

# GOD IS OPERATIONAL

Who am I ?

What is life all about?

Am I more than my image?



Identity

Belonging

Purpose

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Is.55;Mt4.4;Jn.14.6;Col 2.20

#### ...lonely

Ps 23,42,142;Mt.11.27-30

#### ...tempted

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2 Cor4.16-18; Rom 8.35-39

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Ps 8, 139; Eph..3,8-20

#### ...worried

Jn 14.27,16.33; Phil 4.1-13



But I can't have faith!

But we all exercise faith,  
e.g. in a surgeon for an operation  
in a driver for a bus,  
when we switch on electricity.



Similarly about life.

Everyone in practice- operationally- has a world view

Secular materialists have a world view that there is  
no meaning in life beyond the material.  
They trust - operate on - that world view.

Christians have a world view  
which means trusting in Jesus as the One  
Who gives meaning to life  
and will work operationally in  
and through those who are available to Him !

We all have faith - what is vital is that we have faith  
in something/someone who is true, reliable and giving  
meaning for time and for eternity.



I'm not the  
religious type!

But everyone has a world view by which they operate their daily lives. People need to ask if their world view is valid globally, big enough to deal with the start of the universe, why there is evil in the world and what happens when we die. People can't avoid that by saying that they are not religious!

Sometimes it is that they think they would not fit in.

Jesus spent time with the outcasts of the day, noticing young folk and the friendless man who had been ill for 38 years. He was inclusive, welcoming all kinds and "types",

e.g.

Peter	- impetuous action man
Thomas	- wanting evidence
Andrew	- second fiddle
Mary	- contemplative
Martha	- always on the go
Nicodemus	- university professor
Zacchaeus	- civil servant ... with sticky fingers!

After all the heart of Christianity is

not a cultural ritual

but a rescue operation

not a dead religion

but a relationship with God made possible by Jesus.

## 5, **God is an operational God !**

Sometimes people think of Christianity as good teaching or advice, and being a Christian something static. But God is living and operational !

**The Bible sees God operationally active ...**

**i. in making the universe**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. John 1.1-3

**ii. in opting into the world in Jesus to experience suffering, face evil and then defeat death and evil in the resurrection.**

I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures 1 Corinthians 15.3/4

**iii. in the lives of Christians who are available for God to use as part of His plan, with God as the pacemaker!**

God is at work in you. Philippians 2.14  
Christ lives in me. Galatians 2.20

## "Jesus loves me"

"That phrase is so simple that a 3 year old can understand it, but its implications are so far reaching that they challenge international finance ministers" T.F.Torrance.



Who  
am I ?

People are searching for  
identity under the image!

The message of the Christian faith  
is that our identity is to be found in Christ - we matter to God!

"Jesus ..." not a myth, example or ethic, but a living and  
personal God made known.

"... loves ...." not mere erratic emotion, but costly as shown on  
the cross for "God so loved the world that He  
gave His only Son" John 3.16

".... me" the Christian faith is not an alien  
imposition, but the God Who  
made us enabling us to be  
the people we were always  
meant to be. I can be myself.



The writer of Ecclesiastes experimented with all kinds of  
lifestyles, all of which turned out to be empty, and came to  
realise "God had placed eternity in the hearts of man" (Ec 3)  
"In Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and  
your own completeness is only realised in Him." Col.2.

"You have made us for Yourself  
and our hearts are restless 'til they find their rest in You".  
St.Augustine



Great to teach the kids about Jesus  
- He was a good teacher, a great  
example! But I'll leave it at that!

Jesus claimed to

- i. reveal God
- ii. be alive before Abraham
- iii. forgive sin
- iv. give eternal life

Therefore He is either

BAD - deliberately misleading people  
(but ... no one could find fault in Him) or

MAD - an unbalanced megalomaniac  
(but ... there was no trace of that) or

**GOD**

We cannot leave Jesus as "just a good teacher".



But I'm the  
practical sort!

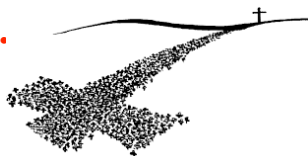
So was Jesus !

Down to earth in an occupied country in a joiner's house!

