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*"Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." Jn 15:13*

Dear Brother and Sisters in Christ,

**"Happy Easter,"** just doesn't convey the *astounding dimension* of what Jesus Christ did for us. Before coming to earth, Jesus was worshipped and obeyed by the billions of *spiritual creatures* as the **awesome Creator** of everything that exists. But Jesus was **not the Son of God until his incarnation**. Before that, Jesus Christ **was the eternal God**. As John 1:1 clearly states, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the **Word was God**." As Pastor John MacArthur wrote in his commentary on the book of Hebrews:



It is therefore incorrect to say that Jesus Christ is eternally *inferior* to God the Father because he goes under the title of *Son of God*. He is no "eternal son" *always subservient* to God, always *less than God*. Jesus was not 'a son' **until he was born into this world** through the virgin birth. Jesus became the Son for our sake – setting aside what was rightfully his, humbling himself, and emptying himself. John MacArthur *Hebrews Commentary* p 28

Jesus is the supreme example of *humility and servanthood*, because as the **Sovereign of the universe and of all eternity**, he subjected himself to humiliation and even to death in service and sacrifice to others. God died for us.

**Most people have no idea of the infinitely high price Almighty God paid for their salvation!**

After the last supper in the upper room, as Jesus and the eleven walked toward the *Garden of Gethsemane*, they may have sung a *worship song*. Jesus knew what was ahead. I wonder if Jesus could even *finish the hymn*, with the *tears* he must have had. He was singing for the last time with the men he loved.



Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, which means 'oil press'. It's here that the olives are squeezed to get the oil out of the olives. It is here that Jesus *would be squeezed*, pressured by Satan to resist the will of God. His agony was not just over the *physical* suffering but the break in fellowship with the Father because God can't look upon sin no matter who the sin is on. And being in *anguish*, Jesus prayed more earnestly, and his **sweat was like drops of blood** falling to the ground. Jesus was under such pressure that his sweat was mixed with drops of blood as the capillaries just under the skin burst and blood dripped from his face.

But many were amazed when they saw him. His face was so disfigured he seemed hardly human, and from his appearance, one would scarcely know he was a man. Isa 52:14

**The temptation to avoid the cross was a real temptation to Christ**

Jesus knew the *intense agony* for taking the *consequences for all the world's sin upon himself* and what a *horror* to be separated from his heavenly Father. Then he said to them, "My soul is *overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death*. Stay here and keep watch with me." Going a little farther, he *fell with his face to the ground* and prayed, "O my Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; but, not as I will, but as You will." *There was no other way that sinful mankind could be saved from an eternal hell, that's why Jesus had to die for us to be saved from hell.*





## Scourging

He knew all things that would happen to him. His beard would be plucked out *and skin with it*. The heavy whip had small balls of lead and bone fragments imbedded in it so the lead balls produce large, *deep bruises which are broken open by the bone fragments*. As each lash cuts deeper and deeper, the blood vessels are torn open and the *blood begins to pump out with each heart beat*. As the whipping continues, his flesh is ripped open tearing through nerves and muscles until a part of the bones in his *ribs were exposed*. But notice Jesus, *had the power to overcome his fear*. "Jesus therefore, knowing all the things that were coming upon him, went forth!" He boldly --**went forth!** Jesus wasn't a victim! He didn't get trapped. He didn't run and hide. But went forward in majesty, confidently in God's perfect will.



## Crucifixion



*The soldier feels for the depression at the front of the wrist and then drives a heavy nail **through the wrist** and deep into the wood. Then he moves to the other side and repeats the action, being careful *not to pull the arms too tightly* but to allow some flexion and movement so the person can breathe but labors with much difficulty. One foot is pressed backward against the other. Then the point of a large square nail is held on top of one foot. The victim feels the point of the nail. Then a large hammer, like a **sledge hammer**, comes slamming down on the nail, completely driving the nail through both feet and deep into the wood. The *pain explodes from the feet, up the legs to the midsection*, until the entire lower **torso is on fire**, spreading over the entire body.*



The nails in the wrist put intense pressure on the large median nerves causing the hands to cramp and curl inward forming the **rigid claw shape**. He pushes himself up on his feet to avoid the torment in his wrists, but by placing his **full weight on the nail through his feet**, the nail tears through the nerves between the bones in his feet. Once the legs give out, the weight would be transferred to the arms, gradually pulling the shoulders and elbows out of their sockets making the arms six or seven inches longer. The leg muscles begin to spasm so he is unable to push himself up without extreme pain. So he struggles to push himself up in order to get just one short breath. With extreme pain, Jesus pushes up so he could fill his lungs and utter his last few short sentences. For **6 long hours** his lungs filled with fluid as he was suffocating. Looking down at the Roman soldiers throwing dice for his clothes, Jesus said, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do."

