# Salvation / Justification

## Scriptures

### Collin & Drew McGarvie

#### Acts 4:12

“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”

#### John 3:3

Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again

#### Acts 16:30-31

He then brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.”

**Sin alienates us from God:**

#### Genesis 2:17; 3:8

Adam and Eve's sin separated them from God. They could no longer bear to be in His presence, but sought to avoid Him.

#### Isaiah 59:1-2

Our sins and iniquities separate us from God, so He will not hear us.

#### Ephesians 2:12

People in sin (v1-3) are separated from Christ and without God in the world.

**Forgiveness Restores Our Relationship to God.**

#### Romans 5:6-10

Though sin deserves punishment, God loves us so much He sent His Son to bear our punishment so we could be saved.

#### Ephesians 2:13,17-19

Though we were separated and far from God, we can be made nigh by the blood of Christ and have access to the Father.

#### Colossians 1:21-23

Our evil works make us enemies alienated from God, but through Jesus' death we can be reconciled (made friends again)

### JJ Miller

#### Gen\_49:18

I have waited for thy salvation, O LORD.

#### 1Th\_5:9

For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

#### Rom\_3:30

Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

#### Rom\_4:25

Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

### Keagan Johnson

#### Romans 4:25

“And the free grift is not like the results of that one man’s sin. For the judgement of one’s trespass brought condemnation but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification.”

#### Acts 13:39

“He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.”

#### Exodus 15:2

“The Lord is my strength and my defense; He has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise Him, my father’s God and I will exalt Him.”

#### Psalms 18:2

“The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.”

### Violet Spicer

#### Romans 4:25

He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

#### Leviticus 20:8

Keep my decrees and follow them. I am the LORD, who makes you holy.

#### 1 Thessalonians 5:23

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### Romans 5:1

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

## Stories / Anecdotes / Facts

### Collin & Drew McGarvie

#### 8 Year Old Bullies

One day there was a group of 8-year-old bullies on the playground. They had surrounded 2 little 4-year-old boys, Tyler and Kace, who had made faces at them and said some mean things to them earlier. They began pushing the little boys, and kicking them, and hitting them, and laughing about it. But there was another 8-year-old boy, named Paul, who saw what was happening and went over to stop the bullies. He pushed his way through the crowd, grabbed Tyler and Kace, and started to walk them away quickly. The bullies were close behind and started pushing Paul. He looked at the bullies and said "you need to leave them alone, right now!" The bullies replied, "We're only going to wait and beat them up again later. Those little brats made faces at us, and they are going to pay for it." Paul took a deep breath, held his chin up high, and said, "if u promise to leave them alone forever... I will let y'all beat me up instead." The bullies thought about it for a second, then with evil smiles, they accepted Paul's deal. Tyler and Kace stood in the background watching as Paul was grabbed by the bullies. They began punching him, spitting on him, and calling him awful names. After a little while, Paul had fallen to the ground. Even though he had black eyes, blood dripping down his face and arms, his shirt all torn up, bruises all over, and most likely a broken nose... the bullies kept on kicking him and hitting him with sticks. When Paul was laying on the ground, he could just barely see little Tyler and Kace outside the circle. They were smiling and laughing as they were pointing at Paul who was getting beat up. When the bullies had finally had enough, they left Paul bruised, bloody, and lying on the ground. The only boys left were little Tyler and Kace, who were still laughing with big smiles on their face. With saddened eyes, Paul looked at the two boys and said, "I did this for you." Once Paul could stand up, he took the little boys by the hand, and walked them safely home. Kace giggled and smiled the whole way home, but Tyler was quiet. when Paul began to walk away, Kace whispered, "Loser." But Tyler shouted to Paul, "Why did you do that?" Paul turned around and simply said, "Because I love you." Kace went inside, but Tyler ran up to Paul and gave him a big hug and said, "thank you so much. I'm sorry for laughing at you."

#### Polycarp

Polycarp Eighty and six years have I served Him, and he never did me any injury; how then can I blaspheme my King and my Savior. --Polycarp, disciple of the Apostle John, and Bishop of Smyrna . In the Asia Minor city of Smyrna, persecution broke out against Christians and some were put to death for their faith. But the agitated mob wanted to cut off the church there by getting rid of their leader, the now aged Polycarp. The believers hid Polycarp in a farmhouse. (The leaders there taught that one should not seek out martyrdom, but neither should it be avoided if there was no choice and it meant denying Christ). The authorities found the farm house and came to arrest the old man. He welcomed his captors as if they were old friends and gave them food and drink. He asked for an hour to pray before being taken to the arena. They relented. The hour stretched into two hours. The officers, overhearing his prayers began to wonder what they were doing arresting an old man like this.

Polycarp was brought into the arena. Instead of Polycarp begging for his life we find the proconsul pleading with this aged bishop to just curse Christ so he would be released. Polycarp's reply--our quote at the top--was loud and clear. He was burned alive. The Christians present said there was a joyful radiance on Polycarp's face as he died. Believers were allowed to bury his remains on February 22, probably in the year 155. Churches near and far from Smyrna observed this date in years to come and drew strength from the testimony of this old, old, man who would not deny Christ, no matter what it cost him.

#### Wealthy Man Art Work

A wealthy man and his son loved to collect rare works of art. They had Everything in their collection, from Picasso to Raphael. They would often sit together and admire the great works of art.

When the Viet Nam conflict broke out, the son went to war. He was very courageous and died in battle while rescuing another soldier. The father was notified and grieved deeply for his only son.

About a month later, just before Christmas, there was a knock at the door. A young man stood at the door with a large package in his hands. He said, "Sir, you don't know me, but I am the soldier for whom your son gave his life. He saved many lives that day, and he was carrying me to safety when a bullet struck him in the heart and he died instantly. He often talked about you, and your love for art."

The young man held out his package.

"I know this isn't much. I'm not really a great artist, but I think your son would have wanted you to have this."

The father opened the package. It was a portrait of his son, painted by the young man. He stared in awe at the way the soldier had captured the personality of his son in the painting. The father was so drawn to the eyes that his own eyes welled up with tears. He thanked the young man and offered to pay him for the portrait.

"Oh, no sir, I could never repay what your son did for me. It's a gift."

The father hung the portrait over his mantle. Every time visitors came to his home he took them to see the portrait of his son before he showed them any of the other great works he had collected. The man died a few months later. There was to be a great auction of his paintings. Many influential people gathered, excited over seeing the great paintings and having an opportunity to purchase one for their collection. On the platform sat the painting of the son.

The auctioneer pounded his gavel. "We will start the bidding with this portrait of the son. Who will bid for this painting?" There was silence. Then a voice in the back of the room shouted. "We want to see the famous paintings. Skip this one." But the auctioneer persisted. "Will someone bid for this painting? Who will start the bidding? $100, $200?" Another voice shouted angrily. "We didn't come to see this painting. We came to see the Van Goghs, the Rembrandts. Get on with the real bids!" But still the auctioneer continued. "The son! The son! Who'll take the son?"