Nothing could be more practical  
than changing the world ...  
... by changing people !

## The cross is crucial.

While the gospels record failures of friends, fickleness of the crowd and the vested interest of the judiciary of the day, Jesus' death was not an accident. He deliberately came to die.



His purpose is described in illustrations from 4 aspects of daily life



rescue from trouble

Salvation



social life

Reconciliation



business life

Redemption/Ransom



law courts

Justification

The Cross is God's way of showing God's hatred of sin and love of sinners ... and acting to deal with it! Sin is like blowing the fuse in our connection with God, Jesus restored contact so that the transforming power of God might be operational in our lives. "God took the sinless Christ and poured into him our sins. Then, in exchange, he poured God's goodness into us!" (2 Cor. 5.20 The Living Bible translation)





How do we know it was not made up?

**Examine the evidence and possible alternative explanations!**

**1. The tomb was empty:**

**They had gone to the wrong tomb ?**

It was the vested interest of 2 efficient authorities, Romans and Jews, to go to the right tomb and find the body. **FAILED!**

**Body removed ?**

Thieves would take clothes; women could not move stone.

**Not really dead ?**

"Blood and water" from Jesus' side: medical evidence of death

**2. Jesus was seen:**

**The visions were just hallucinations** But hallucinations need

- i. inward desire/wishful thinking and
- ii. encouraging circumstances

Far from these being the case

- i. the disciples were afraid, slow to believe. back in their old job
- ii. Jesus was seen not just by wee group in upper room, but also by many different combinations of 500+ in a variety of places.

**The visions were just inventions**

While the different records can be dovetailed it is not easy - inventions would have more joined up thinking and would not have chosen women to convince a male dominated world!

**3. Disciples were changed from being afraid to being bold**

**4. This emphasis was the cause of their persecution**

**5. They rejoiced in His death**, which only makes sense if His death was not the end.

**6. Archaeologists"** findings dated before 50AD shows that by then some people believed Jesus had power over death.



**That was so long ago :  
how do we know that we have an accurate  
picture of Jesus ?**

There was great pride in monks copying accurately. There are various manuscripts complete or fragments which can be examined, e.g. in the British Library, London, and in Manchester and Dublin. These have been compared and any differences noted. From this is possible to work out how minor errors arose. None of them affect the person and work of Jesus!

AUTHOR	When Written	Earliest Copy	Time Span	No. of Copies
Caesar	100-44 B.C.	A.D. 900	1000 yrs.	10
Livy	59 B.C.-A.D. 17			20
Plato (Tetralogies)	427-347 B.C.	A.D. 900	1200 yrs.	7
Tacitus (Annals of Rome)	A.D. 100	A.D. 1100	1000 yrs.	20
Pliny the Younger (History)	A.D. 61-113	A.D. 950	750 yrs.	7
Thucydides (History)	460-400 B.C.	A.D. 900	1300 yrs.	8
Suetonius (De Vita Caesarum)	A.D. 75-160	A.D. 950	800 yrs.	8
Herodotus (History)	480-425 B.C.	A.D. 900	1300 yrs.	8
Sophocles	496-406 B.C.	A.D. 1000	1400 yrs.	193
Catullus	54 B.C.	A.D. 1500	1600 yrs.	3
Euripides	480-406 B.C.	A.D. 1100	1500 yrs.	9
Demosthenes	383-322 B.C.	A.D. 1100	1300 yrs.	200+
Aristotle	384-322 B.C.	A.D. 1100	1400 yrs.	49*
Aristophanes	450-385 B.C.	A.D. 900	1200 yrs.	10
Homer (Iliad)	900 B.C.	400 B.C.	500 yrs.	643
<b>New Testament</b>	<b>A.D. 50-100</b>	<b>A.D. 125</b>	<b>25yrs.</b>	<b>over 24,000</b>

There are two other factors used by historians

- i. the number of manuscripts
- ii. the gap between the original book being written and the first available copy

In the case of the New Testament writings there are far more manuscripts, and the gap is very significantly smaller!

It is safe to conclude that there is an accurate picture!

But did not Paul alter Jesus' simple message ?

