

God's Unlimited Promises to Hold On To

# UNLIMITED SALVATION



**GNU** WORD  
SPREADS  
FAST.  
Good News Unlimited

**DEVOTIONAL**

## FROM ELIEZER TO YOU

Dear Friend

Welcome to the third edition of GNU's devotional, Unlimited. These little booklets, produced every two months, will help you walk closer with Jesus as you discover his unlimited and unchanging promises to hold on to.

The theme of this edition is "Unlimited Salvation", focusing on the deep, comforting assurance of salvation through Jesus Christ alone, and the unbreakable bond we have with him through prayer. I have been personally inspired and blessed by the stories from around the world of how God is blessing his work and inspiring people to become involved in sharing the Gospel.

We look forward to sharing reflections on "Unlimited Faith" in our next edition, to help you develop a greater faith in the Saviour, especially in difficult times.

These Unlimited devotional booklets offer practical wisdom, opportunities to reflect, and insights on how to serve others. I look forward to hearing how these devotionals are helping you grow in Christ.

Receive this with our prayers, and an abundance of the blessings of salvation.

Grace and peace,

*Eli*

Eliezer Gonzalez  
Senior Pastor, GNU



# UNLIMITED SALVATION

**God's Unlimited Promises to Hold On To**

## THERE ARE NO HOPELESS CASES

**Jesus is the Shepherd who finds the sheep.  
It is never the other way around.**

*The woman said, "I know that the Messiah is coming, the one who is called the Christ... Jesus said to her, "I Am—the one who speaks with you." (John 4:25–26, CEB).*

The Samaritan woman at the well had a ruined reputation—broken relationships, and a shattered heart. In her lonely nights she would call out to God, who seemed to be so far away. It seemed that there was no way that she could get close to him and find his comfort.

Then, amazingly, that day at the well, a Jewish man happened to be sitting there precisely when she arrived. He asked her for kindness, which she gave. And then he announced that he was the Messiah. In fact, by telling her that his name was "I Am" (John 4:26—very clear in the Greek), Jesus was telling her that God himself had come to her. Her broken connection with God and with her community had been restored.

Jesus is the Shepherd who finds the sheep. It is never the other way around. Even when we think that he is far off, God is close. Very close (Psalm 145:18).

That closeness is based on the union that God forever forged through Christ at Calvary. Because of the Cross, there is one eternal family for all who will receive the Son of God. And there is power through the Spirit, whom he has given to all who believe. Every cry is heard. Every prayer is answered. Unlimited salvation.

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

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**Eli's Reflection:** *In what way do you think salvation is limited by God? Do you know of any "hopeless cases"? Make a plan to pray for them, starting today. And if that hopeless case is you, make sure you read this book.*

## CHRIST'S MIRACLES AND PARABLES TEACH JUSTIFICATION IN HIM ALONE

The prodigal confesses, as must every sinner, "I am not worthy," but the Father still receives him.

*To the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness (Romans 4:15, NIV).*

Justification is the receiving of the righteousness that is alien to us and found in Christ alone. It is set out as a doctrine in Romans, but it is found throughout the whole of Scripture. Even the miracles and parables of Christ describe it.

For example, the sick and handicapped came just as they were, but the word of Christ declared them whole. They came just as they were, but they did not remain just as they were. Contact with Christ made the difference. His power alone worked the transformation as they submitted to it.

In the parables, the lost are pictured as helpless sheep, forfeited coins and degraded sons. Only loving grace made the rescue possible. The shepherd found the sheep, the woman found the coin, and the memory of the Father's love drew the prodigal. The prodigal confesses, as must every sinner, "I am not worthy," but the Father receives him nonetheless.

Justification is a declaring righteous, not a making righteous. But God does not pronounce the leper clean and leave him a leper. He does not pardon the rebel and then leave him to carry on his rebellion. The 'fruit of the Spirit' is the evidence that we have been 'born' of the Spirit.

### ▼ DES FORD

**Eli's Reflection:** *Think about your favourite parable or miracle of Jesus. How does it teach the truth of justification by Christ alone and through grace alone? Write it down so you don't forget it, and share it with your church group.*

## THE GOSPEL THAT SAVES IS SIMPLE

The Good News of the crucified and risen Saviour is still as simple and as powerful as ever.

*By this gospel you are saved... For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:2–4, NIV).*

When I visit the supermarket, I try to buy food with fewer additives. I believe that the more additives on the list, the less good the product is for my health.

It's the same with the Gospel. It was simple to begin with. Jesus rose to life from the grave, and told his followers to share the good news with everyone: he died for the forgiveness of the sins of the world, so all who believed in him would live forever. His resurrection was the proof!

The Gospel means "Good News," and the Good News of the crucified and risen Saviour is still as simple and as powerful as ever.

The Gospel isn't at its heart a community, a social agenda, or some good advice for living. All of those things are some of the results of the Gospel, but none of them can save you. They aren't the Good News. In case you missed it, here it is:

*For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).*

Now *that's* Good News!

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

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**Eli's Reflection:** *Here is a way to both celebrate and share the Good News. Write out John 3:16 on separate pieces of note paper and attach each one to a helium balloons. Who knows where they will land?*

# JESUS PUTS YOUR SIN ON HIS ACCOUNT

**We are not received as slaves,  
but as beloved as Christ himself.**

*But if he has wronged you or owes anything, put that on my account (Philemon 1:18, NKJV)*

Firstly, we were God's property, and we ran away. Our sin was against God; for this reason it needs atonement. Resolutions can never touch this side of sin, reformation can never wipe it out, but Christ's atonement meets the case perfectly.

Secondly, the law gives to the sinner no right of appeal. The standard of the law has never for a moment been lowered, but grace steps in and changes the whole matter, and every sinner under grace has the privilege of appealing for divine help.

Thirdly, the sinner flees for refuge to Jesus...

Fourthly, through faith in Christ we are begotten as sons. It is impossible to understand this, but the Word of God, to which may be added our experience, justifies us in believing that it is true, and being sinners we are thus delivered from the bondage of sin and kept from its power.

Fifthly, in this new relation we return to God, and we are not received as slaves, but beloved as Christ Himself...

And thus we stand on redemption ground, and as Onesimus bore the letter to Philemon, so we stand before God in the name of Jesus Christ, and he speaks for us as did Paul for the Roman slave.

▼ **J. WILBUR CHAPMAN**

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**Eli's Reflection:** *Find a box or a jar, and label it, "Christ's Account." Whenever Satan reminds you of a sin that you have confessed to God, write it down and put it in the container. From time to time, empty it into the trash.*

## CHRIST HAS JUSTIFIED US THROUGH HIS DEATH

Christ became what he was not,  
that we might become what we are not.

*Just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people (Romans 5:18, NIV).*

Justification is the reception of the sinner just as he or she is, for Christ's sake. Sanctification, or transformation, is the result. The essence of justification is that God does for us what we could never do for ourselves. He accomplished our acquittal through Christ's life and death, which were not only substitutionary, but representative.

When Christ died, God counted it as though the whole human race died. His perfect life, given for us on the Cross, was put to the credit of the whole human race. Christ became what he was not, that we might become what we are not. (See 2 Corinthians 5:14, 21).

Sanctification begins with regeneration, which always accompanies the faith and penitence that mark justification. Sanctification concerns our state, which is always imperfect, whereas justification concerns our standing with God, which is always perfect.

Justification is concerned with what has been entirely done outside of us. The result of justification is that as faith lays hold of the gift of salvation, the Holy Spirit who inspires that faith begets a new life in seed form. Henceforth the believer, so to speak, is a person with two natures, the old and the new.

### ▼ DES FORD

**Eli's Reflection:** *Make a list of some actual things that you do in your life that feed your old nature and another list of things that feed your new nature. Decide to stop doing something that feeds your old nature, and to do more of one of the things that feeds your new nature. Ask God for help in these areas of your life.*





*Letter from Australia...*

## **GNU LAUNCHES YOUVERSION PARTNERSHIP**

Good News Unlimited takes seriously Jesus' command to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation" (Mark 16:15). That's why GNU has recently expanded its ministry by partnering with the YouVersion Bible reading platform.

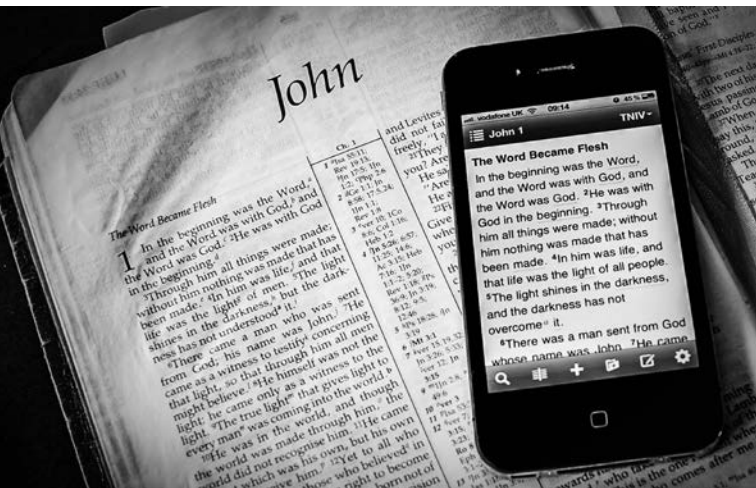
YouVersion is a Bible app for mobile phones and the web to encourage people everywhere to read their Bibles. It's run by dedicated Christians. Because GNU's Gospel-based reading plans have been accepted onto the YouVersion platform, they can now reach the more than 2.5 million YouVersion subscribers around the world.

The first Unlimited Bible reading plan became available on YouVersion in December, and the second one will follow it shortly. GNU's 14-day reading plans are based on a daily devotional, supported by Bible passages to give you more information. YouVersion tracks your progress, so it's as easy as click and read!

