

GOD'S PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE!

Did you know that God is a great planner? Sure! Just take a look at the intricacies of His creation. Every cell, every living organism was designed and built according to His exacting detail.

And although God didn't plan for Adam to eat the fruit—when he did, God had a planned response already in hand.

Paul talks about God's plan when he writes, "*He (that is, God) chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight*" (Ephesians 1:4).

Isn't it great to know that God plans ahead? And since it's GOD'S plan we're talking about, let's call His plan: **PLAN A**. Now understand: There is no Plan B. It's not needed. Plan A is more than sufficient to meet our need. May I tell you about it?

Before I do....may I ask: "What kind of planner are you?"

I know that's a pretty tough question, so let me ask it another way. And believe me, the first time someone asked me this question, it made me stop and think, too.

Let's say you're ushered into the throne room of heaven and God asked you, "Why should I let YOU into My heaven?" What would you say?

If you're like me, that question has stimulated some serious reflection on your part. If so, may I share with you how I came to a place in my life when I could answer that question positively—and how you can do the same? Believe me, I consider it a great privilege to tell you about PLAN A. It's the greatest thing that has ever happened to me, and I love to share it with others.

There are four truths that are essential to understand in order to get a handle on Plan A. The first is this:

1. GOD HAS A PLAN!

God wants you to come to know Him personally. He wants to develop a relationship with you. He wants you to have a fulfilling, happy life here, and He also wants to give you eternal life in heaven.

Jesus once said: "*I have come that they might have life and have it to the full!*" (John 10:10).

God wants to bless you and bring meaning to your life. He wants you to know His love and discover His divine purpose for your life. God once told His people: "*For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future*" (Jeremiah 29:11).

That's God's Plan! And this plan is all-inclusive. It's for everybody, not just the religious elite. But the sad news is—most people aren't experiencing that fulfilled, abundant life!

Why is that? Why don't more people experience God's purpose for their lives?

That brings us to Truth #2. Many aren't experiencing the joy of God's Plan simply because:

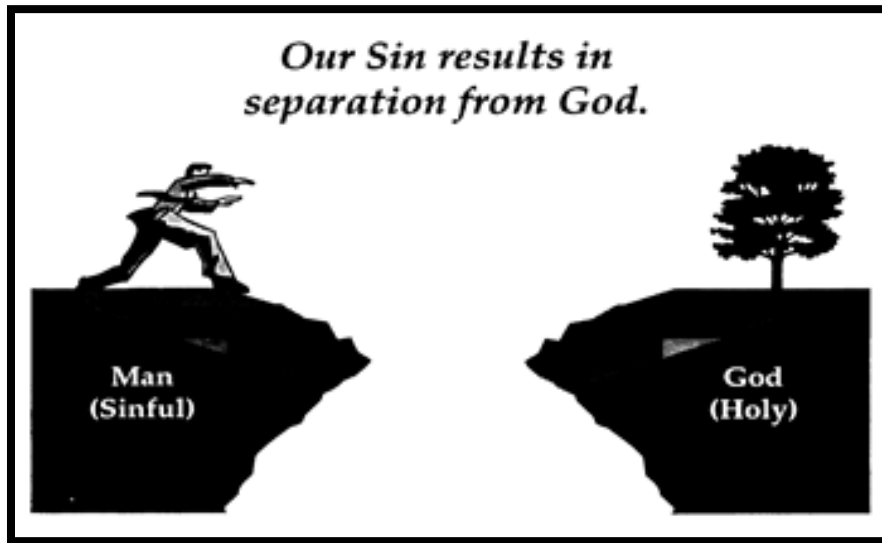
2. MAN CAUSED A PROBLEM!

So what else is new, right?

There's a great bumper sticker making the rounds these days. It says: *"If you don't feel close to God—GUESS WHO MOVED?"*

That's the problem. We've moved. And not just a few. All of us. The Bible says: *"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"* (Romans 3:23).

That "All" includes you. And me. All of us have chosen to go our own way, to pursue our own objectives rather than obey God's laws. **SO WHAT'S THE RESULT OF THAT SIN?** Picture it like this:



God wants us to enjoy a personal relationship with Him. But sin has created a big gap between us. And sooner or later, no matter how we try to fill that gap, we realize that life without God lacks meaning and purpose and hope.

