A photograph of a dirt road winding through a forest. The trees on either side are covered in vibrant autumn foliage, with shades of yellow, orange, and brown. The road leads into the distance, disappearing into the trees. The sky is a pale, hazy blue. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

Finding Your Way

Compiled by Dr. Harold Bollinger

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Forward

Some people resent that Jesus is the gate, the only way of access to God. But Jesus is God's Son—why should we seek any other way or want to customize a different approach to God?

In contrast to the thief who takes life, Jesus gives life. The life he gives right now is abundantly richer and fuller. It is eternal, yet it begins immediately. Life in Christ is lived on a higher plane because of his overflowing forgiveness, love, and guidance. Have you taken Christ's offer of life?

Jesus is the way because he is both God and man. By uniting our lives with his, we are united with God. Trust Jesus to take you to the Father, and all the benefits of being God's child will be yours.

Jesus says he is the *only* way to God the Father. Some people may argue that this way is too narrow. In reality, it is wide enough for the whole world, if the world chooses to accept it.

Instead of worrying about how limited it sounds to have only one way, we should be saying, "Thank you, God, for providing a sure way to get to you!"

As the *way*, Jesus is our path to the Father. As the *truth*, he is the reality of all God's promises. As the *life*, he joins his divine life to ours, both now and eternally.

Chapter 1



Saul looking for believers on the way

Acts 9:2

And asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

Saul (later called Paul) was so zealous for his Jewish beliefs that he began a persecution campaign against anyone who believed in Christ (“who belonged to the Way”).

Why would the Jews in Jerusalem want to persecute Christians as far away as Damascus?

There are several possibilities:

- (1) to seize the Christians who had fled,
- (2) to prevent the spread of Christianity to other major cities,
- (3) to keep the Christians from causing any trouble with Rome,

- (4) to advance Saul's career and build his reputation as a true Pharisee, zealous for the law,
- (5) To unify the factions of Judaism by giving them a common enemy.

As Saul traveled to Damascus, pursuing Christians, he was confronted by the risen Christ and brought face to face with the truth of the gospel. Sometimes God breaks into a life in a spectacular manner, and sometimes conversion is a quiet experience.

Beware of people who insist that you must have a particular type of conversion experience. The right way to come to faith in Jesus is whatever way God brings *you*

Some speaking evil on the way

Acts 19:9

But when some were becoming hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the people, he withdrew from them and took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.

Ephesus was a center for black magic and other occult practices.

The people cooked up magical formulas to give them wealth, happiness, and success in marriage. Superstition and sorcery were commonplace. God clearly forbids such practices (Deut. 18:9-13).

You cannot be a believer and hold on to the occult, black magic, or sorcery.

Once you begin to dabble in these areas, it is extremely easy to become obsessed by them because Satan is very powerful.

But God's power is even greater (1 John 4:4; Rev. 20:10). If you are mixed up in the occult, learn a lesson from the Ephesians and get rid of anything that could keep you trapped in such practices.

Saul persecuted this way to death

Acts 22:4

"I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and putting both men and women into prisons.

Gamaliel was the most honored rabbi of the first century. He was well known and respected as an expert on religious law and as a voice for moderation (Acts 5:34).

Paul was showing his credentials as a well-educated man trained under the most respected Jewish rabbi.

By saying that at one time he was as zealous for God as any of his listeners, Paul was acknowledging their sincere motives behind their desire to kill him and recognizing that he would have done the same to Christian leaders a few years earlier. Paul always tried to establish a common point of contact with his audience before launching into a full-scale defense of Christianity.

When you witness for Christ, first identify yourself with your audience. They are much more likely to listen if they feel a common bond with you.

