

Just wanted to take a minute to say hello and introduce myself. I'm just a normal guy with a family that cares about you.

I know you don't know me and I don't know you but for whatever reason, our lives have collided, if even for this short moment.

I don't know what you have been through or where your life is at right now, but I just want to share a very simple truth with you. You've probably heard it many times before and may not care at all, but here it goes: God loves you.

This truth has completely transformed me and the life of my family. If I had the time, I'd tell you about all the things God has done in my life from start to finish, but basically God has rescued me from all the bad things I've ever done and ever will do simply because he loves me.

I could go into a lot of detail about how messed up my wife and I were before God found us... about how I was wrapped up in all kinds of sexual sin, or about how my wife was into all kinds of drugs and partying. But I'm not sure how much the details matter. What matters is that God rescued us from all that and brought us into a relationship with him.

I obviously don't know anything about you. I don't know about your past or what your life is like now. I'm guessing that you never thought you'd find yourself in the place where you are at right now. So I don't pretend to understand everything you're going through.

I'm just here to let you know that there is hope.

Listen... I can't promise you that if you open up your heart to God that all your problems will go away. That you'll be suddenly "blessed" by winning the lottery or something. But I can promise you that you won't have to live life alone anymore. That even if you struggle for the rest of your life to make ends meet, you will have something to look forward to in an eternity in heaven with God.

So... if you're still reading, I just want to tell you that God wants to offer you a new life. A new start. He doesn't care what you've done in the past, He just wants you to come to Him just as you are.

This is what the Bible actually says:

1. Everyone is a sinner from birth and has screwed up. Romans 3:4 says – "There is none righteous, no, not one." Romans 3:23 says: "For ALL have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"
2. We deserve death and hell because of our sin. God is holy and righteous and demands an absolutely perfect life from us (which is impossible by the way). Romans 6:23 says "the wages of sin is death". That is what we deserve for our sin.
3. But God didn't just leave us in this state... He provides a way out of our sin and the death that we deserve. He sent His Son Jesus to die in your place. He actually took the penalty that you deserved when he went and died on the cross. And when He rose from the dead 3 days later, he conquered death. Now that Jesus died in your place, the only thing you have to do is accept and believe that fact. The Bible says that if you simply believe that Jesus rose from the dead, that you will be saved from sin and death, that God will wash you completely clean as if you had never done a single thing wrong. It's a pretty ridiculous statement if you actually think about it, but it's exactly what the Bible says. This is what Romans 10:9 says: "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.". And another famous verse: John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave his one and only Son that whosoever believes in Him won't die, but will have eternal life."

Religion says that you have to somehow “reach” God by being a good person... not doing bad things, and living a life doing good things. Only then will you be good enough to go to heaven and be with God. I want to tell you that religion is a lie. If you actually read the Bible, you will see that God hates religion. It totally contradicts what God has said. The Bible is clear that there is nothing you or I can do to reach God or to be good enough to be accepted by God. Think about it... is there anyone on the planet that has ever not made at least one mistake? Of course not. That is why the Bible says that there are NONE righteous. Religion is not the answer. This is the simple answer:

Agree with God that you have made mistakes and are a sinner, Admit that sin to God and repent, and simply believe that God sent His Son Jesus to die on the cross for you, rise again so that your sin could be washed away.

It's not rocket science. This message which the Bible refers to as “the gospel” is so simple that a child can understand it.

So my basic question to you is, do you believe all this? If so, what are you going to do about it?

Let me make a suggestion... just talk to God. He can hear you right now. Just tell God that you agree with Him that you are a sinner, that you have messed up and want forgiveness, that you want a new life. Tell Him that you believe that He sent Jesus to die for your sins so that you could have a relationship with Him. Pray it honestly and from your heart. God will hear you and accept you as you are.

Again, I want to emphasize that you don't have to try to clean yourself up for God. You don't have to try to be a better person before you talk to God, simply come to Him as you are and talk to Him. I guarantee you that He is listening. If you prayed that prayer from your heart, I want to tell you that you are saved! God has washed your sins away and given you a new life.

The next part of your prayer should simply be something that expresses to God your thankfulness for saving you from your past and from your sin. And because of that gratitude you now want to live for Him, asking Him to take full control of your life.

After that... if I can make a few suggestions. Try to find a Church that is close that teaches the Bible. There are a lot of Churches out there and the whole process can be pretty confusing, but I would suggest that you look for a Church that simply teaches the Bible chapter by chapter and verse by verse. Then, tell someone at that Church about your new commitment. They will be able to help you to learn more about the Bible and learn more about how to have a fruitful relationship with God.

Well... I just want you to know again that God loves you. He has changed the lives of my wife and I, and that is why I wanted to write you this personal letter. This is something that I have experienced for myself, and just want you to know that it is real and truly life changing.

I hope some of the items in this bag can come in handy. I know it's not much, but hopefully it will be helpful as you go through some of these hard times in your life. Again, I don't know what you're going through, but I want you to know that I will be praying for you.

God Bless,
Justin Smith & Family

P.S. I'm including some resources for you for local food pantries, shelters, job resources, and basically anything I could find to try to help you.

If you made a decision for Christ, we'd love to hear about it, feel free to write anytime:

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