We try our best to bridge the gap—to figure out some way to pull together the broken seam—but even our best efforts come up short. Try as we may, there's no way we can bridge that gap.

What does this gap cause? Among other things, a lack of happiness, fulfillment, contentment, and peace. All the things we long for and try to get by ourselves, but cannot.

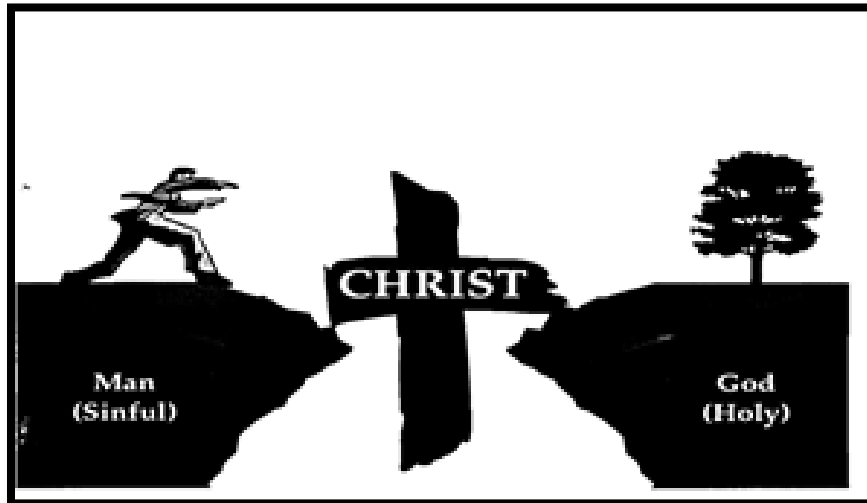
SO HOW DO WE BRIDGE THIS GAP?

We can't . . . But God already did. That's Truth #3.

3. GOD MADE A PROVISION

After all, He knew we were going to blow it. He knew man would rebel, so He said, *"I will send my Son to be a payment for man's sin. He will be a Deliverer. He will build a bridge so that man and I can once again enjoy the intimate fellowship I planned for us in the Beginning."*

Picture it like this:



God's decision to send Jesus is based on one word: **GRACE**. And grace is the reason why people who try to earn their way into heaven by being good enough or by doing enough good things will never make it. Because you can't earn grace—grace is a gift. A free gift of love. The Bible says: *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God”* (Ephesians 2:8).

It was amazing grace that caused Jesus to take our sins upon Himself when He died on the cross. The Bible says: *“All we like sheep have gone astray, each one has turned to his own way, and the Lord laid on him the punishment we deserved”* (Isaiah 53:6).

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).

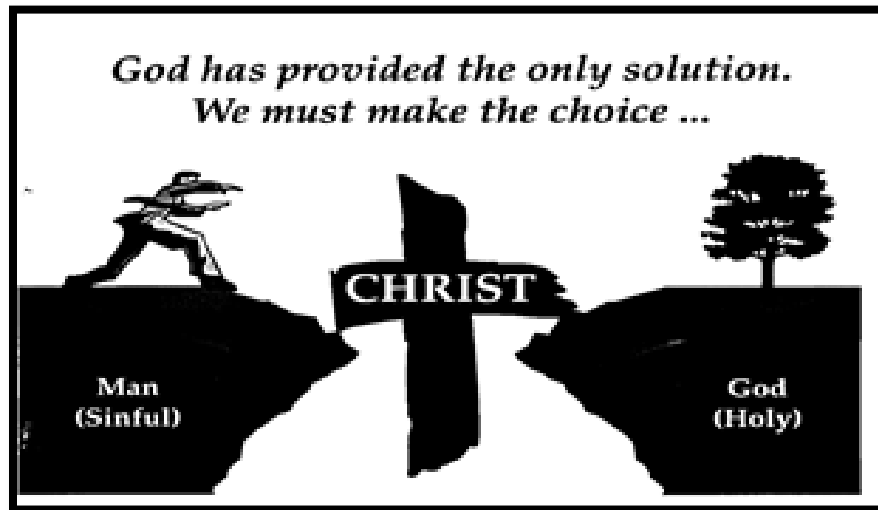
And because He shouldered your sins at Calvary, He actually paid in full your sin-guilt. His death is your deliverance. Through His death, Jesus conquered the power and penalty of sin. Which is why He now offers His sin-payment as a gift. He says, **“You can come into a relationship with Me through my death. You can have eternal life and you can know with assurance that you are God's child.”** But it's not enough to just know this information . . .