The way that is called secrete

Acts 24:14

But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:

Jesus is the way, the truth and the life

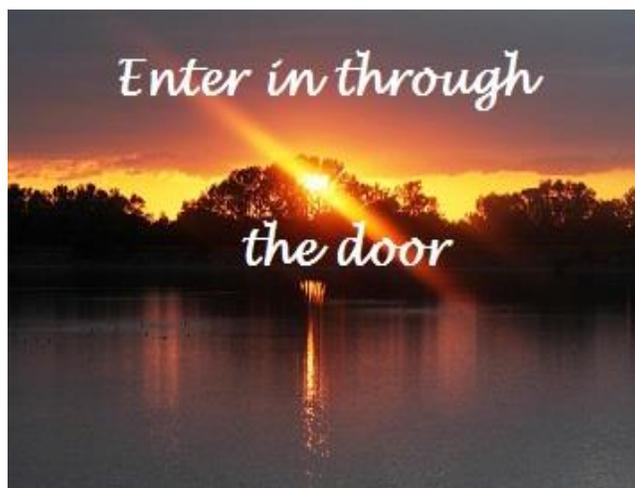
John 14:6

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me.

Acts 14:6

Iconium (Acts 14:1), Lystra, and Derbe were three cities Paul visited in the southern part of the region of Galatia. Paul probably wrote a letter to these churches—the letter to the Galatians—because many Jewish Christians were claiming that non-Jewish Christians couldn't be saved unless they followed Jewish laws and customs.

Chapter 2



Enter in through the door

John 10:9

"I am the door; if anyone enters through me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

In the sheep pen, the shepherd functioned as a gate, letting the sheep in and protecting them. Jesus is the gate to God's salvation for us. He offers access to safety and security. Christ is our protector.

Some people resent that Jesus is the gate, the only way of access to God. But Jesus is God's Son—why should we seek any other way or want to customize a different approach to God?

In contrast to the thief who takes life, Jesus gives life. The life he gives right now is abundantly richer and fuller. It is eternal, yet it begins immediately. Life in Christ is lived on a higher plane because of his overflowing forgiveness, love, and guidance. Have you taken Christ's offer of life?

You know the way where I am going

John 14:4-6

"And you know the way where I am going." Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going, how do we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me.

This is one of the most basic and important passages in Scripture. How can we know the way to God? Only through Jesus. Jesus is the way because he is both God and man. By uniting our lives with his, we are united with God. Trust Jesus to take you to the Father, and all the benefits of being God's child will be yours.

Jesus says he is the *only* way to God the Father. Some people may argue that this way is too narrow. In reality, it is wide enough for the whole world, if the world chooses to accept it.

Instead of worrying about how limited it sounds to have only one way, we should be saying, "Thank you, God, for providing a sure way to get to you!"

As the *way*, Jesus is our path to the Father. As the *truth*, he is the reality of all God's promises. As the *life*, he joins his divine life to ours, both now and eternally.

One God and one mediator

1 Timothy 2:5

For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

We human beings are separated from God by sin, and only one person in the universe is our mediator and can stand between us and God and bring us together again—Jesus, who is both God and man. Jesus' sacrifice brought new life to all people. Have you let him bring you to the Father?

Jesus gave his life as a ransom for our sin (Mark 10:45). A ransom was the price paid to release a slave from captivity. Jesus, our mediator, gave his life in exchange for ours. By his death, he paid our penalty for sin.

Enter by the living way

Hebrews 10:19-20

Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh.

Moving from argument to instruction, the author cites many examples of those who have demonstrated faith throughout history.

Living by faith is far better than merely fulfilling rituals and rules. This can challenge us to grow in faith and to live in obedience to God each day.

The Most Holy Place in the temple was sealed from view by a curtain (Hebrews 10:20). Only the high priest could enter this holy room, and he did so only once a year on the Day of Atonement when he offered the sacrifice for the nation's sins.

But Jesus' death removed the curtain, and all believers may walk into God's presence at any time.

Only one way to be saved

Acts 4:12

"And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

Many people react negatively to the fact that there is no other name than that of Jesus to call on for salvation. Yet this is not something the church decided; it is the specific teaching of Jesus himself (John 14:6).

If God designated Jesus to be the Savior of the world, no one else can be his equal. Christians are to be open-minded on many issues, but not on how we are saved from sin.

No other religious teacher could die for our sins; no other religious teacher came to earth as God's only Son; no other religious teacher rose from the dead. Our focus should be on Jesus, whom God offered as the way to have an eternal relationship with himself.

There is no other name or way!

Believe and be baptized to be saved

Mark 16:16

"He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.

It is not the water of baptism that saves, but God's grace accepted through faith in Christ. Because of Jesus' response to the criminal on the cross who died with him, we know it is possible to be saved without being baptized (Luke 23:43).

