

G... stands for GOD

GOD is the beginning of GRACE. In fact, He is the beginning of all things.

- The Bible says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1).

The vast expanse of the universe and everything in it is the work of God alone. He is the Creator, Sustainer and Ruler of all things. All creation reflects His majestic power and glory.

- "The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands" (Psalm 19:1).

As Creator, God alone is worthy of the praise of His creation.

- "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things" (Revelation 4:11).

God, our Creator, is a God of HOLINESS and LOVE.

- "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY is the LORD GOD, the ALMIGHTY" (Revelation 4:8)

Holiness is that attribute of God that makes Him completely unique and separate from His creation. God is Majestic, Glorious, and Perfect in every way. The slightest sin or imperfection cannot dwell in His Holy presence.

- The Bible describes God as "He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion!" (1 Timothy 6:15-16).

God's LOVE is as great as His HOLINESS and MIGHT.

- The Bible speaks of "the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind" (Titus 3:4).

Because of love, God created human beings to reflect His power and glory. In fact, we are the pinnacle of His creation!

- "When I consider Your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained; What is man that You take thought of him, and the son of man that You care for him? Yet You have made him a little lower than God, and You crown him with glory and majesty! You make him to rule over the works of Your hands" (Psalm 8:4-6).

What makes us so special? We, unlike the rest of God's creation, were created in the image of God Himself!

- "God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them" (Genesis 1:27).

Because God is our loving Creator and Ruler, we are responsible to love, worship, and obey Him alone. Since He created us, He has the right to lay his claim on our lives.

- Jesus said, "You shall worship the LORD your GOD, and serve Him only" (Matthew 4:10).
- Jesus also said, "'You shall love the LORD your GOD with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the great and foremost commandment" (Matthew 22:37-38)

Why, then, do we not reflect God's glory and obey Him as we should?

R... stands for REBELLION

Soon after God created Adam and Eve (the first man and woman), they willfully chose to rebel against God, and sin entered the human race. Every person thereafter has inherited that sinful nature and has continued to rebel against our Creator. The result of sin is that we have failed to reflect God's glory. In order to dwell in His Holy presence, God does not require that we merely do our best to live good lives; He requires us to reflect His perfection.

- God said, "You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy" (Leviticus 19:2).

God will never judge us based upon how we compare to our fellow human beings, but on how we compare to *Him*.

Clearly, *all* of us fall far short of His perfect standard.

- "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

We are all sinners both by *nature* (because we inherited our sinful natures from Adam and Eve) and by choice (because we all willfully choose to disobey God).

- The Bible says, "Through one man (Adam) sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned" (Romans 5:12).
- "If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8).

Because God is perfect in HOLINESS, He cannot tolerate the presence of sin. Our sins have separated us from our Creator.

- "Your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you" (Isaiah 59:2).

Because sin separates us from God, it carries tragic consequences.

- "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).

One day, we will all stand before God to give account of our deeds.

- "It is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment" (Hebrews 9:27).
- Jesus warned, "when the Son of Man (Jesus) comes in his glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on his glorious throne." He will separate the sinners from the righteous. "These (sinners) will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life" (Matthew 25:31,46).

The problem is, How can we sinners ever become righteous in God's sight?

A... stands for ATONEMENT

Atonement means "to repair a broken relationship." God, because of His great love for His creation, sent His Son - Jesus - into the world so that sinners may be reconciled to God.

- Jesus said, "For God so love the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16).
- "Having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1).

Peace with God has made possible by everything Jesus did on behalf of sinners. This includes HIS LIFE, DEATH, and RESURRECTION.

HIS LIFE. Jesus did for sinners what they could not do for themselves. He succeeded where we failed. Jesus reflected God's glory.

- "And the Word (Jesus) became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

Jesus lived a perfect, sinless life.

- The Bible says that Jesus is "One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15).

HIS DEATH. God has provided atonement between Himself and sinners through the substitutionary death of Jesus on the cross. Jesus died as the substitute for sinners; He died in their place.

- "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).
- "For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God" (1 Peter 3:18).
- "He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross" (1 Peter 2:24).

At the cross, an amazing exchange took place: our sins were credited to Jesus; His righteousness is credited to those who follow him.

- He (God) made Him who know no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

HIS RESURRECTION. Jesus' death is not the end of the story ... Three days later, He arose victoriously from the grave! Death has been defeated! Jesus' resurrection is proof that God has approved His ministry. Jesus *alone* is SAVIOR and LORD!

