

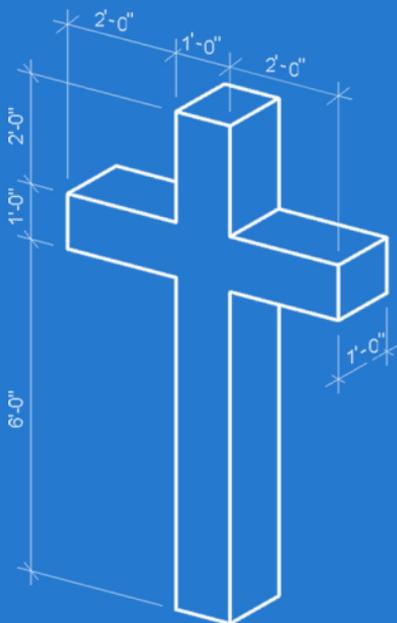
THE PLAN OF SALVATION



The Road to Emmaus, 1877
Robert Zünd (1826 - 1909)

Pastor Robert L. Dickie

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*"O the love that drew salvation's plan,
O the grace that brought it down to man.
O the mighty gulf that God did span,
On Calvary."*

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Berean Baptist Church

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Introduction

I am going to draw a diagram that will explain “The Plan of Salvation” that is taught in the Word of God. The diagram combines both a **visual** and **verbal** explanation of this plan. I intend to condense the vast wealth of biblical truth into 13 broad themes. By this method, I will seek to explain the wonderful message of Christianity by setting forth an easy-to-grasp set of principles and statements that theologians have called, “**The Plan of Salvation.**”

It might help us at the very outset to describe what we mean by the thought of God. The *Westminster Shorter Catechism* describes God by saying:

“God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.”

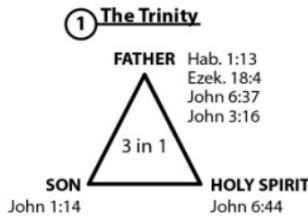
When I refer to God in this plan of salvation, I am referring to the God of the Bible alone. This plan of salvation is designed to reveal to us the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. The gospel is good news. The good news is what the sovereign God of the Bible has done for those He has chosen in Christ. The True and Living God has revealed Himself through creation and in His special written revelation, the Bible.

If you believe that the Bible is true and should be trusted as a sure guide to Heaven, then read and study this booklet and diagram. If you do not believe the Bible to be true, then I invite you to read this booklet anyway. It may be that you will have your heart touched by the grace and the power of God. My prayer for you is that this wonderful plan of salvation found in the Bible will change your life forever.

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1. The Mystery Of The Trinity



When I draw a symbol to represent God, I use a triangle. A triangle has three sides. Each side represents one of the persons of the God-head, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Christianity teaches that there is just one God. But this one God manifests Himself in three persons. This is the great mystery known as the Trinity.

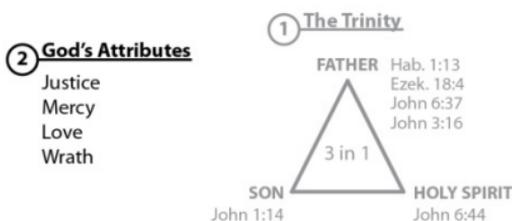
Many people have stumbled over this mysterious concept. Muslims believe that Christians were polytheistic. Polytheism is the belief in more than one God. But the doctrine of the trinity does not teach any form of polytheism. Christians believe that the One God of the Bible reveals Himself in three persons. Each person of the God-head (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) is co-equal, co-eternal, and fully God. This is the mystery of the Trinity: One God who reveals Himself in three distinct but equal persons. This doctrine of the Trinity must not be confused as a form of divine schizophrenia. God is not the Father today, the Son tomorrow, and at some other point the Holy Spirit. No! God is always eternally the same. God is being revealed in three

persons. This wonderful and mysterious truth is central to the Christian faith as taught in the Word of God, which is comprised of *only* the Old and New Testament. If one rejects the doctrine of the Trinity, he no longer has any right to call himself a Christian. The doctrine of the Holy Trinity is a non-negotiable tenet of the Christian faith.

C. H. Spurgeon spoke of the Trinity in this fashion:

“The Father gives the great gospel feast, the Son is the feast, and the Spirit not only brings the invitations, he also gathers the guests around the table. Or to use another metaphor, God the Father is the fountain of grace, God the Son is the channel of grace, and God the Holy Spirit is the cup from which we drink of the flowing stream.”