- i. The New Testament is open about differences between people, but there are no differences about the person and work of Jesus.
- ii. There is great emphasis on passing on accurately, the words used being the technical word such as a registrar would use e.g. 1 Cor 15.3
- iii. There were enough witnesses around to correct him if he was wrong , and challenge them to do so e.g. 1 Cor 15.6
- iv. Paul quotes clearly well-known early creeds e.g. 1 Cor 15.3-6
- v. Paul uses hymns already known, e.g. Phil 2.5-11
- iv. Paul refers to practices in the early church which are based on the person and work of Jesus, e.g. Baptism and Communion



It is absolutely clear that far from altering the good news, Paul shared it expressing it in a way relevant to the early church in its witness, e.g. "reconciliation" is illustrated by the Parable of the Prodigal Son



(perhaps better called the Parable of the Waiting Father!)

Have you ever wondered  
where a piece fits in a jigsaw?  
Or if a bit belongs to a  
different jigsaw?



Often it is only further along  
that one realises how it all fits together. But is a great  
help to have a picture of the completed puzzle.

The Bible tells us that God knows how things fit together.  
For in Jesus all things were created: things in heaven and  
on earth, visible and invisible,; all things have been created  
through him and for him. He is before all things, and in  
him all things hold together Col. 1.16-17.

*God  
is just for  
"churchy"  
things.*

That's a mistake! God made the  
universe. Therefore there is nothing  
outside His knowledge or interest.  
Therefore there is no separation  
between "sacred" and "secular"  
Secularists (i.e. those who want to  
keep the Christian faith as a private  
faith but not expressed in the public arena), are seeking  
to impose their own worldview on others. They fail to  
realise that the God of salvation made known in Jesus, is  
also the God of creation, involved in every aspect of life.  
For example ecology is the (often belated!) application of  
the biblical principle of stewardship to developments in  
technology, etc.



Has not science done away  
with the need for God?

"The kettle is steaming"

There are two answers to that :

1. the water has reached 100 Centigrade
2. because it was put on for our tea.



Both are valid: one explains "how?" and the other "why?"  
Science and Christianity are both valid. Truth is one!



By speaking of equations and laws, science shows that the universe has a pattern. Patterns need a pattern-maker, i.e. a Mind behind the Big Bang.

We like to communicate with one another. It therefore seems reasonable that "the Mind" behind it all would like communicate with the minds which developed. How could this be done?



Lists of equations would be boring and not understood, and folk would say "how does He know about life?" The only fair way would be to communicate as a person.

The God of the Bible is not "God of the gaps", used to explain what otherwise people cannot. "Scientists are discovering God's thoughts after Him"

Christians believe that we see the God Who planned the laws of science and nature in action in Jesus. That's not unscientific!

**What about evil? Could God not stop war, crime?**



The Bible does not dodge such questions!

Job suffered. Psalm 73 raises the issue of the unfairness of illness. Jesus was misunderstood by His family, let down by His friends, failed by a corrupt justice system, victimised by vested interests, suffered a long painful death, and experienced taking on Himself the consequences of the evil of the world.

1.. We are slowly discovering how illness can be caused by aspects of society. A great deal of trouble is caused directly or indirectly by mankind's ignorance or selfishness. (But while wrong causes trouble we cannot reverse it and say that it is always our fault when we land in trouble)

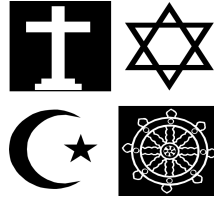
2. Why doesn't God stop it?

Then the sea would be solid so that no one could drown, fire would not burn, gravity would stop when someone fell. An impossible world!

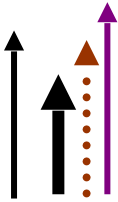
3. God did not make us as puppets, but as people who can choose. But He did come to sort the world by sorting people. Jesus has defeated death and evil, inviting us to join His team and so know His power working in and through our lives.



But all  
religions are  
the same !



**NO** - while there are some views/features shared, they are not the same : e.g. one religion included that widows should be burnt on their husband's funeral pyre.

