

# THE FINAL EXAM

BY JOHN A. STEWART

Every person will eventually stand before God in judgment — the final exam. The Bible says, *And it is appointed for men to die once, but after this comes judgment* (Heb. 9:27).

May I ask you a question? *If you died today, do you know for certain you would go to heaven?* I did not ask if you're religious or a church member, nor did I ask if you've had some encounter with God — a meaningful, spiritual experience. I didn't even ask if you believe in God, or angels, or if you're trying to live a good life. The question I *am* asking is this: *If you died today, do you know for certain you would go to heaven?*

When you die, you will stand alone before God in judgment. You'll either be saved for all eternity, or you will be separated from God for all eternity in what the Bible calls the lake of fire (Rom. 14:12; Rev. 20:11–15). Tragically, many religious people who believe in God are not going to be accepted by Him when they die.

***“Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”*** (Matt 7:22–23).

God loves you and wants you to go to heaven (John 3:16; 2 Peter 3:9). If you are not sure where you'll spend eternity, you are not prepared to meet God. God wants you to know for certain that you will go to heaven.

***Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation*** (2 Cor. 6:2).

The words ***behold*** and ***now*** are repeated because God wants you to know that you can be saved today. You do not need to hear those terrible words, ***Depart from Me...*** Isn't that great news?

Jesus himself said, ***You must be born again*** (John 3:7). These aren't the words of a pastor, a church, or a particular denomination. They're the words of Jesus Christ himself. You ***must*** be born again (saved from eternal damnation) before you die; otherwise, it will be too late when you die! You can know for certain today that God will accept you into heaven when you die.

***These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life*** (1 John 5:13).

The phrase ***you may know*** means that you can know for certain before you die that you will go to heaven. To be born again, you must understand and accept four essential spiritual truths. These truths are right from the Bible, so you know you can trust them — they are not man-made religious traditions. Now, let's consider these four essential spiritual truths.

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## FIRST ESSENTIAL SPIRITUAL TRUTH

### THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT YOU ARE A SINNER AND SEPARATED FROM GOD.

No one is righteous in God's eyes. To be righteous means to be totally without sin, not even a single act.

***There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one*** (Rom. 3:10–12).

***...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*** (Rom. 3:23).

Look at the words God uses to show that all men are sinners — *none, not one, all turned aside, not one*. God is making a point — all men are sinners. No man is good (perfectly without sin) in His sight. The reason is sin.

Have you ever lied, lusted, hated someone, stolen anything, or taken God's name in vain, even once? These are all sins. Only one sin makes you a sinner and unrighteous in God's eyes.

Are you willing to admit to God that you are a sinner? If so, then tell Him right now you have sinned. You can say the words in your heart or aloud — it doesn't matter, but be honest with God. Now check the box if you have just admitted you are a sinner.

*God, I admit I am a sinner in Your eyes.*

Now, let's look at the second essential spiritual truth.

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## SECOND ESSENTIAL SPIRITUAL TRUTH

### THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT YOU CANNOT SAVE YOURSELF OR EARN YOUR WAY TO HEAVEN.

Man's sin is a very serious problem in the eyes of God. Your sin separates you from God, both now and for all eternity — unless you are born again.

*For the wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23).*

*And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1).*

**Wages** are a payment a person earns by what he or she has done. Your sin has earned you the wages of death, which means separation from God. If you die never having been born again, you will be separated from God after death.

You cannot save yourself or purchase your entrance into heaven. The Bible says that man is **not redeemed with corruptible things like gold or silver** (1 Peter 1:18). If you own all the money in the world, you cannot buy your entrance into heaven. Neither can you buy your way into heaven with good works.

*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works lest anyone should boast (Eph. 2:8–9).*

The Bible says salvation is **not of yourselves**. It is **not of works, lest anyone should boast**. Salvation from eternal judgment cannot be earned by doing good works — it is a gift of God. There is nothing you can do to purchase your way into heaven because you are already unrighteous in God's eyes.

If you understand you cannot save yourself, then tell God right now that you are a sinner, separated from Him, and you cannot save yourself. Check the box below if you have just done that.

*God, I admit that I am separated from You because of my sin. I realize that I cannot save myself.*

Now, let's look at the third essential spiritual truth.

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## THIRD ESSENTIAL SPIRITUAL TRUTH

### THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT JESUS CHRIST DIED ON THE CROSS TO PAY THE COMPLETE PENALTY FOR YOUR SIN AND TO PURCHASE A PLACE IN HEAVEN FOR YOU.

Jesus Christ, the sinless Son of God, lived a perfect life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead to pay the penalty for your sin and purchase a place in heaven for you. He died on the cross on your behalf, in your place, as your substitute, so you do not have to go to hell. Jesus Christ is the only acceptable substitute for your sin.