2. God’s Attributes



When we ask, “What is the God of the Bible like?” -- we come to the subject of God’s attributes. An attribute is anything that is true of God. For example, if I am going to describe myself, I might say I have these attributes or characteristics: my hair is brown, my eyes are blue, I’m 5’10” tall, I am a Caucasian. These are my attributes. God also has

attributes. Some of God's attributes are sometimes called "**Incommunicable**." This means these attributes find no similarity or correlation in man. These incommunicable attributes include God's Omniscience (He is all-knowing), God's omnipotence (He is all-powerful), and God's omnipresence (He is everywhere at the same time).

Then there are also what are called "**Communicable**" attributes in God. These are qualities about God that have a relative similarity in man. God's communicable attributes include His holiness, justice, wrath, grace, mercy, love, etc.

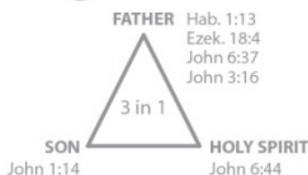
Perhaps the greatest of God's attributes is His holiness. Holiness means to be perfect and without any flaws, sins, or moral blemishes. While man may know a measure of holiness, only the Triune God revealed in the Bible is perfectly holy.

3. God's Requirements

2 God's Attributes

Justice
Mercy
Love
Wrath

1 The Trinity



3 God's Requirements

Hebrews 12:14
**"Without holiness
no man shall see
the Lord."**

From God's attributes, we discover that God has very inflexible and binding requirements for man to meet if he would see God in Heaven. The author of the book of Hebrews tells us in Hebrews 12:14, "...*Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.*" What does this mean? It means that the God of the Bible is so holy that He requires holiness in His creatures if they would wish to stand in His presence loved and accepted. If we cannot say that we are 100% perfect, holy, and righteous, then we have no hope of ever seeing God in Heaven. If you cannot say, "I have never sinned. I have from the moment of my birth till the time of my death never broken any of God's laws," you will not be able to see God in Heaven or be accepted in His sight. God is so holy that He demands perfection. We read in the book of Habakkuk chapter one verse thirteen,

"Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity..."

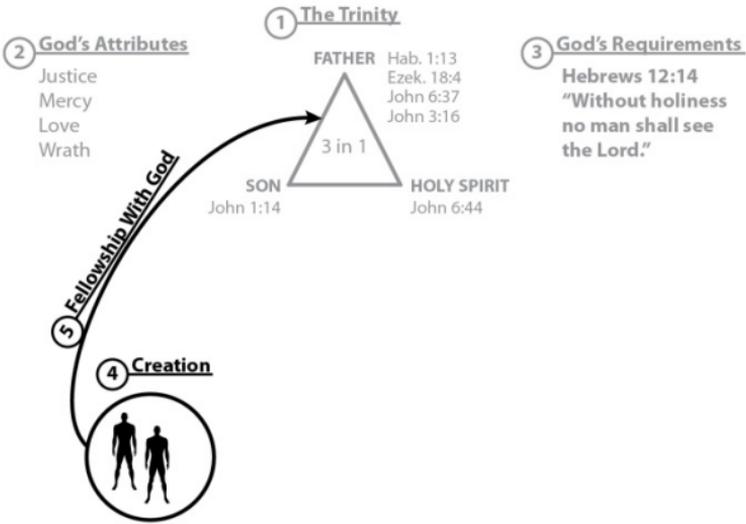
These are true statements. If we try to approach God without perfect holiness and righteousness, then we cannot

enter into His presence when we die. This has shocked many people. To know that God requires perfect righteousness (righteousness is obedience to God's laws) in order for us to go to Heaven, should cause all of us to cry out, "O, God, who then can be saved?" This is exactly what God wants us to do.

Imagine this scenario: you have died and you are standing before God. God asks you this question, "Why should I let you into heaven?" You tremble, you fidget, and you search for an answer. Remember, this is your only chance to state your faith and to make your case as to why God should let you into heaven. Think carefully. What would your answer be? If your answer began like this, "God, You should let me into heaven because I..." That answer is dead wrong! That answer is focusing on what you have done or experienced. The Bible makes it clear that that is not the way to approach God. If you begin with this answer, "God, You should let me into heaven because I..." -- it does not matter what you put after the pronoun I, your answer will be incorrect.