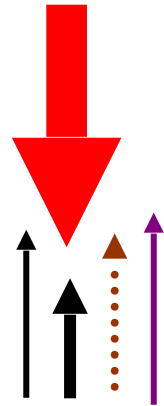


While most religions record folk reaching up/  
out for meaning in life with various teachers  
seeking to help them,

the distinctive central feature  
of the Christian faith is that

God has taken the initiative making Himself  
known in action in Jesus, the cross marking  
the spot in history !

**NEWS** not just views,  
not so much a religious system  
as a relationship.



In the early church the good news broke the barriers of race, class and gender **All one in Christ Jesus Gal.3.28**  
Therefore local cultural expressions of the church must always be secondary to the global truth which unites all Christians, cf Jesus' prayer (John 17) that all of them "may be one in complete unity so that the world will know that God had sent Him", and the early church in Gal.3.28



I don't understand  
the Trinity

## 1 or 3?

### Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

i.  $1+1+1=3$  but  $1 \times 1 \times 1=1$

ii. A box is one but .... has length breadth and height

iii. An atom is a unity but involves proton, neutron and electron.

iv. "The police" often describes several officers

The Trinity was not thought up by a church committee (phew!!) but is a condensed description of God as He was made known.

Consider ...

- i. ... if God is the source of life which includes communication it is logical that before time God should be living (and communicating) in Himself.
- ii. ... that God is eternal love implies more than one Person in the Godhead!

By this Trinity we are loved! All three Persons of the Godhead work in total harmony!

a. It is not Jesus being the "nice bit" of an otherwise angry God. For God the Father sent Jesus, and Jesus was raised from the dead, i.e. by the Father.

b. Similarly the Holy Spirit is sent by the Father through what Jesus has done and lives in all Christians.



## 17 How to survive living as a Christian

Jesus prayed that Christians might be "in the world"  
but not "of the world " John 17

Paul picked this up writing to the Christians  
"in Christ in Corinth"

Just as a fireman has to go into all kinds of situations but is not dependant on the atmosphere round about, because he has breathing apparatus, so Christians are called not to escape from the world, but go into the world, i.e. society trying to run itself without God.



But as it is important that a fireman regularly checks the tally on his breathing apparatus, so it is important that Christians "keep on being filled with the Spirit" (it is a continuous tense - not a one-of) as we face the spiritual battles of life (Eph. 5.18; 6.10ff).

The Holy Spirit is in the lives of **all** Christians. Two features of regular topping up with the Holy Spirit are Bible reading and prayer -

- partly personal and
- partly as part of the Christian fellowship

## 18 God's team : the Church

There is no such thing as a Robinson Crusoe Christian!  
Metaphors for the church include



**BODY** of Christ  
Christ as the head 1 Cor.12

### **BUILDING**

with Christ as the foundation

Foundation



**BRIDE** of Christ  
emphasising the relationship with Jesus



The church today should reflect the features of the church in Acts :caring learning sharing praising

### **suppose caring is omitted**

the gospel becomes impersonal information  
and folk in trouble are left out

### **suppose learning is omitted**

there is no understanding to pass on to the next generation or impact contemporary society

### **suppose sharing is omitted**

then Christians become cliques instead of multi-ethnic, multi-age and with no outreach the group becomes older until it dies out

### **support praising is omitted**

the fellowship becomes a club or personality cult doing it "MY way"

## What about the Baptism of infants ? 19

Like communion baptism is a visual aid illustrating the good news of the initiative of God in Christ, and therefore the focus is not what is offered in the gospel rather than on the person being baptised.

Water is the symbol of cleansing, and therefore reminds us both of the contamination of sin and the fact that we can be decontaminated.

Examples in the New Testament of individuals being baptised are of adults, as is the case when someone who has had no church connection becomes a Christian.



### **Why then baptise infants**

- i. Circumcision was a symbol of the old covenant in the Old Testament ... it is unlikely that the symbol of the more gracious new covenant would be more restricted. The link between circumcision and baptism is mentioned in Col.2 8/9
- ii. When the Philippian jailer became a Christian he was baptised with his household. That includes children.
- iii. Far from denying the need for a personal faith, it focuses on the grace of God, Who in Jesus died for us "when we were yet without strength". Like a cheque, it has a genuine promise which has to be cashed in. Children who have been baptised do not automatically become Christians, it is their own decision.