Baptism alone, without faith, does not automatically bring a person to heaven. Those who refuse to believe will be condemned, regardless of whether or not they have been baptized.

Chapter 3



This way is the will of God.

John 1:12-13

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

All who welcome Jesus Christ as Lord of their lives are reborn spiritually, receiving new life from God. Through faith in Christ, this new birth changes us from the inside out—rearranging our attitudes, desires, and motives. Being born makes you physically alive and places you in your parents' family (John 1:13). Being born of God makes you spiritually alive and puts you in God's family (John 1:12). Have you asked Christ to make you a new person? This fresh start in life is available to all who believe in Christ.

The way to receive eternal life

John 3:15-16

So that whoever believes will in Him has eternal life. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

When the Israelites were wandering in the desert, God sent a plague of snakes to punish the people for their rebellious attitudes. Those doomed to die from snakebite could be healed by obeying God's command to look up at the elevated bronze snake and by believing that God would heal them if they did (see Numbers 21:8-9).

Similarly, our salvation happens when we look up to Jesus, believing he will save us. God has provided this way for us to be healed of sin's deadly bite.

The entire gospel comes to a focus in this verse. God's love is not static or self-centered; it reaches out and draws others in.

Here God sets the pattern of true love, the basis for all love relationships—when you love someone dearly, you are willing to give freely to the point of self-sacrifice.

God paid dearly with the life of his Son, the highest price he could pay. Jesus accepted our punishment, paid the price for our sins, and then offered us the new life that he had bought for us.

When we share the gospel with others, our love must be like Jesus'—willingly giving up our own comfort and security so that others might join us in receiving God's love.

Some people are repulsed by the idea of eternal life because their lives are miserable. But eternal life is not an extension of a person's miserable, mortal life; eternal life is God's life embodied in Christ given to all believers now as a guarantee that they will live forever.

In eternal life there is no death, sickness, enemy, evil, or sin. When we don't know Christ, we make choices as though this life is all we have. In reality, this life is just the introduction to eternity.

Receive this new life by faith and begin to evaluate all that happens from an eternal perspective.

To "believe" is more than intellectual agreement that Jesus is God.

It means to put our trust and confidence in him that he alone can save us. It is to put Christ in charge of our present plans and eternal destiny.

Believing is both trusting his words as reliable, and relying on him for the power to change. If you have never trusted Christ, let this promise of everlasting life be yours—and believe.

Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ

Acts 16:31

They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."

Paul and Silas's reputation in Philippi was well known. When the jailer realized his own true condition and need, he risked everything to find the answer.

The Christian Good News of salvation is simply expressed: Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved (see Romans 10:9; 1 Cor. 12:3; Ephes. 2:8-9; Phil. 2:11).

When we recognize Jesus as Lord and trust in him with our entire life, salvation is assured to us. If you have never trusted in Jesus to save you, do so quickly. Your life can be filled with joy, just as the jailer's was (Acts 16:34).

Paul and Silas took the family unit seriously. So the offer of salvation was made to the jailer's entire household—family and servants.

Yet it was not the jailer's faith that saved them; they all needed to come to Jesus in faith and believe in him in the same way the jailer had. Yet his entire family did believe and all were saved.

Pray that God will use you to introduce Jesus to your family and that they will come to believe in him.

Only one way to believe

Romans 10:9

That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved

Paul adapts Moses' farewell challenge from Deut. 30:11-14 to apply to Christ. Christ has provided our salvation through his incarnation (coming to earth) and resurrection (coming back from the dead).

God's salvation is right in front of us. He will come to us wherever we are. All we need to do is to respond and accept his gift of salvation. The *deep* as used here refers to the grave or Hades, the place of the dead.

Have you ever been asked, "How do I become a Christian?" These verses give you the beautiful answer—salvation is as close as your own

mouth and heart. People think it must be a complicated process, but it is not. If we believe in our hearts and say with our mouths that Christ is the risen Lord, we will be saved.

This verse must be read in context. Paul is not saying Christians will never be put to shame or be disappointed.

There will be times when people will let us down and when circumstances will take a turn for the worse. Paul is saying that God will keep his side of the bargain—those who call on him will be saved.