4. Creation

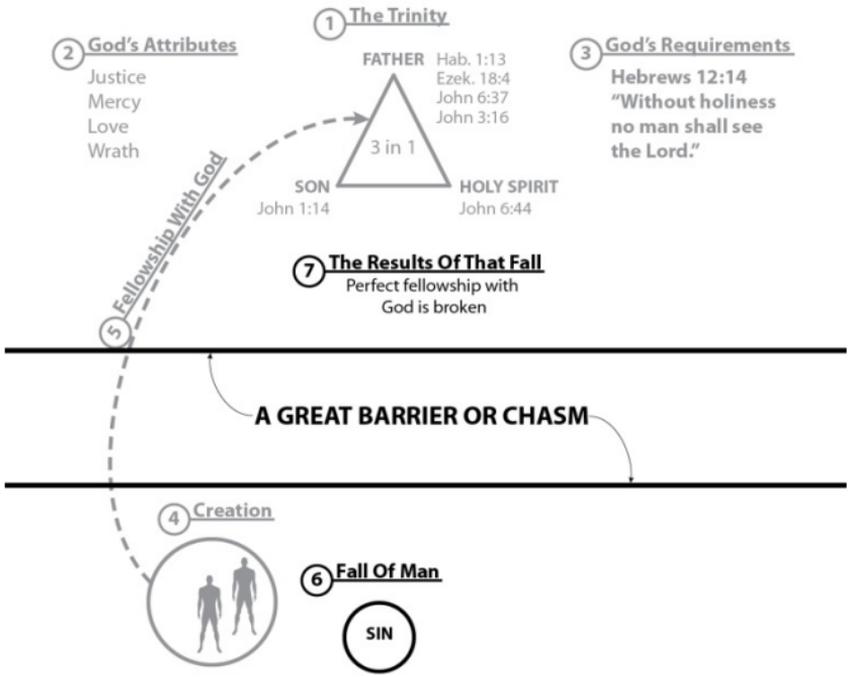
5. Fellowship With God



The first verse in Genesis begins, *“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”* God made man in His own image and placed him in a perfect environment in the Garden of Eden. Man had perfect fellowship with God day and night. Man was holy and without sin. But something tragic occurred. The serpent came to Eve in the garden and seduced her and led her into sin. God had given Adam and Eve one prohibition, *“of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”* Genesis 2:16-17.

6. The Fall Of Man

7. The Results Of That Fall

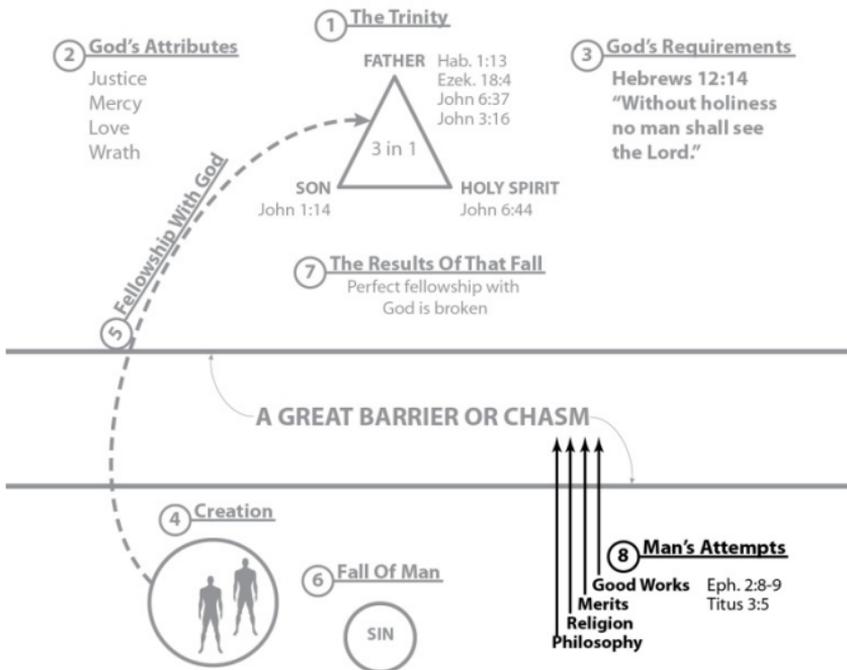


One day, Eve found herself alone in the garden. The serpent came to her and began to speak to her. What I find interesting in this story in Genesis is that Eve does not seem surprised or concerned with a talking snake. I must confess that I do not like snakes. They frighten me so much that when I see one I tend to stop and let them go on their way. But if I walked outside and a snake slithered up to me and began to say, "Hello, Bob, I want to speak to you," I can assure you that I would be running from that snake as fast as I could. What this tells me is that it may have been before the

fall that Adam and Eve had a capacity to speak to the animals. This ability was probably lost when they fell into sin and reaped the consequences of that decision.

Once Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, they died spiritually and began to die physically. A great barrier or chasm now separated Adam and Eve from the Lord they once had perfect fellowship with.

