and ate of the fruit. She then talked Adam into doing the same. Eve was deceived, Adam knew what he was doing, but they had no idea how drastic the punishment would be! The fall of all mankind was the result: ***Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:*** (Romans 5:12).

Adam and Eve's disobedience to God's Word brought sin and death into the world. The death process began at that moment, their bodies were no longer immortal, but they now had an appointed time to die. ***And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:***

(Hebrews 9:27). But worse than the physical death, their spirits also died, known as the second death—***But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death*** (Revelation 21:8). Because of Adam and Eve’s disobedience to God’s command, the LORD no longer walked with them in the cool of the day; they had been evicted from the Garden of Eden and stood in need of a Saviour. The part of man that died was not the body or the soul, but it was the spirit—the part that communicates with God.

The Ultimate Sacrifice

Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, loves the human race He created so much that He came to the earth in the form of a man to offer Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of all mankind. ***Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*** (Philippians 2:6-8).

The difference between all other religions and born-again Christians is this truth: the true God, Jesus Christ, stepped out of eternity into this world in the likeness of a man so humans could step into eternity in the likeness of Christ: ***Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is*** (1 John 3:2). He did the work and freely offers the rewards of His work to all who believe!

All other religions demand good works for their God and never disclose how much is enough. I once was sharing the Gospel with a man at a hardware store who informed me that he was a follower of a works-oriented religion. He went on to say that he flies on two wings, one the wing of hope and the other the wing of fear! ***For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind*** (2 Timothy 1:7). Since God does not give the spirit of fear, then it must come from Satan—the master behind all works oriented religions. ***For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast*** (Ephesians 2:8, 9). The born-again Christian has no bragging rights to their salvation. When a person accepts Christ’s free gift of forgiveness, they realize that their access into Heaven is only possible because Christ did the work and thus gets all the glory!

For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one

another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; (Titus 3:3-6)

The Biblical Truth of How to be Born-Again

Sin Nature

We are all born with the sin nature. No one had to teach humans to lie; it came naturally. Everyone can think of a time when they told a lie, even a small one; otherwise known as a *white lie!* The part of us that died because of our sin was our spirit. Remember John 4:24 tells us that **God is a Spirit**, and if we want to know Him and worship Him, we must do it spiritually. How can a dead spirit communicate with the living spiritual God—it can't! But, when you repent and believe the Gospel; your spirit will come alive (the second birth) and communication with God will be restored! The Apostle Paul declared this statement, ***For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth*** (Romans 1:16).

God's Plan of Salvation

We have established the three distinct differences between the spirit, soul and body. Each has a specific job in the life of every human being. The Bible is clear that every person alive is a sinner. ***For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*** (Romans 3:23). The Bible is also very clear in its judgment for our sin, ***For the wages of sin is death...*** (Romans 6:23). Because we are all sinners, we have the **wages**, or payment for our sin—death! One may think that everyone must die physically, and this is a true statement, but there are two deaths recorded in the Bible, ***And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death*** (Revelation 20:14). This death is the eternal separation between the Holy God and an unholy sinner. The judgement of sin does not only condemn our physical body to die, but the second death also dooms the soul and spirit, the part of man that communicates with God.

The Death of our Spirit

The plan God has put in place for He and man to be reconciled is to be **born-again**. The Apostle Paul made this statement to the believers in Ephesus, ***And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins*** (Ephesians 2:1). The word **quickened**, has the meaning of being made

alive. Paul was speaking to these believers to help them understand what took place when they repented and believed the Gospel. He made it personal—**and you**. The sin that is in our lives killed a part of us. It was not our body (we are still physically alive), and it was not our soul (we still have the ability to think, feel and experience emotion), so this leaves our spirit—the part that communicates with God.

Instant Spiritual Life—Born-again!

Repentance is essential due to the fact that Jesus Himself preached it: ***Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel*** (Mark 1:14, 15). The Apostle Paul tell us in the book of Romans that our belief will cause a desire to be righteous: ***That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation*** (Romans 10:9, 10). What takes place at the point of repentance and belief is a new spiritual creature is born: ***Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new*** (2 Corinthians 5:17).