***To forgive the men who caused this unbelievable pain is truly supernatural love.***

That the Father God would turn his Son over to Satan and demonic men to unleash all their hatred for God on a defenseless man – is incredible. Although Satan and cruel men had their few hours torturing the Son of God, God, the Father, watched and will extract eternal punishment on them and those who follow them to eternal punishment! The Father watched in the background but vengeance will be his forever. *This is as real to God as if it was yesterday.*

***Anyone who knows what God did to forgive us of sins and yet does not accept it – deserves hell.***

How much more severe a punishment do you think that person deserves who tramples on God's Son, treats as common the blood of the covenant by which it was sanctified, and insults the Spirit of grace? Heb 10:29 NIV

Never had God suffered and died before. In his humanity, Jesus did not want to go through with it. Jesus had so much more perception and sensitivity to pain than we do, and thus had a *much greater suffering* than we can imagine. But we know that Jesus did it, because **it was the only way we could avoid going to hell**. Yet so many people take his sacrifice for granted or completely ignore his sacrifice for their sins to their own peril. "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. 5:21)

**Mercy Saves Us From Hell! Grace Gives Us Heaven!**

Jesus was RESURRECTED never to face suffering or death again. Although his sacrifice is sufficient for every person, **it is valid only for those who believe in him**. Christ died for the whole world **but only those who receive him can obtain salvation**. But it wasn't **nails that kept Him on the cross**. It was LOVE that held Him there. The nails could have easily been removed with *just a word from Jesus*. But he remained in agony on our behalf.



The hands that flung the stars into the heavens are the hands that blessed and fed the multitudes and raised the dead, those holy hands **are nailed to the cross**. The physical torture and pain wasn't as painful as **feeling abandoned** by the Father. When Christ took upon himself the **sins of the world-past, present and future**, He literally became SIN FOR US. The Father couldn't even look upon the Son at that point. Jesus felt totally **abandoned and took the punishment and penalty for our sins**.



By 3pm, the crowds became silent, came the VOICE of VICTORY when Jesus said **"It is finished!"** and he gave up his spirit. What was finished? **Mankind could now be saved**. At that moment, the huge 18" thick curtain that separated the holy of holies in the Temple was **torn from top** to bottom by God Almighty! The veil that *kept sinful man away from God, to protect man from being killed by God*, was ripped apart so that *mankind could go directly to God, without going through any priests. It's the only way we can be saved.*

At dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene went to *the tomb* because she loved Jesus, and *even after he was dead*, she went to anoint his body. She wanted to DO something, even to his *dead body*. She burst out crying and *wept and wept!* It was with tear filled eyes that she looked into the tomb and saw the two angels. They gleamed like **lightning**. But Mary wasn't startled by these supernatural brilliant angels. All she could think about was HER LORD'S BODY! One angel said, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus. He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There **you will see him**."



Suddenly, Jesus appeared and said, "Mary! Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee. There they will see me." Jesus called her by name, "Mary." *How beautiful it must have been, for Mary to hear Jesus say her name.* We believe that after we die the first words we will hear from our savior will be our **names**. What better way to welcome those **He died for** than with our names? He's going to call you by your name. Mary Magdalene ran back and found Peter and John and *breathlessly blurted out*, "**Jesus is alive!**" John and Peter ran back to the tomb and bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there in a very unusual position. Instead of being spread out in a long, jumbled strip, it was still all wrapped together in one spot. John, **saw and believed!!**

*No one had removed the grave clothes from the corpse*, it had not been **unraveled**. Corpses were buried with a sticky myrrh around them, that **glues** the linen to the body so that if anyone had taken the body out of the grave clothes, they would first have to *peel these sticky linen strips off*. But these strips were still all together. It was as if the body had **simply passed right out** of the head cloth and shroud and left them empty. It was as if Jesus' body **vaporized** and let the **clothes fall limp**. Jesus *passed through* the grave clothes and then re-materialized. This is amazing, but it's the kind of body we will have.

