

Why You Need To Get Saved



By Paul Christensen

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The front cover and title page picture is from The Last Judgment by Michaelangelo, and depicts what the man sees when he realizes that he is in Hell.

Introduction

When I was involved in a coffee bar ministry, telling people about their need to accept Jesus Christ as Saviour and to “be saved”, the regular question was, “What do I need to get saved from?” Of course the obvious answer was, “From an eternity in Hell.” But that answer was often rejected, because the people we were trying to reach did not have a conception of Hell, and that some of them told us that they would rather go there to be with their friends instead of going to a boring place where people had to sit on clouds playing harps. Such was their perception of Heaven and Hell.

An answer which went some way to dealing with question was, “To save you from a meaningless life.” But even that answer resulted in a stalemate in most cases, because most of the ones we spoke to believed that they were already living meaningful lives that they were reluctant to give up in order to live a life which was new and unfamiliar to him.

The real problem is that we were trying to talk to people who were not awakened to where they stood with God, and it seemed that all our efforts to try and persuade them were in vain. Therefore our prayer is that while you read this booklet, the Holy Spirit will do the necessary supernatural work in you by speaking to your heart and making you aware of your true state before God, and where you are going to spend eternity when your life is over.

Reading this booklet will change you, whether you accept its message or not. If you have never heard the Gospel in this

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way before, you will be made aware of where you stand with God in a way that you have never known it before. That makes you responsible, and when you stand before God on that great Day of Judgment you will have no excuse. But then again, it may make you realize that you really do need Jesus Christ to be your Saviour and that this will lead you to take the necessary steps to get things right with God.

What follows are not my original thoughts, but are based on an 18th Century Gospel message. It was one of the most successful sermons which caused a general revival in the church where it was preached.¹ It is not a pleasant sermon to read. It will frighten you, but that is not necessarily bad because there are times when God frightens a person into seeing himself as he really is before He starts to restore you to a right relationship with Himself. So, be prepared. Do you have the courage? If not, stop reading now and give this booklet to someone else. Maybe Hell will not be as hot for you as it would have been after you read this booklet and still decide to reject God's invitation to be saved.

¹ **Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God**" is a sermon written by American theologian Jonathan Edwards, preached on July 8, 1741 in Enfield, Connecticut.

The Message

This is based on an Old Testament Bible Verse in Deuteronomy 32:25: ***“Their foot shall slide in due time.”***

This verse shows that God will take vengeance on the disobedient Israelites who were God’s chosen people at the time and who, out of all the people in the world, were living under God’s grace. Regardless of all the encouragements and counseling that God had brought to them through His prophets, they still went after idols. Their foot sliding in due time shows that they are exposed to punishment and destruction.

1. They are always exposed to destruction as a person stands or walks in slippery places is always in danger of falling. This is shown also in Psalm 73:18: ***“Surely you did set them in slippery places; you cast them down into destruction.”***
2. It also implies that they were always exposed to sudden unexpected destruction. This is similar to a person walking along an icy ridge in the mountains. At each step the person could lose his footing and go sliding down the mountain side. One moment he is on his feet and the next he is sliding down without being able to stop himself.
3. Another thing implied is that they are liable to fall by themselves, without being thrown down by the hand of another person. All it takes is for his own weight to drag him down.

4. The reason why some have fallen already and others do not fall at this moment is only that God's appointed time has not come yet. There will be an appointed time to come and then their foot will slide and their own weight, with gravity, will be the force that will drag them down. God will not hold them up any longer, but will let them go, and at that instant, they will slide down to their destruction. It is like standing on slippery ground tending down toward a bottomless pit, and he is standing on the edge of the pit, so that when his foot slips he cannot stand on his own but when let go he immediately falls and is lost.

The point is that there is nothing that keeps unconverted people at any moment out of Hell except the sovereign will and pleasure of God. What is meant by this is his arbitrary will which is not restrained by any obligation or difficulty on His part to preserve any unconverted person at any time. The following considerations clarify this truth so the reader is in absolutely no doubt as to what is meant.