Since GNU launched on YouVersion in December, over 6,000 people subscribed to the Unlimited Love reading plan, and over 2,000 completed it.

Eliezer Gonzalez, CEO of Good News Unlimited, is excited about this expansion of GNU's Gospel outreach:

*"Our increasing focus on digital helps us to reach many more people with the Good News. It's how people communicate today, so we must use it to spread the Word fast."*



▼ *GNU's first YouVersion Bible Reading Plan, Unlimited Love, has attracted many thousands of readers.*

We praise the Lord that he is providing ways for the Gospel to be heard loud and clear, and for Christians to be encouraged and built up in it around the world.

We can only continue to reach out to a world that desperately needs the Gospel because of the ongoing generosity of committed Christians like you.

The Lord's Gospel Commission instructs us to "Go into all the world...". That's not always physically possible, but your generosity with the resources entrusted to you by God is a critical part of that 'going into all the world'.

▼ **Prayer Point:** *Thank God that he continues to open new ways for people to learn of his salvation. Pray that he will guide you as you consider your generous response to his supreme gift to you.*

# JESUS GIVES YOU REAL LIFE

Jesus died  
so that you might never die.

*Everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die  
(John 11:26, NASB).*

Look at how full of life children are! Their energy seems inexhaustible. But as life goes on, age, sickness, and the eventual troubles of life inevitably wear us down. In spite of this, most people at the end of their days hold on, wanting another day, another hour, even another minute. It's innate in us to want to live, and not to die.

Although we all die, but it's not the reason why we come into the world. We come into the world to live.

But Jesus is different, because Jesus actually came to die (John 3:16). Jesus came to die so that by delivering you from death, you could live—truly live—both here in this life (John 10:10) and in eternity. Just as little kids enjoy life, Jesus has given us eternity to enjoy.

Jesus died so you might never die (John 11:25). When you believe in him, though you may die an earthly death, Jesus counts it merely as a sleep (John 11:11, 14), and as the blink of an eye (1 Corinthians 15:52). You are always safe in Christ and you will rise again!

When you accept Christ's gift of life, you have eternity in which to be the person whom you were always meant to be, and to enjoy the best of life forever. That's God's ultimate purpose for you.

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

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**Eli's Reflection:** *How do you understand what Jesus says, that "Everyone who... believes in me will never die"? Think about this deeply. Do you have eternal life right now? How should this truth change the way you see yourself and the way you live?*

## WE GROW TOWARDS PERFECTION

**If we do not demonstrate an increasing hatred for our sins, we have never been justified.**

*Yes, Adam's one sin brings condemnation for everyone, but Christ's one act of righteousness brings a right relationship with God and new life for everyone (Romans 5:18, NLT).*

In the passage above, and in 2 Corinthians 5:14, the Apostle Paul tells us that when Christ died, it was reckoned as though the whole wicked world died. Henceforth our debts are paid.

But our cure experientially is not yet complete. Our way to the kingdom of God may be marked by stumbling, limping, and crawling upon the floor. A Christian of vast experience once wrote: "We ourselves are constantly falling, failing in speech and action to represent Christ; falling and rising again, despairing and hoping."

Sanctification is not legalistic achievement, but rather, increasing prayerfulness; increasing self-distrust, and increasing faith in him alone who can save and keep. If we do not demonstrate an increasing hatred for our sins, we have never been justified.

Romans 5:1–11 lists some of the aspects of the subjective experience of the believer. Now that justification has come, so has peace and joy and love for God. Patience is developed by the way one reacts to trial, trouble and tribulation. One grows towards that perfection with which the believer is initially and forever credited. Christ regards us as though the work is already complete.

### ▼ DES FORD

**Eli's Reflection:** *I once asked Des Ford what the difference was between a saved person and an unsaved person. He replied, "A saved person loves God and hates sin, and an unsaved person loves sin and hates God." Do you agree with that? How is that reflected in your own life?*

## COME JUST AS YOU ARE

He will welcome you  
and you will sit at his table,  
though not in rags,  
for he will clothe you  
in his own righteousness.

*Invite the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame...  
Go out into the country lanes and behind the hedges and  
urge anyone you find to come (Luke 14:21–23, NLT).*

Do not wait to make yourself any better. Do not try in your own strength to get back some of the ground you have lost. Christ came to save sinners, and if you will come just as you are, you may be sure of a loving welcome.

There is a story of a great monarch who was accustomed on certain set occasions to entertain all the beggars of the city. Around him were placed his courtiers, all in their rich clothes; the beggars sat at the same table in their rags of poverty...

One of the courtiers had dirty marks on his silk clothes, and could not wear them... "Well, well," said he, "so long as I may see the king's face and sit at the royal table, I can go in with the beggars." So he put on the rags of a beggar and was welcomed to the king's table.

My friend, it is the same with you. You have spoiled the silk robes of your purity, you can only come to God as a poor sinner. But as such he will welcome you and you will sit at his table, though not in rags, for he will clothe you anew in his own righteousness. Only yield your heart to the Gospel message and you will be welcomed in.

▼ **LOUIS ALBERT BANKS (ADAPTED)**

**Eli's Reflection:** *Consider your life, with its successes and failures, joy and sadness, spiritual highs and sinful lows. What events in your life would you put under each of these headings? Now fall on your knees and surrender all of yourself to God. Thank him because he accepts the totality of you, just as you are.*

# GOD WINS GREAT VICTORIES THROUGH PEOPLE LIKE YOU

God specialises in taking nobodies  
and turning them into somebodies.

*The least of you will become a thousand, the smallest a mighty nation (Isaiah 60:22, NIV).*

In 480 B.C., just 300 Spartans held back the entire invading Persian army at the pass of Thermopylae in Greece. That incredible battle has been put to good use by Hollywood, most recently in the movie "300."

In the Bible there's also a story where an army of 300, with God's help, defeated another massive army when the situation seemed hopeless. Gideon and his small army weren't perfect, but they trusted God.

It's easy to believe the movie playing inside your head that tells you you're an unworthy, unloveable nobody, facing impossible challenges, and a bad ending. But that's not the truth if you have accepted the salvation that Jesus offers you.

Don't let your feelings of inadequacy stop you from becoming a child of God, because he specialises in taking nobodies and turning them into somebodies. He has shown you how much you matter to him by coming to this world in the person of Jesus Christ, his Son. And when he rose again he showed that everyone can be a winner if they are in relationship with him.

God is recruiting now, and he wants you to be one of his "300".

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

**Eli's Reflection:** *Do you have a favourite piece of clothing? When feelings of worthlessness hit you, put it on and say this verse: "I am overwhelmed with joy in the Lord my God! For He has dressed me with the clothing of salvation and draped me in a robe of righteousness" (Isaiah 61:10, NLT). Then step confidently into the world.*

## ENDINGS ARE JUST BEGINNINGS IN DISGUISE

The story of Jesus isn't history. It's current affairs.

*To all who mourn in Israel, He will give a crown of beauty for ashes, a joyous blessing instead of mourning, festive praise instead of despair (Isaiah 61:3, NLT).*

We can all look back and see new beginnings disguised as endings in our lives. It was like that when I quit the job I'd had for many years. It was really hard to do, especially since I didn't know what I'd do next. It felt like an ending, but it really was an exciting new beginning.

The four gospels tell the story of what Jesus did while he was on earth. Luke was the author of one of these books, and he says that what he wrote about was about all that Jesus **BEGAN** to do (Acts 1:1).

What Luke is telling us is that when he writes about how Jesus was crucified and about how he rose from the dead, it wasn't the end! It was just the beginning—it was what Jesus **BEGAN** to do. And Jesus has been finding the lost, and healing the broken ever since!

The story of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection is only the beginning of your own story. Jesus is alive, and he's still at work today!

The story of Jesus isn't history. It's current affairs.

When you make Jesus' story your story, don't be fooled by what seem to be the endings in your life, because in him, they are all just new beginnings in disguise!

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

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**Eli's Reflection:** *When we share the Good News, it is not only about what Jesus has done in the past, but what he is doing today in our own lives. Do you have an experience or a story to tell? When was the last time you shared it? I invite you to share it with someone within the next week.*





## THE OPEN, EMPTY HAND

In that very gift is all we need  
for this life and eternity.

*'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep'  
(Luke 15:6, NIV).*

In Jesus' parable of the Lost Sheep, the shepherd doesn't say to the one lost sheep, "If you partially find your way home, I will do the rest and come to pick you up." Some people believe this about salvation: that if they put in their part, say 5% righteousness, then Jesus will supply the remaining 95%. How deceptive this kind of thinking is!

In Christian terminology, we talk about "coming to Jesus," and similar expressions. While these expressions do have a basis in the teachings of the Bible (John 6:35–40), they can be understood only in terms of our total acceptance of Christ's total salvation, understanding that it is Christ who has provided a full and perfect atonement at Calvary. To "come to Jesus" is to turn in repentant helplessness to him alone, for even faith itself is a gift from God (Hebrews 12:2).

Consider the teachings of Jesus. The lost lamb could not start to find its way home. The man wounded on the road to Jericho could do nothing for himself. The paralysed man by the pool of Bethesda could not take a step towards the water. The lost coin could do nothing to find itself.

So what are we to do? God is calling everyone to repentance; he is calling everyone home. When we, with the open, empty hand of faith, receive the gift; in that very gift is all that we need for this life and for eternity.

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

**Eli's Reflection:** *Think for a moment about how you talk about your conversion? Is it, "When I found Christ..." or "When I found the truth..." or expressions like that? Do you ever think in terms of "When Christ found me"? Do you need to change the way you share your story with others, in order to give the glory to Jesus?*

## WE MUST BECOME WHAT WE ALREADY ARE

God's love and acceptance of us is like the blazing sun, always complete and full and warm.

God... raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:6, NKJV).

We are already seated in heavenly places in Christ, having died with him, been buried with him and having risen with him. (See Galatians 2:20; Romans 6:4; and Colossians 3:1). The Christian is admonished to become what he already is; that is, because he is a child of the King, he is to act like one.

Therefore at every stage of his experience the Christian may know that he is fully accepted of God, despite his or her internal ups and downs of feelings, emotions, and ethical achievements or failures. Note that the second half of each Pauline Epistle stresses the "therefore" in the life of the justified. Justification without holiness is a heresy.

For practical Christian living, the challenge is to focus our attention on what Christ is to us, rather than what we are to him. We are not to make the mistake of reasoning from feeling to fact to faith, but the reverse. God's love and acceptance of us is like the blazing sun, always complete and full and warm. But our attitude to God is like that of the waning moon, always incomplete, and always only a slight reflection of his own.

No one will ever perish while he or she depends upon the merits of Christ's atonement.

▼ **DES FORD**

**Eli's Reflection:** *The apostle Paul urges us to become what we already are—to live as Christ sees us and according to how he treats us. When you do this, it can have a massively positive impact on your life. Is there an area of your life where you think this is especially important? Discuss it with a trusted spiritual counsellor.*

## KEEP YOUR EYES ON GOD IN THE TOUGH TIMES

It's OK for the ship to be in the sea;  
it's just not good for the sea to be in the ship.

*In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials  
(1 Peter 1:6 NIV).*

I'm glad Peter wrote that verse. I wouldn't feel I was a Christian but for that verse. No one is jubilant all the time. If they are, there's something wrong. Real life is tough. Real life has many hard knocks, and at times we are in heaviness.

The Christian remembers that it's OK for the ship to be in the sea; it's just not good for the sea to be in the ship. It's OK to be in the storm, but never let the stormy waters get into you. You can be in very hard times and yet have joy in the thrill that you know everything's going to be all right in the end.

The Christian is like that. You remember the African-American pastor preaching about Calvary: "That was Friday, but Sunday's a comin'!" He had the key. When you are in pain, you can say, "It's Friday, but Sunday's a comin'!" You can say, "I may be on a cross now, but it's not always going to be like this."

The Cross of Christ is a wonderful paradigm of what everybody's life is at times: limited, painful, naked, and without strength.

At those times, remember: That's Friday, but Sunday's a comin'!

▼ **DES FORD**

**Eli's Reflection:** *Do you know of someone who is living in a "Friday" time in some area of their lives? Ask God to help you find some way to encourage them to hang on until "Sunday" comes?*

## THAT'S GRACE!

Grace is for the graceless.

It's not grace if it's given to the deserving.

*My grace is all you need (2 Corinthians 12:9, NLT).*

"Grace" is a popular girl's name, but how many people actually know what it means? Here is the meaning of the name "Grace."

It means "continual favour," "eternal love," "unfailing kindness," and "tender mercy"—all of those things rolled into one! Grace challenges us at every level of our being, because the Bible tells us that grace is for the graceless. It's not grace if it is given to the deserving. And that's what God does:

*For God so loved the world (John 3:16)... That's grace!*

*This Man receives sinners (Luke 15:2)...That's grace!*

*Every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven to men (Matthew 12:31)... That's grace!*

Every believer in Jesus has been blessed by the grace of God that comes to us through our Lord Jesus Christ:

*For the law was given through Moses; grace...came through Jesus Christ (John 1:17).*

Grace is not some abstract theological concept. Grace is love incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ. Grace came to us at Bethlehem, on the shores of lake Galilee, and on a hill outside Jerusalem. And Grace comes to us today.

I think more babies should be called "Grace," and then more parents should share the Gospel with people who ask them what they have named their baby!

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

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**Eli's Reflection:** *What does your name mean? Look it up. Do you live up to what your name means? If not, there's grace for you! In what area of your life do you most need grace? Pray for it and receive it with gratitude.*

## LOOKING TO JESUS WILL CHANGE YOU

**For every look at your wounds of sin,  
give ten looks to the Great Physician.**

*Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith  
(Hebrews 12:2, NKJV).*

The two doctrinal ills in the matter of salvation are legalism and antinomianism. The former teaches that we must be good in order to be saved. The latter teaches that being saved, we can do as we like.

Both of these are erroneous. God accepts us just as we are. The legalism in the New Testament was not the belief that we are saved by works, but that we are saved by faith and works. In reality, we are saved by faith alone, though the faith that saves is never alone.

Sanctification comes by looking to self. There we find only insufficiency, inadequacy and sin. We are saved by looking to the Saviour. For every look at your wounds of sin, give ten looks to the Great Physician. Whatever gets our attention gets us. Whatever we hold in the mind passes into action.

If you focus on your sin and failures, you will sin and make more mistakes. But if Christ is pre-eminent in your thinking, then you will grow more and more like his Master, so that...

*...we all with open face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory (2 Corinthians 3: 18).*

▼ **DES FORD**

**Eli's Reflection:** *Do you tend to look to your own sin, or to Jesus? Do you have a favourite worship song or hymn, which has lyrics that points you to Jesus? Write out a verse from that song that is particularly meaningful to you. Copy it several times and put it around your home in places where you will find it. When you do find it, sing the song!*



## *Letter from India...*

# **GOD'S DOUBLE MIRACLE**

Good News TV continues its outreach for God in India, thanks to your generous support. The weekly TV programme is supported by the Good News Evangelism programme that visits villages, preaching and teaching the Word. An enthusiastic member of Pastor Joseph's team is Babu Rao, who knows the transforming power of Jesus firsthand.

As a young man, Babu Rao achieved his life's ambition to become a police officer. But his growing addiction to alcohol caused him to lose his job, and his career aspirations were in ruins. He begged and pleaded with his superiors, promising that he would do better. But Babu Rao had run out of chances.

Checking in with Babu Rao thirteen years later, we find him working as a laborer, still addicted to alcohol, still regretting the path his life has taken. But he can't shake his addiction, and he can't undo the past.

It was at this hopeless time in his life that he was first introduced to Jesus. His grandmother had just become a Christian. As she shared her new faith with Babu Rao, the message touched his heart, and he dedicated his life to Jesus. He stopped drinking alcohol and began reading the Bible and praying daily. His life as a labourer continued, but now he had a new reason for living.

Now picture this new Christian's excitement as he discovers the Good News Unlimited TV programme for the first time. He is overwhelmed with joy that the Gospel is being preached in this manner, and he is inspired to contribute to this work. He calls Pr Joseph, the programme's host, who





▼ **Babu Rao:** *I have come to know the value of life and the power of Jesus..*

invites Babu Rao and his wife to join his evangelism Team. They begin attending the Gospel meetings and Babu Rao shares his story of transformation.

The gospel never stops transforming lives—in expected and unexpected ways. A year after becoming a Christian, Babu Rao received an offer to rejoin the police force. It had been 14 years since he had lost his job. This had seemed impossible, even after Pr Joseph had interceded on his behalf. God had worked a double miracle in his life.

Now Babu Rao divides his life between his two passions: God's work and his work in the police force. He says,

*My addiction caused me to lose my job, but I came to know the value of true life when I heard about Jesus. So I dedicated my whole life to him and I love sharing my story of how Jesus has changed my life and given me hope.*

▼ **Prayer Point:** *Thank God for the miracle of eternal life in Jesus Christ, and for the joy and hope that changes lives here and now. Thank him also as you grasp the opportunities he provides you to share the Gospel right across the world.*

## JESUS WILL NOT GIVE YOU UP

Not one of us is so poor and barren  
that we cannot bear fruit unto God  
if we yield ourselves completely  
to the Heavenly Gardener.

*...his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness (Lamentations 3:22, NIV).*

The story of the Last Supper, recorded in John 13 begins with the Lord washing the feet of the Twelve, not the Eleven. If I'd been in charge, it would have only been eleven. I wouldn't have washed Judas' feet, knowing what he was about to do.

As a tide continually surges onto the beach, so the love of Christ repeatedly comes against the heart of the sinner. Christ even washes the feet of the man who is going to sell him for thirty pieces of silver.

If Christ could wash the feet of Judas, if the tide of his redeeming love could beat against that hard heart again and again, will he ever give us up because of our failures and our follies, however weak we may be?

Judas thought he was strong. The more we know about ourselves, the weaker we know ourselves to be.

If Christ could plead with someone so set on evil as Judas, the traitor of the Twelve, is he going to give us up? Surely, if Christ can love like that, then his compassion will not fail for us who are weak, often foolish, and too often straying.

▼ **DES FORD**

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**Eli's Reflection:** *Whatever your past, today is a new beginning, and the love and mercy of Jesus is washing over you. Judas failed to respond. How will you respond? Take some time now to immerse yourself in Christ's love, and determine to acknowledge it in how you live your life today.*

## GOD SAVES YOUNG AND OLD

The old sin just as much as the young,  
but perhaps they've convinced themselves otherwise,  
or perhaps they've just learnt to sin in different ways.

*All these people died still believing what God had promised them. They did not receive what was promised, but they saw it all from a distance and welcomed it (Hebrews 11:13, NLT).*

We often think that the young have a monopoly on being idiots, but that's not true! I made plenty of mistakes when I was young, and I make plenty of mistakes today. Many people wrongly think that the young are responsible for most of the sinning in the world, and that somehow older people must generally be sinning less.

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews contains a list of God's heroes. But it's also a great list of people who made their most stupid mistakes when they were older: Abraham and Sarah, who disbelieved God multiple times; David the murderous adulterer; and that other impatient murderer, Moses. None of these were teenagers when they sinned.

