

# Pistol Pete's Testimony

By: Pete Maravich and Darrell Campbell with Frank Schroder



With all the trophies, awards, money and fame, I am not at peace with myself. I felt that money and things it could buy in this world were my tickets to pleasure and happiness. But, even with all the money, I was miserable. Deep down I knew life had to be more than parties, a Mercedes, and stocks and bonds. Nothing lasted through all the accolades and trophies. I had found nothing to hang on to that would last forever. Even my greatest records would someday be broken.

The trophies were collecting dust in the attic, and one day no one would remember or care about a floppy-socked basketball player named Pistol Pete Maravich.

The fame and fads were all temporary and fleeting! My explorations of different religions, astrology, astronomy, nutrition, UFO's and even basketball only revealed all the more emptiness that I couldn't fill. I became a desperate man, facing the inevitable questions each person must face: "What do I have to live for? What value do I have? What will happen to me when I die? I had not found a purpose anywhere in a past filled with success, fame, and fortune. For a man that seemed to have it all, in my estimation I had no purpose, and no reason for being."

I knew I had to make things right with God. I cried out to God, saying, “I’ve cursed you and I’ve spit on you. I’ve mocked you and used your name in vain. I’ve kicked, punched and laughed at you. Oh, God, can you forgive me? Please, save me, please. I have had it with all the world’s answers for happiness. All of it, the money, fame and things have left me so empty.”

I prayed a simple prayer, as best I could, “God, come into my life...forgive me of my sins. Make me the person that you want me to be.” Through this simple act of surrender, the void that once loomed so large was filled. From that moment on my life was never to be the same. Trying to please others had brought me frustration, a drinking habit, and a love of material possessions. I had gone to the brink of self-destruction. After my conversion that special night in Louisiana, I turned full circle. All the fame and fortune I had accumulated looked extremely pale when compared to the abundance of God in me. I was driven by a desire to please God because of a newness of life I had received from him. The fears I once possessed were wiped away. My life was now filled with the light and love of God.

For a long time I never felt a need for God because I had everything the world had to offer: money, material things, power, pleasure, I had it all! I lived in expensive houses and drove expensive cars—they were all priorities in my life. That is where my security lay. Consequently, I never felt I had a need for God until my heart was opened up and I was spiritually broken. I found myself at the end of my rope and realized nothing out there would satisfy me and fill the void—the gaping hole, the bottomless pit in my life. Only God could fill all the empty spaces.

Money can buy you everything but happiness. It can pay your fare to anywhere but heaven. “I also found out if you seek pleasure and happiness, you will never find it. But if you have the wisdom and obedience to seek God, happiness will find you.”

# Pistol Pete's Record

Pistol “Pete” Maravich was one of the most remarkable athletes in the history of all sports. In an era when players were only eligible for three years – and there was no three-point shot – Pistol Pete – became, and remains, the highest scoring player in the history of college basketball. No one has ever challenged his records and there is no reason to believe anyone ever will. After leaving LSU, he went on to become a five-time NBA All-Star and he is a member of the NBA’s 50th Anniversary All-Time team. In 1988, LSU’s Assembly Center was named in his honor.

- All-Time Career Scoring Leader with 3667 points, an average of 44.2 points for 83 games.
- Ranks first, fourth and fifth for most points in a single season in NCAA
- Ranks first, fourth and fifth for most points in a single season in NCAA history. Averaged 44.5 in 1970, 44.2 in 1969, 43.8 in 1968.
- Scored 69 points vs Alabama Feb. 7, 1970
- Led LSU to the NIT Final Four in 1970, it’s first appearance in 16 years.
- Unanimous first team All-American in 1968, 1969 and 1970. Naismith Award Winner in 1970.
- Member of the NBA Hall of Fame after 10 year career with Atlanta Hawks, New Orleans and Utah Jazz and Boston Celtics.
- Named one of the NBA’s 50 greatest players in 1997.