1. There is no lack in God's power to send people to Hell at any moment. It does not matter how strong a person is, when God's appointed time comes for that person to leave this world and fall down into Hell, his strength can do nothing to prevent it. As we see in world events, when there is a rebellion against the government of a country, that government has great difficulty containing the rebels, resulting in riots, bloodshed, and even civil war; and sometimes resulting in the government being overthrown in a coup. This is not so with God. There is no power on earth that can withstand the power of God when He decides to act. The strongest person is like mere chaff in the face of a hurricane. No resistance is

possible, because the power of God totally overwhelms the person, and he is swept before it in the same way someone is swept away by a powerful tsunami. When we are walking along and see an insect crawling along the ground, we can quite easily crush it with our foot if we want to; or if a spider is hanging by a slender thread, we can break or burn it, and the spider has no option but to fall. Thus it is easy for God to allow a person to fall down into Hell at any time He pleases, and who are we to think we can stand before Him?

2. Unconverted people deserve to be sent to Hell and divine justice will never stand in the way. There can be no objection on the basis of God's justice for Him to use His power at any instant to destroy them. On the contrary, justice raises its voice to condemn them. The sword of justice is suspended over their heads, and it is only God's arbitrary mercy that stops it falling.
3. Sinners have already been sentenced to be condemned in Hell. They are subjected to the law of God, which is the highest law in the universe, and that very same law condemns them, so that they are already under arrest and awaiting transportation to Hell. **"He that believes not is condemned already"** (John 3:18). Every unconverted person actually belongs to Hell. **"You are from beneath"** (John 8:23). So, Hell is the place assigned to them by the law and justice of God.
4. They are, at this moment, subject to the fierce anger of God that is expressed in the torments that exist in Hell. The reason why unconverted people do not go down to Hell each moment is not because God is not angry with them as He is with the miserable souls who have already gone to Hell and are suffering eternal torment

there. In fact, God's anger is greater towards those who are still living, even those who are reading this booklet, than He is with those who are now in the flames of Hell.

It is not because God has taken His mind off the sinfulness of unconverted people that he does not let them fall into Hell right now, though many unconverted sinners think that He does not think about them as often as He really does. God's anger is still directed at them, and God is not sleeping as far as their condemnation goes. The pit is prepared, the fire is made ready, the furnace is hot and ready to receive them. The sword is sharpened and held over them, and the pit is opened up beneath them.

5. The devil stands ready to take ownership of them and to get his hands on them as soon as God permits him. Unconverted people belong to the devil. He has rightful claim over them and under his dominion. All God has to do is to withdraw His restraints, and the devil and his demons would rush forward like greedy lions leaping on their prey and forcing them down to devour them. Hell opens its mouth to receive them, and if God permits, they would quickly be swallowed up and lost.
6. The principle of sin inside unconverted people is like a volatile substance in a container that is in danger of exploding and bursting into flame at any moment, if God was not restraining it. The foundation of the torments of hell is in the nature of every unconverted person, and this principle of sin reigns in them and is in full possession of their souls. This principle of sin is active and powerful and excessively violent in its nature and if God did not hold it back, it would break out. The Scripture says that the souls of the wicked are as the

troubled sea (Isaiah 62:20). God restrains their wickedness by His mighty power as He does the raging tsunami, saying, "You can come so far but no further." Sin ruins the soul and is destructive in its nature and if God should leave it without restraint, there would be nothing stopping it making the soul totally miserable.

7. There is no security for unconverted people for one moment just because there are no visible means of death at hand. Good health and a strong constitution do not give any security, and if the person observes all the rules of health and safety so that death by accident is unlikely, that is no security either. History and experience tells us that there are countless ways in which a person can meet his death, and that at each moment a person is on the brink of eternity and his next step could be into another world before he knows it or sees it coming. Unconverted people walk over Hell on a rotten covering which could give way at any moment causing that person to fall out of control into the bottomless pit. All the means for sinners leaving this world are in God's hands and are absolutely subject to His power and what He determines. So, even if all the ways we could think of that could cause a person's death were not used, this would not stop God making an arbitrary decision to allow that person to fall into Hell according to His will.
8. People will naturally take every care to preserve their own lives and others will do all they can to stop people from dying, but these offer no security at all at any time. There is clear evidence from history and experience that the wisdom of a person does not guarantee their safety or prevent them from their death when God wills it. If wisdom was a factor, there would be a difference

between wise people and others, but in fact: ***“How dies the wise man? Even as the fool”*** (Ecclesiastes 2:16).