The old sin just as much as the young, but perhaps they've convinced themselves otherwise, or perhaps they've just learned to sin in different ways. The Apostle Paul says, "There is no difference... for all have sinned" (Romans 3:22–23).

That's why it's good to know that God isn't "ageist", and that his mercy and favour are for everyone who turns to him. No matter how badly you've stuffed things up, or what stage of life you're in, there's still a place in God's list of heroes for you.

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

**Eli's Reflection:** *With which Bible character do you identify the most? In spite of the failures, what do you think was the one quality that helped that particular character be one of God's heroes? How could you intentionally cultivate that quality in your own life?*

## YOU MUST LET GOD WIN

When we surrender, we win;  
and when we're broken,  
then God can make us whole.

*Whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it (Matthew 16:25, NIV).*

I once haggled for twenty minutes with a young lady in the Shanghai markets for a bag. When we finally agreed a price, she said, "Ooooh, you're very good! You know the prices!" Then she asked, "Do you have a girlfriend?"

I took her question as a compliment on my great negotiation skills, and I told her I was happily married.

In the Bible, Jacob is the great negotiator. His prayers are full of his requests and the deals he wants to make with God. But when God comes to wrestle with him, Jacob realises that here is someone whom he cannot outwit or overpower.

Jacob wrestles all night, and still he's no closer to winning. It's only when God cripples him that Jacob realises that he's been wrestling with God all along. Then he gives up, and when Jacob gives up, God incredibly announces that Jacob has actually won!

The reality of the Kingdom of Heaven, which is the ultimate reality, turns the values of the world upside down. We win by losing, gain by giving, and lead by sacrificing. We need to stop trying to win in our own lives, and instead let God win.

Because when we surrender, we win; and when we're broken, then God can make us whole.

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

**Eli's Reflection:** *What are you struggling with right now? Are you prepared to let God win? When God wins, it doesn't necessarily happen how and when we expect. If you are ready, find a peaceful place away from your everyday life, and surrender this issue completely to the Lord.*

# YOU MATTER TO GOD

**We all matter to God.  
It doesn't matter who you are.**

*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 (John 3:16, KJV).*

Jesus died for your sins. You should know this, for the Bible is full of the wonderful word “whosoever.”

If Jesus so loved the world that he died (John 3:16). Do you live in this world, or somewhere else? If you live in the world, he died for you.

God so loved you that he gave his Son for you. When Christ suffered on the Cross, he suffered for you, just as though it was only for you. It is the one lost sheep the shepherd goes after. The one is significant.

Napoleon was once asked, “Did you lose anyone important in the battle?” “Oh, no,” he replied, “a few score thousand soldiers died, but no one of importance.” I wonder what the mothers thought. God is not like that. God is more like the librarian who knows every book in the library. We all matter to God. It doesn't matter who you are.

Do you remember what Christ said through the angel to the women at his tomb? *“Go tell his disciples and Peter. ...”* (Mark 16:7 NIV). He remembered Peter.

▼ **DES FORD**

**Eli's Reflection:** *We are all constantly bombarded with reasons why we can't possibly matter to God. I invite you to tell someone today how much they matter to God. By doing that, you'll bless yourself also: what better way of reminding yourself just how significant you are to God!*

## JESUS IS THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD

**Because Jesus is, above all, the Saviour of the world, he then becomes to us everything else that we need.**

*And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world (1 John 4:14, NIV).*

They say that remembering people's names, and who they are, is one of the keys to success. The same is true of Jesus. We have to be clear about who he is.

Some people look at Jesus primarily as their example of how to live. Other people consider Jesus to be primarily their Saviour. Who is Jesus, first and foremost?

If Jesus is first and foremost our example, then everything about his life shows us up. It condemns us as miserable failures. If we have this focus in our lives, it will tend to lead us towards the twin evils of perfectionism and legalism.

But if Jesus is, above everything, our Saviour, then we have hope! He came into the world to save sinners, and all of us qualify in that category. It is only when we come to Jesus as penitents that we find acceptance, peace, and joy.

The whole emphasis of the New Testament is that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world. Because Jesus is, above all, the Saviour of the world, he then becomes to us everything else that we need. If Jesus is first of all our Saviour, then he can also be our example. It all depends on knowing who he is.

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

**Eli's Reflection:** *Who is Jesus to you? Is it possible to put it into words? Why don't you try? Write down in one paragraph who Jesus is to you, and then use that paragraph as the basis of a prayer of praise and thankfulness to Jesus.*



## YOU ARE PERFECTLY SAVED

Salvation must be of grace,  
because what motive but grace  
could move the Lord to save the guilty?

*God... has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began (2 Timothy 1:9, NKJV).*

The apostle uses the perfect tense, meaning that this has already happened: "Who has saved us." Believers in Christ Jesus are saved. They are not looked upon as persons who are in a hopeful state, and may ultimately be saved, but they are already saved.

Salvation is not a blessing to be enjoyed on your deathbed, or to be enjoyed in some future life above, but something you can have now; received, promised, and enjoyed now. The Christian is perfectly saved according to God's plan... The price of salvation has already been paid: "It is finished" was the cry of the Saviour before he died. The believer is also perfectly saved in God's covenant promise: Adam and Eve's sin was our sin, and our life is now in Jesus Christ.

This complete salvation is accompanied by a holy calling.... God did not choose us or call us because we were already holy, but he called us so we could be holy, and holiness is the beauty produced by God's workmanship in us.

Salvation must be of grace, because the Lord is the author of it: and what motive but grace could motivate him to save the guilty? Salvation must be of grace, because Jesus covers all our guilt and unrighteousness.

▼ **CHARLES SPURGEON (ADAPTED)**

**Eli's Reflection:** *Do you feel perfectly saved? If not, are the wrong feelings in control of your life? What can you do to bring your feelings more into harmony with God's promises to you? Can you focus more on the things that bring you assurance, comfort, and peace?*



## WHAT PRAYER IS

**Prayer is a little child going to the Father  
and spilling out the heart.**

*If you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him (Matthew 9:11, NLT).*

If there is a loving heavenly Father—and we need not doubt that until rocks rush to form a Taj Mahal or computers without fingers or electricity can churn out a Bible—he would want to talk to us.

Because talking must always be a two-way street, all the great characters of the Bible were praying people. Abraham, Elijah, Jeremiah—all the prophets—Samuel, Hannah, Peter, and Paul, were all praying people. No wonder then that the Bible talks about prayer 350 times.

They knew what we must learn: that if we lived under the constant benediction of the supreme fact of the universe that God is love, our lives would be in constant peace.

What, then, is prayer?

Prayer is need, finding a voice. It is slipping through an open door to find our best Friend in the universe. Prayer is telling God what upsets us, what concerns us. It's telling God when we're grateful for his help, when we need his guidance, when we want his forgiveness, when we've been stupid and fearful and anxious, and when we've messed everything up.

Prayer is a little child going to the Father and spilling out the heart.

▼ **DES FORD**

**Eli's Reflection:** *If prayer is so important, what stops you from praying more? Have you ever prayed for ten minutes straight? One hour? A whole day or night? I challenge you to find a quiet place, perhaps in nature, take your Bible with you, and pray for a whole hour. I promise it will change you.*

## GET TO KNOW THE REALITY OF GOD

In terms of our higher nature and potential, it is the knowledge of God that we chiefly need.

*Let the one who boasts, boast about this: that they have the understanding to know me, that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight (Jeremiah 9:24, NIV).*

In the ancient book of Job we have the invitation “*acquaint now yourself with him and be at peace*” (Job 22:21). Centuries later, Jesus echoed these words when he said, “*Come ... learn of me ... and ye shall find rest unto your souls*” (Matthew 11:28, 29). In terms of our spiritual nature and potential, it is the knowledge of God that we chiefly need.

If that be so, we might anticipate that the Devil would do all he could to give us a false picture of God. How well he has succeeded! Think of your early childhood pictures of God and analyse your present ones. Is God more like a policeman than a father? Such immature and inaccurate pictures, of course, conflict strangely with biblical passages such as:

*Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him (Psalm 103:13).*

*As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you (Isaiah 66:13).*

*The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth... forgiving iniquity (Exodus 34:6,7).*

Should we not strive to have a more accurate, biblical picture of our Maker, Redeemer, and Judge?

### ▼ DES FORD

**Eli's Reflection:** *Does your picture of God fill you with insecurity and terror, or with love and joy and peace? Perhaps you need to drink more deeply from the sources that give you a truer picture of the gracious heart of God.*

# NEVER LOSE YOUR CONNECTION WITH GOD

A prayerless soul is a Christless soul.

*Continue in prayer (Col 4:2, NKJV).*

It is interesting to notice how large a portion of the Bible is occupied with the subject of prayer. We scarcely open the Bible before we read, "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord," and just as we are about to close the volume, the "Amen" of an earnest request meets our ear.

Here we find a wrestling Jacob; there a Daniel who prayed three times a day; and a David who with all his heart called upon his God. On the mountain we see Elijah; in the dungeon, Paul and Silas. All these stories teach us about the sacred importance and necessity of prayer

We may be certain that whatever God has made prominent in his Word, he intended to be conspicuous in our lives. If he has said much about prayer, it is because he knows we have much need of it.

So deep are our necessities, that until we are in heaven we must not cease to pray.

A prayerless soul is a Christless soul. Prayer is the lisping of the believing infant, the shout of the fighting believer, the final thoughts of the dying saint falling asleep in Jesus.

It is the breath, the watchword, the comfort, the strength, the honour of a Christian.

▼ **CHARLES SPURGEON (ADAPTED)**

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**Eli's Reflection:** *Is there someone close to you whom you know should pray more? Why don't you encourage them in prayer by offering to pray with that person on a regular basis? What a blessing that will be for you as well!*

## BANISHED BY THE LAW, CONNECTED BY GRACE

We do not work to the Cross,  
but from the Cross.

