

Our Striving Falls Short 2

Now, the reality of our sin and the separation it brings from God doesn't stop people from trying life or even religion on their own. People try many things on their own terms to find meaning in life, and for some, even to find their way back to God.

Isaiah 64:6 says that even our righteous attempts for God on our own are as filthy rags in His sight. So God says that our attempts for meaning or religious improvement apart from Him are useless. While this may sound harsh, He as Creator alone lays out the design for humanity as well as the way to true redemption and meaning in life.

Yet people still search for meaning and strive with great effort to cross the gap of separation back to God. As one struggling to wade across a swift stream only to find it impossible, so is the one trying to gain favor with God on his or her own. Sin makes this distance back to God impossible on our own.



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WHAT NOW? 5

1. *Grab a Bible*
John is a great place to start reading!


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2. *Find a Church*
Search for a Bible preaching church in your area.

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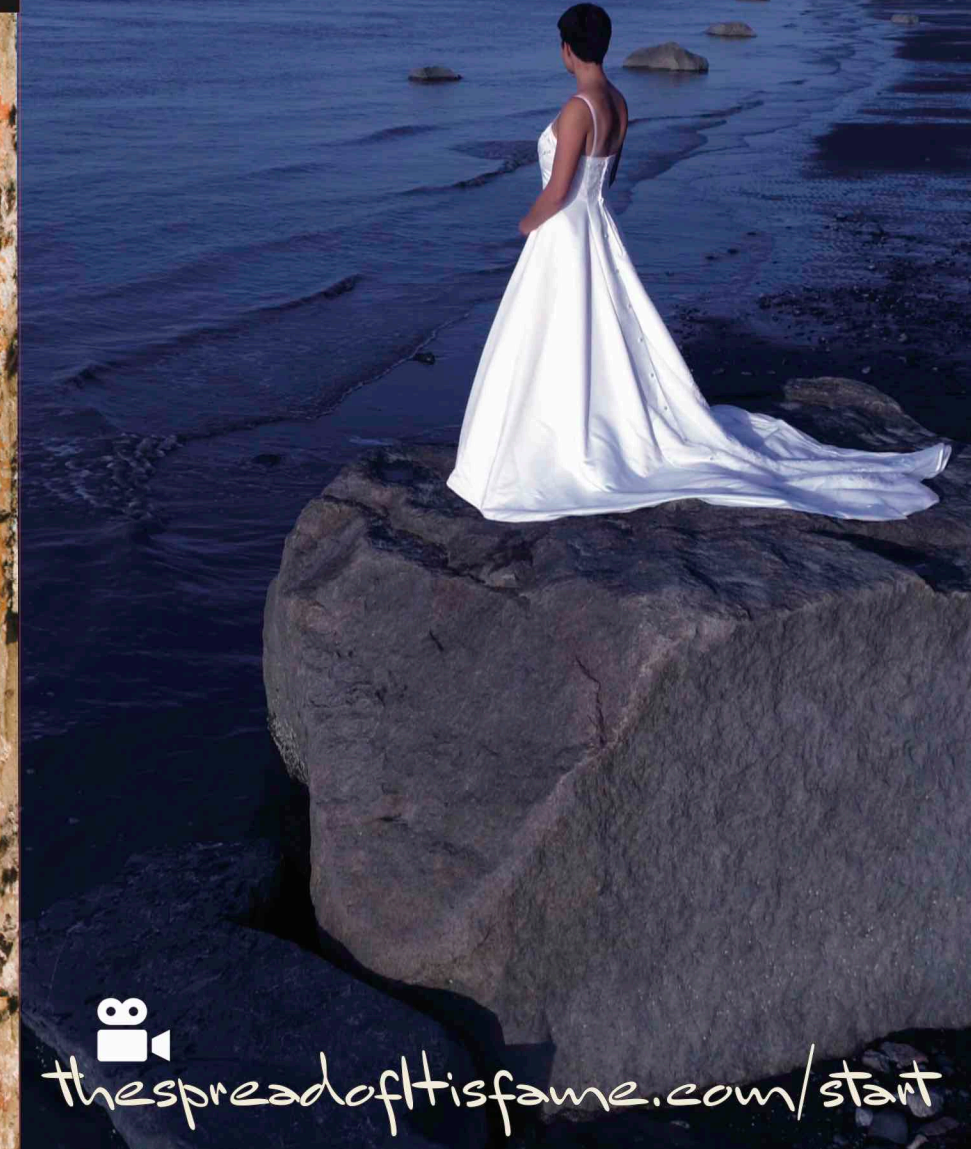
3. *Give Us a Shout*
Reach out and let us know if you chose to follow Jesus or even if you just have questions! We'd love to hear from you!