Finally, a voice came from the very back of the room. It was the long-time gardener of the man and his son. "I'll give $10 for the painting." Being a poor man, it was all he could afford. "We have $10, who will bid $20?" "Give it to him for $10. Let's see the masters." "$10 is the bid, won't someone bid $20?"

The crowd was becoming angry. They didn't want the painting of the son. They wanted the more worthy investments for their collections. The auctioneer pounded the gavel. "Going once, twice, SOLD for $10!" A man sitting on the second row shouted. "Now let's get on with the collection!"

The auctioneer laid down his gavel.

"I'm sorry, the auction is over. When I was called to conduct this auction, I was told of a secret stipulation in the will. I was not allowed to reveal that stipulation until this time. Only the painting of the son would be auctioned. Whoever bought that painting would inherit the entire estate, including the paintings. The man who took the son gets everything!"

God gave his son 2,000 years ago to die on a cruel cross. Much like the auctioneer, His message today is, "The son, the son, who'll take the son?"

#### John Wycliffe (c. 1328–1384).

Wycliff was a leading English scholar of the 1300s who lost his post when he openly condemned false teaching of the medieval church; he used his free time to translate the first English Bible.

### JJ Miller

#### How a football star shined in the darkness

Jacory Benson is a natural athlete.

Underestimated from an early age because of a learning disability, it was easy for him to search for his worth, his identity, in success on the field.

He liked the attention. Actually, scratch that. He loved the attention.

The lights. The crowds. The praise.

His energy and personality burst out of every running play. Ball tucked against his chest. Legs pumping. Body bouncing, dodging, weaving through the defense. Inside, he felt like he was dancing down the yard lines.

Jacory lit up the field and every place he went. At Seneca High School, he had influence, and other students wanted to be like him.

But the athlete lifestyle — the attitude, the girls, the parties, dabbling in drugs — it was just what he had to do, who he had to be, for other people.

Deep down, Jacory knew it wasn’t who he was.

Charlie Metcalfe was an athlete, too, at a rival Upstate school.

To him, Jacory wasn’t a future all-star. Jacory was one more guy God put in Charlie’s path who needed to discover who he really was — the person God made him to be.

They met in a living room playing video games and moved the conversation to a late night meal at the Waffle House, where they talked like they’d known each other forever.

A couple of weeks later, Charlie caught Jacory’s eyes in a darkened auditorium at NewSpring Fuse. They both knew that at that moment, the game changed.

Now they were brothers, partners, missionaries.

Their schools were divided by geography, social class, culture, and race. But that wasn’t a problem — just an opportunity to bring people together to show them an uncommon unity, an uncommon life in Jesus.

Between them, they brought hundreds of people to hear the good news.

READ: The difference Charlie and Jacory played in the life of Carious Staggers

And that athletic scholarship Jacory dreamed about and sweated for? That dream to make his family proud; to provide for his mom so she didn’t have to work two jobs anymore?

They talked about it a lot.

What if it wasn’t just a way up or way out?

What if it was a way in?

So Charlie wasn’t surprised one bit by what happened on Jacory’s college signing day.

Skip and Roxane Cummings traveled 40 minutes to NewSpring Columbia and back every Sunday for years. As the saying goes, “A church alive is worth the drive.”

They got connected to the church when their son, Riley, was a Clemson student. There they felt a kind of reawakening of their lifelong faith in Jesus.

The Cummings’s lived in Cope, about 15 miles southwest of Orangeburg, home of South Carolina State University, where Jacory had chosen to play football.

So it was close enough.

Jacory’s mentor at NewSpring Clemson, Fuse Director Hykeng Paul, and Jacory’s best friend, Charlie, both reached out to the empty-nest couple hoping they could make a connection.

They knew college would be a tough transition for Jacory — new routines, new temptations, new influences.

Jacory's young faith had already withstood a big test. Just a few weeks after his epic signing day, in the spring of his senior year, Jacory learned at a track meet that his older brother, Javaris, had dropped dead on a basketball court.

To this day, no explanation. One minute Javaris was alive. The next he was gone.

Without Jesus, Charlie, and his NewSpring mentors and friends, Jacory would never have handled the tragedy the way he did. With faith. With hope. With courage.

But Jacory didn’t yet see how much he drew strength from his community — and how vulnerable and weak he was without it.

Jacory’s first semester at South Carolina State as a redshirt freshman was bruising, on and off the field.

He was struggling on the field. He was struggling in class. Within a week, his grandfather was murdered, plunging him into fresh grief before the wounds from his brother's death had even begun to heal.

Jacory felt isolated, depressed, and questioned whether there were other things worth chasing more than God.

He drifted toward bad choices and pulled away from his faith.

At home on winter break, around Charlie and the rest of his no ordinary family again, Jacory’s eyes were opened.

Charlie persuaded him to take hold of the lifeline that the Cummings were all too willing to offer ...

At the start of the second semester at State, Jacory began to ride to church with Skip and Roxane.

Week after week, he was able to reconnect with athletes he knew from the Upstate, and he brought new friends along for the ride, too.

They hung out at a restaurant after weekly gatherings at the Columbia Campus and at the Cummings' home during the week.

Young and old. Black and white. Different in every way. Cutting up, eating good, shooting questions, back and forth, about life and God and random stuff.

Skip and Roxane were blessed more than any of them. Baptizing two of Jacory’s friends who met Jesus was one of the highlights of his Christian life, Skip says.

It took this no ordinary family to pull Jacory back from the brink; to set his heart on fire again; to remind him of God’s calling on his life.

Jacory was meant to be in Orangeburg for one reason: to bring hope and change to the college campus where so many were broken and hurting.

In this world, Jacory knows adversity doesn’t stop. It just takes a breath before it comes at you again.

In the summer of 2018, just as he was preparing himself for real playing time, he tore his ACL in practice.

But Jacory knows he’s not out of the game. He’s down for now. But he’s not out.

Running through life’s blocks and tackles — God at his back, God at his side, God in front, dancing through the downs — that is the game.

In front of the signing day crowd at Seneca High School — tears flowing, voice cracking — he spoke of a future that might come when God might take football away.

It's like Jacory saw it before he knew it.

The only winning team was His no ordinary family.

The only win was glory to God.

“Everything is going to be all right,” he texted just days after the injury. “This is going to be a story to remember.”

Because deep inside, Jacory knew his life never was meant to be all about him. ...

#### How my life came to a crossroads

Mark Greenway thought being a good person was all that mattered until he came face to face with his emptiness. Mark Greenway was a good husband and father, a successful business owner, and a pillar of the community. He had been raised in the church and had made a confession of faith as a teenager. He thought his good deeds were all he needed to go to heaven.