At Jesus death, the disciples were terrified *hiding behind locked doors* for fear that the same horrible crucifixion would happen to them. But hours after the resurrection, the same men had **no fear** of any **man**; no **fear of death**, no matter how horrible. **Would anything less than a resurrected Christ** cause men hiding behind locked doors **just HOURS later** to break out of hiding *and change the world*? These men knew that **Christ had the power over death** and that **he was with them - constantly**. They began to **live without the fears** that had held them captive before. There was nothing **to worry about**. If Caesar didn't like the message they told, *so much the worse for Caesar*. Whether *you lived or died, you belonged to the Lord - not Caesar*.

The early Christians *shook the Roman Empire until it tottered and fell*. The **world** would never be the same again. And people *who know* the risen **Lord** continue to *change the world*. **What is greater than knowing that death is not a wall but a door that leads into the magnificence of eternity with Jesus?** The Resurrected body of Jesus shows us *what our resurrected body will be like*. What proof **would you need** that *death is not the end of life*? The **proof God gives** us is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. But since we couldn't all be there, that first Easter morning, God has given us **eye witness accounts** of Jesus resurrection, so that we might believe in Him and have everlasting life.

### **The Power of The Resurrection, #1877**

From the beginning of time, people feared and dreaded death, but the resurrection of Christ changed that by showing that death wasn't the end **but the beginning**. Our nation's schools are robbing this generation of this life



changing, historical fact, by censoring out the greatest event in all human history – the resurrection. Patriot **Pastor Garrett Lear**, tells of Christ's suffering in Gethsemane where he sweat drops of blood, the beatings, the tortuous death on the cross and the separation from God the Father.

### **The Resurrection & The Life, #1878**

Most people have no idea of the infinitely high price God paid for their salvation! **Pastor Robert Nash**, author of *Last Words -7 Sayings From the Heart of Christ on the Cross*, says while Jesus was gasping for every breath, he spoke words filled with hope and compassion. **William Frey**, says, "Since God can raise the dead, death has lost its power over us." **John MacArthur**, of Grace to You, tells how the disciples were terrified before the resurrection but after seeing Jesus, they became fearless & transformed the world. Our **Pastor Chuck Smith** says, "The crucifixion wasn't an accident but *designed by God* to show his love and forgiveness for sin."

### **Jesus was guilty of no sin yet he suffered for all sin.**

What motivated him to give his life? Love! Solely on the basis of his love for us Jesus died. God, the Son, died for our sins. "No one has taken my life but I lay it down on my own initiative." Jn10:18

### **Broad is the Way #1866**

William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army said to his first graduating class that he should apologize for keeping them for two years in order to teach them how to win a soul to Jesus Christ. It would have been better, he said, had they "*spent five minutes in hell.*"

What happens to people who die but don't go to heaven? Is hell a real place? If hell didn't exist, why did Jesus talk about it so much? **Bill Wiese**, a successful realtor and author of *Twenty Three Minutes in Hell*, describes his incredibly detailed vision of hell; the stench, the flames, the deafening screams of agony, and the terrifying demons! Bill says *the Lord* took Bill's spirit to hell and back to *warn people* who don't believe that hell exists. If you could go to heaven because of your good deeds, *then Jesus died for nothing!* Jesus suffered excruciating pain and death to save people from *hell*. Where is hell? Can good people go there?

Most people don't go deliberately into hell but *drift into it*. Most people do not intentionally turn their backs on God or deliberately reject him. Most just go slowly, *almost imperceptibly, past the opportunity of salvation* out into eternal hell! How many billions of people in hell were *close to salvation* but *drifted away slowly*. All a person needs to do to go to hell is - **do nothing.**

To tell an unbeliever that God has a *wonderful plan for their life* can be *seriously misleading*. If an unbeliever turns to Christ and *repents of his sins, he will be saved* and God does have a wonderful **eternal** plan for them! But if he doesn't turn to Christ, God's only plan for him is damnation. In the same way, it is misleading and dangerous to tell them that God loves them without telling them, in spite of that love, That God is a **God of justice** and they are *under God's wrath* worthy to be sentenced to hell. John MacArthur *Commentary on Matthew 16-23*.

