

# Truth or Chains



This is a letter written by my Dad, J.R. Owen, Sr. to a man who was struggling physically and searching for spiritual answers. It presents so well just what we received with our salvation and how important knowing these truths are.

## Letter to a Friend

Dear Matt, \*

It was so good to speak to you the other night. I was amazed with what you have been through since March. But I was also encouraged by your attitude. The Lord is beginning to do a great work of changing your life. It is a work He has wanted to do for years. Isn't it good to know that He never gives up on us? But then, the Father can never give up on His children. Philippians 1:6 states: "Being confident of this very thing, that He Who has begun good work in you will perform it (bring it to completion) until the day of Jesus Christ."

It is all His work, not ours. Once we have placed all our plans, indeed everything and ourselves in His hands, so that we become His possession, then it is a matter of staying out of the way as He does His work in us. It is Christ's work to make us what He wants us to be: we need but to look to Him as "the author and finisher of our faith." (Heb. 12:2) As I have taught over the years, to the degree that we really understand our salvation, to that degree will we appreciate our salvation and our Savior. The reason the churches are filled with so many carnal Christians (1Cor.3:1-2) whose lives are so spiritually weak is that they haven't a clue as to the extent of their wonderful salvation. As great as it is to know that I am saved and can never be lost, and that I will "go to Heaven" some day, our salvation is far more wonderful than that.

Many Christians attempt to live godly lives and be faithful to God by some method or some discipline such as having a daily Quiet Time, being a faithful church attendee, praying every day and other things such as these. They mean well and are very earnest, but experience so much failure as they struggle to be faithful in these areas. What they never seem to realize is that these so-called "disciplines" are not a burden (or discipline) to the one who is walking with the Lord Jesus; rather, they are as much a part of his spiritual life as eating, drinking and breathing is to one's physical life. These dear saints are putting the cart before the horse. They imagine that the Christian life is like a calculator: if they do the right things out will pop the results they have been looking for, a godly Christian life. Yet, after years of faithfully trying to do what they think should produce that kind of life they are worn out and seem no closer to their goal than they ever were. In all their striving they have substituted "disciplines" for Jesus Christ, the very answer to their longings.

Until the reality of the indwelling life of Christ sinks in they will always treat Him like an outsider, One Who is sitting on His throne in Heaven waiting for the day when He will return. But, instead of Christ being far away, the Bible describes Christ and His relationship with the saints in a far different way. It says: "I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one..." John 17:23; "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Colossians. 1:27: "Christ is all, and in all." Colossians. 3:11; "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Colossians 3:3

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\*(name changed for publication)

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## Letter to a Friend (cont.)

So, dear brother, Christ is in you, and you are in Christ. You have an eternal union with Him just as if He was right in the same room with you, which He is. Knowing this, and knowing that He is your Lord and Savior, and all that that means, you can now begin to have a personal relationship with Him. This relationship will now express itself in a very natural desire to get to know more about Him and will manifest itself in a desire to talk things over with Him throughout the day. You will look forward to meeting other believers and having fellowship with them. But the first step is to get to know your Lord and Saviour, and to know the great work He accomplished on the cross and through His resurrection.

I want now to give to you as simply as possible some of the wonders of your salvation. While these will be the basic truths regarding your salvation, they will be enough for God the Holy Spirit to begin His life-changing work. Please take your time and read all the scriptures and meditate on them. If you really want to know the truth, the Lord will make the truth clear to you. Remember, you are reading these verses and meditating on these passages to get to know Christ, not as an exercise to become "spiritual." Christ will make you spiritual as you get to know Him.

## TRUTHS ABOUT OUR SALVATION

### I. The Purpose Of Man

Man was created to glorify God. It is only reasonable to expect that the God Who created all things should receive honor and praise and glory from the highest of His creation. Isaiah. 43:7; Ephesians. 1:12; 1 Peter 1:15-16.

### II. The Failure Of Man

Because God is holy and righteous, man was created to be holy and righteous too. That is the only way a holy God can be glorified. Since sin is an affront to a holy God and we are sinners, we cannot glorify God; we have missed the mark. Romans. 3:9-18,23; II Chronicles. 6:36; 14:2-3; 39:6

### III. The Condition Of Man

Every person born into Adam's race is altogether spiritually dead. Try as he might, his good works are unacceptable to a holy God Who cannot look upon sin. Man's condition therefore is one who is without God and hopeless. Ephesians. 2:1,12; Isaiah.64:6; Habakkuk.I:13; John 3:17-18

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### IV. The Destination Of Man

Until one receives Jesus Christ as his saviour he is condemned by God to eternal death. That death will be ultimately the Lake Of Fire with no relief. Oh what an awful eternity many are facing! And we once faced it too. Romans 6:23; Matthew 25:29-30; Daniel 2:2; Revelation 20:15

### V. The Love And Grace Of God.

God's love, infinitely strong, sent His only begotten Son to become "The Lamb Of God that takes away the sin of the world." (John 1:29). Therefore Jesus died on the cross in our place to pay for our Sins.