8. Man's Attempts To Bridge The Gap



All men everywhere have an innate desire to know and fellowship with the living God. Man makes many attempts to cross this chasm to reach the Lord. Men everywhere, of every race, of every continent, try by their religions, good

works, philosophies and human merits to earn favor with God. All of these attempts are doomed to failure. Why? Because God tells us in Ephesians 2: 8-9, *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”*

No man can work his way to Heaven. All of our best works, efforts, and merits are actually demerits. The prophet says, *“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags....”* Isaiah 64:6.

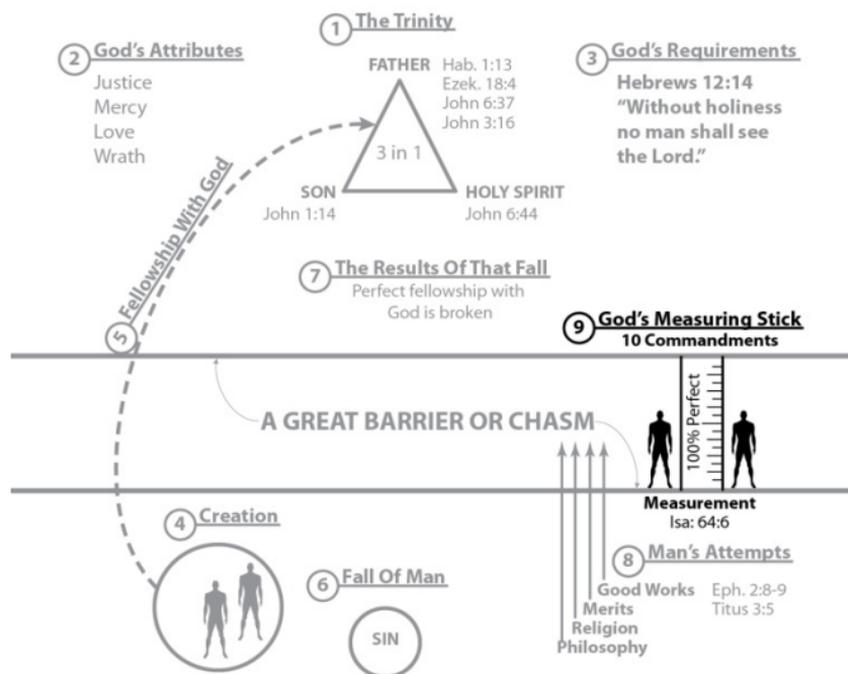
Here are some statements found in the Bible that clearly show us that human efforts and works cannot bridge the gap and earn us a place in Heaven.

1. Romans 3:10, “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one.”
2. Romans 9:16, “So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.”
3. John 3:19, “And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.”
4. John 6:44, “No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.”
5. Ephesians 2:1, “And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.”

6. Titus 3:5, “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”
7. Jeremiah 17:9, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”

Man is a poor silly creature. We are always trying to work our way to heaven.

9. God's Measuring Stick



The word **gospel** means “good news.” But before we can receive the good news, we must first hear the bad news. The bad news is that God is holy and just. God must punish sin. Man is fallen and separated from God. The bad news is that our best efforts to bridge the gap cannot help us to arrive at heaven.

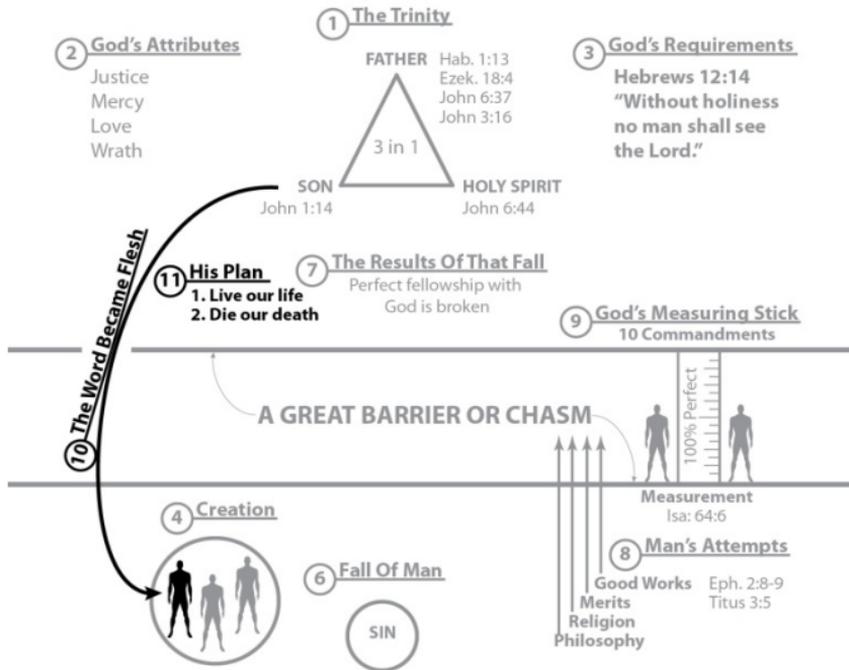
The bad news also involves God's measuring stick, the Ten Commandments. These ten laws not only reveal God's character but also reveal our sin and our guilt. The bad news is that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Who can say they have kept these Ten Commandments perfectly?