### **Without confession and repentance, of sin there is no legitimate salvation.**

Undue emphasis on such external acts such as raised hands, saying a special rote prayer, or simply saying you're saved can lead many people into believing they are saved *when they are not*. A premature or incomplete decision is not a valid salvation. Jesus didn't die to make people feel better by relieving their frustrations and anxieties. Belief in a God who is **all love and no wrath, all grace and no justice**, is **idolatry** invented by liberal churches. *Salvation becomes meaningless* when **sin** is ignored! Christ's death becomes meaningless, if there's no sin.

### **To reject Jesus is to reject the reason for our existence.**

Jesus was *God in the world*, and *to reject him is to reject God*. Because of the magnificence of the *Person of Christ*, a person is a fool to reject the salvation he offers. How can a person who knows who Christ is, admit that the gospel is true, and still *not commit* his life to Him. What an incomprehensible mystery and tragedy. **It is difficult to understand how anyone who knows the love and the character of Jesus Christ can reject him.** It's a mystery that people *don't rush* to Christ and everything he offers yet **never** *commit themselves to him*. How could anyone reject the One who came into the world He Created, died on a cross to forgive us of our sins, paid our penalty, showed us his divine love, and offers us eternal life and gives us blessing and joy beyond imagination?

There's coming a day *when you see those pierced hands and feet*. You will know He gave his own life for you. When you look into the eyes of Jesus, your priorities change. A relationship with Christ is a deep love in the heart, in your soul. It's a life-giving relationship that makes the things of this world appear dull in comparison.



### How To Bring Children to Christ, #1876

What does it mean to be a true follower of Jesus Christ? *What's a false convert?* How can you tell if a child is truly saved? Almost 9 out of 10 (88%) of church children lose their faith before high school graduation. What can a parent do to be sure their children keep their faith? **Ray Comfort**, evangelist and author of *How To Bring Your Child To Christ and Keep Them There*, says, "Don't give your children a false image of God. Give them a true understanding and view of the God of the Bible not Santa Claus!" Parents should teach their children the fear of the Lord to resist their temptations.

### Islamic War Against Civilization, part 1 #1874

Many Americans naively assume all religions are basically the same. That Islam is peaceful. That's what the Lebanese people believed before the Muslim take over. Then it became a living hell for Christians. **Brigitte Gabriel**, author of *Because They Hate – A Survivor of Islamic Terror Warns America*, says, "Lebanon was much like America – prosperous, open and democratic. But their multiculturalism led to their downfall." Brigitte tells how horrible it was to live in a shelter for 7 years without electricity, adequate food or drinkable water. Why did Muslims do that to her? Americans need to understand the danger of Islam here!

### Islamic War Against Civilization, part 2 #1875

Why are public schools promoting Islam when Christianity gave us freedom and prosperity? **Martin Mawyer**, author of *Twilight In America -The Untold Story of Islamic Terrorist Training Camps Inside America*, describes the 3 dozen camps he has personally seen and how they plan to take over America for Allah. **Dr Bob Morey**, an expert on Islam, and author of over 40 books, with two doctorates, says Muslims are planning a massive attack (with a nuclear device) in America to bring this nation under subjection to the barbaric Sharia Law. How can we prevent and even defeat this coming Islamic invasion?

### The Pope vs The Commandments, part 1 #1872

A new decree issued by Pope Francis has changed the official Catholic doctrine of 2000 years calling homosexuality a depravity, a sin, to now being able to be *blessed as same sex unions*. **Jonathan Cahn**, author of *The Return of the Gods*, says this is not just a demonic attack on churches, but *end-times apostasy*. In fact, this "feel good" Pope, head of 1.3 billion Catholics, warned that being *too rigid* on absolutes like the Ten Commandments can be contrary to *human nature*. Francis said that someone who holds too strongly to the Ten Commandments has *something wrong with them*. Question: *Does that include JESUS!!* Francis said, "That each person should search their own consciences for their own commandments." *This is apostasy!* undoing the Commandments!

Does that mean adultery is now to also be blessed? But it's not about being unloving to homosexuals. True loving is warning them that sin is an abomination to God and warning *them they are on their way to hell*. This decree will have a profound impact on morality throughout the world as the Catholic Church blesses degeneracy!

### There is no purgatory!

*When a person dies, his soul goes to either heaven or hell. There is no second chance after death. The Bible tells us, "Man is destined to die once and after that to face judgment."* Heb 9:27 *It would do no good to pray for someone who has died. Unforgiven sin can never be forgiven after a person dies.* After spending eons in hell, a person who is not forgiven, will never be closer to heaven *than when he first entered hell*. Purgatory is a fiction created by the Catholic Church to keep Catholics dependent on priests and their church instead of looking directly to God.