## A Very Exciting Journey

If you are a young person reading this, I want to take you on a very exciting journey. This journey will be exciting, because you will see and understand why the Bible is the all-time best seller. If you already know a good deal, or even a lot, about the Bible, that is good, but if your knowledge is limited and you want to know more, your time reading this will be an investment that will pay you far more than any other way you could spend your time.

First, what is this book that we call the Bible and what is it all about? Why do millions of people read it every day and say that it is a tremendous blessing to them? In the following pages, I will answer these questions and many more, as our journey unfolds and you arrive at a place in your mind and heart that gives you peace and the everlasting assurance that you are a very special person and that you matter to God. You will see why you are a unique creation and there is no other human being living now, or at any time in history, just like you.

Now, what is the Bible? It is called, by most people, the Holy Bible and is the Word of God. It was written by human beings, but they were inspired by God who told them what to write down. The Bible is really about hope, hope for eternity, and hope for a better life here on earth. This wonderful book is divided into two parts - the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Bible is made up by what are called “Books” and there are 66 books in the Bible - 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament. The names of the books are in the “Index” as they appear, in



order, from the front to the back. Each book of the Bible has “Chapters” and they are numbered in consecutive order. Each chapter contains “Verses” and they are also in consecutive order. This information will help you find any verse in the Bible when someone gives you a particular verse of scripture and instructs you to look it up. For example, if I gave you the verse ... II Chronicles 7:14, you would go to the Index, find II Chronicles, and the page number. You will also note that this book is in the Old Testament. Then go to the page number listed and proceed to chapter 7, and then to verse 14. It reads as follows: “if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” If you will do this a few times, it will become easier and easier.

Obviously, in this short treatise there will not be space to take each book and give an overview, but I can give you some major concepts and themes that will help you better understand the Bible. Some of the topics I will present include the creation story, sin, the flood, the law, the patriarchs, the exodus, a nation is formed, kings, major and minor prophets, the virgin birth, the triumphal entry, the resurrection, the Apostle Paul, and many others. My goal here is to give you a broad outline of the Bible, in simple storybook form, so that you will better understand what you are reading at any point, “As We Study the Bible.”

You should also know that in the back of this booklet, there are a number of spiritual questions that today’s youth want to know the answers to. These questions were asked by young people just like you. We all struggle, to some degree, with life’s questions, but this is especially true for young people who are struggling to find



their own identity and to build a value system that will enable them to become happy, well-adjusted, and successful human beings. I can promise you that nothing in your life will prepare you like knowing the Bible, the Word of God, and developing a lifestyle that honors Him. No one wants to fail in life, and I can promise you that God does not want you to fail either. He always wants the very best for you.

First, let's take a look at the creation story. This is recorded in the first book of the Bible called Genesis. The word Genesis means, "Origin or Beginning." The first verse in the Bible is one of the most important as it says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Everything was formless and void, and there was nothing here but God and He created it all. This is why He is due our praise, worship and adoration. The very first chapter records the events that took place the first week, when God created everything we see about us in six days and He rested on the seventh day. We refer to this day as the Sabbath or a day of rest. Today we worship the Lord on the first day of the week, because of His resurrection.

When God created Adam, the first man, God saw Adam needed a helpmate so He created the first woman, Eve, and placed them in the Garden of Eden. God told them they could eat anything in the garden except from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that was placed in the middle of the garden. One day a serpent, who was really the devil, deceived Eve by telling her that she could eat from the forbidden tree and she would be like God. In turn, she deceived Adam and he also ate. Soon God confronted Adam and Eve, because they had disobeyed Him. This was the original sin that was committed by them.



Can we take just a moment to clear up a very possible confusion regarding the word “sin?” God defines sin much differently than the world that we live in right now defines or describes sin. God says it this way: “all we like sheep have gone astray; each has turned his own way.” Isaiah 53:6. Can you just imagine this? Think about sheep walking or wandering away from their shepherd. Some sheep intentionally run; others just wander. We are much like sheep when we think or when we chose to run or wander. Regardless, the result is the same. Problems, trouble, darkness, and danger are these dramatic results. Today they look like drugs, sexual addictions, alcohol, prison terms, and suicides. Most of all, sin makes us feel ALONE! I hope this makes “sin” easier to understand.