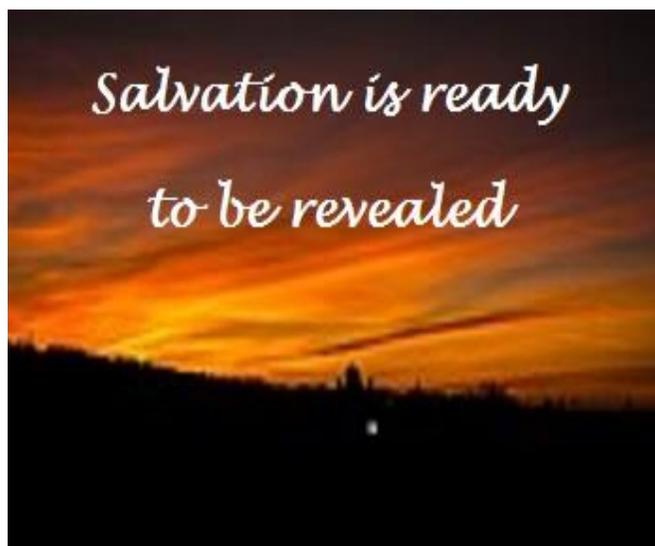
God will never fail to provide righteousness to those who believe.

The way of grace

Ephesians 2:8

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;

Chapter 4



Salvation ready to be revealed

1 Peter 1:5

Who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

God will help us remain true to our faith through whatever difficult times we must face. The “last time” is the judgment day of Christ described in Romans 14:10 and Rev. 20:11-15.

We may have to endure trials, persecution, or violent death, but our souls cannot be harmed if we have accepted Christ’s gift of salvation. We know we will receive the promised rewards.

Make his paths straight

Matthew 3:1-12

In those days John the Baptist began preaching in the Judean wilderness. His message was, "Turn from your sins and turn to God, because the Kingdom of Heaven is near."

Isaiah had spoken of John when he said

"He is a voice shouting in the wilderness: 'Prepare a pathway for the Lord's coming! Make a straight road for him!' "

John's clothes were woven from camel hair, and he wore a leather belt; his food was locusts and wild honey. People from Jerusalem and from every section of Judea and from all over the Jordan Valley went out to the wilderness to hear him preach. And when they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River.

But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming to be baptized, he denounced them. "You brood of snakes!" he exclaimed. "Who warned you to flee God's coming judgment?"

Prove by the way you live that you have really turned from your sins and turned to God. Don't just say, 'We're safe—we're the descendants of Abraham.' That proves nothing. God can change these stones here into children of Abraham.

Even now the ax of God's judgment is poised, ready to sever your roots. Yes, every tree that does not produce good fruit will be chopped down and thrown into the fire.

"I baptize with water those who turn from their sins and turn to God. But someone is coming soon who is far greater than I am—so much greater that I am not even worthy to be his slave. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

He is ready to separate the chaff from the grain with his winnowing fork. Then he will clean up the threshing area, storing the grain in his barn but burning the chaff with never-ending fire."

For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment handed on to them.

Almost 30 years had passed since the events of Matthew 2. Here John the Baptist burst onto the scene. His theme was “Repent!” Repentance means doing an about-face—a 180-degree turn—from the kind of self-centeredness that leads to wrong actions such as lying, cheating, stealing, gossiping, taking revenge, abusing, and indulging in sexual immorality.

A person who repents stops rebelling and begins following God’s way of living prescribed in his Word. The first step in turning to God is to admit your sin, as John urged.

Then God will receive you and help you live the way he wants. Remember that only God can get rid of sin. He doesn’t expect us to clean up our lives *before* we come to him.

The kingdom of heaven began when God himself entered human history as a man. Today Jesus Christ reigns in the hearts of believers, but the kingdom of heaven will not be fully realized until all evil in the world is judged and removed.

Christ came to earth first as a suffering servant; he will come again as King and Judge to rule victoriously over all the earth.

The prophet quoted is Isaiah (Isaiah 40:3), one of the greatest prophets of the Old Testament and one of the most quoted in the New. Like Isaiah, John was a prophet who urged the people to confess their sins and live for God.