9. All the strategies of unconverted people which they use to escape Hell while they continue to reject Christ will not secure them from Hell for one moment. Every unconverted person who hears of Hell thinks that he or she will be able to escape it. They put their trust in the deeds they have done, or what they are doing now, or their intentions for the future. Everyone thinks in their own mind how they will avoid Hell and that their strategies are effective and will not fail. They hear with certainty that only a relative few will be saved and that the greater proportion of mankind who have died has already gone to Hell, but each one thinks that he can arrange matters better for their own escape than what others have done. He thinks that he does not intend to end up in Hell and so arranges his affairs so as not to fail.

But the schemes of unconverted people are a delusion as well as their confidence in their own strength and wisdom. They are trusting in nothing but an empty shadow. The greater proportion of those who have lived before and have died have undoubtedly gone to Hell and it was not because they were less wise than those who are still alive. It is also not because their schemes for avoiding Hell were any better than anyone else's still alive. If we could go and speak to someone in Hell, they would say to us, “I never intended to come here. I did all I could to avoid it. I thought that I could succeed, but it came upon me so suddenly I was here before I realized. Death outwitted me. God's wrath was too quick for me. Here I was, entertaining myself with

vain dreams of what I would do in the after-life, and when I was saying to myself, 'peace and safety', sudden destruction came upon me."

10. God is under no obligation, and He has given no promises to keep any unconverted person out of Hell for one moment. He has not given any promises of eternal life for natural (unconverted) people, except what is contained in His Covenant of Grace which involve the promises given in Christ. But if people are not converted to Christ, they have no part in the Covenant of Grace, because they do not believe in any of the associated promises and have no interest in having any sort of relationship with the Mediator of the Covenant, Jesus Christ.

It does not matter what efforts have been made religiously or in prayer, because until the unconverted person believes in Christ, God is under no obligation to keep him at any time from eternal destruction. So, to summarise:

- Unconverted people are suspended over the pit of Hell
- They deserve it and are already sentenced to it
- God is angry with the unconverted every day
- Unconverted people have done absolutely nothing to lessen that anger
- God is not in the least bound by any promise to keep them out of Hell
- The devil is waiting for them
- There are no resources that would give them any security or refuge.

Application

The primary purpose for dealing with this awful subject is to wake up unconverted people who are reading this booklet. What you have heard before applies to every person who has not accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour. Hell is spread out under you, and when your time comes, you will slide right down into it and there is nothing to stop you falling. It is only the sovereign will of God that holds you up out of it at present.

This is something that you are probably not aware of. You are aware that you are being kept out of Hell for the moment but you do not perceive the hand of God in it. Instead, you are looking at your physical fitness, good health, safe environment and your own ability to keep yourself safe. But these things are nothing because if God withdrew His hand from you, these things would do nothing to prevent you from falling than thin air to hold up a person suspended in it.

It is your sinfulness that makes you as heavy as lead and it adds to the force of gravity that puts a downward pressure on you toward Hell, and if God should let you go, you would immediately swiftly descend and plunge into the bottomless hole. Your physical fitness, health and wise strategies would have no more influence to hold you up than a spider's web to stop a falling rock. If it was not for the sovereign will of God, the earth would not support you for a moment because you are a burden to it. The creation groans because of you. The sun does not willingly shine on you to give you light to continue to serve sin and Satan. The air does not willingly continue to serve you to enable you to continue breathing while you spend your life in the service of God's enemies. What God has

created is good and your condition and the things you do are directly contrary to its nature and purpose. The world would spew you out if it were not for the sovereign will of God. The black clouds are suspended over you, and the only thing that stops that great tornado of God's justice from blowing you away like chaff before the wind is the sovereign decision of God to keep you alive for the meantime.

