

WHY WE NEED A SAVIOR

MAN

GOD

IN THE BEGINNING . . . The first man and woman, Adam and Eve, were created by God and enjoyed perfect fellowship with Him. They were without sin and lived peacefully in a beautiful garden that supplied all their needs. God gave them only one rule, which was not to eat the fruit of a particular tree. However, Satan tempted them to eat the forbidden fruit by saying it would benefit them. They ate it, and that act of disobedience against God was the first sin. It severed Adam's and Eve's relationships with God because He is holy and cannot have fellowship with evil.

MAN

SIN

GOD

OUR CONDITION TODAY . . . Since we are all Adam's descendants, every child in the world has been born with his fallen nature. Instead of coming into the world desiring to do right, we are all born with an inclination toward sin and evil. Proof of this natural downward tendency is abundantly evident anywhere human beings are found. Our sin results in tremendous pain, sorrow, and suffering. The consequences of sin reach far beyond this life because those who reject God and die in a sinful state will go to Hell and be separated from God eternally.

MAN

JESUS

GOD

GOD'S PLAN . . . God wants to remove sin from our lives so that we can have a relationship with Him and spend eternity in Heaven. However, the penalty for sin is death, and that penalty must be paid. Out of His great love for us, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Savior. Jesus lived as a man and died in our place for our sins. Because of that, if we follow the steps that God has laid out in the Bible, our sins can be forgiven. God will change our desires and give us power to live without sin so we can enjoy eternal life with Him in Heaven one day.

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Where Will You Spend Eternity?

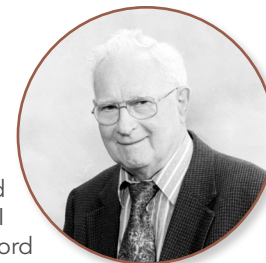
WHERE WILL YOU SPEND ETERNITY?

Terror gripped Pete as he left the tavern that afternoon.

By Pete Friesen

As a child, I was taught about God, but for a long time the Gospel just never appealed to me. When I was about thirteen, I went to the altar to pray, and the Lord showed me some marbles I had stolen. He asked me about making restitution and I refused. I left the altar and didn't pray again to get saved until I was forty-three years old.

I went through high school as an amateur boxer and a football player. I should have been happy because I was young and healthy. I had all the things that young people want, but there was something inside that was never satisfied.



When I got out of school, I went to work in the logging camps. There I lived just like the rest of the loggers. I came to town and drank, fought, and got into all kinds of trouble. I never thought about serving the Lord. Nobody could convince me that you could be a Christian and enjoy living. When I visited my mother, I would go to church with her. But as soon as the service was over, I would walk out the door. She asked me about going to church more often and I said, "Why should I go when it makes me so miserable? There are all kinds of places I can go where I can really have a good time." I didn't realize that God was convicting me when I went to church.

I was ambitious and worked hard. I made a lot of money, and I spent a lot of money. Then one day, everything changed. I had been doing construction work on the overpasses of the Interstate 5 highway into Medford, Oregon, and when the job ended, I didn't know what to do next. On a Saturday afternoon I was sitting in a bar watching a football game on television when I heard a Voice say, "Pete, where will you spend eternity?" The stool beside me had been empty, so I turned to see who had sat down, but no one was there. Then, as I turned back to the game, I heard the Voice again. This time it said, "What difference is it going to make out in eternity who wins that ball game?" Right then I knew Who was talking, and I got up and walked out of that place.

Although I was never one to be afraid, that afternoon I was terrified. I was afraid I was going to die before I could get to church and pray. I went to church the next Sunday morning, but at the close of the service, it seemed there was no way I could walk down the aisle to the altar of prayer.

Sunday night found me back in church, and as the congregation was singing the final song, a man came and

asked, “Pete, wouldn’t you like to go pray?” That was all it took; I went to the altar and started to pray. I kept praying until God came down and saved my soul. A wonderful transformation took place; He made a change in my life. The habits and appetites of a lifetime were gone in a moment, and I had a brand-new outlook on life.