Both prophets taught that the message of repentance is good news to those who listen and seek the healing forgiveness of God's love, but terrible news to those who refuse to listen and thus cut off their only hope.

Know Jesus need to be prepared to meet him. We can prepare them by explaining their need for forgiveness, demonstrating Christ's teachings by our conduct, and telling them how Christ can give their lives meaning.

We can "make straight paths for him" by correcting misconceptions that might be hindering people from approaching Christ. Someone you know may be open to a relationship with Christ. What can you do to prepare the way for this person?

John was markedly different from other religious leaders of his day. While many were greedy, selfish, and preoccupied with winning the praise of the people, John was concerned only with the praise of God.

Having separated himself from the evil and hypocrisy of his day, John lived differently from other people to show that his message was new. John not only preached God's law, he *lived* it. Do you practice what you preach? Could people discover what you believe by observing the way you live?

Some probably came simply out of curiosity and ended up repenting of their sins as they listened to his powerful message. People may be curious about your Christian life-style and values.

You can use their simple curiosity as an opener to share how Christ makes a difference in you.

Why did John attract so many people? He was the first true prophet in 400 years. He blasted both Herod and the religious leaders, daring acts

that fascinated the common people. But John also had strong words for his audience—they too were sinners and needed to repent.

His message was powerful and true. The people were expecting a prophet like Elijah (Malachi 4:5; Luke 1:17), and John seemed to be the one!

John baptized people as a sign that they had asked God to forgive their sins and had decided to live as he wanted them to live.

Baptism was an *outward* sign of commitment. To be effective, it had to be accompanied by an *inward* change of attitude leading to a changed life—the work of the Holy Spirit.

John said that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. This looked ahead to Pentecost (Acts 2), when Jesus in the form of tongues of fire, empowering his followers to preach the gospel, would send the Holy Spirit. John's statement also symbolizes the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing God's judgment on those who refuse to repent.

Everyone will one day be baptized—either now by God's Holy Spirit, or later by the fire of his judgment.

Teach the word of God in truth.

Matthew 22:16

And they sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and defer to no one; for you are not partial to any.

The Pharisees, a religious group, opposed the Roman occupation of Palestine. The Herodians, a political party, supported Herod Antipas and the policies instituted by Rome.

Normally these two groups were bitter enemies, but here they united against Jesus. Thinking they had a foolproof plan to corner him, together their representatives asked Jesus about paying Roman taxes.

If Jesus agreed that it was right to pay taxes to Caesar, the Pharisees would say he was opposed to God, the only King they recognized. If Jesus said the taxes should not be paid, the Herodians would hand him over to Herod on the charge of rebellion.

In this case the Pharisees were not motivated by love for God's laws, and the Herodians were not motivated by love for Roman justice. Jesus' answer exposed their evil motives and embarrassed them both.

Jesus is asked to teach the way of God.

Mark 12:14

They came and said to Him, "Teacher, we know that you are truthful and defer to no one; for you are not partial to any, but teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to pay a poll tax to Caesar, or not?"

Anyone who avoided paying taxes faced harsh penalties. The Jews hated to pay taxes to Rome because the money supported their oppressors and symbolized their subjection.

Much of the tax money also went to maintain the pagan temples and luxurious life-styles of Rome's upper class. The Pharisees and Herodians hoped to trap Jesus with this tax question. Either a yes or a no could lead him into trouble.

A yes would mean he supported Rome, which would turn the people against him. A no would bring accusations of treason and rebellion against Rome and could lead to civil penalties.