But when his daughter invited him to NewSpring and he began to attend, he discovered thoughts and feelings he had never had before. After reading the Bible cover to cover, he saw his sin for the first time and how easy it was to pretend to be a Christian.

At the age of 48, he realized that all the things that he had used to give life meaning and value — his hobbies and his possessions — were ultimately worthless. Mark had come to a crossroads where he understood that living a cleaned up, moral life was empty without a relationship with Jesus.

#### “I tried to take the world on alone”

Dylan Lanier heard someone testify at just the right time ...

Dylan Lanier lost his home, his job, and his family, and there was only one place left to turn. A former boss, who had become a friend, had shown Dylan there was a way to live with a hope Dylan had never known.

That was Dylan’s turning point — in a conversation with him on the phone in a hotel parking lot. “I truly have peace in my heart.”

#### “I was always the angry sibling”

Toni Bush heard someone testify at just the right time ...

Toni Bush hid a lot of childhood pain and anger from her parents’ divorce, and she needed healing.

She took a step closer into her church family, and she connected with a leader who helped Toni finally surrender her heart. That was Toni’s turning point — in a conversation in the front yard of someone’s house.

### Keagan Johnson

#### Martin Luther

“The question is asked: How can justification take place without the works of the law, even though James says: ’Faith without works is dead’? In answer, the apostle distinguishes between the law and faith, the letter and grace.

The ’works of the law’ are works done without faith and grace, by the law, which forces them to be done through fear or the enticing promise of temporal advantages. But ’works of faith’ are those done in the spirit of liberty, purely out of love to God. And they can be done only by those who are justified by faith.

An ape can cleverly imitate the actions of humans. But he is not therefore, a human. If he became a human, it would undoubtedly be not by virtue of the works by which he imitated man but by virtue of something else; namely, by an act of God. Then, having been made a human, he would perform the works of humans in proper fashion.

Paul does not say that faith is without its characteristic works, but that it justifies without the works of the law.

Therefore, justification does not require the works of the law; but it does require a living faith, which performs its works.”

#### Source UNKNOWN

One evangelist put it this way: “Justification means God looks upon you just as if, ‘like just-as-if-I-have-never-sinned.’ He looks upon you just as if you had never sinned.” Instead of seeing your filthy rags, God sees the righteousness of His Son in your place, and you are accounted righteousness.

#### John Newton (1725–1807)

This slave trafficker in Africa was wondrously converted from his wicked lifestyle and eventually became an Anglican preacher. He is known worldwide for “the most often sung testimony of all time”—the hymn Amazing Grace.

#### John Bunyan (1628–1688)

John Bunyan was a foul-mouthed, poorly educated English youth who was marvelously converted and became a preacher. Jailed for his preaching, he wrote what became one of the greatest bestsellers of the English world, Pilgrim’s Progress, as well as one of the most-read autobiographies, Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners.

### Violet Spicer

#### Luther Discovers Grace

In 1505 21 year old Martin Luther walking toward village of Stotternheim when sky became overcast. Raging storm blew up and a bolt of lightning lit the sky with a flash, knocking Martin to the ground. “St Anne help me!” he cried “I will become a monk.” Martin had grown up in a medieval culture filled with talk of devils and demons and angels and heaven and hell and the great judgement day. Culture of great fear. He thought the lightning had been launched at him by God as a message, a glimpse of the terror of Judgement Day. Martin knew he needed to preserve his soul and the best way to do that was to become a monk. So off to the monastery he went to seek God’s grace and mercy. At the end of his first year he was made a priest and invited to celebrate his first mass. Martin’s family came for the occasion, the chapel was filled, the psalms were sung. Then Martin took his place behind the altar and began. But just moments in he was struck by sheer terror – here he was, in his own words, “a miserable and little pygmy…dust and ashes and full of sin” daring to speak to the living, eternal and fearsome God.

Martin got through the mass and kept going as a monk, but those experiences capture his terrible internal burdens. He got to the point where he was convinced that God was so pure and holy no-one could ever hope to be saved. All would be abandoned to the torments of hell. “More than once (I) was driven to the very abyss of despair so that I wished I had never been created. Love God? I hated him!”

And then in 1513, 8 years after that thunderstorm, 7 years after that terrible mass, Luther had a third great religious experience. He was lecturing on the book of Psalms at the University of Wittenburg, then in 1515 on Romans, then in 1516 on Galatians. It was during those studies Luther discovered a life transforming insight from the gospel – that God’s requirement for us is not perfection but faith. “My situation was that, although an impeccable monk, I stood before God as a sinner troubled in conscience, and I had no confidence that my merit would assuage him. Therefore I did not love a just and angry God, but rather hated and murmured against him…Then I grasped that the justice of God is that righteousness by which through grace and sheer mercy God justifies us through faith…whereas before the ‘justice of God’ had filled me with hate, now it became to me inexpressibly sweet in greater love”

**Source: Reported in Roland Bainton, Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther**

#### Are We Just Products of Chance?

This time last year, I didn’t believe in God. Despite being brought up in Catholic schools, I was convinced that He didn’t exist and even if He did, I saw no need and had no interest in following Him.

I couldn’t reconcile the idea of God with all the suffering in the world and thought science was a barrier to faith.

But by my second and third year of university, I worried whether I was truly leading a happy and fulfilling life. This stemmed from not knowing why I existed.

Not feeling happy was so frustrating, because I knew I was leading such a privileged life. I was studying at a university, had a great group of friends, great family, and knew that by the standards of the world, I was rich.

I tried to convince myself that this feeling of happiness and completeness would come in the future. Maybe it would be when I had a full time job, or a family, or maybe it would come with even more money so I could ‘experience the world.’

But I eventually realized that moment was never going to come.

I concluded I was just a product of chance in the universe. I was going to just live my life, have fleeting moments of happiness, and eventually that would be that.

Then, in one of my classes, I met Rosie, a member of Student Life – Cru’s ministry on my campus. This was the first time I ever got to know someone that truly followed Jesus. As our friendship grew, we started to have conversations about life and about God.

Through the skills Rosie had learned from Student Life, she answered my questions and shared the gospel with me. Slowly I began to see the truth in Christianity and things started to make sense.

But as I began to understand, I came to God wanting a lot of things. I wanted to know why I existed, and I wanted happiness.

As I learned more about God and Jesus, I finally realized that I had already been given everything I could ever need.

In coming to know that God created me, I saw how I’d been living my life for the past 21 years. I had been doing what I wanted to do in my life instead of what God wanted. I took all the good things God had given me and lived a life separate from Him. God had created me to have a relationship with Him and I rejected Him.

I never thought I was selfish, but ultimately everything I was doing was for me.

I realized how far away I was from God. But then also learned that despite everything I had done and all the times I’d rejected Him, He still loved me.