### Grace Through Faith Alone, part 2 #1873

The most crucial issue is where you will spend eternity. **Mike Gendron**, a devout Catholic for 35 years, had a crisis of faith between believing Catholic teachings *or the Bible*. Was salvation based on faith alone or on faith plus being baptized, believing the Eucharist is Christ's actual body, believing in Mary as a perpetual virgin and the infallibility doctrine? We love Catholics but hate what keeps them from heaven. When Jesus died on the cross, the veil in the *Holy of Holies* was torn from top (by God) to bottom. That means we can go directly to God in prayer and don't need a priest. There is no scriptural basis for purgatory so it makes no sense to pray for the dead. Pastor **John MacArthur** says by *praying to and exalting Mary, Christ is robbed of his Glory*.

### Mary is not the Queen of Heaven nor a perpetual virgin

Mary is called the 'mother of God' because she, as a virgin, gave birth to Jesus. But Mary was not divine nor sinless but needed a Savior ("My spirit rejoices in God my *Savior*" Lk 1:47). Mary was not a perpetual virgin after Jesus was born. She gave birth to other children named in Matthew 13:55. (James, Joseph, Simon and Judas...)

### Peter is not the First Pope

The Catholic's first pope was supposedly Peter, but there's no scripture where Peter is called a pope. When Jesus said he would build his church on the ROCK, it wasn't Peter, who was vacillating and even denied knowing Jesus



three times! Jesus had to correct Peter many times. Peter like all popes are not infallible. Jesus asked Peter, “Who do you say I am? And Peter answered, “You are the **Messiah, the Son of the living God.**” and Jesus replied, “Blessed are you Simon for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven.” The rock was **Peter’s statement** about **Jesus being the Messiah.** *Jesus is the Foundation Stone, not Peter.*

### **The Controversy of Evolution** #1871

Is Intelligent Design **religious or** scientific? Are millions of scientists who believe in evolution wrong? Evolution has been enshrined in our educational system with laws to protect it. Scientists in the 1800’s believed that life could spontaneously come from non-life. What Darwin believed, Pasteur disproved. **Dr Carl Warner**, author of *Evolution-the Grand Experiment*, believed in evolution until a friend asked him questions that changed his worldview. Why would birds evolve half a wing or animals evolve half a leg then evolve into intermediates that are incapable of life? Jesus Christ created everything material and spiritual, everything that exists. He is also responsible for creating time, space, energy and matter. If you **do not** believe in a **Creator**, you have quite a problem explaining how this marvelous, intricate, immeasurable universe *came into being.*

**No evolution** created the tiny cubic half-inch section of brain cells that contains all the memories of a lifetime.

**No evolution** created the ear that transfers sound waves from air to liquid without losing any sound.

**No evolution** created Betelgeuse that’s 800 quadrillion miles (880 followed by 15 zeroes) from earth. It has a diameter of 250 million miles, which is greater than that of the earth’s orbit around the sun.

**Where did it all come from? Who made it? It cannot be an accident.** Just as a painting had a painter, so creation had a Creator. If it’s made, someone had to make it, and the Bible tells us that the **Maker was Jesus Christ.** *Look up at the stars at night. They didn’t just tumble into space! The rising and lowering of the tides doesn’t just happen by accident. Planting dead seeds into the ground and they grow, isn’t just a phenomena of nature. These are part of God’s actions in this world.*

### **Indoctrination into Evolution is a sin against God**

“Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it is better for him that a heavy millstone be hung around his neck and he be drowned in the depth of the sea.” Mt 18:6 The Lord is saying that whoever entices or influences a child to *believe the lie of evolution and deny the Spirit of God*, it’s a sin punishable of dying a terrifying death by drowning. It is an **enormous crime in God’s sight** to harm one of them by leading them to sin. That’s like poking their finger in God’s eye. God takes it personally how children are indoctrinated.

The left makes up lies and denies America’s history to influence impressionable children on a massive scale. As these lies are taught often enough, without being challenged, the children will believe them. Not because they make sense, but because that’s the only thing they learn. Children are taught to admire Marxism, see racial division and believe moral relativism, and hate the values that formed this nation.