*For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace (Romans 6:14, NIV).*

We do not work to the Cross, but from the Cross. The power of sin is never removed till the guilt of sin has been taken away (Romans 6:14). Our actual experiential freedom from sin comes as we bask in the forgiveness of God. Our gratitude and love for God's great gift becomes a torrent, washing away our defilement. As we sense that we are no longer under law but under grace, as regards our acceptance with God, we receive freedom from the habits that have long bound us.

We come to recognise that the Law is a perfect standard of righteousness, but we acknowledge that it can never give us a perfect standing. The Law is not even a means of sanctification except as it drives us to Christ and indicates what the will of God is. The New Testament shows a decided opposition to law—not to law as a standard, only to law as a method.

The justification I have received covers my past, present, and future (See John 13:10; Romans 8:1; and 1 Corinthians 1:30). The Christian should not look upon himself as being continually in and out of grace because of his mistakes and failures. He or she is *“accepted in the beloved”* and *“complete in him.”*

▼ **DES FORD**

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**Eli's Reflection:** *What does Des' statement that “We do not work to the Cross, but from the Cross” mean to you? Think carefully about your own Christian walk. Are you truly working “from the Cross,” or is there an element in your life of working “to the Cross?”*



## PRAYER IS THE KEY

Prayer is the key in the hand of faith  
to unlock heaven's storehouse,  
wherein are stored all the treasures of omnipotence.

*Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened (Matthew 7:7, 8, NIV).*

Prayer is a primary fact of life. Because we believe in God, it is natural for us to pray. Prayer is an expression that we are not self-sufficient, and that we are asking God to help us.

Phillips Brooks, the great preacher who wrote, "O Little Town of Bethlehem," saw a little boy standing on tiptoe, trying to press a buzzer outside the door of a house. Being a man of great benevolence, Phillips lifted the boy up so he could press the button. Then the boy cried, "Now scoot!", wiggled out of his arms and scooted. Phillips Brooks was left standing at the door to explain.

Prayer is not pressing the doorbell, then scooting. Prayer is sharing with God. Prayer is listening as well as talking. Prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse, wherein are stored all the treasures of omnipotence.

The optic nerve is very tiny, but because of it, we can see the sun and the moon and the stars, the faces of those we love, and all the wonders of the earth.

Prayer is the optic nerve of our spiritual nature. Why then, do some sever that nerve if it is to their great and eternal loss?

### ▼ DES FORD

**Eli's Reflection:** *How many times have you done what the little boy in Phillips Brooks' story did? How many times have you rung God's doorbell and then scooted? I encourage you to leave time to listen to what God might say to you in the midst and at the end of your prayers. Prayer is not a one-way conversation.*

## **FORGIVENESS MAKES YOU HAPPY**

**Forgiving others becomes easy when you start to understand just how much God has forgiven you.**

*Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against them (Romans 4:8, NIV).*

The word “blessed” in this verse literally means “happy.” Many studies have shown that forgiving others is great for your health. The benefits include reducing pain and the risk of heart attack, improving cholesterol levels, blood pressure sleep and mental health. By being forgiven, and forgiving others, we can all be happier.

We all like to have boundaries. We like to set limits to things. Peter asked Jesus how many times he should forgive. Jesus basically told him to just forgive and keep on forgiving, without counting (Matthew 18:21, 22).

To refuse to forgive someone is like drinking poison and hoping the other person will die. Forgiving others becomes easy when you start to understand just how much God has forgiven you.

Accepting God’s forgiveness for ourselves is the first step in learning to forgive others. To do this, we must first of all understand our own profound personal need for forgiveness, and the extreme lengths to which God has gone to forgive us. When we accept his forgiveness, and extend forgiveness to others, it not only brings happiness into our own lives, but makes God happy as well.

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

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**Eli’s Reflection:** *None of us forgives all those we should, nor as perfectly as we should. Are you being poisoned by withholding forgiveness? Reflect for a while about just how much God has forgiven you. Then make a plan to improve your health and happiness by forgiving the person you need to forgive.*

## YOU'VE GOT A LOT OF KINGDOM LIVING TO DO

If Jesus could get Jairus' daughter out of bed, then he can get you out of bed as well!

*Just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives (Romans 6:4, NLT).*

Some mornings I just don't want to get up. You probably know the feeling. Your body craves a few more minutes in bed, and your brain just doesn't want to switch on for the day. Even worse, are there times when you feel so washed up, so fed up with everything, and just so plain tired, that you don't know if you can go on?

There's a story in the Bible about the worst case of not getting out of bed ever. In fact this girl not only wouldn't get up, but she couldn't get up, because she'd died that night as a result of a serious illness. But Jesus raised her to life and got her out of bed (Mark 5:21–43).

If Jesus could get Jairus' daughter out of bed, then he can get you out of bed as well! Not only will he raise you to life at the resurrection, but right now, he'll take you by the hand and say, "Get up! Leave the past behind. You have a lot of kingdom living to do!"

When you need new strength, remember his promise:

*Those who trust in the Lord will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary (Isaiah 40:31, NLT).*

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

**Eli's Reflection:** *No matter how messed up or broke you might be, how young or old, God still has a whole lot of Kingdom living for you to do, now and for eternity! What part of worship is it that most energises you? How can you engage in it more?*



## BE CAREFUL WITH WHAT YOU DESIRE

We can't pray purposefully and live carelessly.

Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart (Psalm 37:4 NIV).

The main hindrance to prayer are the things we value and desire, because every desire is a prayer.

The prodigal son prayed, "The younger son told his father, 'I want my share of your estate now before you die.'" (Luke 15:12 NLT). He got it and landed in a famine. Lot got what he desired: Sodom—and he had to leave it with his tail between his legs. Judas got what he wanted: thirty pieces of silver—and he swung from a tree. Every desire is a prayer.

We must be careful with the things we desire, and with how we live. We can't pray well and live wickedly. We can't pray purposefully and live carelessly (See Isaiah 59:2).

It is because of our desires that we despise what is readily available.

In St. Peter's in Rome, there is a door into the cathedral that is only opened four times in a century. It is called the *porta sancta*. Just four times every one hundred years, the pope approaches the door with a small silver hammer and knocks on the door. Then it is opened to him.

Suppose you could pray only once every 25 years. How would you pray then? Of course, you are not restricted. But the fact that prayer is readily available makes us underestimate its value, and to desire other things. We should make God's desires our desires.

### ▼ DES FORD

**Eli's Reflection:** *Des refers here to some of the reasons why people don't pray more. Every person is different. Think about the biggest obstacles in your life to praying more. What is the top one? Pray about it and come up with a plan to deal with your obstacle, and improve your prayer life.*

## YOU NEED NEVER LOSE YOUR CONNECTION WITH GOD

Jesus came to seek and save the lost.  
He is the ultimate Seeker  
and the Ultimate Saviour.

*The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost  
(Luke 19:11, NIV)*

I don't know what I did before GPS navigation systems! I remember constantly being late for meetings, and driving round and round in circles, frustratingly lost. And then my wife gave me a GPS for my birthday and my life has never been the same again.

But there are worse ways of being lost. You can be lost in a relationship, or you can lose your own identity thanks society's bombardment about who others think you should be. And even worse is to lose your soul, to lose eternity.

Although we try to live good lives, we always fall far short of living the kind of way God wants us to live. But here's the good news. Jesus came to seek and save the lost. He is the ultimate Seeker and the Ultimate Saviour:

*And this is the will of God, that I should not lose even one of all those he has given me, but that I should raise them up at the last day (John 6:39, NLT).*

When you trust in Jesus, no matter how messed up your life may be, you are, although never a perfect child, always perfectly his child. No one has ever been lost while trusting in Jesus, and that's a promise!

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

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**Eli's Reflection:** *Do you trust in Jesus? Then you cannot be lost and your connection with God is secure! How do you think this truth could change the way you pray and approach God?*



## Letter from Ukraine...

# YURII'S DELIVERANCE

Yurii took a long time to learn all the lessons God had for him, and learning them nearly cost him his life. Now he tells his story to praise the God who never gave up on him, and to thank you for your generosity in helping to spread the Word of the Gospel fast in his part of the world.

Thirsty for adventure, teenaged Yurii enjoyed flouting authority and, as a thief and a drug dealer, caused trouble whenever it suited him. He saw the world as his enemy. "The borders between good and bad were wiped out," he says. "I felt that the whole world was against me and I had to attack."

He stole large sums of money, most of which went to support his addiction to marijuana. He believed he could get away with anything, but this proved not to be the case, and he was arrested, convicted and imprisoned.

Prison did little to calm and reform him. He rebelled at the discipline, and became obsessed by his desire to form a music group. Even this caused problems for him because of his constant quarrels with everyone—prisoners as well as prison administration. He even turned to religion as a means of getting what he wanted.

Prison was a dangerous place for a person who did not submit to discipline, and Yurii's life took a dramatic turn when he was wrongly accused of a double murder—a crime that could see him imprisoned for life, or even put to death. Daily interrogations were so brutal that he feared for his life.

Then he remembered his Bible. It fell open at Psalm 45, and he read with amazement the words in verse 15: *"I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."*

As he faced the next interrogation session, God gave



▼ **Yurii** is doubly grateful for the Gospel that saves and transforms lives.

him the strength to speak simply and directly about his innocence, and miraculously, the charges were dropped. For the next eight years in prison, Yurii's journey with God ebbed and flowed, but he gradually grew in faith and trust. He was finally able to organise a music group, he learned computer skills, he preached about Jesus Christ, he even married and had a son.