Because of disobedience, God banished Adam and Eve from the Garden and soon they began to have children. The first two were boys and their names were Cain and Abel. Because of jealousy, one day while they were in a field, Cain rose up and killed his brother Abel. This is the first murder recorded in the Bible. After that Cain became fearful for his life so he fled to another land. After many years, he married, and he and his wife began to have children. In time, the earth began to be populated and the people began to commit great and horrible sins.

One day, God looked down on His creation and was so displeased that He decided to destroy the earth and all those who were living, except one righteous man by the name of Noah. God instructed Noah to build an ark. It took him 120 years to complete it. Everyone laughed at Noah, while he was building the Ark, but when it was completed, God told him to take his wife, three sons and their wives and enter the Ark. God also told Noah to bring in



a certain number of every kind of living creature, so they would be preserved and not perish in the flood.

Then the rain came for 40 days and 40 nights. The whole earth was covered with water and every living creature, including man, perished. It took several months for the water to finally recede. Noah, his family, and all the living creatures came out of the ark and began to repopulate the earth. Shortly after the flood, God put a rainbow in the sky, as a symbol that He would never again destroy His creation by covering the earth with water. When you see a rainbow in the sky, I am sure you will remember this story. After the earth was repopulated, God began to raise up men who are called Patriarchs. A Patriarch is the father of a tribe or clan of people. One of the most important in the story of God's people is a man by the name of Abraham who God chose to be the father of His very special people – the Jews. Abraham married a woman whose name was Sarah, and God instructed them, along with Abraham's nephew Lot, to leave their homeland, the Ur of the Chaldees, and travel to a land that He would show them. The Bible says that "Abraham believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness." God promised Abraham that he would be the father of many nations. They settled in a land called Canaan but left a few years later to move to Egypt, because of a severe famine in the land.

After the famine, they returned to Canaan, had a son and named him Isaac, when Abraham was 100 and Sarah was 90 years of age. He was the son of promise, (see Genesis 21: 1) and he grew up and married a woman by the name of Rebekah. Isaac and Rebekah became the parents of Jacob and Esau.



A special note here: you will find, as you study the Bible, one question will lead to others and, as you begin to research and track down the answers, your study will become more exciting, as you learn more and more.

It is here that the story of God's people really begins to take shape and gets more interesting with the passing of each day. Here is the thing that is unique about these two boys: Jacob is smooth-skinned and Esau is hairy. Jacob is the favorite of his mother, while Esau is the favorite of his father. However, Esau is older and, according to their customs, was to inherit the birthright, meaning he got most of the inheritance and also the blessing. But Jacob was shrewd and cheated him out of both the birthright and the blessing. Esau made a vow to kill him after his parents died. So his mother sent Jacob to Laban, her brother in another country, for his own safety.

There he met Laban's daughter Rachel and immediately fell in love with her. He wanted to marry her so Laban told him, if he worked for him for seven years, he could marry her. When the seven years were up, Laban tricked him by substituting her sister Leah in the wedding tent that night. Laban told him the custom was to marry the older before the younger and asked him to work seven more years for Rachel. This is important because between Rachel, Leah, and their two handmaids (nurses) they had 12 sons who became the 12 tribes of Israel.