The moment a person is born physically, they have no record of a past; when that same person is born-again, the spiritual birth, the record of their sinful past is completely gone in the eyes of God. Below are some Scriptures that will cause you to rejoice:

Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. (Hebrews 10:15-17)

As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. (Psalm 103:12)

He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. (Micah 7:19)

I, even I, am he that blotteth thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. (Isaiah 43:25).

Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins. (James 5:20)

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; (Acts 3:19)

When a person receives Christ as their Lord and Saviour, they have a clean start! No record in Heaven will be found. Jesus paid for the sins of the world and has completely and totally satisfied the punishment for them. What a Saviour, what a God! His righteousness is our reward!

After His death and ascension into Heaven, Jesus left with us the Holy Spirit, **And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you** (John 14:16, 17). God the Holy Spirit comes to dwell inside the believer and gives him the second birth: **What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's** (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20). Now that He lives in you, He will guide you in your new life, **Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth...** (John 16:13)

The Breath of God Brings Life

Let's go back to the Garden of Eden when God formed man: **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 soul** (Genesis 2:7). After God's hands formed man out of the dust of the ground, it was His breath that gave Adam life. When a sinner invites Jesus to be their Saviour, the Holy Spirit will come into their life. The Hebrew word for Holy Spirit is *Ruach*. The Holy Spirit cannot be seen because it is invisible like the wind. It is easy to see the evidence of the wind, but you cannot actually see the wind itself. The Hebrew word *Ruach* has the expressed meaning of the breath of God which brings forth life. When the sinner has asked Christ to come into their life to be their Saviour, the Holy Spirit, *Ruach*, will see his dead spirit inside the heart of man and breathe into it the breath of life. It is then that the spirit is made alive by the breath of God, the sinner is born-again and now able to communicate with God: **The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God** (Romans 8:16). The changed life of the sinner is the evidence of their spiritual birth.

The Apostle Paul clearly describes the spiritual birth in 1 Corinthians 15:42-49: (emphases added)

***There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.* (1 Corinthians 15:42-49)**

God's eternal plan for the salvation of man is a simple gift. It is essential to first believe the Gospel, which is, the virgin birth of Jesus (God in the flesh), His sinless life on the earth, His death on the cross and most importantly, His resurrection from the dead. The Scripture also says, ***For godly sorrow worketh repentance...*** (2 Corinthians 7:10). If you are willing to repent, which results in a turning from sin, and you realize that only Jesus can help you accomplish this, then call on Him today to be your Saviour: ***For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*** (Romans 10:13). To call on God is simply talking to Him in prayer, asking Him to forgive you of your sin and come to live in your heart to help you live a life that will be pleasing to Him. The prayer below is simply a model prayer—you fill in the blanks as you talk directly to Him.

Pray: Dear LORD God, I know that I am a sinner condemned to Hell. I am sorry I have sinned against you. I believe Jesus, God the Son, died on the cross and rose again for me. Please forgive me of my sin, come into my heart, and help me to live a life pleasing unto You. I accept You as my personal Lord and Saviour. Thank You for writing my name in the ***Book of Life***; in the name of Jesus I pray, Amen.

The Spirit of God living inside you does not want you to wonder whether you are born-again and heaven bound. He wants us to know that we have been eternally forgiven and have a place reserved for us in Heaven. He gives us this confidence in His Word:

If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He

that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. (1 John 5:9-13)

It has been said that if a man can be saved by his good works, He can be lost by his evil deeds, but if a man has been born-again by the grace of God, his salvation will be eternally secure by God's mercy—***Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost*** (Titus 3:5).

If you have asked the LORD to be your Saviour today, please contact us at the Rock of Ages Ministries so we can rejoice in your decision and guide you in your new walk with God. Welcome to the family of God! Our mailing address is P.O. Box 2308; Cleveland, TN 37320, or you can let us know by visiting our web site at www.roapm.org. God bless you.



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www.ropam.org