Finally, in 2012, Yurii's sentence was suspended, and he was freed. He has become grounded in his faith, and his mission now is to share the Good News with others. He has become part of the GNU family in Poltava, and is helping to set up a Gospel ministry in the very prison where he was an inmate. *"I thank God for such an opportunity,"* he tells us, with typical understatement. But the joy in his eyes speaks volumes about his love for Jesus and the depth of his gratitude for the Gospel that saves and transforms.

▼ **Prayer Point:** *Thank God that the Gospel reaches into the most dire situations to rescue us. Pray for people the world over who still need to hear and accept the saving grace of Jesus.*

## JESUS INTERCEDES FOR US WITH UNTIRING CARE

O Jesus, what a comfort it is  
that you have pleaded our cause  
against our unseen enemies!

*I have prayed for you (Luke 22:32, ISV).*

How encouraging is the thought of the Redeemer's never-ceasing intercession for us. When we pray, he pleads for us; and when we are not praying, he is advocating our cause, and by his supplications shielding us from unseen dangers. Notice the word of comfort addressed to Peter: "Simon, Simon, Satan wants to have you so he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not."

We little know what we owe to our Saviour's prayers. When we reach the hilltops of heaven, and can review our lives to see how the Lord our God has led us, we will truly be able to praise him for guiding us and for undoing much of the mischief which Satan was attempting to do on earth. Then we will be able to thank him for his untiring care of us, and for his constant intercession with God on our behalf.

Even before Satan has begun to tempt, Jesus interrupts him and enters a plea in heaven. Mercy outruns malice....

O Jesus, what a comfort it is that you have pleaded our cause against our unseen enemies; countermined their mines, and unmasked their ambushes! Here is a matter for joy, gratitude, hope, and confidence.

▼ **CHARLES SPURGEON (ADAPTED)**

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**Eli's Reflection:** *We tend to be "on and off", and "hot and cold" in our communication with God, but he is always constant and faithful with us. Reflect on your own prayer life. What is one thing that you can do to be more mindful of the presence of God in the daily busyness of life?*

## THE JOY IS IN THE WALK

If you're walking with Jesus, you're already there.

*My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me (John 10:27, NKJV).*

As Christians, we seem to be always waiting for God to do something. We often think that the joy is in the answered prayer, but what if the joy is also actually in the praying itself?

I was sitting at an airport waiting for my flight recently, when I had this feeling for a moment that someone was watching me. It's odd when that happens, isn't it? And sure enough, a few moments later, a friend who also happened to be in the airport came up to me and said, "Hi!"

Maybe Jesus felt something similar as he was walking along one day, he realised that there were two men following him. So he turned around and said to them,

*"What do you want?"*

*They said to him, "Teacher, where are you staying?"*

*He replied, "Come, and you will see" (John 1:37-39).*

Jesus doesn't invite them to a destination, rather, he invites them on a journey. He just says, "Come."

It's natural for us to want to know the destination. Too often we think that happiness is at the end of the road somewhere.

But Jesus knows that the joy is in the walk, and if you're walking with Jesus, you're already there.

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

**Eli's Reflection:** *So, "what if the joy is also actually in the praying itself"? Do you have a joyful prayer life, or are you always hoping that the joy will come later on, if you pray hard enough? What can you do to make your prayers more joyful right now?*

## GOD CARES FOR YOU

God attends the funeral of every sparrow.

*Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows (Matthew 10:29–31, BSB).*

Some people don't pray, because after all, does God really care? In this world alone, there are six billion people. Is God like the old woman who lived in a shoe, who had so many children, she knew not what to do? In Matthew 10:29-31, Jesus teaches about a God who attends the funeral of every sparrow. God cares about the details.

On one occasion God contacted a man named Ananias in Damascus, and said to him: *“Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight”* (Acts 9:10-12).

That's not bad for specifics: the name of God's servant, Ananias; the name of the street he was to go to, “Straight”; the name of the owner of the house he was to go to, “Judas” (another Judas; not the one who betrayed Jesus); the name of the man who needed help, “Saul”; and the city he came from, “Tarsus.” And a final detail: “But remember, Ananias, you will be interrupting Saul during his devotions.”

Does God care? He cares for every detail. God counts the hairs of our head. God attends the funeral of every sparrow.

▼ **DES FORD**

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**Eli's Reflection:** *Can you think about one example in your life where God made it clear to you that he cares about the little things? Think of someone who needs to be encouraged that God cares for them. Share your story with that person.*



# GOD ALREADY LOVES YOU

The central message of Christianity  
is that God already loves you,  
and that because of Jesus,  
you are accepted.

*While we were still sinners, Christ died for us  
(Romans 5:8, ESV).*

Mary Donaldson's story—the girl from Tasmania, Australia—is a modern fairy tale. She met Frederick, Crown Prince of Denmark in a pub in Sydney during the Olympics, and they were married four years later. It's literally the stuff of movie scripts! She lived the fairy tale.

Most people don't believe in fairy tales, and they don't believe that good things can happen to them. If they believe in God at all, then they just pray and hope for the best, believing that what they ask for is unlikely.

Most people also believe that you only get what you work hard for. That's why they think that the message of Christianity is that if they're good enough, then perhaps God will love them. But that's not good news, that's terrible news!

The central message of Christianity is that God already loves you, and that because of what Jesus has done, you are accepted into a perfect relationship with him. Jesus took our sin, and he gives you his perfect life.

It's like a poor girl who only has debts, and she marries a prince. He gets her debts, and she shares the kingdom! That's what the gospel is all about, and it's true for everyone who trusts in Jesus.

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

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**Eli's Reflection:** *Why is it often so difficult for us to believe that God already loves us? Think about how you see yourself, and your weaknesses, and your relationships. Think about how God views the same things: hasn't he already dealt with all of them?*

## PRAYER IS NOT JUST SPENDING TIME ON YOUR KNEES

Prayer goes both ways. The person who is talking all the time never learns anything.

*Keep on Praying (Romans 12:12, NLT).*

An objection to prayer that I encountered early in my life is that we think it means spending long hours on our knees. The great preacher, Spurgeon, said, "If that's what prayer is, I couldn't do it, even for the sake of eternity."

As a young student, I asked the most saintly man in the college community whether prayer was all about spending a long time on one's knees.

"Oh, no, son," he answered. "Prayer is just talking to God, wherever you are, whatever you are doing. It's not just about being on your knees."

Of course, it is true that many of the great saints of history have spent long hours in prayer. But they were hours spent in meditation and the study of God's word, and in crying out. One disciple of Saint Francis of Assisi listened all night long to the great man. All the disciple heard was Francis saying every now and again, "My God and my all. My God and my all." That is a grand prayer.

Periods of prayer work both ways. We speak to God, God speaks to us, and we stop and think. Prayer goes both ways. The person who is talking all the time never learns anything. That's wasteful.

### ▼ DES FORD

**Eli's Reflection:** *Today, spend the whole day in prayer. You don't have to close your eyes or kneel down. Just be conscious of the presence of God throughout the day; speak to God in your mind about what you are doing, and the issues you are facing. Afterwards, reflect on the experience.*



*Letter from Belgium...*

## **FROM BRUSSELS TO AFRICA, WITH LOVE...**

*Eli's Note: This report is from Pastor David Kayumba, who leads the Great Invitation fellowship in Brussels, and acts as GNU's representative in Africa. This fellowship is made up of refugees and immigrants, most of whom have fled terrible persecution in their home countries. As they embraced the joy of the Gospel and affiliated with GNU, they quietly determined to do something themselves to serve the God they love so much. They have very little themselves; they want no credit, they only want to serve God. I thank you for your support for the work of the Gospel everywhere, and I thank God for the example of our brothers and sisters in Brussels, who are giving out of their poverty.*

The "Whosoever Will radio program was started mid last year, broadcasting in Rwanda twice weekly, reaching into Burundi, and parts of Uganda. This radio ministry is the initiative of the Great Invitation fellowship based in Brussels. We are a small fellowship affiliated with GNU. We were inspired by the way GNU has shared the Gospel with us and everywhere abroad.

This radio programme has been entirely the work of volunteers—people living in Brussels whose lives have been transformed by the Gospel. As Africans immigrants and refugees, we do not have many resources, but by the grace of God we have funded this initiative ourselves as our contribution to the work of God.

When we started this program we created a WhatsApp and Facebook study group and we have since registered more than 100 listeners in our study group. Feedback from listeners has expressed gratitude, surprise, questions and comments; we can see their great need for a clear gospel message, and their joy in the certainty of salvation.



▼ *Pastor David Kayumba prepares to baptise precious people into Jesus Christ.*

Kanyandakwe from Burundi, who lives in the refugee camp, said: *I thank you for your presentations because they removed my blindness. This program is helping many people in this refugee camp. Please send us the audio so that we can share it with others.*

Kandama from Mozambique said: *Finally I give up my stubbornness and pride that has been keeping me stuck in hopelessness. I have seen this simple truth of the cross of Jesus and its glorious achievement for me. I am now ready for my Lord's return.*

These are just a couple of the many messages we receive from listeners. This kind of feedback keeps us going in the great work of announcing the Good News. We seek the total liberation of those who do not have a knowledge of the Gospel. It is not always easy to do this, but we continue to see the hand of God touching many.

▼ **Prayer Point:** *Thank God for the Gospel that inspires us to share its message of hope and joy with others. Pray that God will guide your personal response to the Good News of Jesus Christ and the free gift of salvation in him.*

## PRAY LIKE YOU MEAN IT

**I don't care how loud your wind-jamming in prayer meeting may be if you go out and skin somebody in a horse deal the next day.**

*Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven (Matthew 6:10, NIV).*

Many people get down on their knees and say: "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name: your kingdom come..." (Matthew 6:9) and then they go out and do something to prevent that kingdom from coming...