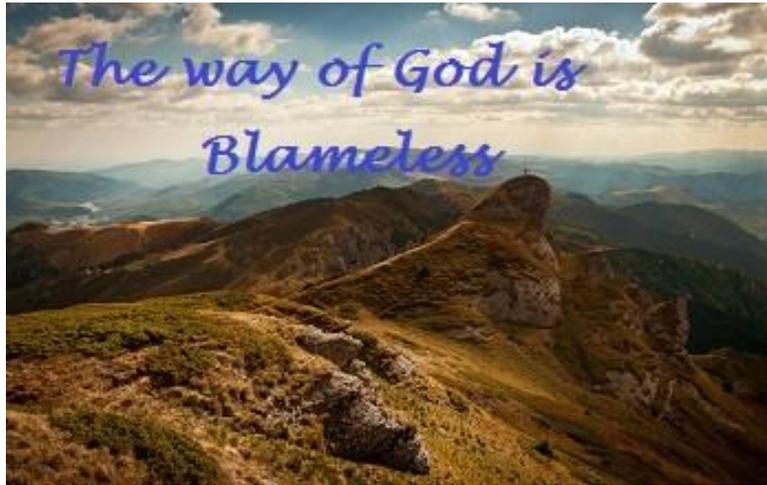
Teach the way of truth

Luke 20:21

They questioned Him, saying, "Teacher, we know that you speak and teach correctly, and you are not partial to any, but teach the way of God in truth.

These spies, pretending to be honest men, flattered Jesus before asking him their trick question, hoping to catch him off guard. But Jesus knew what they were trying to do and stayed out of their trap. Beware of flattery. With God's help, you can detect it and avoid the trap that often follows.

Chapter 5



The way of God is blameless

Psalm 18:30

As for God, His way is blameless; the word of the LORD is tried; He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him.

Some people think that belief in God is a crutch for weak people who cannot make it on their own. God is indeed a shield to protect us when we are too weak to face certain trials by ourselves, but he does not want us to remain weak.

He strengthens, protects, and guides us in order to send us back into an evil world to fight for him. And then he continues to work with us because the strongest person on earth is infinitely weaker than God and needs his help.

David was not a coward; he was a mighty warrior who, even with all his armies and weapons, knew that only God could ultimately protect and save him.

God's ways are higher than our ways.

Isaiah 55:9

"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

The people of Israel were foolish to act as if they knew what God was thinking and planning. His knowledge and wisdom are far greater than man's. We are foolish to try to fit God into our mold—to make his plans and purposes conform to ours. Instead, we must strive to fit into *his* plans.

Man was instructed in the way of the Lord

Acts 18:25-26

This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, being acquainted only with the baptism of John; and he began to speak out boldly in the synagogue.

But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.

Apollos had heard only what John the Baptist had said about Jesus (see Luke 3:1-18), so his message was not the complete story. John focused on repentance from sin, the first step. But the whole message is to repent from sin and then believe in Christ. Apollos did not know about Jesus' life, crucifixion, and resurrection. Nor did he know about the coming of

the Holy Spirit. Priscilla and Aquila explained the way of salvation to him.

They refuse to follow the right way.

Hebrews 3:10

So I was angry with them, and I said, 'their hearts always turn away from me. They refuse to do what I tell them.'

In many places, the Bible warns us not to “harden” our hearts. This means stubbornly setting ourselves against God so that we are no longer able to turn to him for forgiveness. The Israelites became hardhearted when they disobeyed God’s command to conquer the Promised Land (here called “the rebellion,”

They do not know God’s way

Psalm 95:10

"For forty years I loathed that generation, and said they are a people who err in their heart, and they do not know my ways.

What keeps us from God’s ultimate blessings (entering his “rest”)?
Ungrateful hearts

(Psalm 95:2), not worshiping or submitting to him

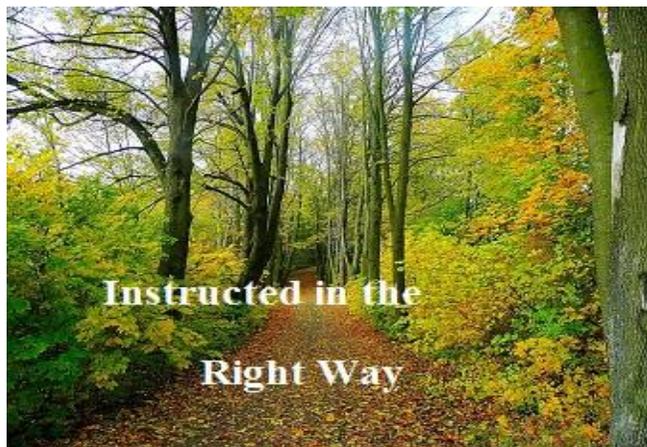
(Psalm 95:6), hardening our hearts

(Psalm 95:8), testing God because of stubborn doubts

(Psalm 95:9). In Hebrews 4:5-11,

We are warned not to harden our hearts, but to reject the glamour of sin and anything else that would lead us away from God.