I am still amazed that despite living my life the way I did, I could come to God because of what Jesus had done for me on the cross. He died on the cross and took the punishment for my sins and the sins of the world, to save us, so that we might come back to God.

In death, Jesus saved my life. And in knowing that, I put my faith in Jesus as my Lord and Savior.

It has changed my life. I am now in a relationship with God. I have a deep sense of joy and fulfillment in my life, even when times are tough.

I am not living for myself anymore, but for His glory and purposes. I know my purpose in life is bound to God, and it is to know Him and do His will.

#### God's So Great Salvation: A Personal Testimony

Born in Massachusetts [U.S.A.] in 1947, I was born again by God's grace, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, in 1975 at the age of 28.

Prior to the day of my salvation, my life was one of searching and questioning. I would ask myself the same questions over and over again:

—what is the purpose of life?

—is life worth it?

—what does the future hold?

In telling how God saved me, let me first give some background of my years prior to that life-changing day.

My upbringing was nominal Christian. We were Protestants, not Roman Catholics.

After living in Massachusetts for a short time, my family lived in upstate New York during my elementary and junior high school years, and on Long Island, New York, during my high school years.

Growing up in the rural environment of upstate New York included vegetable gardening, raising chickens, fishing, a paper route and piano lessons. The country environs afforded me many opportunities to experience and appreciate the wonders of God's creation.

My family attended a Reformed Church. I remember my Dad playing trumpet solos and singing in the choir and the time I sold the most cans of candy for a church fundraiser and how good that felt.

My teenage years exposed me to the urban world of Long Island, New York. During those years we attended a United Methodist Church and I enrolled in a membership class, was sprinkled with water, and became a member. I remember it as a time of religious awakening and feeling a nearness to God.

Christmas with candlelight services and Easter with sunrise services always gave me a temporary inner feeling of peace.

I do not remember the Lord Jesus being mentioned in our home, but whatever I was taught, I believed the Bible was God's Word and true.

Off to State college in northern New York after graduation from high school, I worked as a messenger for a construction company and later as an apprentice carpenter during the summers to help pay for my college expenses.

It was while at college that I met my wife to be. Married in 1969, it was off to graduate school to study botany. This was the time of the Vietnam Conflict and the draft lottery. I believed that killing another human being was morally wrong and was of a pacifist mind set, but did not participate in any of the protests of the time. My lottery draw resulted in a low number and I applied for and was granted Conscientious Objector status after a prolonged period of turmoil in my life.

We moved to Maine after the year of graduate school and I served two years of alternative service doing custodial work in two hospitals. Overall, it was a good experience. It was during this time that our first child was born.

After the two years in Maine, we moved to Long Island, New York, where I attended graduate school while working nights at a microelectronics corporation.

When I could not find employment after graduating with a Master's degree, my parents invited us to live in a downstairs apartment in their house in Vermont.

Living there let me get to know my parents better. More importantly, they shared their faith in a living God who could transform my life and fill the emptiness that I had. Since my college years, they had each believed on the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour and their lives had changed.

They told me of God's love and how He sent His Son Jesus Christ to earth to die on the Cross and shed His blood, and rise from the dead, so that by believing on Him, I could have my sins forgiven and have everlasting life.

I remember arguing with my parents because of my disbelief in what they told me about salvation through Christ and Christ alone. But I was challenged to read the Bible which I believed to be true until it was settled in my mind one way or the other! Either they were right or I was!

After nights of reading the Bible, one evening while I was reading in the Gospels, I saw that Jesus was God and the only way of salvation. Whereas I was previously blind to spiritual things, God opened my eyes and my unbelief suddenly left. What my parents had told me about God's salvation was true!

I now understood John 3:16 in the Bible (For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life) and I believed God and His provision of His Son for me, and I placed my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour.

Amazing grace—how sweet the sound,

That saved a wretch like me!

I once was lost, but now am found,

Was blind but now I see.

Accepting the fact that I was a sinner was never difficult for me; rather I felt that I was too great a sinner to be accepted by God, no matter how much I worked to please Him. What a blessing to realize that it was not by my good works, but by God's grace through faith in the Lord Jesus that I could be saved!

With a new life with Christ as my Saviour came a purpose for living and the assurance of heaven when I die. I thank and praise God for His grace which allowed a sinner like me to have forgiveness of sins and the opportunity to serve and have fellowship with Him both now and forever!

If you do not personally know and love the Lord Jesus Christ, I encourage you to read the Gospel of John in the New Testament, the gospel messages on this site such as Herein Is Love and to attend a Bible-believing local church where you can learn more of the living and true God and His so great salvation which He wants you to have!

You will never regret believing on the Lord Jesus Christ and becoming a child of God with a new life in Christ; one with joy unspeakable and full of glory!

History is filled with testimonies of changed lives, from murderers and slave traders to musicians, philosophers, scientists, and writers. God’s Word has a long history of changing lives. We are not Christians by birth, by nationality or by religion. It is an individual experience. A most compelling proof of the work of Christ is the difference it makes in the experience of an individual. As you watch the following videos, you will see how the lives of these individuals were transformed by the incredible power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

#### THE PERSONAL TESTIMONY OF MIKE DA SILVA

I was born in Canada to immigrant parents. They both worked at multiple jobs, so I grew up, going to and coming from school to an empty house. My parents taught us also to be religious and to try to be the best you can; otherwise God may punish you. Everything started changing when I reached my adolescent years. I began to experiment with many different things, primarily drugs and alcohol. By the time I reached 16 yrs of age I experienced a drug overdose. I got myself involved in so many other things which I am ashamed of and will not bother to write them out. Within two years I was married and everything seemed perfect for awhile. My wife and I were both working and we had a place of our own, within four years we had two healthy baby boys. Unfortunately, I began to dabble in the things that almost destroyed me. During this time my wife had a friend who would constantly invite us to come and hear someone speak at her church. At first I was definitely NOT INTERESTED, but she was kind to my wife and children so I decided to go to just one service, only as a favour of course.

This is where I'd like to tell you what I heard that night, which changed my life forever. The message was the story of God and His love for all of mankind. The speaker was at the door shaking everyone's hand and thanking them for coming. I actually tried to avoid him but he caught my attention and shook my hand and asked me if I was saved. I told him that I didn't understand what he meant, so he put it this way, "If you should get into a car accident tonight and are ushered into eternity, where will your soul be? In heaven or in hell?". With all my religious upbringing, I told him "I'll go wherever God wants me to go". He told me God's great message is that you will be saved through the finished work of Christ. He further asked me if I believed I was a sinner and I had no problem admitting that. Then he told me where unforgiven sinners go if they should die in their sins, but that God didn't want any soul to go there and so He had made provision for anyone who would change their way of thinking and just simply believe Him. Well, that night we read a few verses of Scripture together (John 3:16, I Timothy 1:15, Romans 6:23 and Romans 10:9). That night I realized two things. I believed that I was a guilty sinner before God and that Jesus Christ died on a cross for my sins.