At home, one of the first things I did was dig in my suitcase for the Bible my mother had sent me years before. It was still in the original box, unopened. That night I started to read it and couldn’t get enough. Then in the middle of the night, I woke up, turned on the light, and instead of lighting a cigarette and getting a drink, I opened the Bible and read more. I told the Lord, “How can I do what You say in the Book if I don’t know what is in it? I need to know.”

After I had been saved for a few weeks, I heard that I needed to be sanctified. I knew nothing about that experience, but one night sitting there in my apartment, I realized something was lacking in my life. I told God, “You know what I need. You know I want it, so please give it to me.” Right there the Lord sanctified me. The glory of God filled that apartment, and I couldn’t stay inside. I went out and walked up and down the streets, laughing, shouting praises, and crying. Finally, I told the Lord, “You’ll have to stop blessing me. I just can’t hold any more.”

I went on that way, so happy in the Gospel. Then one night in a mission meeting, a brother who had a disability got up and testified. He could hardly speak or be understood, but the Lord told me, “There’s a testimony I can use because it has My Spirit on it.” That man had the baptism of the Holy Ghost and I didn’t. Right there I realized how much I needed that experience. I didn’t understand what it was and had never seen anybody receive it, but a hunger sprang up in my heart.

I went to Midwest camp meeting that year with one purpose in mind—I wanted to receive my baptism. The camp meeting started on a Saturday night, and I prayed that night, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday. By Wednesday I was getting discouraged but I determined to keep seeking God. I had my own ideas about receiving the baptism; I felt that when the

I felt the presence of the Lord and it really didn’t make any difference to me if I lived or not.

Lord baptized me, I would just speak a few words in another language and that would be it. I wasn’t interested in a lot of demonstration, I just wanted the experience. That night, the Lord showed me that He was going to baptize me in His own way. Then He said, “Now will you let Me baptize you?” I said, “Amen,” and that’s the last I remember. Afterwards, I asked those praying with me, “Did I leave this tabernacle? It felt as though the roof lifted.” Well, I had the baptism and that was the important thing. It has been a wonderful experience, something every Christian needs.

I moved to Roseburg and went back to work felling timber. One day I met with a terrible accident—a tree fell on me. I knew I was seriously injured because I couldn’t get up. They got me on the stretcher and called an ambulance. When we got to the hospital, the doctor said I would not live through the night. Our pastor in Roseburg was already there and prayed for me. Before I went into a coma, I told him, “It’s all right, where I’m going it won’t hurt anymore.” I felt the presence of the Lord and it really didn’t make any difference

to me if I lived or not. I knew where I was going if I died, and I tell you that’s a wonderful feeling.

The nurse on duty that night said she called the doctor two different times to come and cover me and take me out of the room because I was gone. However, the Lord spared me, and I was still alive when morning came. The nurse said, “There was a Presence around your bed last night, a peace that I have never felt before in all my nursing experience.” I could tell her, “Yes, the Prince of Peace was here last night.”

I had been torn up so badly that nobody expected me to live. My back was broken in three places. Most of my ribs were broken or torn loose from the backbone, my shoulder was smashed, and my spleen was ruptured. I don’t know what else was wrong inside, but the Lord came down and healed me. Two months after that accident, I was back to work.

I have proved God in all kinds of situations. You know, the Gospel is the only thing I’ve ever found that gets better with the using. Shortly after I was saved, some of my old acquaintances told me that the Gospel would get old, and I would soon be back drinking and carousing around. They were wrong. Today I love the Gospel more than ever because I know a lot more about God. I know how He can work, and I know what He has done for me. The Gospel makes life worth living and I intend to hold on to it for the rest of my life.

■ **Pete Friesen was an Apostolic Faith minister in the United States. After retiring, he volunteered at the church world headquarters printing plant until his death in 2008.**

STEPS TO DELIVERANCE

ACKNOWLEDGE

Admit that you have sinned and need God’s help.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)

CONFESS AND REPENT

Be genuinely sorry for the sins you have committed and ask God to forgive you.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. (Luke 13:3)

FORSAKE

Determine that with God’s help you are going to turn away from all sin in your life.

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him . . . for he will abundantly pardon. (Isaiah 55:7)

BELIEVE

When you have honestly and sincerely taken the steps above, then believe that God will hear your prayer and save you.

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)

RECEIVE

God will let you know that the work is done in your heart.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. (Romans 8:16)