## 20. What does communion mean ?

Like baptism is a visual aid of the initiative of God in Christ. As such the way in which it is done will vary considerably in style and formality, often depending on the number of people there. But however it is done three points are key



### **LOOK AT** the table

Christianity is based not on our personal feelings or the atmosphere, but on the facts of Who Jesus is and what He did on the cross in history. Reading how Jesus gave new meaning to the symbolic passover and the breaking of bread reminds us of God's action

### **LOOK IN** to ourselves

Christians believe that we are more than a biochemical mix ! Just as we need to feed our physical bodies, so we need to feed our inner beings. Jesus said "I am the Bread of life", and He has promised to live in the lives of all Christians through the Holy Spirit. As we receive the bread and wine we allow the Holy Spirit to fill us. Therefore we need to examine ourselves!

### **LOOK AROUND** to fellow-Christians and society

The Christian faith is personal but it is not private. As bread and wine are passed round, we are reminded that we are part of a Christian fellowship. As such we have a responsibility to encourage one another and share the good news of Jesus "proclaiming Him until He returns"

# Representing Jesus

21

1 Peter 3.15-16.

## Attractiveness of hope

The distinctiveness of the lives of Christians sensing "the aroma of Christ" (2 Cor 3) leads others to ask "what makes you tick?"



## Account to which called

While the Christian faith is not something we have reasoned (thought up), nevertheless there is a reason (an evidence base) for our faith, which Christians should be ready to explain.

## Attitude which counts

In Greek the flip side of grace is gracious, and therefore there will be a graciousness about those who are sharing the message of the grace of God. For we are not trying to win points in an argument about religion, but rather seeking to be a caring, efficient and gracious channel through which God can work in winning folk into a relationship with Himself.

**Sensitivity** - there is nothing worse than someone abrasively dismissing the heartaches of a lifetime in two seconds flat. We have two ears, one mouth!

**Reverence** - not a mechanical piety, but a deep awareness of the presence of God.

## 22 Why read the Bible ?

### 1.. Light for understanding

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and  
a light to my path" Ps 119.105

While the Bible records folk searching for meaning in life

e.g. Psalm 73; Eccl. 1 and 2; John 3. 1ff

the main thrust is God searching for us

e.g. Psalm 126; Eph 3.8-11; 1 John 4.19

with the Bible record emphasising the evidence

e.g. Luke 1.1-4, John 20.24-31; 1 John 1.1-4

and therefore truth and understanding are important

e.g. Nehemiah 8.2,8; 2 Peter 3.18



### 2. Spiritual food for nourishment

Since we are more than flesh and bones,

then just as we require food for our bodies lest we suffer  
malnutrition, we require food for our inner being

e.g. John 6.25ff and Deut 8.3.

a given message to be fresh, not stale, in our minds

e.g. 2 Peter 1. 12-15



### 3. Equipment for living

Christians are to be "in the world" but not "of the world"

John 17.1-18

and therefore need to be equipped both for our own sake

Psalm 119.11; Heb 4.12-13

and to enable us to cope in the spiritual battle

Eph. 6.10 especially v17

this equipping of all Christians being the  
responsibility of Christian leadership

Eph. 4.12-16; 2 Tim 3.16 - 4.1



## The Bible comes alive!

23



Oh so  
that it what it  
means!

Wow

In Psalm 23 "Thy rod comforts me" is puzzling ....  
....until one realises that in the East the shepherd went  
ahead leading the sheep.  
They followed him along the  
twisting wadis or gorges  
because he knew where  
there was water and grass  
to refresh and satisfy.



As the sheep at the rear of the flock would not be able to  
see the shepherd he would knock with his rod on the  
rocks. Just as the sheep got the message from the  
Shepherd they could not see, so David said that although  
he did not see God he got the message of what God is like,  
and that God was there to refresh and satisfy his mind  
with meaning and purpose

Jesus picked up that illustration and said "I am the Good  
Shepherd ... laying down my life for the sheep ... I am some  
that they may have life in all its fulness." John 10

## 24 The words used in the New Testament are often very **v i v i d** words.

Realising the nuances of what the words would have meant to the writers and first hearers of that time can help us to grasp the full meaning of the passages in which they occur. For example the word "encouragement" literally means "called alongside". As God came alongside people in Jesus, we are to be alongside people!