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.
2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.
3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
4. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.
5. Honor thy father and thy mother.
6. Thou shalt not kill.
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
8. Thou shalt not steal.
9. Thou shalt not lie.
10. Thou shalt not covet.

We do not measure up to these ten laws do we? Only one man in history has measured up to this great standard perfectly. That man was Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Messiah.

10. The Word Became Flesh

11. His Plan - To Live And Die



Before God made the world, He met in a great council meeting. We might call this the eternal counsel of God. In eternity past, the Triune God of Father, Son and Holy Spirit came together and made a covenant. A covenant is an agreement between two or more persons. The Father said, "I am going to create a world. This world of people will sin and fall. Out of this world, from every race, tribe, and tongue, I will choose a people to be My people." We may call these people the chosen ones or the elect of God. "I will give these people to My Son, the Lord Jesus Christ."

John 3:16, *“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”*

God had three options open to Him. First, He could have decided to damn all men. Second, He could have decided to save all men. Or, third, He could have decided to save some men. Actually, the Scriptures tell us that He decided to save a number of men that no man can number. Revelation 7:9 tells us:

“After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.”

The elect are a great number of people that God has selected.

I Thessalonians 1:4, *“Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.”*

Ephesians 1:4, *“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.”*

John 6:37, *“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”*

John 15:16, “*Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you...*”

Acts 13:48, “*...And as many as **were ordained** to eternal life believed.*”

(The word ordained means to be appointed or chosen.)

I know that there are some people who will say it is unfair that God should choose some and not all. Let C. H. Spurgeon, the great minister from London, England, answer this objection for those who are troubled by this thought.

“Some say, ‘It is unfair for God to choose some and leave others.’ Now, I will ask you one question: Is there any of you here who wishes to be holy, who wishes to be regenerate, to leave off sin and walk in holiness? ‘Yes, there is,’ says someone. ‘I do!’ Then God has elected you. But another says, ‘No, I don’t want to be holy; I don’t want to give up my lusts and my vices.’ Why should you grumble, then, that God has not elected you? For if you were elected, you would not like it, according to your own confession.”(Quotations from Spurgeon, p. 64)

The Son said, “Father, I will go to earth and become a man. I will do two things for these people that you have chosen to give to me. I will live the life they could not live and die the death they should have died.”

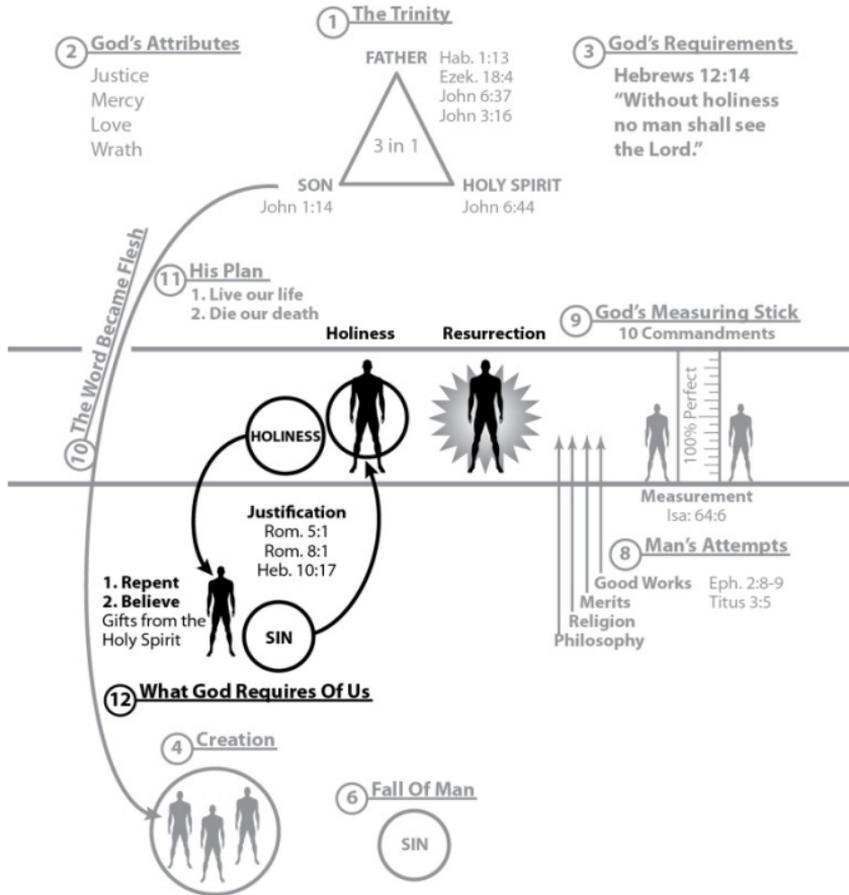
John 1:14, *“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”*