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*All Scripture quotations are from the ESV, English Standard Version, Crossway, 2011.

God's Design



Genesis 1 records God's creation of all things. Psalm 19 and Romans 1 speak of the glory of God in creation. Ultimately, we must all choose by faith whether we'll believe the claims of Scripture. Romans 9 compares God as designer to a potter molding a piece of clay. If God is Creator of all things, He has a purpose for all things. 1

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Sin Corrupts & Brings a Gap of Separation to God

In the beginning God made all things perfect, including man and woman. Like the symbolism of a bride on her wedding day, mankind once stood righteous before a holy God. In Genesis 3, however, we read of sin entering the world as Adam and Eve chose to doubt God and then act contrary to His instruction.

Romans 5 explains that through man's sin in the garden, sin now becomes automatic for every person. Romans 3:10 says that "there is none righteous, no not one." Romans 3:23 says that "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God."

God explains in His Word that His holiness and our sinfulness are not compatible. Our sin brings a gap of separation between us and God.

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The Solution

3

John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."

Romans 5:8 says, "But God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life."

Sin creates this massive gap of separation between us and our holy God. God explains in His Word that there is nothing we can do to fix this separation. Holiness demands justice, and so justice must be served. Hebrews 9:22 states that blood must be shed for forgiveness from sin. All of the Old Testament pictured this through the shedding of animal sacrifices, as the people showed their faith in these substitutionary sacrifices. The New Testament makes this GOOD NEWS clear, that God in His love made a way of redemption. The Father sent His Son Jesus to live a perfect life for us, to die a sacrificial death for us, and to rise to new life. Galatians 3:13 says, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us..." Jesus became this perfect once-for-all sacrifice bearing the justice from God that our sin deserved.

Thus, Jesus is our ultimate Gap Stander or Bridge that spans this gap of separation back to the Father. Nothing we do in our effort deals with the justice our sin demands before our holy God.

We read in Titus 3:5-7, "He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

JESUS

bridges the gap

All have Access to this Jesus

4

The one who knows he or she is messed up has access to this Jesus. The one who strives to clean up for God has access to this same Jesus. The one who tries living life on his or her own in hopes of finding a place with God has access to this same Jesus. Anyone who tries to find a way back to God in their own way still has access to this same Jesus.

Coming to faith in Christ is just that... faith. It is realizing that you can do nothing to bridge your way back to a relationship with God because of your sin. Jesus bridged this gap and only He is able to offer this access, this justice before God, this forgiveness, this new life all through trust in Him.

Ephesians 2:8-9 states, "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."

Finally, we read in Romans 10:9-10, "because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him

from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved."

A Choice of the Heart

Coming to faith in Christ is just that... it is a choice of the heart to place one's trust solely in Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins before God. It is through faith pledging to follow this same Jesus by faith throughout the rest of your life. It's coming to the end of yourself and beginning a new chapter by faith in Jesus' perfect life, sacrificial death, and glorious resurrection.

Making this faith choice is not a rote prayer, but rather a conscious choice in your heart. If you find God showing you these things are true and you believe them and want to follow Him by faith, simply cry out to him in your own words telling Him that!



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