In a convoy to Malta called Operation Pedestal in World War 2 the tanker "Ohio" had her back broken by a German attack. With no steerage way Dudley Mason captain of the tanker "Ohio" signalled for help. HMS Braham and HMS Penn came alongside, acting as a splint to prevent her breaking up and give steerage way. As a result "Ohio" reached Malta. They were called alongside.

Encouragement is a key feature of the early church, emphasised in e.g. Hebrews 10.35, 13.22.



## 25 Matt 5.3-12 Beatitudes - beautiful attitudes

5.3 **Blessed** - Not a promise "if you do this you will be happy" nor a nebulous hope of what might be but rather an exclamation of congratulations on what is "Wow : this is real happiness!"



5.5 **Meek** - not = weak, image of a Christian as a bit of a cissy! It is used of a bit in horse's mouth, i.e. strength under control. In age of self-assertive egoism it takes a big man to be humble, a strong person to be gentle, strength under Christ's control.

5.6 **Hunger and thirst after righteousness** - starving and parched longing for things to be righteous, which is not a passive concept to be admired but an operational word, actively putting right.



Sanctification is always active in the Hebrew OT



5.8 **Pure** - used of corn winnowed of all chaff or of an army purged from all discontented/ disloyal men, so implying a clearing out of motives which do not nourish or which distract from a relationship with God.

5.48 **Be perfect** - does not imply a mathematical 100% but rather fulfilling the purpose for something was made, e.g. a key opening a lock

This lifts "be perfect" from the impossible to the question of what is the purpose for which your life was made.

**Be** - what we are counts before what we do because what we are governs what we do. Christianity is not a religious system, but a people changing message.



26 The word **POWER** is a key feature of the Christian faith. Several vivid words are used



**EXOUSIA** e.g. Matthew 28.18

An ID card indicates authority coming from who the person is e.g. a warrant card. God's power comes from Who He is, the eternal God behind the universe. Far from an unnatural imposition, it is power from the Maker!



**DUNAMIS** e.g. Romans 1.16; Philippians 3.10

From that word we get dynamite - dull to look at until it is used. Christianity may be dull to look at - people changing when used !



**ENERGIA** e.g. Ephesians 1.18; Colossians 1.29

Used in a military sense of being operationally active, not mothballed lying idle. God is operationally active!



**ISCHUS** e.g. Ephesians 1.18

Used of capacity, e.g. a pint jug to hold a pint. God is able!



**KRATOS** e.g. Ephesians 1.18; Colossians 1.11

It has the note of an impressively superior legal and valid power to turn the scales.

What an astonishing God! He is able!

**STERIZO** e.g. Revelation 3.2

Used of a frail person being supported by a stick or a fragile plant with a stake. God's power is appropriate to our situation.



Often the **10 Commandments** are seen out of the context which is operational, based on the nature and action of God :

**I am** - the unchanging nature of God

**I've acted** - to free you from exploitation and therefore

**I ask !** - as part of my distinctive people

Also based on the nature and action of God is

### The Lord's Prayer

**Our** we are part of God's multi-multi-cultural global team

**Father** personal, as in the Prodigal Son (Waiting Father)

3 things about our relationship with God

**Hallowed be Thy Name** -

May the name and nature of God make the running!

**Thy Kingdom come** May God's rule be accepted

**Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven**

May our lives be aligned to God's eternal plan

3 things about our relationship with others

**Give us this day our daily bread**

Provision for the present

**Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors**

Pardon for the past

**And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil**

Power for the present

**For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory A ll**

You are the One Who gives lasting reality M y

for ever

E nergies

N ow

Sin is seen often as "caught doing something nice but naughty"

Look at the vivid words used for sin in the New Testament

hamartia (Luke 11.4) miss target, fail to be what we should be.

parabasis (Rom 4.15) transgress, like crossing double white line

paraptoma (Gal. 6.1) blunder through lack of thoughtfulness

anomia (1 John 3.4) lawlessness, doing one's own thing

akebia (2 Tim. 2.16) irreverence, refusing to honour God

adikia (1 John 5.17) injustice, lack of integrity

opheilema (Matt. 6.12) owe debt fail to fulfil what we should do

parakoe (Rom. 5.19) disobey deliberately turn a deaf ear to God

hettema (1 Cor. 6.7) defeated by that below Christian standard

## **FORGIVENESS** transforms

Not just "letting off" but a radical transformation!