When you say this in your pew on Sunday it means nothing unless you live it on Monday... I don't care how loud your wind-jamming in prayer meeting may be if you go out and skin somebody in a horse deal the next day...

Those who truly pray "Thy kingdom come," will not be shrinking their measures at the store; the load of coal they send out won't be half slate. The person who truly prays "Thy kingdom come" won't undercut you for a metre of cloth. It will not take the pure-food law to keep a man who truly prays "Thy kingdom come" from putting chalk in the flour, sand in the sugar, brick dust in red pepper, ground peanut shells in breakfast food...

For those who truly pray "Thy kingdom come," it would be impossible to have one kind of religion on their knees and another when in the street... When a person truly prays "Thy kingdom come," it covers everything in a person's life, or nothing at all.

▼ **BILLY SUNDAY (ADAPTED)**

**Eli's Reflection:** *Take some time and think about what "Your kingdom come" means for you? How willing are you to fully surrender to the kingdom of God in your life? Find a beautiful place outside and ask God to show you how he wants to manifest his kingdom in your life. Spend some time truly praying the prayer, "Your kingdom come."*

## CALVARY RECONNECTS US WITH THE TREE OF LIFE

To find Christ as one's sacrifice is to find paradise.

*To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God (Revelation 2:7, NIV).*

On numerous occasions, Scripture refers to the Cross as a tree. This is most appropriate since trees provide food and shelter; they are places of rest and beauty, and have, in themselves, the seed of continued life. In all these ways, every good tree points to the Cross of Christ.

Concerning both the tree of life in Paradise, and the tree of Calvary, we find that they are located "in the midst" (Genesis 2:9; John 19:18; Revelation 1:13; 5:6; 22:2).

By this repeated phrase we are reminded of the centrality of Christ and his sacrifice. The Saviour at Calvary stands between God and man, between the Father and the Spirit, between life and death, between time and eternity, law and grace, judgment and mercy. The tree of life in the midst of Paradise also symbolised his Cross, since to find Christ as one's sacrifice is to find paradise. Only if we can keep him in the centre of all beliefs and practices can all be well.

While a thief stealing from the tree in Eden was expelled from Paradise, another thief, millenniums later, was promised entrance into Paradise because he partook of the second tree. Calvary has transformed the tree of the knowledge of good and evil into a tree of life for all who believe.

▼ **DES FORD**

**Eli's Reflection:** *It's wonderful to see how all of Scripture, rightly understood, points us in one way or another to Calvary. We've just seen how the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden points us to the Cross of Jesus. Select another symbol or event from the Old Testament and set aside some time this week to study how it points to the Cross.*

## JESUS INVITES US TO LAUGH

Should we not see in the release of laughter  
an indication of the wellspring of joy  
that the gospel furnishes?

God... has anointed you with the oil of gladness  
(Hebrews 1:9, NKJV).

We think of our Lord as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief and this is correct. We would never find comfort in a man who knew only laughter.

We're not told about the laughter of Jesus and yet the Bible does say that he was "anointed ... with the oil of gladness" (Hebrews 1:9). Think about the humour Jesus uses when he says things like: "Why do you see the sawdust in your neighbour's eye and not the log in your own?" "If the blind lead the blind, shall they not both fall into the ditch?" "They strain out a gnat, and swallow a camel."

The only reason we do not laugh at such expressions is because we have a feeling that it would be irreverent. Either that, or we don't really think about them sufficiently to appreciate the full picture Jesus was describing.

Human beings were intended to laugh. There is such a thing as the laugh of faith, rejoicing in the assurance that God is not only good, but more than good. He delights in our joy and has made provision that it should be a joy that will last forever.

Next time you enjoy a really good laugh, remember that it can also be a symbol of the bubbling joy of the gospel.

▼ **DES FORD**

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**Eli's Reflection:** *What can you do this week to put more laughter in your life? I'm not talking about the kind of laughter that you do in front of the TV, but the kind of laughter that is shared with someone else, and that builds relationships. Plan it and do it.*



# JESUS PRAYED FOR YOU

Jesus prayed for what his heart most desired:  
forgiveness for you.

*Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do  
(Luke 23:34, NKJV).*

Because I've got relatives overseas, some of whom are elderly, I've had to say goodbye to them, knowing that I might never see them again. Our final words mean can mean a lot. Sometimes people pray.

It is fitting that Jesus' final words on the Cross were a prayer. He could have prayed for many things. He could have prayed to be saved from crucifixion, or to be granted a painless death. He could have prayed for a display of glory from the Father to vindicate his name, or for courage for his cowardly disciples. But he prayed for none of these things. He prayed for what his heart most desired: forgiveness for you.

You weren't there, but because he died for the sins of the world, Jesus wasn't thinking just of the people who physically crucified him. He was thinking of a lost and broken world.

He wasn't thinking of himself. He was thinking of you.

He understands how hard it is for us. He understands how often and how far we fall. And most of all Christ wanted you to know that you are forgiven.

It's only human to doubt God sometimes, and to question whether he even thinks about us. At those times, remember Christ's words at Calvary. They should banish your doubts forever.

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

**Eli's Reflection:** *Understanding that Jesus' final prayer was for us in general, and for our forgiveness in particular, I encourage you to consider what you tend to pray for the most. Think about that, and think about what that may say about your relationship with God..*

## WITH JESUS YOU WIN EVERY TIME

Jesus is the ultimate life hack.

*For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain  
(Philippians 1:21, NIV).*

I don't have a big repertoire of magic tricks, but I do this coin trick where I flick a coin and (with a bit of sleight of hand) I predict whether it's going to be heads or tails before it lands. I can't tell you how to do it, because that would be breaking the rules of magic.

For lots of people, life is like a coin toss. You never know what random thing you're going to get—whether it's going to be heads or tails. But imagine if you had a hack for life, so you could stack the odds in your favour, so you could win every time!

For most people, living and dying are heads or tails, a win or a loss—the opposite sides of the coin. When Paul says that for him “to live is Christ and to die is gain,” what he means is, “Whether it's heads or tails in life, whatever happens, if I have Jesus, I win.”

This is no magic trick. It's the ultimate hack for life.

For most people life is a gamble. They hope that things will go well while they live, and they still die wondering.

Having Jesus as your Saviour takes the gamble out of it. Jesus is the ultimate life hack.

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

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**Eli's Reflection:** *Because of Jesus, today you win whatever happens! Today, you will be more than a conqueror (Romans 8:37)! Spend some time in prayer thanking God for Jesus Christ.*



*Letter from Rwanda...*

## **SAVED AND HEALED BY JESUS ONLY**

Jackie, a beautiful young lady of Rwanda, expresses her gratitude again and again for the love of Jesus, his saving and healing power, and for generous people like you who have made it possible for her to understand the full power of the Gospel.

As a young girl, Jackie was involved in a terrible motor vehicle accident that almost claimed her life, leaving her a paraplegic, bedridden, wheel-chair bound and in crippling pain. Again and again, while she lay in hospital, she defied the doctors, who believed she would die. Although a Muslim, she came to believe that Jesus had saved her life, and she determined to learn more about him.

The opportunity came when GNU Evangelist Sammy was visiting nearby and heard about her. He immediately organised to visit her, and introduced her to the simple Gospel of Jesus Christ that saves and transforms lives. He gave her a copy of the book *Jesus Only*.

Jackie's life was indeed transformed. From her wheelchair, she became a great evangelist for the Gospel. People came from far and wide to see this young woman who had been given up by the doctors, but who was now a vibrant messenger for Jesus.

One day, Jackie heard of a preacher who was praying for people to be healed. She had always believed that one day Jesus might perform a second miracle of healing—this time on her body. With the help of friends and family, she undertook the difficult journey, and joined the long queue of people hoping to be anointed and prayed for by this preacher. Finally, he addressed the waiting people. He could not pray over everyone, and he would choose those who were most worthy. Those who wore any ornaments were to be sent away. Jackie was wearing earrings, so she was among the 'unworthies'. Sadly, she returned to the car for the long trip home.



▼ **Jackie with Sammy:** *Jesus, who accepts me just as I am, healed me and made me stand up and walk again.*

But before the journey could begin, she felt a strange heat in her legs. *"I cried out in pain, and I heard a voice calling my name. I turned around, but none of the people I was with was speaking to me. The strange voice spoke again and told me to stand up. I got out of the car and stood up, and as I did, the pain in my legs eased and, lo a miracle! I was able to walk on my own legs! I cannot describe the shock of joy and gratitude to Jesus, who did not wait for me to be worthy, but healed me just as I was!"*

News spread like wildfire, and people again marvelled at the power of Jesus. Jackie's Muslim father summed up the feeling of many people: *"The Jesus of my little girl is powerful!"*

So the seemingly impossible happened. God rescued his daughter Jackie, firstly from the prison of sin and despair, and then from the prison of her wheelchair. She has rededicated her life to sharing the Good News of Jesus and to spreading the Word fast.

▼ **Prayer Point:** *Thank God for the Gospel's power, that it changes lives, heals afflicted people, and gives them joy and hope. Determine today to support the spread of the Gospel in every way possible, so more people can share this joy.*

## REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS

Do you pray that God will “give”  
and forget to ask that God will “forgive”?

*Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors (Matthew 6:11–12, KJV).*

Does it ever occur to you that you might be more anxious about the “give” than the “forgive”? Does it ever happen that you pray that God will give, but you forget to ask that he will forgive? And yet, isn’t forgiveness the greatest need of all? Even if you could be given everything you wanted, and your sins were not forgiven, all those ‘wants’ would be very poor gifts.

The person with no earthly wealth, without even enough to eat, can still be wealthy and happy if their sins are forgiven. Let us not forget, as we go on praying for what God has to give, to ask still more earnestly that he will forgive us our sins.