Chapter 6



Instructed in the right way

Acts 18:24-25

Now a Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus; and he was mighty in the Scriptures.

This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, being acquainted only with the baptism of John;

Apollos had heard only what John the Baptist had said about Jesus (see Luke 3:1-18), so his message was not the complete story. John focused on repentance from sin, the first step.

But the whole message is to repent from sin and then believe in Christ. Apollos did not know about Jesus' life, crucifixion, and resurrection. Nor did he know about the coming of the Holy Spirit. Priscilla and Aquila explained the way of salvation to him.

To command his household to keep the way

Genesis 18:19

"For I have chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him."

Did Abraham change God's mind? Of course not. The more likely answer is that God changed Abraham's mind.

Abraham knew that God is just and that he punishes sin, but he may have wondered about God's mercy.

Abraham seemed to be probing God's mind to see how merciful he really was. He left his conversation with God convinced that God was both kind and fair.

Our prayers won't change God's mind, but they may change ours just as Abraham's prayer changed his. Prayer helps us better understand the mind of God.

Teach me your way, oh Lord

Psalm 27:11

Teach me your way, O LORD, and lead me in a level path Because of my foes.

Many have had the sad experience of being forsaken by father or mother. Broken homes, differences of belief, addiction to drugs or alcohol, even psychological isolation can leave children crippled by this loss. Even as adults,

The pain may linger. God can take that place in our life, fill that void, and heal that hurt. He can direct us to adults who may take the role of father or mother for us. His love is sufficient for all our needs.

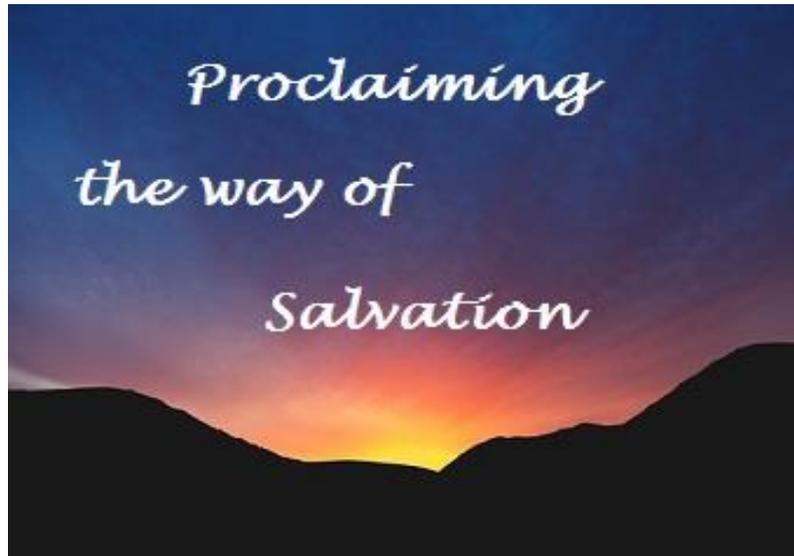
Teach me the way in which to walk

Psalm 143:8

Let me hear Your loving kindness in the morning; For I trust in You; Teach me the way in which I should walk; For to You I lift up my soul.

David was losing hope, caught in paralyzing fear and deep depression. At times, we feel caught in deepening depression, and we are unable to pull ourselves out. At those times, we can come to the Lord and, like David, express our true feelings. Then he will help us as we remember his works (Psalm 143:5), reach out to him in prayer (Psalm 143:6), trust him (Psalm 143:8), and decide to do his will (Psalm 143:10).

Chapter 7



Proclaiming the way of salvation

Acts 16:17

Following after Paul and us, she kept crying out, saying, "These men are bond-servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation."

What the slave girl said was true, although the source of her knowledge was a demon. Why did a demon announce the truth about Paul, and why did this annoy Paul? If Paul accepted the demon's words, he would appear to be linking the gospel with demon-related activities. This would damage his message about Christ. Truth and evil do not mix.