Look at the vivid words used in the New Testament

aphesis (Acts 2.38) liberation, like cattle released into a field

charizesthai (Col 2.13) give out of grace, free gift

exaleiphein (Col. 2.14) with no acid ink writing can be blotted out

athetesis (Heb. 9.26) abolish, tear up

sozein (Matt. 1.21) save, rescue e.g. from a storm

luein/apolouein (Rom. 7.14) free from shackles or slavery

katharizein (1 John 1.9) wash/purify (catheter comes from it)

aphairein (John 1.29) take away, as burden in Pilgrim's Progress

epikaluptein (1 Pet. 4.8) cover, God never looks at them again

katallage (2 Cor. 5.18-21) reconcile, unite estranged people

hilasterion (Rom. 3.25) propitiation, as in the sacrificial system

dikaion (Rom 5.1) justified, accepted as good by mercy



Sum it up in 3 words !

## "Jesus is Lord"

This was what said by someone when they became a Christian (Rom 10.9). It made them different from those who accepted the current culture of "Caesar is Lord".

**Jesus** - means the Rescuer (from all that contaminates and then He transforms us)

**is** - affirmation of lasting truth

**Lord** - this was not a decorative title but One who is actively in control, to Whom Christians are available, as fire crews are to their controller!



The controller knows where there is need, and who is available. God knows and hurts with needs : Christians are available for God to work in and through them!

Then Christians seek to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" and honour His name (2 Pet.3.18)

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## So what ?

Many echo ...

"In this strange illusion  
chaos and confusion  
people seem to lose their way ...  
what is there to live for  
strive  
or keep alive for"

**20TH  
CENTURY  
BLUES**

In "West Side Story" in the midst of the asphalt jungle



Maria sang : "Some day we'll find a new way of living ...  
... a way of forgiving ...  
someday,  
someday,  
someday,  
somewhere"

**This is whan is Jesus offers ...**

**... to be operational in our lives.**

## Useful Websites

Schools    suscotland.org.uk;       shineinschools. com ;  
               CVE-Scotland;

Courses on the Christian faith

NUA : excellent downloadable from SU Scotland

Christianity Explored : [www.christianityexplored.org](http://www.christianityexplored.org)

Questions on Christian faith :

bethinking.org ;    bethinking.org/youth ;

rebootglobal.org ; solas

NUA via Scripture Union Scotland

Daily Bible Reading notes on line free

wordlive.org

Third World/Persecuted Church

Tear Fund : [tearfund.org](http://tearfund.org)

Open Doors : [opendoorsuk.org](http://opendoorsuk.org)

interesting organisations

[vinetrust.org](http://vinetrust.org) ; [streetpastors.org](http://streetpastors.org)

## Helpful books

Solid Reference :    New Bible Dictionary

Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology

Popular Reference : Hitchhikers Guide to the Bible

Lion Handbook to the Bible

Commentaries : Bible Speaks Today series

ESV Study Bible

# God's Invitation

God made the world  
and all its creatures  
with men and women made in His image.

By breaking His laws people have broken contact with God,  
and damaged His good world  
This we see and sense in the world and in ourselves.

The Bible tells us the Good News that God still loves us  
and has shown His love uniquely in His Son, Jesus Christ.  
He lived among us  
and died on the cross to save us from our sin.  
But God raised Him from the dead!

In His love, this living Jesus invites us  
to turn from our sins  
and enter by faith into a restored relationship with God  
Who gives true life before and beyond death.

Then, with the power of the Holy Spirit remaking us like Jesus,  
we - with all Christians -  
worship God,  
enjoy His friendship  
and are available for Him to use  
in sharing and showing  
His love, justice, and peace  
locally and globally  
until Jesus returns!

In Jesus' name  
we gladly share with you God message for all people -  
"You matter to God"  
and invite you to accept His invitation.

(Commissioned by and authorised by the 1992  
General Assembly of the Church of Scotland)