You have noticed surely, that after completing this simple prayer, and before going on to speak of other things, Jesus takes up again one of the thoughts of the prayer; and which one is it? Something about God’s name being hallowed, or his reign coming? Something about daily bread? Something about temptation, or evil? No: it is this one; this one thought he repeats:

*For if you forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you, and if you forgive not, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you.*

▼ **JOHN A. BROADUS (ADAPTED)**

**Eli’s Reflection:** *Do you ask God to “give, give, give” so much that you forget to ask for “forgiveness”? And do you forget to forgive others? Why do you think forgiveness plays such a central role in the Lord’s Prayer, so much so that Jesus repeated it immediately afterwards for emphasis?*

# THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING TO BE THANKFUL FOR

Misery is simply a synonym for ingratitude.

*Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus (1 Thessalonians 5:18, NIV).*

Two angels set out from heaven, each with a basket to bring back the prayers and thanksgiving of those on earth. The angel of thanksgiving started with a large hamper; the collector of petitions with a small basket.

When they returned, each was in trouble. The petitions overflowed the small basket and filled a sack as well. But the bottom of the large hamper was not even covered by three tiny thanksgivings!

We dare not despise the nine lepers who were cleansed and did not return to thank Jesus, for we often do the same. It has always been much easier for all of us to cry "give me" than to give thanks. One of our greatest needs, which if fulfilled will multiply our joy, is the need to think and to thank.

The trouble, of course, is this poor human nature of yours and mine. Our human nature is as crooked as a corkscrew. To say "thank you" is just as difficult for us as to practice giving rather than getting.

Watching the rain, one woman said, "It will settle the dust. Another woman said, "This will make mud." Misery is simply a synonym for ingratitude. There is always something to be thankful for each day, even if it's only for what hasn't happened.

▼ **DES FORD**

**Eli's Reflection:** *If God sent an angel down to you right now, with a basket to collect your thankfulness, would the angel return with a full basket or with a few miserly scraps of gratitude? If "misery is simply a synonym for ingratitude," what can you do to put more gratitude into your life?*

## JESUS' CROSS LIFTS YOU TO A LIFE OF JOY

**Where there is no going down into the valley of grief,  
there can be no rising up to the mountain of glory.**

*Take up your cross, and follow me (Matthew 16:24, NLT).*

Our Lord's life was a life of suffering in order that suffering might be sanctified. He was a refugee in Egypt during his childhood, that refugees might draw comfort from his plight. In youth, he lived in a home of poverty, that the poor might know that his sympathies are always with them.

He knows what it is to be despised and rejected of men, in order that you and I might feel that he is always sufficient.

And on the Cross he thought of every person who would ever suffer. In those six hours he sanctified every agony through which every son and daughter of God could ever pass.

In this way, our Lord turned Black Friday into a Good Friday, because where there is no Black Friday, there can be no resurrection Sunday. Where there is no going down into the valley of grief, there can be no rising up to the mountain of glory. Where there is no tom flesh, there can be no glorified body.

There is no such thing as the Christian life without bearing the cross. If we will accept the Cross, it will become like wings to a bird; it will become like sails to a ship. In lifting the Cross, we shall find that it lifts us.

▼ **DES FORD**

**Eli's Reflection:** *Think of one thing that causes you suffering today. Could this be part of the cross Christ calls you to carry? The Apostle Paul tells us to give thanks always to God the Father for everything (Ephesians 5:20). Can you thank God for the cross he asks you to carry? If not, ask God to give you grace.*



## KNOCKED DOWN BUT NOT OUT

Life can be tough—really tough. It is a miracle of grace that any of us will get out of it alive!

*We are experiencing all kinds of trouble, but we aren't crushed. We are confused, but we aren't depressed. We are harassed, but we aren't abandoned. We are knocked down, but we aren't knocked out (2 Corinthians 4:8–9, CEB).*

If there were ever anyone who had reason to complain about their life, Paul of Tarsus would have been the one. In 2 Corinthians 11:23–27, he writes about how many times he has been thrown in prison, beaten, flogged within an inch of his life, stoned, shipwrecked, and betrayed. He says that he has gone without sleep, food, drink, and warmth, and he has faced dangers everywhere.

Still, Paul's faith stays strong! How do you get to have a faith like that? Paul goes on to explain that,

*We do this because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will also raise us with Jesus... We don't focus on the things that can be seen but on the things that can't be seen. The things that can be seen don't last, but the things that can't be seen are eternal (2 Corinthians 4:14,18.)*

Let's face facts. Life can be tough—really tough. It is a miracle of grace that any of us will get out of it alive!

Hold on to the fact that you will be raised with Jesus. Focus on the eternal things that can't be seen. Hold on to them by faith. The storms may rage around us, but we will always stand in the victory of Christ.

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

**Eli's Reflection:** *The fact that you are reading this means that you haven't been knocked down either. Think of someone who needs encouragement right now, and with whom you can share your faith today. Don't delay. That person may need your encouragement today!*

## JESUS IS YOUR SAVIOUR AND LORD

Jesus can't be your Saviour,  
if he isn't your Lord as well.

*God will give you a grand entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 1:11, NLT).*

It's easy to say "thank you", without being truly grateful, but it's often harder to show our gratitude.

Two blind men once came to Jesus and asked him to have mercy on them (Matthew 9:27–31). He healed them, and then he told them to make sure that they told absolutely no-one about what had happened. Instead, they both raced off and started telling everyone what Jesus had done.

Yes, Jesus had saved them from their blindness—in this sense, he was their Saviour.

But if they had been truly grateful, they should have done what Jesus asked them to do. In obeying Jesus, they would not only have been accepting him as their Saviour, but as their Lord as well.

There are many people who happily claim Jesus as their Saviour, but how many truly accept him as their Lord? As Jesus said on another occasion, "*Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?*" (Luke 6:46).

Unlike those two blind men, are you grateful enough to let Jesus be both Saviour and Lord of your life? After all, Jesus can't be your Saviour, if he isn't your Lord as well.

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

**Eli's Reflection:** *Make a list of the key things that Jesus has done for you in your life. With your list, pray a prayer of thanks. Be specific. Ask Jesus to show you an area of your life where he wants you to accept his Lordship.*



*Letter from Croatia...*

## **JESUS ONLY PROJECT**

"We're helping to feed the 5,000 in Croatia," says Ed enthusiastically. Faithful GNU supporters Ed and his wife Slavica are passionate about the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And they love their homeland, the former Yugoslavia. When they first read the book *Jesus Only*, by Des Ford (abridged by Ritchie Way), they were inspired by its simple, powerful presentation of the Gospel, and longed to share it in their native Croatian language.

God blessed their vision; the translation was completed by dedicated volunteers, 5,000 copies were printed, and they set about distributing them.

The local library in Hvar on the island of Hvar took copies to place on their shelves; some people went to bus and railway stations with supplies of books, offering them to waiting travellers. Others went door to door, inviting people to accept and read about the Gospel. In one town, Ed was able to speak to the local bishop who accepted several books. As they spoke together, they found common ground in the Gospel of Jesus.

These stories have been repeated many times over the past few months, and as we go to print, we have learned that almost all of the books have been distributed, and plans are under way to print a further 5,000 copies.

The vision now is to translate *Jesus Only* into Serbian, Macedonian and Slovenian. By partnering with GNU, you also can help to support these kinds of Gospel projects in many parts of the world.

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▼ **Prayer Point:** *Pray that the Word will spread fast in Croatia as God guides these books to those who most need them. Ask God prayerfully for his guidance to help you fulfil his Gospel Commission for you.*

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Category: Religious/Christian life/Inspirational

ISBN: 978-0-9945446-4-3

### **Biblical Quotations**

The following translations of the Bible have been used:

NIV	New International Version
KJV	King James Version
AKJV	American King James Version
NET	NET Bible
ESV	English Standard Version
ISV	International Standard Version
NLT	New Living Translation
RV	Revised Version
NASB	New American Standard Bible
TLB	The Living Bible
BSB	Berean Study Bible

Where no Bible reference appears, the authors have paraphrased the original text.

## GET TO KNOW THE AUTHORS

### DR DESMOND FORD



Dr Desmond Ford has a vibrant enthusiasm for spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ. Affectionately known as “Des”, he’s worked as a pastor, and been a Bible teacher, minister and theologian for more than sixty years. He’s earned several degrees including two PhDs in theology, and has written twenty books.

Des Ford’s preaching emphasises justification by faith – the Good News that Christ, by his life and death, redeemed the world so that now “whosoever will, may come” to God. He affirms that the gospel is for everyone, following the instruction that Christ’s name should “be declared throughout all the earth”.

### DR ELIEZER GONZALEZ



Eliezer Gonzalez is passionate about the gospel. With a previous background in teaching and management, he was called by the Lord into the gospel ministry. He’s earned Master’s degrees in Theology and Early Christian History, and a PhD in Early Christian History.

Most importantly, Eliezer communicates the gospel of Jesus Christ in a simple yet powerful way, and has presented this life-changing message in many countries and in many different forums. He’s praying for “millions upon millions of people to be in the Kingdom of God” as Good News Unlimited partners with you to spread the Word fast about Jesus.

**God's Unlimited Promises  
to Hold On To**

# UNLIMITED SALVATION

*Unlimited Salvation* is the third in GNU's ongoing series of nine-week devotional booklets. Written by Eliezer Gonzalez and Des Ford, these encouraging devotionals are interspersed with wisdom and insights from great Christian thinkers. Inside, you'll find personal reflections and inspiring testimonies from GNU's global ministry to help you live daily for Christ, and to inspire you with the proven power of God's love in action.

It's our prayer that *Unlimited Salvation* will take you deeper into God's promise of unlimited love for you.

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