The wrath and anger of God is like a great lake of water held back by an enormous dam. If the floodgates remain closed, the water banks up deeper and deeper, and the longer it is left to bank up, the more violent the flood when the floodgates are opened. The longer that God leaves you in your sin and for you to continue your sinful ways, and the vengeance of God's justice is withheld, the more fierce and violent is the flood of wrath and punishment when the restraints are taken off. Even if your strength is ten thousand times greater than it is right now, that would do nothing to hold back the flood of wrath that will overwhelm you. Even if your strength is ten thousand times greater than the strongest demon in hell, that would not do anything to withstand or endure it.

The bow of God's wrath is bent and the arrow has been placed on the string and is pointed at your heart by the justice of God, and there is nothing but the mere will of God that it is not released. God has made no promise, nor is He under any obligation to preserve you at any time. So, if you have never accepted Christ as your Saviour and are not born again and made new creatures, raised from being dead in sin, are in the hands of an angry God. It does not matter in how many ways you have reformed your life and tried to become a better person; nor does it matter that you have gone to church, maintained family and private prayer, even had a position in the church leadership. If you have never believed in Christ, it is

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only the arbitrary will of God that keeps you from falling into Hell this very moment.

There are many others who are now in Hell who have been in similar circumstances to you who did not expect to go there. While they were thinking and saying, Peace and safety, suddenly they found themselves falling into the abyss and those things they depended on for peace and safety were nothing but thin air and empty shadows.

The God that holds you over the pit of Hell, much as a person holds a spider on its thread over a fire, is your enemy and is fiercely angry at you. His anger burns at you like fire, and He looks on you as being worthy of nothing else but to be thrown into the fire. He is too pure to bear looking at you, because you are ten thousands times more loathsome in His sight than the most hateful venomous snake is in ours. You have offended Him more than a rebel has offended the government of his country, and yet there is nothing except His hand that keeps you from falling into the fire. It was only His hand that stopped you falling into Hell last night; that you were permitted to wake up this morning in this world after going to sleep. There is no other reason why you have not gone to Hell while reading this booklet. In fact, there is no reason at all why you do not fall down into Hell this very moment!

So, consider the fearful danger you are in right now. You are hanging by a thin thread over a great yawning chasm of fire, and the flames are burning around the thread, to singe it or to burn it through altogether. Because you have no relationship with the Mediator and nothing to save you except yourself; nothing that you have done, or now doing, or that you can do can induce God to spare you one more moment.

Here are some important things to consider:

1. Whose wrath is it? It is the wrath of the infinite God. If it was just the wrath of man, even though it was the most powerful ruler, it would be comparatively little. The wrath of governments, especially if they have absolute rule over their citizens can generate deep fear in people: ***“The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion: Who so provokes him to anger sins against his own soul”*** (Proverbs 20:2). The earthly ruler is capable of causing serious distress to people who get on the wrong side of him, but the greatest ruler, in their greatest strength and power are but feeble worms when compared to the Creator and the King of kings. They can do only little when they are exerted the utmost of their fury. All the rulers of the earth are like mere grasshoppers. They are nothing; even less than nothing. The wrath of the Great King of kings is much more terrible than theirs. ***“And I say to you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that, have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: fear Him, which after He has killed, has power to cast into Hell; yes, I say to you, Fear him”*** (Luke 12:4, 5).
2. It is the fierceness of His wrath that you are exposed to. ***“For behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render His anger with fury, and His rebuke with flames of fire”*** (Isaiah 66:15). We read of ***“the wine press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God”*** (Revelation 19:15). Just the mention of the wrath of God is terrifying enough, but the thought of the “fierceness and wrath of God” is so terrifying that it is inconceivable. Who could ever be able to endure it? To what a dreadful, inexpressible

depth of misery must the poor creature be sunk who shall be the subject of this!

You who are reading this booklet need to consider that as you remain unconverted, God will execute the fierceness of His anger on you without any pity at all. When He will see that you are going through the most dreadful suffering, crushed right down under the great weight of torment, He will have no compassion upon you; nor will He withdraw His wrath or make it any lighter. He will have no regard for your welfare, nor will He take any care to cause you to suffer too much, than only the amount of suffering will not go beyond what His strict justice requires. Nothing will be withheld just because it is too hard for you to bear. ***“Therefore will I also deal in fury: my eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity; and though they cry in my ears with a loud voice, yet I will not hear them”*** (Ezekiel 8:18).