### **Hope in God** #1870

If you say your circumstances are hopeless, **you’re slamming the door on God.** Fear and discouragement are from the enemy, but faith and hope come from God. **Terry Law**, author of *The Hope Habit, Finding God’s Goodness When Life is Hard*, says having hope as a habit is life changing! It’s not simple optimism! Biblical hope has the power of God to train you to live with a hope to give you confidence in God in severe trials by freeing your mind from worry and fear that actually weakens our immune systems! Just a tiny spark of hope breaks that cycle to release **endorphins** that lessen pain, and promote healing and hope. *Hope in heaven helps.*

### **Explosion of Antisemitism** #1869

Why are American students turning against Jewish students? Three top university presidents testified before a Congressional Committee as Congresswoman **Elise Stefanic** asked if calls for killing Jews violates their standards of conduct. They answered that it would be context related. But would calling for the death of Muslim students be context related? Of course not. This double standard dehumanizes Jewish students. **Kayleigh McEnany** says 60% of students think the best way to resolve the war would be to give the land to Hamas. **Amir Tsarfati** says Israeli soldiers are turning away from secularism and toward God!

### **The Link Between Marxism & Abortion** #1868

The number one cause of death in America is still abortion. Without the right to life, no other rights matter. **Seth Gruber**, a renowned pro-life speaker and president of *The White Rose Resistance*, gives a powerful, passionate speech saying, “Many pastors don’t understand that the culture war is a spiritual war. Abortion forms the lynchpin to the silent Marxist revolution.” Margaret Sanger, founder of Planned Parenthood, was greatly influenced by



communism and euthanasia to start abortion clinics to rid the world of the “unfit.” The strategy of our adversaries is sexual chaos, abortion and euthanasia.

### **The Relevance of Noah's Ark** #1867

Is the Genesis Flood true history or a fable? Is there scientific evidence for the Flood? **Dr Frank Sherman** explains how the steep walls in the Grand Canyon show a rapid rush of water that could only be formed by the Flood. God gave people 120 years to repent. But only 8 people were saved out of the 4-7 billion people who were drowned because of sin. **Tom Dooley**, author of *The True Story of Noah's Ark*, describes the water canopy that fell to earth as rain. Noah had the faith to believe God, to believe there would be rain resulting in a flood, and that his ark would rise above the waters of judgement to safety (rapture)!

### **THE CONCERT**

Wishing to encourage her young son's progress on the piano, a mother took her boy to a Paderewski concert. After they were seated, the mother spotted a friend in the audience and walked down to greet her. She didn't notice her little boy got up to explore and walked through a door marked "NO ADMITTANCE." When the house lights dimmed and the concert was about to begin, the mother returned to her seat and discovered that the boy was missing. Suddenly, the curtains opened and spotlights focused on the Steinway on stage. **In horror**, the mother saw her little boy sitting at the keyboard, innocently plucking "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

At that time, the great piano master made his entrance, and quickly moved to the piano, and **whispered in the boy's ear, "Don't quit. Keep playing."** Then leaning over, Paderewski reached down with his **left hand** and began filling in a **bass part**. Soon his **right arm reached** around to the other side of the child and he added a running **obbligato**. Together, the old master and the young novice transformed a **frightening situation into a wonderfully creative experience!** The audience was mesmerized. That's the way it is with our Heavenly Father. We do the best we can but sometimes our results *aren't exactly gracefully flowing music*. But with the hand of the Master, our life's work truly can be beautiful.

Next time you set out to accomplish great feats, listen carefully. You can hear the voice of the Master, whispering in your ear, **"Don't quit... Keep playing."** Feel his loving arms around you. Know that his strong hands are there helping you turn your feeble attempts into true masterpieces.

God never **loses anything** or anybody. God has never been **outsmarted or defeated**. God has never **worried** or been **afraid, insecure or lonely**. God knows every **detail in the future** as *if it had already happened*.

He has never **run out of ideas** or resources or ways to **protect** those who love Him. God has infinite creativity, Almighty power and endless energy. Our God is a God of **inexhaustible imagination**. He's a God of **incredible creativity**. God has never made a mistake. God has never been surprised. God never says, "Oh I didn't know that would happen." God tells us to live with faith in his power and his ability. God **always wins** and never **runs out of ways to protect** his own.