When Jesus lived on this planet 2000 years ago, He lived for a period of 33 years. During that time, He never sinned. Not even once! Every time He kept the law and resisted temptation, He was doing it for all those the Father had given to Him. Finally, at the end of his life, Jesus was betrayed by a friend and taken outside the city of Jerusalem and crucified on a cross between two thieves. There on that cross, Jesus died as a substitute for those the Father had given to Him.

By dying there, Jesus paid the debt we owe to God. After His death, Jesus was buried and three days later on Sunday, the first day of the week, Jesus was raised from the dead proving two things-- that He was God, just as He said, and proving that His Father was pleased with His life and death. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is one of the most important doctrines in the Bible. If the resurrection could be proven to be false, then everything else that Jesus said and did must be questioned, as well. Although it is not my intention to try to prove the resurrection of Christ here at this point, let me at least make this statement that the resurrection is one of the most well-attested and unassailable points in all of the Bible. It has been said, “Christianity is the only religion that bases its claim to acceptance upon the resurrection of its founder.

For any other religion to base its claim on such a doctrine would be to court failure. Test all other religions by this claim and see.” *The Great Doctrines of the Bible* by William Evans, p.84.

12. What God Requires Of Us



We've considered the bad news, and now we're ready to hear the good news. Jesus came to earth and lived our life and died our death. He kept the law perfectly and went to the cross to suffer and die in our place. The One who gave the law to Moses on Mt. Sinai became a man and put Himself under the very law that He made; He kept it perfectly all of His life. Then Jesus went to the cross to die for our sins as a

sacrifice. On the cross our sins were paid for, and Jesus bore the terrible weight of the wrath of God on our behalf.

If we understand these things, we need to know that there are two things that God requires of us. He requires that we **repent** of our sins and **believe** on the gospel of His Son. Repentance means to turn from our sin with a godly sorrow and ask God for forgiveness. Repentance also means that we will forsake our sins and stop doing them. God requires that we believe on Christ and in His gospel. This means we believe all that we see here on this diagram. To believe is to have faith in Christ, to trust and to rest in Christ and in all that He has done for us.

When we repent and believe, something wonderful happens. First, it is evidence that all of our sins were transferred to Christ at the cross. Second, Christ's righteousness and holiness is transferred to us. This is called justification by faith alone.

Let me illustrate this by describing a courtroom scene for you.

1. We have a judge. God the Father is the Judge who calls us to give account of our lives in His divine courtroom.
2. We have an accused person on trial. We, as sinners, are the ones brought before the Judge of the universe

to give an account of the things that we have done whether they be good or bad.

3. We have a prosecutor. Satan is the prosecutor. He is the one who accuses us before God day and night.
4. We have a defense lawyer. Jesus Christ is our defense attorney. (The Judge's own Son has been given the task of defending those whom Satan accuses.)

We have a trial and an acquittal. At the trial, Satan makes his case. It seems to be air tight. Satan can produce all the evidence of our sins and failures before God. Satan appeals to our conscience. He calls forth ten witnesses (the Ten Commandments) to testify against us. He makes an impassioned and scathing denunciation against each of us. It seems the evidence is overwhelming. We hang our heads in shame. Our hearts are so broken we cannot even look up at the Judge whom we assume is about to pronounce us guilty and damned forever. But then, our defense attorney steps forward. He makes an eloquent plea on our behalf. He hold up His hands and says, "Your honor, My Father, do You remember the agreement we made together? I promised to come to earth to live the life this man could not live. I said I would die the death he deserved to die. Father, You know I did these things. Here is the evidence. Behold My hands, My feet, My side! Look at my back where the whip tore my flesh. Behold the wounds on My brow! Father You must

forgive them. You must acquit them. You must pronounce them not guilty and pronounce them to be as holy as Myself. This was our agreement.” The Judge smiles in approval and to our utter astonishment He pounds the desk with His gavel and says, “Not guilty!” We look up with amazement and wonder and the defense attorney, the Lord Jesus Christ, comes over, helps us to our feet, and puts His arm around us and walks with us out of the courtroom. This, my dear friends, is the way we are exonerated in the courtroom of heaven.