When I told my wife that I was saved, she said, "Good, you need it". She had always been a good girl and never did anything I did in my past. However, a few months later she saw that she needed to be saved also and trusted Jesus Christ as her personal Saviour. Since then our lives have been affected by many trials like cancer, death of loved ones, financial difficulties, etc. Being saved did not prevent all these things from happening to us in life, but having God in our lives makes all the difference. There is so much more I could tell you, but I am restricted to these short paragraphs. After all, this story is really not about me, it's about what God has done for me and what He wants to do for you, if you let Him.

## Quotes

### Collin & Drew McGarvie

#### Harry Ironside

“Christ is a substitute for everything, but nothing is a substitute for Christ. “

#### Dwight L. Moody

“It is our privilege to know that we are saved.”

#### Max Lucado

“Though the Bible was written over sixteen centuries by at least forty authors, it has one central theme–salvation through faith in Christ.”

#### Billy Graham

“God proved His love on the Cross. When Christ hung, and bled, and died, it was God saying to the world, I love you.”

### JJ Miller

#### Billy Graham

God proved His love on the Cross. When Christ hung, and bled, and died, it was God saying to the world, 'I love you.'

#### C. S. Lewis

The salvation of a single soul is more important than the production or preservation of all the epics and tragedies in the world.

#### Charles Spurgeon

Not that our salvation should be the effect of our work, but our work should be the evidence of our salvation.

#### Charles Spurgeon

The greatest enemy to human souls is the self-righteous spirit which makes men look to themselves for salvation.

### Violet Spicer

#### Martin Luther

“There is no justification without sanctification, no forgiveness without renewal of life, no real faith from which the fruits of new obedience do not grow.”

#### Joyce Meyer

“Justified means just as if you've never sinned.”

#### Charles Spurgeon

“Saving faith is an immediate relation to Christ, accepting, receiving, resting upon Him alone, for justification, sanctification, and eternal life by virtue of God’s grace.”

#### Tullian Tchividjian

Justification and sanctification are both God’s work, and while they can and must be distinguished, the Bible won’t let us separate them. Both are gifts of our union with Christ, and within this double-blessing, justification is the root of sanctification and sanctification is the fruit of justification.

# Sin / Depravity

## Scriptures

### Jadyn Monoskie

#### Genesis 6:5

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (KJV)

#### Romans 3:10

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one." (KJV)

#### Proverbs 10:6

"Blessings are upon the head of the just; but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked."(KJV)

#### Proverbs 10:20

"The tongue of the just is as choice of silver: the heart of the wicked is of little worth."(KJV)

### Emma Miller

#### Rom 6:23

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

#### Rom 5:8

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

#### Proverbs 14:34

Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.

#### 1 John 3:8

He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

### Katherine Johnson

#### Gen. 37:4

“And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.”

#### Lev. 4:22

“When a ruler hath sinned, and done somewhat through ignorance against any of the commandments of the Lord his God concerning things which should not be done and as guilty.”

#### Hos. 6:7

“But they like men have transgressed the covenant: there have they dealt treacherously against me.”

#### Jude 1:10

“But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.”

## Stories / Anecdotes / Facts

### Jadyn Monoskie

#### A Six Egg Omelette With Only One Rotten Egg by Ray Prichard

**Message on Romans, family-times.com)**

Many people have trouble with the concept of total depravity. While not denying they are sinners, many people feel that their sin isn’t bad enough to condemn them. What they don’t understand is that any sin is wholly unacceptable to God. Let’s suppose I invite you over to my house this Saturday morning for omelettes. The day comes, you knock at my door, I let you in, and go to the kitchen to prepare the meal. There on my counter are several mounds of chopped onions, green peppers, ham and sliced mushrooms. Nearby is a bowl of grated cheese. While you wait in the dining room I reach into the refrigerator for the eggs. To my shock, I discover that I have only six eggs. That’s okay, except that one of the eggs is rotten. There isn’t time to go get fresh eggs, so I say to myself, “I’ll just mix this rotten one in with the good ones and they’ll never know the difference.” In a few minutes when I serve the omelettes, you begin sniffing the air. “What’s that funny smell?” “Oh, don’t worry about that. One of the eggs was rotten, but I just mixed it in with all the rest.” Would you accept that omelette? No, you wouldn’t. And neither will God. ( No One Is Good – Romans 3:9 – 3:20, A Six Egg Omelette With Only One Rotten Egg by Ray Prichard Message on Romans, family-times.com)

#### Depraved to Disciple by Jemar Tisby

**desiringgod.org**

On June 17, a twenty-one-year-old man entered Emanuel A.M.E. Church in Charleston, South Carolina. He sat down with a small group of parishioners who were there for a Bible study. After about an hour of listening to teaching and discussion on Mark 4:16-20, he pulled out a pistol and fatally shot nine people. In the aftermath of the Charleston shooting, pundits on television and people on social media labeled the tragedy “inexplicable” and “senseless.” While well-intentioned, these words are inaccurate. This young man’s deadly violence is indeed explicable. It does make a sort of twisted “sense.” We know why these nine people were murdered. We know why sex-trafficking thrives. We know why we cheat on our spouses. The reason for all that is wrong in the world is summed up in one word — sin. ( From Depraved to Disciple by Jemar Tisby, desiringgod.org)

#### Lion in a Cage by Benjamin Goffe

**thepublicans.org**

If a lion is in a cage, and you put before him a bowl of meat, and a bowl of wheat, which one will the lion choose to eat? ”The lion will always choose the meat, he would never choose the wheat, because lion’s don’t eat wheat, that is who they are.” Right, a lion will always eat the meat because of who they are. Total Depravity is like this, in that our nature, using it’s freedom of choice, will only choose sin! Why? That is who we are! It must take an act outside of ourselves to change what is going on inside of ourselves.( Lion in a Cage by Benjamin Goffe, thepublicans.org)

#### How to Kill a Wolf by Chris Robin

**thepublicans.org**

Do you know how a eskimo kills a wolf? No, tell me. They take seal blood and put it in a bucket, and then dip a knife into that bucket. After this they put the knife outside to freeze. They then take the knife and stick it into the seal blood again and place it back outside to freeze. They do this about 5 times until a thick frozen coat of seal blood is around the knife. After there is a coat of blood, they stick the knife into the ground, with the blade up, and watch. A wolf smells the blood and comes to eat a seal but finds this little frozen seal popsicle! They lick it over and over and over until it numbs their tongue, and when they get through the blood and hit the knife they will not feel it until it is too late. They bleed to death and die. Total Depravity is like that in that we will always choose what will kill us, sin! That is, unless God intervenes and changes the desires of our hearts!( How to Kill a Wolf by Chris Robin, thepublicans.org)

### Emma Miller

#### Billy Sunday On Sin

“I’m against sin. I’ll kick it as long as I’ve got a foot, and I’ll fight it as long as I’ve got a fist. I’ll butt it as long as I’ve got a head. I’ll bite it as long as I’ve got a tooth. When I’m old and fistless and footless and toothless, I’ll gum it till I go home to Glory and it goes home to perdition.”—Billy Sunday

#### Wash Your Hands After Dealing With Death

In 1818, Ignaz Philip Semmelweis was born into a world of dying women. The finest hospitals lost one out of six mothers to the scourge of “childbed fever.” A doctor’s daily routine began in the dissecting room where he performed autopsies. From there he made his way to the hospital to examine expectant mothers without ever pausing to wash his hands. Dr. Semmelweis was the first man in history to associate such examinations with the resultant infection and death.