*For He [God, the Father] made Him [Jesus] who knew [committed] no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. 5:21).*

*I [Jesus] am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me (John 14:6).*

*Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. (Acts 4:12).*

Jesus Christ is your only hope and means of salvation. Because you are a sinner, you cannot pay for your sins, but Jesus paid the penalty for your sins by dying on the cross in your place. Friend, there is salvation in no one else — not angels, not some religious leader, not even your religious good works. No religious act such as baptism, confirmation, or joining a church can save you. There is no other way, no other name that can save you. Only Jesus Christ can save you. You must be saved by accepting Jesus Christ's substitutionary sacrifice for your sins, or you will be lost forever.

Do you see clearly that Jesus Christ is the only way to God in heaven? If you understand this truth, tell God that you understand, and check the box below.

*God, I understand that Jesus Christ died to pay the penalty for my sin. I understand that His death on the cross was the only acceptable sacrifice for my sin.*

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FOURTH ESSENTIAL SPIRITUAL TRUTH

**BY FAITH, YOU MUST TRUST IN JESUS CHRIST ALONE FOR ETERNAL LIFE AND CALL UPON HIM TO BE YOUR SAVIOR AND LORD.**

Many religious people admit they have sinned. They believe Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world but they are not saved. Why? Thousands of moral, religious people have never completely placed their faith in Jesus Christ *alone* for eternal life. They think they must believe in Jesus Christ as a real person and do good works to earn their way to heaven. They are not trusting Jesus Christ alone. To be saved, you must trust in Jesus Christ *alone* for eternal life. Look what the Bible teaches about trusting Jesus Christ alone for salvation.

***Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved*** (Acts 16:31).

***...that 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. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For "Whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved" (Rom. 10:9-10, 12-13).***

Do you see what God is saying? To be saved or born again, you must trust Jesus Christ *alone* for eternal life. Jesus Christ paid for your complete salvation. Jesus said, ***It is finished*** (John 19:30). Jesus paid for your salvation completely when He shed His blood on the cross for your sin.

If you believe that God resurrected Jesus Christ (proving God's acceptance of Jesus as a worthy sacrifice for man's sin) and you are willing to confess Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord (master of your life), you will be saved.

Friend, right now God is offering you the greatest gift in the world. God wants to give you the *gift* of eternal life, the *gift* of His complete forgiveness for all your sins, and the *gift* of His unconditional acceptance into heaven when you die. Will you accept His free gift now, right where you are?

Are you unsure how to receive the gift of eternal life? Let me help you. Do you remember that I said you needed to understand and accept four essential spiritual truths? First, you admitted you are a sinner. Second, you admitted you were separated from God because of your sin and you could not save yourself. Third, you realized that Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven — no other name can save you.

Now, you must trust that Jesus Christ died once and for all to save your lost soul. Just take God at His word — He will not lie to you! This is the kind of simple faith you need to be saved. If you would like to be saved right now, right where you are, offer this prayer of simple faith to God. Remember, the words must come from your heart.

***God, I am a sinner and deserve to go to hell. Thank you Jesus for dying on the cross for me and for purchasing a place in heaven for me. I believe you are the Son of God and you are able to save me right now. Please forgive me for my sin and take me to heaven when I die. I invite you into my life as Savior and Lord and I trust you alone for eternal life. Thank you for giving me the gift of eternal life. Amen.***

If, in the best way you know how, you trusted Jesus Christ alone to save you, then God just saved you. He said in His Holy Word, ***But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become the children of God.*** (John 1:12). It's that simple. God just gave you the gift of eternal life by faith. You have just been born again according to the Bible.

You will not come into eternal judgment, and you will not perish in the lake of fire — you are saved forever! Read this verse carefully and let it sink into your heart.

***Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life*** (John 5:24).

Now, let me ask you a few more questions.

According to God's Holy Word (John 5:24), not your feelings, what kind of life did God just give you? \_\_\_\_\_  
What two words did God say at the beginning of the verse to assure you that He is not lying to you? \_\_\_\_\_  
Are you going to come into judgment? YES or NO \_\_\_\_\_. Have you passed from spiritual death into life? YES or NO \_\_\_\_\_.

Friend, you've just been born again. You just became a child of God.

We'd like to help you grow in your new Christian life. We will send you a Spiritual Birth Certificate to remind you of your spiritual birthday and some Bible study materials to help you understand more about the Christian life. To receive these helpful materials free of charge, photocopy the form below, fill it out, and send it to us by mail, or you can e-mail your request to [info@LamplightersUSA.org](mailto:info@LamplightersUSA.org).

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- Please send me the Spiritual Birth Certificate and Bible study materials to help me grow as a Christian.
- I would like to begin attending a Bible-believing church. Please recommend some Bible-believing churches in the area where I live.
- I already know of a good Bible-believing church that I will be attending to help me grow as a new Christian.

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