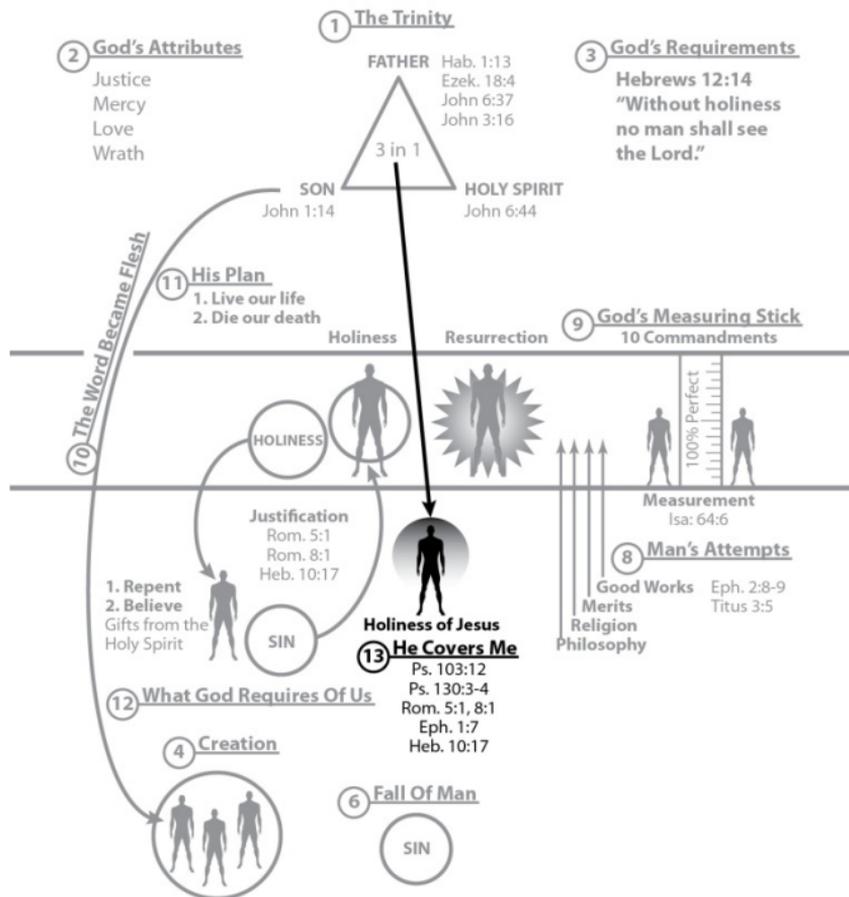
But someone might still say, “But I thought you said we cannot work for salvation or contribute anything to it? Are you saying we are saved because of our faith and repentance? Would not our faith and repentance be considered works or merits that would earn us salvation?” No. We must repent and believe. But these are not merits that we plead before God as if we have done these things on our own or by our own strength. Faith and repentance are gifts from God that the Holy Spirit gives to all those who have been chosen by the Father. If repentance and faith were not gifts, then we might claim them as works or some kind of merit why God should let us into heaven.

Ephesians 2:8-9, *“For by grace are we saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”*

II Timothy 2:25, *“In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will **give them repentance** to the acknowledging of the truth.”*

Remember what I asked, “If you died today and God said to you, ‘Why should I let you into heaven?’ -- what would you say?” If you began by answering like this, “You should let me into heaven **because I...**” It does not matter what you put after the pronoun I --you are wrong! It is not because you did anything, however good or noble that allows you into heaven. It is because Christ lived and died for you and because the Holy Spirit graciously bestowed upon you the gift of faith and repentance. We are saved because of Christ and His finished work alone. The Holy Spirit will draw to Christ all those the Father has chosen. And the Holy Spirit will see to it that those who have been chosen will be given the gifts of true saving faith and repentance.

13. He Covers Me



The result of this gracious work of God is that we are now covered by the holiness and the righteousness of Christ. He covers me! When God now looks down at us, He no longer sees our sins but sees us dressed and covered in the righteousness of Jesus Christ His Son. As a result of all this, we are now accepted and treated as if we had never sinned. We are now considered and declared to be sinless and to be as holy as Jesus Himself. We are holy in Christ. Therefore,

based on Christ's imputed righteousness, we can go to heaven. Christ is our perfection. Christ is our covering. The holiness of Christ is our hope of eternal life.