After eleven years and the delivery of 8, 537 babies, Dr. Semmelweis lost only 184 mothers. He spent much of his life lecturing and debating with his colleagues. Once he argued, “Puerperal fever is caused by decomposed material, conveyed to a wound… I have shown how it can be prevented. I have proved all that I have said. But while we talk, talk, talk, gentlemen, women are dying. I am not asking anything world shaking. I am asking you only to wash… wash your hands.”

But virtually no one believed him. Doctors and midwives had been delivering babies for thousands of years without washing, and no outspoken Hungarian was going to change them now! Semmelweis died insane at the age of 47, his wash basins discarded, his colleagues laughing in his face, and the death rattle of a thousand women ringing in his ears.

How often do you wash your hands? How often do you wash your heart? We all collect “dirt” in our hearts each day. There are things we see, hear, or do that are not pleasing to God. Going on about our lives without stopping to clean our hearts from these things will harm us spiritually.

“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.” Psalm 51:10

#### An Unpaid Debt

A Brooklyn man was once arrested for burglary and sentenced to several years in the state penitentiary. A few years into his sentence, the man escaped from prison and disappeared. Police detectives spent hours searching for him, following leads, and analyzing his escape, but to no avail. Although many detectives gave up on the case after several years, one young detective never gave up. Bit by bit, he tracked down every clue and kept searching for the escapee until one day, many years later, he finally found the escaped criminal.

Following him to a convenience store, the detective approached him from behind, laid his hand on his shoulder, and notified him that he was under arrest. Shocked, the escapee said, “What’d I do officer?”

“I know what you did years ago. I know how you broke out of prison, disappeared out west, got married, then came back to live with your family.”

Realizing his future would be in prison, the man asked the officer if they could at least go to his house so he could say goodbye to his family. Seeing the sorrow in his eyes, the officer agreed. When they arrived at his house, the man asked his wife, “Have I been a good husband to you? Have I been a good father to our children?”

“Why yes,” replied the wife, “you have. But why are you asking me this?”

At that point the escaped man explained everything to his wife, relaying past events he thought would stay hidden. He begged the detective to recognize how he had turned his life around and pardon him, yet the detective still handcuffed him and led him away.

While the escaped criminal may have lived several years as a law-abiding citizen and had demonstrated love and kindness for his family, he was still guilty of burglary and had not finished his sentence. He may have been good, but his good actions didn’t outweigh his past actions.

#### How Did Sin Get Into Sinclair?

Dr. Walter Wilson, ever on the alert to speak to men about their souls and need of the Saviour, asked an attendant at a service station who had filled his car with gas: “How did sin get in Sinclair?” pointing to the lighted sign atop the gas pump. “I do not know, sir, how sin got into Sinclair; but, sir, I have wished many times that I knew how to get sin out of my life!”

It was then that Dr. Wilson had the opportunity to tell the young man of the One who is the sinner’s friend and of whom it is written: “And thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins” (Matthew. 1:21).

### Katherine Johnson

#### St Patrick & Confession

Confession to a priest in the confessional booth is one of the well-known practices of the Roman Catholic Church. Most Protestant churches reject it on the grounds that we should confess to Christ not a priest. Nevertheless, the story of how it came into existence is instructive.

Throughout the Middle Ages sins were not confessed in private but in public. To sin was to sin not only against God but against the church. Thus, it was a public matter and confessed publicly. Even where confession was made in private the contents of the confession were often made public. What’s more penance was usually seen as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Sin after your confession and penance and you were lost forever. Sin could be forgiven only once.

St. Patrick of Ireland changed all this. Growing up in Britain he had experienced the humiliation of having his sin made public and the terror of believing it could be forgiven only once. When he went to Ireland as its first Christian missionary, he established a new practice. Confession would now take place in private and be kept private – the sin was no one else’s affair. It was between the sinner and God alone. What’s more confession would be repeatable as necessary, acknowledging the fact that everyone sinned pretty much all the time and that God’s forgiveness was always available.

Whatever we make of the practice today, Patrick’s innovation highlights important realities surrounding sin, confession and forgiveness. Yes, we all sin regularly; yes, we are called to confess our sin to God; yes, God’s forgiveness is freely available; and no, people should not be publicly humiliated for their sin.

**Source: Reported in T Cahill, How the Irish Saved Civilisation (Hodder 1995)**

#### Painting Judas and Jesus

Leonardo Da Vinci, the noted Italian artist, painted the Last Supper. It took seven years for him to complete it. The figures representing the twelve Apostles and Christ himself were painted from living persons. The life-model for the painting of the figure of Jesus was chosen first.

When it was decided that Da Vinci would paint this great picture, hundreds and hundreds of young men were carefully viewed in an endeavor to find a face and personality exhibiting innocence and beauty, free from the scars and signs of dissipation caused by sin.

Finally, after weeks of laborious search, a young man nineteen years of age was selected as a model for the portrayal of Christ. For six months Da Vinci worked on the production of this leading character of his famous painting. During the next six years Da Vinci continued his labors on this sublime work of art. One by one fitting persons were chosen to represent each of the eleven Apostles – with space being left for the painting of the figure representing Judas Iscariot as the final task of this masterpiece.

This was the Apostle, you remember, who betrayed his Lord for thirty pieces of silver. For weeks Da Vinci searched for a man with a hard, callous face, with a countenance marked by scars of avarice, deceit, hypocrisy, and crime. A face that would delineate a character who would betray his best friend.

After many discouraging experiences in searching for the type of person required to represent Judas, word came to Da Vinci that a man whose appearance fully met his requirements had been found in a dungeon in Rome, sentenced to die for a life of crime and murder. Da Vinci made the trip to Rome at once, and this man was brought out from his imprisonment in the dungeon and led out into the light of the sun. There Da Vinci saw before him a dark, swarthy man his long shaggy and unkempt hair sprawled over his face, which betrayed a character of viciousness and complete ruin. At last the famous painter had found the person he wanted to represent the character of Judas in his painting. By special permission from the king, this prisoner was carried to Milan where the picture was being painted. For months he sat before Da Vinci at appointed hours each day as the gifted artist diligently continued his task of transmitting, to his painting, this base character representing the traitor and betrayer of our Savior.

