

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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MY SEARCH FOR SALVATION



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Despite my best efforts, my heart still condemned me.
What was I going to do?

By Loyce Carver



As a child, I lived on a farm in Tennessee. My parents were good, church-going people who loved their five boys. Dad ruled the household with a strict but loving hand. Although our family was poor, he taught us the finer things of life—diligence, honesty, and high morals.

About a mile from our home stood the one-room schoolhouse where I received my early education. Our teachers often began the day with Bible reading or a prayer.

Across the road from the school stood our little country church. Once a month, a circuit-riding preacher came for the weekend. We heard no smooth, polished

sermons. He said that we must repent and turn from all our sins, or we would be lost and go to Hell. I recognized the truth of those words and felt the convicting hand of God. I got the message about salvation, but it seemed I could not grasp how to receive the experience.

REVIVAL SERVICES

When I was thirteen years old, I attended a revival service. At the close of the meeting, the preacher pled with us to come forward and something compelled me to respond. Those in charge counseled with me and offered a prayer. After asking me some questions, they told me I was saved. I hoped I was.

After that, I remember trying to walk straighter and to believe that God had met me. But during the following days, I realized there had been no change, no real assurance that God's mercy had reached out to me. I wanted to believe it, but my heart still condemned me.

What was I going to do? Eventually I gave up all pretense. I told my friends, "I don't have it. There's no difference between you and me."

The next summer I went to a revival meeting in another community. As the minister preached, I was again under conviction and went forward to pray. Someone said, "I thought you got saved last summer." I answered, "I thought I did too, but I guess I did not for I am not saved now." He looked surprised and said, "Oh yes, you are! You were saved last summer and you will always be saved." I protested, "But I'm just like the boys who are not saved. I'm doing what they do." "That makes no difference," he insisted. "You professed faith and received the Lord as your

Savior, so you are saved now just as much as you ever will be.” How disappointed I was as I left that church!

This broke the chain of my searching. I lost interest in religion and became cynical. I sinned and made no apologies for it.

A MOVE TO OREGON

When I was seventeen, I joined the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Two years later, a transfer to another CCC camp brought me to Merrill, Oregon. There I came into contact with the Apostolic Faith Church. Members of their group in Klamath Falls held meetings at the camp from time to time.

In those services, I found myself up against the old-time religion. I saw real salvation before me. When the young people testified, they were enthusiastic and vibrant about their Christian experience. They knew the time and the very place they had prayed through. They had a marvelous story of victory.

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How I wanted to pray! But at the camp there was no chance to have a prayer service. However, they invited me to come to their meetings in Klamath Falls. There I sought God, praying every time I was in a service. The people did not try to talk me into salvation. They said, “You will know when God saves you. He will give you the witness in your heart.”

CAMP MEETING IN PORTLAND

Soon, they invited me to attend the opening Sunday of the annual Apostolic Faith camp meeting in Portland, Oregon. There I prayed after the morning meeting. People were praying with me and hundreds of people were praying around the altars. This was something I had never seen before. Following the afternoon meeting, I prayed again, but still to no avail.

Sunday night was my last meeting and I felt it was my last chance. In desperation, I finally grasped the needed faith. God accepted my prayer of repentance and my surrender. He let His Spirit witness to my spirit that at last I was truly born again. What peace flooded my soul! I knew I had become a child of God. That night was July 3, 1938.

The next morning we headed back to the CCC camp. When I walked into the barracks one of the fellows said, “Something has happened to Carver.” Right there I gave my first testimony. I said, “Yes, that’s right. The Lord saved me. Things are going to be different now. I am not going to be gambling and swearing anymore.” Then I added, “In fact, I am going to give back everything I won gambling.” I told them I didn’t want anything in my locker to remind me that I used to gamble.

To take my stand and let the boys know I meant what I said was one of the best things I ever did. I put myself on record that I would be different from then on, and God helped me keep my vow.

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The people in the Klamath Falls church helped me pray and become established in the Gospel. The Lord sanctified me, and in the spring of 1939, I received the wonderful experience of the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Yes, I have fond memories of those early days of my Christian experience. It was good then. But now, many years later, the same rejoicing comes to my heart when I rehearse what the Lord has done for me. Every day I can see more clearly that what I do does not amount to much, but what the Lord has done for me is marvelous. What a privilege it is to try to express the thanksgiving in my heart!

■ **Loyce Carver was the leader of the Apostolic Faith Church from 1965 until 1993. He passed away in 1996.**

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)