With God, you **never need to fear**. Even in the face of death, *you have nothing to fear*. Even though you walk through the valley of the shadow of death, you will not fear **for God is with you**. God knows what He's doing in your life, trust Him. Someday you will rejoice in what God is doing. Just as an unborn child doesn't know just how important his legs and arms are until he's born, so ***we don't realize how important the situations we face are until we're born into eternity***. We may not understand what's happening to us now, but when we get into eternity we'll see how essential these experiences are.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isa 55:8-9

Charles Spurgeon wrote that, "Trying to fully understand God is like a **gnat trying to drink in the whole ocean**. ***A God whom we could understand would be no God. If we could grasp Him, He could not be infinite.***" There's an ocean of understanding available to us, yet most people hold a thimble full and think they know God. Anxiety does not empty tomorrow of its sorrows, but only empties today of its strength.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.” Prov 3:5-6 Conclusion. Knowing God changes our decisions. We worry less. The more you know about God the more you know you can trust God.

**30 Day Assignment:** Try loving your enemies. It'll drive 'em crazy. Each day, try to make somebody smile. Be less angry and more loving toward everyone. Make peace with your past, so you won't **ruin your present**. Forget about regrets and resentments. Forget the past, press on for the high calling of God. Php 3:14

**Savor your life. Don't just endure it.** Really **enjoy** the life God is giving you right now.

When you wake up in the morning greet the Lord in a prayer. Pray while you work and do your work as if you were working for the Lord. Remember the best is yet to come. Eternity is unimaginable happiness and everlasting joy! At night give God thanks for whatever happened to you today. You are too blessed to be stressed.

**"He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge."** Ps 91:4

After a forest fire in Yellowstone National Park, forest rangers found a bird literally petrified in ashes, perched like a statue on the ground at the base of a tree. Somewhat sickened by the eerie sight, the ranger knocked over the ashen bird with a stick. When he struck the bird, **three tiny chicks scurried out from under their dead mother's wings**. *The loving mother, keenly aware of impending disaster, had carried her offspring to the base of the tree and had gathered them under her wings, instinctively knowing that the toxic smoke would rise. She could have flown to safety but had refused to abandon her babies.* When the blaze had arrived and the heat had scorched her small body, the mother had **remained steadfast**. Because she had been **willing to die**, those baby birds *under the cover of her wings would live*. That's like Jesus giving his life so we could live forever.

The average believer has a very small image of God. They don't know the awesome power and grandeur of the God who holds the planets in their place! Who sets the limits on the restless sea. God brought a billion galaxies into existence, out of nothing. God created the magnificence that is the human body and brain; He came up with the concept and design for all creation; and brought it into existence from nothing!

CS Lewis put it this way, "If we consider the staggering rewards promised in the Gospels... We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered to us, like an ignorant child who goes on making **mud pies in a slum** because he cannot imagine what is meant by a holiday at the sea."

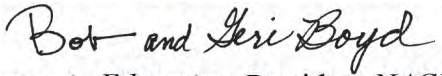
The Maker of the universe wants a close, loving, relationship **with you!** It's easy to get distracted playing with "mud pies" and miss the opportunity to live with God in paradise! No matter what we know about Him, it's minimal compared to the unsearchable, immense being called God. We will spend all eternity getting to know Him, and even then we will have just begun to scratch the surface of the depths of the knowing God Almighty.

“Who else has held the oceans in his hands and measured off the universe with the span of his hand. Who else knows the weight of the whole earth and even the universe?” Isa 40:12 *Living Bible* Why did God create such a vast, ever expanding universe with hundreds of billions of solar systems, and hundreds of billions of galaxies in the observable universe? To show us how *little we are*? No. To show us **how magnificent and Great our God is**. Yet the physical universe shows only a sliver of God's awesome power, infinite creativity and inexhaustible resources. He never runs out of ideas. He loves to create new things.

When God created the universe it was no more difficult than **stretching out a curtain**. “He who sits above the circle of the earth, for whom its inhabitants appear like grasshoppers, stretches out the heavens like a curtain.”

Isa 40:22

Jim Elliott famously said, “He is no fool who **gives what he can't keep to gain that which he can never lose**.” In other words a person who lives a good life now but who doesn't plan for eternity is **wise but for a moment but a fool forever**. Most people think that *if they live a good life*, doing good things, they'll go to heaven when they die. But God says, "No, you must be born again," Jn 3:3 because that is the only way a person can get in to heaven. Your **good deeds** are **meaningless** compared to what God has already done FOR you!

In Christ's Love,  
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