One of the sons was Joseph and his brothers were jealous of him, because he had dreams and told them they would bow down to him. Later, when Jacob sent Joseph to check on his brothers, they saw him coming and wanted to kill him. One of his brothers,



Reuben, said, “Let’s don’t kill him,” so they decided to throw him into a pit. Soon a caravan of traders came by and the brothers sold Joseph to them and they took him to Egypt. But God was in control and Joseph became the housekeeper for Potiphar, second in command to Pharaoh. This led to Joseph interpreting dreams and saving the nation from starvation, because of a severe famine. There also was a famine in Canaan. When Jacob sent Joseph’s brothers to Egypt to buy grain, this led Joseph to have his whole family, 70 in all, move to Egypt. This began a period of 430 years for them to be there and during this time a nation was formed of over 1 ½ million people. When the Egyptians became too hard on the people of Israel, God sent Moses to rescue them and lead them out of this country. The Egyptians were mean and cruel and made them turn out the same amount of bricks without providing the straw needed to make them. After God sent ten plagues on the Egyptians, Pharaoh finally let them go and when he did, this led to the true account that you may have heard about – the crossing of the Red Sea on dry land. After the Israelites crossed, the Egyptians followed them and God caused the water to cover them, drowning Pharaoh and all of his army.

The people of Israel were now in the Sinai Wilderness on their way to the “Promised Land.” Moses sent out one man from each tribe, 12 in all, to scout out the land to see if they could conquer it. When they returned, only two of the 12, Caleb and Joshua, said they could conquer it. The other 10 said the people were so large they looked like giants. As a result of their lack of faith, in spite of what God had done at the Red Sea, He said none of this generation would see the Promised Land and they would spend the next 40 years in the wilderness. It was at the end of this time that Moses died and Joshua became God’s man to lead the people.



When God was ready for them to enter the Promised Land, the people had to cross the Jordan River. He caused the river to stop flowing long enough for them to cross on dry land. God instructed one man from each tribe to take a large stone from the middle of the Jordan River and pile them up in a heap on the Canaan side, to serve as a memorial for future generations. It was not long until they conquered the city of Jericho. You have probably heard about when the “walls came tumbling down.” So we now have the people in the land. The next thing was to divide the land into 12 parcels, so each tribe would have their own land. After several years Joshua died and the land was ruled by a series of “judges” and this is the name of one of the books in the Bible. Soon however, the people wanted their own “king” like the nations around them. God used the Prophet Samuel to select the king. The first one was King Saul. Next was King David, the most revered of all the kings in this nation’s long history. The date for King David was around 1000 B.C. and we are now, as of this writing, in 2015 A.D. You may know that B.C. stands for “Before Christ,” and A.D. comes from Latin, “Anno Domini,” and means, “In the Year of our Lord.”

You may have heard the story about David and Goliath and after the battle the women sang, “Saul has slain his thousands but David has slain his ten thousands.” This made Saul very jealous and, from then on, he tried to kill David. Saul knew that God had anointed David to be king. The “Star of David” is on the Israeli flag today and this tells just how important David was in the history of God’s people. David also wrote most of the Book of Psalms. He wanted to build the first Temple, but God would not permit it because David had “blood on his hands.” This honor was reserved for David’s son Solomon who became king after him



and who is reported to be the wisest man who ever lived.

It is important to note that King Solomon wrote the Books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. He would also build the first Temple. During the time of King Saul, King David, and King Solomon, all 12 tribes would be part of a united kingdom, but they would split after Solomon's death. The 10 northern tribes would become Israel and the two southern tribes would be known as Judah. This would begin a time of good kings and bad kings in the Northern Kingdom until 722 B.C. when they would be conquered by Assyria, deported, and would never be a single unit again.

The Southern Kingdom had several very good kings and a few bad kings. They too, would be invaded by Babylon and taken captive where they would stay for 70 years. After Babylon was conquered by the Persians, King Cyrus would allow the Jews to return to their homeland to rebuild the Temple. Among those who returned were Nehemiah, Zerubbabel and Ezra, a scribe who taught the law to this new generation. When you read the Bible, you will see books titled Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. These are called "major" prophets and God raised them up to speak for Him and to warn the people about the consequences of their sins. One of the marks of a true prophet of God is that what they prophesy always comes to pass.