As he finished his last stroke, he turned to the guards and said, I have finished. You may take the prisoner away. As the guards were leading their prisoner away, he suddenly broke loose from their control and rushed up to Da Vinci, crying as he did so, “Da Vinci, look at me. Do you not know who I am?” Da Vinci, with the trained eyes of a great character student, carefully scrutinized the man upon whose face he had constantly gazed for six months and replied, “No, I have never seen you in my life until you were brought before me out of the dungeon in Rome.”

Then, lifting his eyes toward heaven, the prisoner said, “Oh God, have I fallen so low?” Then turning his face to the painter, he cried, “Leonardo Da Vinci, look at me again for I am the same man you painted just seven years ago as the figure of Christ.”

**Source: Unknown.**

#### Mass Shootings

There have been 19 mass shootings in the US so far in 2019. Just to name a few:

Sep. 3rd ~ Elkmont, Alabama. A 14-year-old boy confessed to shooting and killing his entire family in their Alabama home.

Aug. 31st ~ Odessa, Texas. Suspect open fired and killed 7 people ranging in age from 15-57 years of age.

Aug. 4th ~ Dayton Ohio. The second mass shooting in the span of less than 14 hours. Nine people were killed and 2 dozen were injured.

#### Transgender Bathrooms

Some of our US public-school system schools are saying it is ok to put in transgender bathrooms. This goes against all biblical values and clearly shows that our society is under attack.

## Quotes

### Jadyn Monoskie

#### Brendon Urie

"We're all in this together. We're all sinners."

#### Matthew Henry

"No attribute of God is more dreadful to sinners than his holiness."

#### Jerry Falwell Jr.

"We're all sinners, every one of us. We've all done things we wish we hadn't."

#### Robert Jeffress

“There are no perfect politicians- just as there are no perfect pastors or voters. We are all sinners in need of a Savior."

### Emma Miller

#### Thomas David

Every sinful act is another cord woven into that mighty cable of habit, which binds the spirit to the throne of darkness.

#### Paul Enns

On this sinful, fallen earth, life will remain difficult, fraught with suffering and sadness. But we are looking forward to heaven and heaven is always better in every realm than the earth.

#### Franz Kafka

We are sinful not only because we have eaten of the Tree of Knowledge, but also because we have not yet eaten of the Tree of Life. The state in which we are is sinful, irrespective of guilt.

#### Mark Driscoll

You have been told that God is a loving, gracious, merciful, kind, compassionate, wonderful, and good sky fairy who runs a day care in the sky and has a bucket of suckers for everyone because we're all good people. That is a lie... God looks down and says, "I hate you, you are my enemy, and I will crush you," and we say that is deserved, right and just, and then God says, "Because of Jesus I will love you and forgive you." This is a miracle.

### Katherine Johnson

#### J.C. Ryle

“The sin heart that has really tasted the grace of Christ, will instinctively HATE sin.”

#### C.H. Spurgeon

“When we think to lightly on sin, we think to lightly of the savior.”

#### John Wesley

“Sin, human depravity and Gods justice.”

#### John Piper

“There is no phony faith that wants only to escape from hell, but has no desire for Christ.”

# Historical Evidence

## Scriptures

### Kamila Gonzales

#### 1 Corinthians 10:11

All these events happened to them as examples for us. They were written down to warn us, who lives at the time when this age is drawing to a close.

#### 2 Timothy 4:13

When you come, be sure to bring the coat I left with Carpus at Troas. Also bring my book, and especially my paper.

#### Genesis 8:3-4

So the flood gradually began to recede. After 150 days, exactly 5 months from the time the flood began, the boat came to rest on the mountains of Ararat.

#### Genesis 10:19

The territory of the Canaanite extended from Sidon as you go towards Gerar, as far as Gaza; as you go towards Sodom and Gomorrah and Admah and Zeboiim as far as Lasha.

### Holly Spicer

#### Isaiah 53:3-5

We despised him and rejected him; he endured suffering and pain. No one would even look at him — we ignored him as if he were nothing. “But he endured the suffering that should have been ours, the pain that we should have borne. All the while we thought that his suffering was punishment sent by God. But because of our sins he was wounded, beaten because of the evil we did. We are healed by the punishment he suffered, made whole by the blows he received.

#### 1 Peter 3:18

For Christ died for sins once and for all, a good man on behalf of sinners, in order to lead you to God. He was put to death physically, but made alive spiritually

#### Philippians 2:5-11

The attitude you should have is the one that Christ Jesus had:

He always had the nature of God, but he did not think that by force he should try to remain equal with God.

Instead of this, of his own free will he gave up all he had, and took the nature of a servant. He became like a human being and appeared in human likeness. He was humble and walked the path of obedience all the way to death— his death on the cross.

For this reason God raised him to the highest place above and gave him the name that is greater than any other name. And so, in honor of the name of Jesus all beings in heaven, on earth, and in the world below will fall on their knees, and all will openly proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

#### Matthew 27:26

Then Pilate set Barabbas free for them; and after he had Jesus whipped, he handed him over to be crucified.

### Arisa Dutton

#### Romans 13:1-7

Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. 2 Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgement on themselves. 3 For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended. 4 For the one in authority is God’s servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God’s servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.

#### Matthew 27:2

And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

#### Matthew 12:22-24

22 Then they brought him a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute, and Jesus healed him, so that he could both talk and see. 23 All the people were astonished and said, “Could this be the Son of David?”24 But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, “It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this fellow drives out demons.”

## Stories / Anecdotes / Facts

### Kamila Gonzales

#### Lee Strobel

Yeah, I was an atheist since — well, I first called myself an atheist in High School, and thought that the idea of an all-loving, all-powerful, all-knowing Creator of the Universe was just absurd, wasn’t worth even my time to consider. I had married a woman who was agnostic; she was just sort of spiritually confused. And so it was a neighbor who reached out to my wife; my wife gave her life to Christ, which I thought was the worst news I could possibly get, because I didn’t want to be married to a holy-roller, or somebody who’s going to spend all her time on skid-row serving the poor or something! So I was really — honestly, I thought I was going to divorce her. But I began to see positive changes in her character and values, and it encouraged me to go to church with her one day, where Bill Hybels was preaching, as a young guy, and gave a message called ‘Basic Christianity’. And it knocked out a lot of my misconceptions about the faith, and so I decided that I’d use my journalism training and my legal training to systematically investigate whether there was any credibility to Christianity or any other world religion.