Psalm 103:12, *"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us."*

Psalm 130:3-4, *"If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared."*

Romans 5:1, *"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Romans 8:1, *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."*

Ephesians 1:7, *"In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace."*

Hebrews 10:17, *"Their sins and iniquities shall I remember no more."*

As a result of this gracious gift of salvation, we are told all throughout the Scriptures that God has forgiven us and has covered us with the holiness and the righteousness of His own dear Son.

Conclusion:

This is God's great plan of salvation. The Bible tells us in Romans 3:10-11 that no man can understand this on his own.

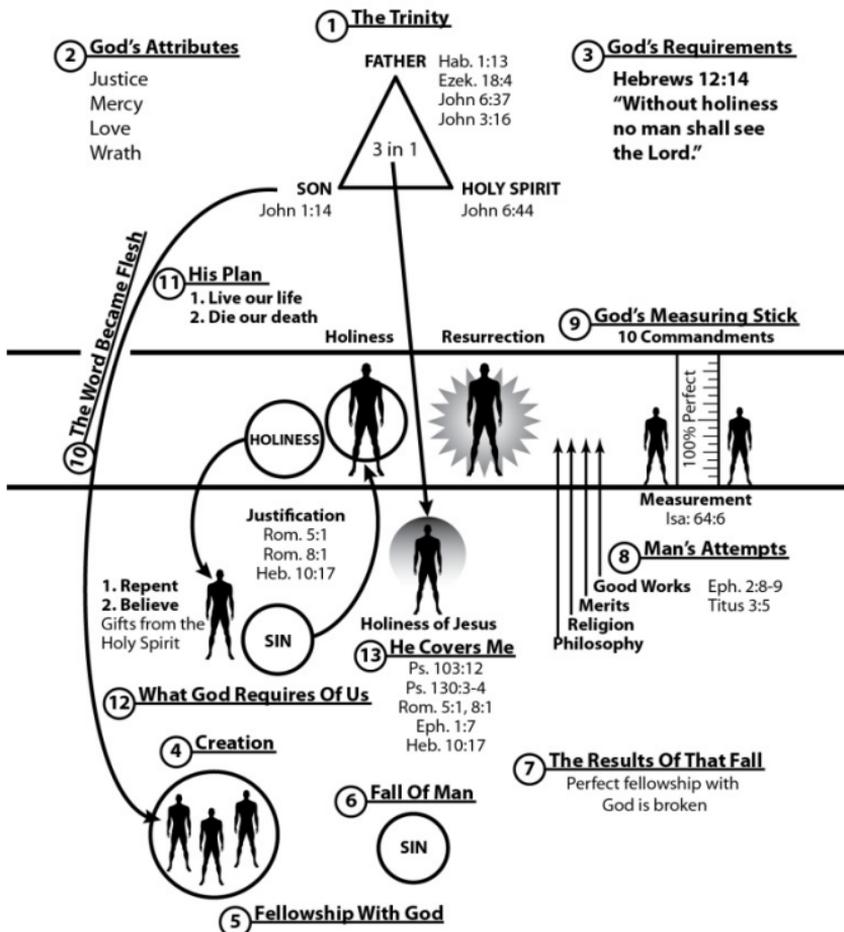
“As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.”

Paul the apostle says the same thing in II Cor. 2:14.

“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

So, all those that the Father has chosen He gives to His Son. The Son becomes flesh (a man) to live and die for those the Father gives Him. And the Holy Spirit comes to us, He finds us, He draws us to Christ, He gives us life and the ability to repent and to believe. We call this irresistible grace. This is what happens when a person is born again.

My dear friends, has God opened the eyes of your soul to see the need of Jesus Christ? Has He given you the gifts of repentance and faith? If you are asking, “How will I know if He will give me these gifts?” The answer is very simple--- you will repent and you will believe. I invite you right now to do just that. Come to Jesus with repentance and faith.



Other Books by Robert L. Dickie

What The Bible Teaches About Worship, Evangelical Press.

Authentic Christianity 101, Evangelical Press.

Living For Jesus, Emmaus Road Press.

What The Bible Teaches About Wealth, Emmaus Road Press.

Trusting The Blood Of Jesus, Rev. William Reid, edited and revised by Pastor Robert. L. Dickie, Emmaus Road Press.



Pastor Robert L. Dickie

Pastor Dickie has served as the Senior Pastor at Berean Baptist Church since 1982. He is currently a director of Evangelical Press in Great Britain. Pastor Dickie has been involved in world missions and travels extensively promoting, defending, and proclaiming the gospel of God's sovereign grace to the nations of the earth. His great desire is to see the glory of God cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