Few find the way alone

Matthew 7:14

"For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

The gate that leads to eternal life (John 10:7-9) is called "narrow." This does not mean that it is difficult to become a Christian, but that there is only *one* way to live eternally with God and only a few that decide to walk that road.

Believing in Jesus is the only way to heaven, because he alone died for our sins and made us right before God. Living his way may not be popular, but it is true and right. Thank God there is one way!

The way of Peace

Luke 1:79

To give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
and to guide us to the path of peace."

Zechariah praised God with his first words after months of silence. In a song that is often called the *Benedictus* after the first words in the Latin translation of this passage,

Zechariah prophesied the coming of a Savior who would redeem his people, and he predicted that his son John would prepare the Messiah's way.

All the Old Testament prophecies were coming true—no wonder Zechariah praised God! The Messiah would come in Zechariah's lifetime, and his son had been chosen to pave the way.

The way of perfect peace

Isaiah 26:3

"The steadfast of mind you will keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in you.

We can never avoid strife in the world around us, but with God we can know perfect peace even in turmoil. When we are devoted to him, our whole attitude is steady and stable. Supported by God's unchanging love and mighty power, we are not shaken by the surrounding chaos (see Phil. 4:7). Do you want peace? Keep your thoughts on and your trust in God.

The wicked can find no way of peace.

Isaiah 57:20-21

But the wicked are like the tossing sea, for it cannot be quiet, and its waters toss up refuse and mud. "There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked."

Chapter 8



The way of Peace

Romans 3:17

They do not know what true peace is."

Paul uses these Old Testament references to show that humanity in general, in its present sinful condition, is unacceptable before God.

Have you ever thought to yourself, "Well, I'm not too bad. I'm a pretty good person"? Look at these verses and see if any of them apply to you. Have you ever lied?

Have you ever hurt someone's feelings by your words or tone of voice? Are you bitter toward anyone?

Do you become angry with those who strongly disagree with you? In thought, word, and deed you, like everyone else in the world, stand guilty before God.

We must remember who we are in his sight—alienated sinners. Don't deny that you are a sinner. Instead, allow your desperate need to point you toward Christ.

Some do not know the way of peace

Isaiah 59:8

They do not know the way of peace, and there is no justice in their tracks; they have made their paths crooked, whoever treads on them does not know peace.

Sin offends our holy God and separates us from him. Because God is holy, he cannot ignore, excuse, or tolerate sin as though it didn't matter. Sin cuts people off from him, forming a wall to isolate God from the people he loves.

No wonder this long list of wretched sins makes God angry and forces him to look the other way.

People, who die with their life of sin unforgiven, separate themselves eternally from God. God wants them to live with him forever, but he cannot take them into his holy presence unless their sin is removed. Have you confessed your sin to God, allowing him to remove it? The Lord can save you if you turn to him.

A highway will be there

Isaiah 35:8

A highway will be there, a roadway, and it will be called the Highway of Holiness the unclean will not travel on it, but it will be for him who walks that way, and fools will not wander on it.

This highway, the “Way of Holiness,” is the way that righteous pilgrims will take from the desert of suffering to Zion (Jerusalem). It is found only by following God. Only the redeemed will travel God’s highway; they will be protected from wicked travelers and harmful animals.

God is preparing a way for his people to travel to his home, and he will walk with us. God never stops at simply pointing the way; he is always beside us as we go.

The way into the Holy place

Hebrews 9:8

The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed while the outer tabernacle is still standing.

The high priest could enter the Most Holy Place (Hebrews 9:3; or the “inner room,” Hebrews 9:7), the innermost room of the tabernacle, one day each year to atone for the nation’s sins.

The Most Holy Place was a small room that contained the Ark of the Covenant (a gold-covered chest containing the original stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments were written, a jar of manna, and Aaron’s staff).

The top of the chest served as the “atonement cover” (the altar) on which the blood would be sprinkled by the high priest on the Day of Atonement.

The Most Holy Place was the most sacred spot on earth for the Jews. Only the high priest could enter—the other priests and the common people were forbidden to come into the room.

Their only access to God was through the high priest, who would offer a sacrifice and use the animal's blood to atone first for his own sins and then for the people's sins (see also Hebrews 10:19).

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer: Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

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Additional comments and charts are taken from:

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