God's grace(undeserved mercy) made salvation possible when the Son of God became our substitute. Because sin was paid for, the way was open for those who would receive Jesus Christ as their sin-bearer to receive Christ's righteousness and be saved from eternal punishment. What love God showed toward man who was His enemy!

John 3:16; Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 5:5-9; Phil. 2:5-8; I Pet. 2:24

**"We are forgiven of all our sins because Christ died for all sins"**

Christ's offering of Himself on the cross was a once-for-all sacrifice, never to be repeated, and fully sufficient for our complete salvation. God is not waiting for us to do anything to complete the work of salvation. It is a finished work. And the sacrifice of Christ was accepted as full payment for our sins by the Father.

I John 2:2; Isaiah 53 (especially verse 11); Heb. 10:12; John 19:30

### VI. The Provisions Of God

Below are some of the wonderful benefits that make up a part of our salvation.

A. We are forgiven of all our sins because Christ died for all sins. All sins have been paid for. Thus, when one receives Christ as his savior all his sins are forgiven. Because this is true, God is not waiting for you to do anything in order to be forgiven. You are fully forgiven. That is and always will be a settled fact. Furthermore, when a believer sins (and we all do), he has an advocate (a representative) before the Father, Jesus Christ who speaks on our behalf and whose blood cleanses us from all sin. This truth is very important, Matt.

I John 1:7 in the Greek text means that this cleansing work is continually going on. There is never a moment when the child of God is not cleansed from sin. What a fact! Colossians.2:13; I John 1:7;2:12.

B. We have been made righteous. The purpose of salvation was to make us righteous. That was the only way we could ever come into God's presence eternally (John 14:1-3); the only way we could glorify a righteous God (Romans 3:23); the only way we could be conformed to the image of Christ (Romans 8:29). As amazing as it may seem to you, you stand before God as righteous. Only Christ's work on the cross could accomplish this. I Corinthians 6:9-11; Romans 4:1-5; II Corinthians 5:21.

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C. We have been placed in Christ. Because we have been baptized into the body of Christ at the point of our salvation, any thing that will ever be done spiritually in us will be done as a result of that relationship. Remembering this relationship is a key to a life of victory.

Ephesians 1 :4-6,10, 22-23; Philippians 1:3-9; I Corinthians 12:12-13

**"We are assured life everlasting."**

D. We have a new life; Christ's life. The Bible tells us that we are new creatures (a new creation) in Christ Jesus. In other words, we aren't the person we were before we were saved, but a brand new person. Christ's work of salvation was not adding or taking away something from our old life, rather, it produced a genuine 24 karat new man, a man of God. No wonder the Lord heaps upon us such wonderful blessings. No wonder He also expects us to live godly lives in keeping with our position. II Corinthians 5:17; Romans 6:1-4; Colossians 3:4; I John 5:11-12; John 3:3; Galatians 3:26

E. We are assured of life everlasting. Some preach that a believer can lose his salvation. It is comforting to know that the Scriptures never support such teachings. If we received eternal life at the point of salvation, we cannot possibly lose it or it would not be eternal. A careful study of Colossians 1:22 shows us just how secure our salvation really is in Christ:

"To present you holy, and unblameable (God cannot find any blame in us), and unproveable (never to be called to give an account) in His sight." That is your position right now, in Christ. And nothing can change it. Romans 8:35-39; John 10:27-29; Jude 24-25.

**"We have peace with God,..."**

F. We have peace with God, We were once God's enemies (Colossians 1:2) and at war with Him, but now we have eternal peace. We have been conquered by His love and are now His willingly. Rom.5:1-11.

G. We await the blessed hope and our heavenly home. We are now citizens of a heavenly kingdom and therefore we look forward to our heavenly home. Oh what a day that will be!

John 14:1-3; Hebrews 11:13, 16; Ephesians 2:19; Titus 2:13.

H. We have received every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus. The glorious truth is that all we have seen in this study, and much more, are all the spiritual blessings God has for us on this earth. And they are all wrapped up in Jesus Christ. You have all you will ever need to live a godly Christian life, and the key is the only One Who can live the Christian life and that is Christ. Ephesians 1:3.

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I know this is a lot to dump on you all at one time, Matt, but once I got started I just couldn't stop. There is so much more to tell you, but that will come later. In the meanwhile take your time and prayerfully meditate on these truths and let the Lord fill your heart with these blessed truths. But remember, Matt, you are using these notes not because they will make you spiritual, but in order to be introduced to Christ that He might take His proper place in your life and you might come to know the greatness of your salvation. He will do the work of making you spiritual. If you have any questions, contact me. I'm always available.

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