At this moment, God stands ready to pity you, because today is the day of mercy. You can cry out to Him today and be encouraged that He will hear you and be merciful to you. But when the day of mercy is past, your most pitiable cries will be in vain. You will be completely lost. You will be of no further use to God except to suffer misery.

The following are some of the most awful words that God can utter: ***“I will tread them in my anger, and I will trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon My garments, and I will stain all My clothing”*** (Isaiah 63:3). It is impossible to conceive of words that contain in them greater manifestations of contempt, hatred, and fierceness of anger. If you cry to God to pity you, He will only tread you under foot.

Though He knows that you cannot carry the weight of His all powerful anger treading on you, He will not care, but will crush you under His feet without mercy. He will not only hate you, but He will hold you in the utmost contempt, and you will only be fit to be trodden down as the filth of the streets.

3. The purpose for which God will expose you to that extent of misery is to show you what the wrath of God really is. God had it in His heart to show the angels and men how excellent His love is and also how terrible His wrath is. Sometimes rulers show only how terrible the consequences are when citizens break the law or rebel, through the extreme punishments that are given. Nebuchadnezzar wanted everyone to know how angry he could get when he condemned Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to the fiery furnace. He had the furnace heated seven times hotter than normal. But God is also willing to show the extent of His anger and magnify the greatness of His majesty in the extreme suffering of His enemies: ***“What if god, willing to show His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?”*** (Romans 9:22). When people see that happening, it will be a dreadful thing to witness. When God rises up and executes His justice on the unconverted and shows the fierceness of His anger and executes His awful vengeance on sinners, He will call the whole universe to witness that awful majesty and mighty power that is to be seen in it. ***“And the people shall be as the burnings of lime, as thorns cut up shall they be burnt in the fire. Hear you that are far off, what I have done; and you that are near, acknowledge My might. The sinners in Zion are***

afraid; fearfulness has surprised the hypocrites...
(Isaiah 33:12-14).

This is what it is going to be like for you if you remain in an unconverted state. The mighty power of God will be magnified in you in the inexpressible strength of your suffering and torment. You will be tormented in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of Jesus Christ Himself, and when you are in that state, the glorious inhabitants of heaven, those who are converted to Christ, will go and look at the awful sight so that they may see what the wrath and fierceness of Almighty God really is. When they see it, they will fall down and worship God and adore His great power and majesty. ***“And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, says the Lord. And they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring until all flesh”*** (Isaiah 66:23, 24).

4. The wrath of God is everlasting. There are no second chances. Although it would be unendurable to suffer the fierceness of God’s anger for one moment, you will be suffering it for all eternity. There will be no end to your misery. When you look forward, you will see a long, boundless duration stretching out before you. Even when you have been suffering 100,000 years, you will know that there will be another 100,000 years and then another, and another after that, for the rest of eternity. This will take up all your thoughts and you will have absolute despair, that you have never known before in

your darkest moments, and the difference will be is that there will be no relief and no end to your despair. After having to wrestle with the vengeance and wrath of God for many ages, this will be just a small blip in an endless continuation of the same misery and suffering that you will experience for the rest of eternity. We can continue to try and describe your future suffering with the most expressive language possible, but it will be a very feeble representation of what it will be really like for you.

We cannot describe how dreadful it is for those of you who are daily and hourly in the danger of this great wrath and infinite misery. But this is the case of every unconverted person who reads this booklet, and it does not matter how moral or strict and religious you otherwise might be. There are many as well as you who are reading this booklet that will actually be the subjects of this very misery for all eternity. We do not know who or where they are or what thoughts they may have. It may be that you feel peaceful and at ease and are reading this without much disturbance. You may be thinking that you will not be numbered with the ones who will experience what we have been describing, and are promising themselves that they will escape. If we knew that there was just one person reading this who we know would be subject to eternal misery, what an awful sight it would be to see that person! His family, friends, and fellow church members would cry out and bitterly grieve for him.

