

# PLAIN TRUTH®

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CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION®

## What He Did for You and Me

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When you were stuck in your old sin-dead life, you were incapable of responding to God. God brought you alive—right along with Christ! Think of it! All sins forgiven, **the slate wiped clean**, that old arrest warrant canceled and nailed to Christ's Cross. He stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority at the Cross and marched them naked through the streets (Colossians 2:13-15, The Message Bible, my emphasis).

**T**he traditional shorthand explanation about what Jesus did for you and me is that he saved us. But sadly, "being saved" has become a hackneyed cliché, one of many in-house expressions and slogans, rejected and even lampooned by many.

Jesus did save us from *our old sin-dead life*—but sin itself has also become a cliché, a narrowly defined term and one that distances many people from the gospel, rather than attracting them.

Some believe if we don't "get saved," God will torture and burn our sorry-you-know-whats in hell forever and ever.

Jesus has not saved us from the wrath of Father God who, were it not for Jesus, would have tortured, toasted and roasted us forever in hell. That's the message of self-serving religion, but it has nothing to do with Jesus.

1) Through the work of Jesus, *God brought you alive*—the New International Version (NIV) says he made us *alive with Christ*. The metaphor is about death and life, but in its spiritual reality, it is more than a metaphor—one is either dead to the things of God or alive.

Life with Christ Jesus gives us hope now and beyond this life. Being alive in Christ means that we too have willingly and voluntarily committed our lives to Jesus, so that the life we once followed, filled with lust, vanity, envy and greed... a life devoted to self, to "me, myself and I" has been

crucified with him AND... not only is our former life kaput and dead—because of his resurrection we too are resurrected. He, our risen Lord, now lives his life in us.

2) He canceled the *old arrest warrant*—again, the NIV says he *forgave our sins and canceled our legal indebtedness and nailed it to the cross*.

He saved us from religiously driven shame and guilt and from much of institutionalized religion that keeps its stranglehold on the necks of its captives, threatening them with eternal torture in a hell it has invented and fabricated so that it—Christless religion—can remain in business.

3) Thus, Jesus *stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority and marched them naked through the streets*. The Cross is the time when Jesus disarmed the powers and authorities of Christless religion and made a public spectacle of them.

Jesus was crucified because he refused to play the game by the rules big business religion had established. But in one of the grand paradoxes of the gospel, one of the divine ironies and eternal spiritual mysteries, killing Jesus did not get rid of him. In fact, the voluntary death of Jesus on his Cross won a victory that could never have been achieved and accomplished any other way... or by any other person.

It was God on that Cross—God in the flesh—and he deliberately did

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what he did as the greatest demonstration of love ever. Jesus intentionally accepted all the hatred and violence and antagonism and vengeance of humanity and put it all on his shoulders—he consumed it all—he burned up, absorbed and eradicated all evil in himself. So all who accept, believe and receive his love and his Cross need no longer live under the control or regulation of evil—evil has no power over those who follow Jesus.

The salvation of Jesus Christ, achieved and accomplished by him for us because it is something we could never have done for ourselves, is both a past event, that happened once and for all *and* a present reality in the lives of those who trust, believe and follow Jesus now.

### A Summary

In more popular terminology, summarizing Colossians 2:13-15 we can conclude:

1) Jesus *saved and saves* us from ourselves... because we are often our own worst enemies. As that comic strip character Pogo once said, “We have met the enemy and he is us.”

2) Jesus *saved and saves* us from our society that takes advantage of us, through its taxation, fraudulent and corrupt governments, warfare and violence.

3) Jesus *saved and saves* us from other people who use and abuse us—blackmailing and intimidating and threatening us... from those who enslave us in both body and soul, who bankrupt us financially and lead us into the depths of evil and immorality of all kinds.

4) Jesus *saved and saves* us from the demands of religious authorities and the institutions they represent. He releases us from the religious prisons and salt mines where people do time, deceived into thinking that God is pleased and appeased by the pain and hardship they experience.

Jesus did not recognize religious rules about achieving, performing and measuring up. **The kingdom**



*The full significance and meaning of Jesus, to and for each of us, is an individually realized belief based on the experience of our relationship with God...*

***Jesus brought to this world was not a kingdom gained by performance but a kingdom given by grace.***

Jesus insisted that unconditional love, grace and forgiveness was lavished on all who would receive it, and it could never be earned. Jesus gave you and me what we can never be worthy of and that gift he gave is centered in and on his life, death and resurrection.

### **What He Did, Still Does and Always Will Do for You and Me**

*What He Did, Still Does and Always Will Do for You and Me* is not a question fully answered by researching arcane truth and facts—or studying the precise history and chronology of events of Jesus’ birth, life, death and resurrection.

- The full significance and meaning of Jesus, to and for each of us, is an individually realized belief based on the experience of our relationship with God. The full significance and meaning of Jesus for you and me, now and forever, is a dynamic given by the grace of God, so that our life as a Christ-follower is a spiritual journey of grace through faith.

- By the grace of God we identify with Jesus in his vulnerability, humility and transparency. We, by the grace of God, are given the risen life of our Lord, lived within us, so that, as Paul says, *the life we now lead we live by faith in the Son of God who loves us and gave himself for us* (Galatians 2:20).

- Jesus lives his risen life in us, in our trenches, on our battlefields, in

our hospital rooms, in our times of grief and loss. Living in Christ, and he in us, means that his compassion is alive in us, received by us and passed on to others in his name. Jesus is with us always, in suffering, sorrow and pain, as well as glorious deliverance. He always lavishes forgiveness, mercy, grace, and love on us.

- We are made alive in Christ, given new life in our risen Lord so that we might serve others in his name. Jesus came to serve, not to be served. Jesus came to serve, even though he knew that his service would not be accepted or received by those to whom he initially came ... even though he knew his service would be rejected, ultimately in his torture and death on his cross

**What He Did for You and Me** did not end. Jesus’ life was not over when they crucified him and put his dead body in a tomb.

**What He Did for You and Me** didn’t end when he won the victory over sin and death in his glorious and victorious resurrection, and then ascended to heaven.

**What He Did for You and Me** has not ended... the gospel continues in people like you and me, in whom the risen Lord Jesus lives.

**What He Did for You and Me** means that we pick up our own cross and follow Jesus and serve others, in his name, as he produces his fruit in our lives.

*To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!*

—Revelation 5:13 □