- "He (God) has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead" (Acts 17:31).

By His life, Jesus attained righteousness on sinners' behalf. **By His death,** Jesus paid the penalty that sinners owed. **By His resurrection,** Jesus defeated death for all who will follow Him.

The blessings of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection apply only to those who will follow Him as Savior and Lord. This response to follow Jesus is called conversion.

C... stands for CONVERSION

We must each receive Jesus as our Savior and Lord by a voluntary and intentional act of the will, having faith in His atoning life, death, and resurrection and turning from sin to obey Him in all things.

To receive Jesus as Lord and savior, we must trust in Him alone for salvation.

- Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me" (John 14:6).
- "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" (Acts 4:12).

And... We must turn from our sins (repent) and turn to Him in love and obedience.

- "God is now declaring to all men that all people everywhere should repent" (Acts 17:30).
- Jesus said, "unless you repent, you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3).
- Jesus also said, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments" (John 14:15).

God offers us salvation as a *free gift* (GRACE). God's GRACE come to us through *faith* in Jesus as Savior and Lord.

- "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23).
- "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Our sin separates us from God.

Our best efforts cannot overcome this barrier.

Jesus' life, death, and resurrection broke the sin barrier. Believers are united to God through Him.

God's GRACE comes to those who receive Jesus by faith.

- "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" (John 1:12).
- The Bible says, "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 ... for 'Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved'" (Romans 10:9,13).
- "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).
- "I am not ashamed of the gospel [good news], for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes" (Romans 1:16).

For those who repent of their sins and place their faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord, God gives the promise of *eternal* life.

E... stands for ETERNAL LIFE

- Jesus promised, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life" (John 5:24).
- "He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the son of God does not have the life" (1 John 5:12).

Jesus brings NEW LIFE to all who place their faith in Him.

- "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come" (2 Corinthians 5:17).
- Jesus said, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10).

This promise of abundant life does not mean that we will be free from troubles in this lifetime. In fact, the followers of Jesus can expect to face trials and difficulties.

- Jesus said, "In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

In spite of difficulties, Jesus promised His followers a PEACE beyond understanding. The peace of Jesus is something that only His followers can experience.

- Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you; not as the world gives do I give you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful" (John 14:27).

Nothing in the universe can separate believers from the love of God.

- "Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ... in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:35,37-38).

The promise of God - to those who trust in Jesus - is peace with God in which this world and eternal life in the world to come.

When Jesus returns in power and glory, those who have trusted in Him for salvation will live forever in His glorious presence!

- "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).

This wonderful gift of eternal life is given to all those who have been saved through faith in Jesus.

THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION

The most important question for each of us to ask is, "Where do I stand in the sight of God?"

- The Bible says that "the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

On the cross, Jesus suffered the justice and wrath of God on behalf of all those who trust Him as Savior and Lord. On the other hand, those who do not trust Him as Savior and Lord will suffer the judgment of God themselves.

- Jesus said, "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him" (John 3:36).

There is no middle ground with Jesus.

- Jesus said, "He who is not with Me is against Me" (Matthew 12:30).

Everlasting life, joy, and peace await those who stand on the Lord's side.

- Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again [spiritually] to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.... and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him not, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls" (1 Peter 1:3-5,8-9).

The question remains, Where do you stand in the sight of God? Are you on the Lord's side, or on your own side? Are you living for God through Jesus, or are you living for yourself? If Jesus returned *today*, would you experience the everlasting joy of Heaven with Him, or would you suffer the wrath of God?

Are you ready to follow Jesus as your Savior and Lord? If so, then you must repent of your sins and place your faith in Jesus alone for salvation. You must believe that He lived, died, and rose again for your salvation. You must commit your life to Him as your living Savior and Lord. If you are ready to have your sins forgiven and to receive the gift of eternal life, then trust in Jesus *right now*.

ARE YOU READY?

Go to God in prayer. (Prayer is talking to God). Admit to Him that you are a sinner and in need of a Savior. Ask Him to have mercy on you and to forgive you of your sins. Thank Him for sending His Son, Jesus - whose life, death, and resurrection secured salvation for all who follow Him. Commit your life to Jesus. Tell Him that you repent of your sins and trust in Him as Savior and Lord. Ask Him to fill you with His Holy Spirit - to empower you to live a life that will bring glory to His name.

The Bible says,

- "He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life" (1 John 5:12-13).

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