And so, I launched on what turned out to be a nearly two-year investigation — of the evidence of science, the evidence of history, philosophy and so forth — trying to come to a conclusion about whether any of this made sense, whether there was anything to back any of this up. And on November 8th 1981, alone in my room, just kind of sifting through all the data I’d collected over that two years, I came to the conclusion that in the light of the evidence it would require more faith for me to maintain my atheism than to become a Christian! And so I realized that Jesus not only claimed to be the Son of God, he backed it up by returning from the dead, and then I recalled a verse that a Christian had pointed out to me earlier, John 1:12 which says “to as many as who receive him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name”. And so I realized that, “OK, I’ve got the believe part down, now I need the receive part”. And that’s when I repented of my sin, received forgiveness through Christ and my eternity changed, and my life changed in ways that I never foresaw. Cos I loved my work in journalism, I loved the Chicago Tribune, I loved the big city competitiveness of that environment, but God called me into other things, for which I’m really grateful because I would’ve missed all this adventure of the Christian life, obviously, if that hadn’t happened.

#### Brian Hardin

Two weeks before Christmas in 2005, Hardin woke up from a dream where he felt he should “podcast the Bible.” Having never had that kind of passion for ministry in the past, he tried to shake off the notion, but after several days, it seemed like he was getting a clear directive from God to resolutely move ahead.

“I believed this is what I was supposed to do and I figured out how to do it,” he confirms. “It was tricky at the time because podcasts were just starting up in general, but with all of my music industry and recording background, I was able to figure it out. By the first of that next year, I posted my name and email address and invited anyone to join me for the Bible readings honestly thinking about five people would listen. I had about 250 emails before the end of the first day, had 200,000 downloads in six months and now we’re nearing the 40 million download mark. Along with the general awakening to God’s Word, there’s been an endless stream of emails from disenfranchised believers who have found a place of healing, disintegrating marriages that have found true restoration because of daily interaction with the Bible, those considering suicide who have found a reason to hope on and many who are bound by some sort of addiction but are finding a path to deliverance.”

I picked his story because he has a series of videos titled the Promise Land. In these short films he visits places where events of the Old and New Testament took place. He explains the geography of that time compared to today and how these places do exist.

#### Ken Ham

In 1979, Ham left his teaching position and co-founded The Creation Science Foundation (CSF) out of his home. He borrowed money to build an extension onto his house and used a small retirement payment to buy the ministry’s first photocopier and electric typewriter. Ham and his family moved to the United States in January 1987, when he was given the opportunity to work with the late Dr. Henry Morris, founder of the Institute for Creation Research (ICR) and co-author of the book that originally fueled Ham’s interest in creation vs. evolution. Ham served as a speaker, traveling across the United States, popularizing ICR’s creation.

### Arisa Dutton

#### Pliny

Pliny the Younger was a civil servant who served as governor of Bithynia, in the north of Asia Minor (modern Turkey), from 111-113 AD. Here he met Christians for the first time and was not sure how they should be dealt with. So he wrote the following letter to Emperor Trajan reporting what he had done so far and asking for guidance.

#### Tacitus

Tacitus was a man from Greece, one the most famous Greek Historians, who was a non-believer. He was alive during the time when Jesus was alive. In his earlier career, he was the Proconsul of Asia. There, he would accuse people of being Christians and punish them who he found guilty. He would corroborate historical stuff from the New Testament about Jesus’s death. In addition to this, Tacitus would refer Jesus as Christus. His last major work was called “Annals”. He despised the Christians

#### Talmud

The Talmud (Also known as "study") is the generic term for the documents that comment and expand upon the Mishnah (“repeating”), the first work of rabbinic law, published around the year 200 CE by Rabbi Judah the Patriarch in the land of Israel. They're a collection of Jewish writings constituting the religious and civil law. They were completed by A.D. 500.

## Quotes

### Kamila Gonzales

#### Lee Strobel

“Christianity is a very historical religion- it makes specific claims that are open to testing.”

#### C.S Lewis

“History is a story written by the finger of God.”

#### Lee Strobel

“It was the evidence from science and history that prompted me to abandon my atheism and become a Christian.”

#### Ken Ham

“While the Bible’s account of the flood is one of judgment, it is also one of mercy and salvation.”

### Holly Spicer

#### N. T. Wright

Jesus’ death was seen by Jesus himself...as the ultimate means by which God’s kingdom was established. The crucifixion was the shocking answer to the prayer that God’s kingdom would come on earth as in heaven.

#### Erwin McManus

Jesus’ death wasn’t to free us from dying, but to free us from the fear of death. Jesus came to liberate us so that we could die up front and then live. Jesus Christ wants to take us to places where only dead men and women can go.

#### Dave Trotter

Jesus Christ God’s son died for me, Jesus rose from the grave for me, Jesus represents me, Jesus is for me. Jesus will raise me when I die. Your gods body or your religious body that you worship is still in the grave for he or she is not God. Only Jesus God’s Son is God. Worship Him.

#### Watchman Nee

Christ is the Son of God who died for the redemption of sinners and resurrected after three days. This is the greatest truth in the universe. I die because of my belief in Christ.

### Arisa Dutton

#### Pliny in Epistles 10.96

"They (Christians) were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang in alternate verses a hymn to Christ, as to a god, and bound themselves by a solemn oath, not to any wicked deeds, but never to commit any fraud, theft or adultery, never to falsify their word, nor deny a trust when they should be called upon to deliver it up; after which it was their custom to separate, and then reassemble to partake of food, but of an ordinary and innocent kind ,"

#### Source??

"[N]either human effort nor the emperor’s generosity nor the placating of the gods ended the scandalous belief that the fire had been ordered [by Nero]. Therefore, to put down the rumor, Nero substituted as culprits and punished in the most unusual ways those hated for their shameful acts … whom the crowd called “Chrestians.” The founder of this name, Christ [Christus in Latin], had been executed in the reign of Tiberius by the procurator Pontius Pilate … Suppressed for a time, the deadly superstition erupted again not only in Judea, the origin of this evil, but also in the city [Rome], where all things horrible and shameful from everywhere come together and become popular.”

#### The Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 43a, "Eve of Passover"

"On the eve of Passover they hanged Yeshu (of Nazareth) and the herald went before him for forty days saying (Yeshu of Nazareth) is going to be stoned in that he hath practiced sorcery and beguiled and led astray Israel. Let everyone know aught in his defense come and plead for him. But they found naught in his defense and hanged him on the eve of Passover (The Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 43a, "Eve of Passover")

#### R. Shimeon ben' Azzai Yeb, IV, 3.49a

"I found a genealogical roll in Jerusalem wherein was recorded, Such-an-one is a bastard of an adulteress" (R. Shimeon ben' Azzai Yeb, IV, 3.49a).

(Both of these references corroborate the New Testament picture of how unbelievers viewed Jesus. They accused Him of being demon possessed.)