But the very sad thing is that many will remember reading this booklet when they have gone down into Hell. It would be a wonder if you reading this booklet right now should not be in Hell in a very short time, before this year is finished, even though you are

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presently healthy and secure. There could be ones reading this booklet who might find themselves in Hell before tomorrow morning!

If you continue in your unconverted state, even if you keep out of Hell the longest, you will be there in a relatively short time. Your punishment will not sleep; it will come swiftly and very probably, suddenly upon you. There are people whom you have known who did not deserve Hell more than you and most likely would have still be alive as you are. But they are now in Hell, suffering extreme misery and absolute despair, but here you are still alive, reading this booklet, and able to go to church on Sunday, and have an opportunity to accept Christ and obtain salvation. What would one of those now in Hell would give to have just one more day's opportunity that you have right now?

Right now, you have an extraordinary opportunity today for Christ has thrown the door of mercy wide open and stands calling and crying out to you with a loud voice. This is a day when others are hearing that voice and are coming to Him and entering into the Kingdom of God. When you sit in a church or at a meeting, seeing others accepting Christ, it would be a great tragedy if you were left behind. To see others feasting in Heaven, and you are suffering in Hell. To see others rejoicing and singing for joy, and you are groaning and weeping in misery. How can you rest for one moment in such a condition?

There are some of you who have lived long lives and yet are still unconverted. All your life you have done nothing but store up wrath and anger against you. Your condition right now is extremely dangerous. Your heart has become very hard and you have become set in your

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ways. You may not know it but people of your stage of life are generally passed over and left to suffer the consequences of their refusal to accept Christ even though He has tried to get them to open their hearts over many years. You have a great opportunity as you are reading this, because maybe God is giving you one more chance to accept Christ and repent of your sins so you can be saved from the eternal misery that you now face.

Let every one who is presently hanging over the pit of Hell, whether they be old men and women, middle-aged, or young people, or little children, now hearken to the loud calls of God's Word and providence. This is the day of the Lord for you. God is collecting those He wants to save from all corners of the earth. Will you be one of them?

If you refuse His call to your heart, there will come the day when you will eternally curse this day. You will wish that you had died and gone to Hell before you read this booklet.

Therefore, let every one of you reading this booklet, who is not converted, wake up and run from the wrath to come.

Conclusion

So there is the message. After reading it, you will now be in no doubt what you would be saved from if you accept Christ. You have the choice of accepting or rejecting this message, just as long as you are prepared to take the consequences of it.

But if this message has woken you up to where you stand with God, and are wanting to turn away from your sinful life and to become a Christian, there are four steps you need to take in order to receive an assurance of your salvation. Here they are.

1. Accept that you are a sinner and justly condemned to Hell. This is the purpose of the message – to make you realize that you are an enemy of God and there is nothing to make you attractive to Him at all. You are in a sorry state with no hope if you cannot accept that there is a great gulf between you and God. So accepting it is your first step toward peace with God.
2. Believe that Jesus Christ died on the Cross to take away the guilt and punishment of your sin. The reason why that can happen is that when He died on the Cross He took your punishment. Then He rose from the dead to show that He has power over the devil who caused the sin to enter the world in the first place. Believing that Jesus rose from the dead and alive in heaven is a central part of your salvation.

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3. Receive Jesus as your personal Saviour and Lord. Ask Him to enter into your life and give you a new heart.
4. Agree to allow Him, through the Holy Spirit, to change you into the person He wants you to be. This will mean studying the Bible, learning to pray, and fellowshiping with other Christians. You won't be a perfect person right away, but once you get started, you will make progress as you learn more and more. This is called "growing in grace"

An important key now is to tell some people you know and trust that you have given your life to Jesus Christ. This is the beginning of your testimony to others of the new life that Jesus has given you. Also, find yourself a good, trustworthy mentor who will guide you in Christian discipleship. Find yourself a good church with a new Christians class, to teach you about the foundations of Christian faith.

Just remember, the person who comes to Jesus will not be cast out (John 6:37). This is the first of many promises that you can take for yourself to bring you to an assurance of your salvation.

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