4. YOU MUST RECEIVE GOD'S PAYMENT

That's the final truth. Just knowing about Plan A isn't enough. You must do something about it. You must cross the bridge God has built. You must receive Jesus, God's Son—our righteous bridge builder—as your personal payment for sin.

The Bible says: *“To all who receive Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God”* (John 1:12).

Picture it like this:



AND JUST HOW DO YOU RECEIVE JESUS?

First, you **BELIEVE**. You have faith. And saving faith is more than just mental acceptance. It includes trusting only in Jesus for your salvation. It also includes obedience to His righteous plan.

Jesus once said: *“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; he who does not obey the Son shall not see life . . .”* (John 3:36).

God’s plan is already full and complete. The bridge is built. And nothing we can do could ever add even the slightest little bit to the structure. However, to receive Jesus means that I am willing to do something about what I say I believe. Now understand, this thing I do is not a “work” that, if performed, earns my way to heaven—it is simply my obedient response to His plan.

The second step we must take is **REPENTANCE**. To repent means that I have a change of heart that leads to a change in action. My entire perspective on life is altered. I see myself as a sinner, and willingly confess my sins to God and determine to change. And when I do, the Bible says: *“If we confess our sins, He (God) is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness”* (1 John 1:9).

The next step is **CONFESSION**. The Bible says: *“If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved”* (Romans 10:9).

Now do you know what people in the Bible did whenever they made a confession of Christ? They were baptized (immersed)! Immediately! There was no waiting period; they didn’t put it off till Sunday—whenever someone received Jesus—that very day they were baptized!

The Bible says: *“You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ”* (Galatians 3:26-27). Baptism in the Bible was always by immersion. It is an outward expression of an inner faith in Jesus. It pictures His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6:3-6). It is the culmination of your decision to receive Christ.

On the very first day of the church, the people responded to the Gospel in faith. As soon as they heard PLAN A, they said, *“What should we do about this? We believe what you’re telling us! What should we do about it?”*

The Apostle Peter said, *“Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit”* (Acts 2:38).

If you believe that Jesus is who He claims to be, if you have repented of your sins, if you have confessed Jesus—the very next step to take is to be baptized.

Well that’s PLAN A (and there is no Plan B). God has a **PLAN** for your life. He wants you to be His child and live with Him in a personal, dramatic way. But because you sinned, God has a **PROBLEM**: “How do I make this one I love My child without just ignoring the sin?” But this problem wasn’t too big for God. Being the Great Problem-Solver, God made a **PROVISION** through Jesus Christ.

Through the cross, Jesus paid the full penalty for your sins, and He offers to you God’s free gift of salvation. But in order for the plan to become a reality in your life—**YOU MUST RECEIVE THE PAYMENT**

Have you ever done that? How about right now? If you are willing, God is more than able to bridge the gap of your sins and bring to you fullness, happiness and hope for the future. He’s ready and able to bring you into His eternal family.

Once you accept God’s PLAN A, this promise can be yours:

*“God has given us eternal life,
and this life is in His Son.
He who has the Son has life:
he who does not have the Son of God
does not have life. I write these things
to you who believe in the name
of the Son of God so that you may
know that you have eternal life”*
(1 John 5:11-13).

I understand that there is a lot of information and difficult ideas in this brochure to grasp. Even Peter, one of Jesus’ closest followers, acknowledged that some of these ideas are hard to understand, but he encouraged other Christians by telling them that you have to grow in your knowledge of the Lord in order to better understand Him (2 Peter 3:15-18).

There may be questions that you have about God, Jesus, and the Bible that are not answered in this brochure. If you do we at Macedonia Christian Church would be more than glad to do our best to answer any questions that you may have.

If you feel led to accept Jesus Christ as your Savior please don’t hesitate to call us. There is no better time than the present. You can reach us at the following address:

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