There are also 12 Minor Prophets - at the end of the Old Testament. Their function is basically the same but with not as large a role as the others. At the conclusion of the Old Testament, with the book of Malachi, there is a period of about 400 years that is called, "Between the Testaments." This period lasted until



the beginning of A.D and the birth of Jesus Christ who was born around 4 A.D. While the Old Testament has a tremendous role to play in the story of God's people, because it is the beginning and the foundation, without it there could be no reason and understanding of the New Testament.

Going back to the front of the Bible, we will find the first five books, called the Books of Moses, to be where God gives the laws for His people to live under. The foundation for His laws is called the Ten Commandments. Here they are in short form: 1. You shall have no other Gods before Me. 2. You shall not make idols. 3. You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain. 4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 5. Honor your father and your mother. 6. You shall not murder. 7. You shall not commit adultery. 8. You shall not steal. 9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. 10. You shall not covet. The full text of the Ten Commandments is also found in Exodus 20: 2-17 and Deuteronomy 5: 7-21.

He also sets forth very specific details in terms of living with their neighbor, marriage, property rights, worship, and many more. Because all men had sinned, in their worship time there had to be a way to be forgiven for their sins. This was done by slaughtering various animals, bulls, goats, sheep, and the shedding of the animals' blood, depending on the sin and the financial condition of the sinner. There is a central point that must be understood to truly understand the message of the Bible and that is "without the shedding of blood, there can be no forgiveness of sin."



This is how many Jews who have not yet accepted Jesus Christ as the Promised Messiah still worship today. However, most animal sacrifices are no longer practiced today, because there is no Temple. Another important point to understand is that because we are all sinners, we all need a Savior and this is why God sent His Son Jesus Christ, the Perfect Lamb of God, to shed His blood and die on a cross for the sins of the whole world.

God has told the Jews that He was going to send a Messiah, a deliverer, in a number of Old Testament verses. In Isaiah 9:6 it says, “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government shall be on His shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Read also in Micah 5:2 “But you, Bethlehem- Ephratah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.” You can’t be clearer than that, and it comes from the Old Testament.

The Bible has about 40 different writers. The Old Testament writings are spread out over about 1,600 years and the New Testament only took around 50 years to write. The writers are included in the above number, but it should be noted that the Apostle Paul wrote 13 of the 27 books in the New Testament. I will go into more detail about him later.

I hope you are beginning to get a feel for how truly exciting the Bible really is, especially when you have a teacher who can make it come alive. I am an introduction to the countless great teachers in thousands of Bible-teaching churches across America.





## New Testament

**I**nsight: Here is an insight that I hope you will consider. When I make comments that are not part of the Bible, this is the same process that takes place in a Sunday school class where we get to make points and ask questions. This enables us to make an application to our own life.

As we begin our journey through the New Testament, it should be noted that the old Roman Empire (27 B.C. – 375 A.D.) played a very important role in the life of the Hebrews, God’s chosen people. The Romans were the world power that controlled the land of Judea during the time of Jesus Christ. King Herod was Governor of Judea when Jesus was born, and later Pontius Pilate was Governor when He was crucified.

The first four books of the New Testament are called “Gospels.” They are the Books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The Gospels are the most important and exciting books in the Bible, as they record the life and times of Jesus while He was here on earth. They give precise details about His virgin birth, life, crucifixion, burial, and resurrection. The Gospel writers also give eye-witness accounts of actual events that took place in these days.

Jesus Christ is the focus of the New Testament, but it is also important to be reminded of the Old Testament prophesy in Micah 5: 2, where the prophet tells us the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem of Judea. Centuries later, that is exactly where it took place. When we truly understand why Jesus was born and what it means to me and you personally, it will be easy to



understand why this is indeed the greatest story ever told. In the following pages, as I have sought guidance from the Holy Spirit, my prayer is that I can offer many convincing proofs why the Bible is indeed true.

In Chapter 1: 18-21 of the book of Matthew, we read these words, “This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

However, before Jesus was born, God’s plan took another turn and we see this in Luke, Chapter 2: 1-4, “In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee in Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.”

Jesus’ virgin birth and the fact He was the long-awaited Messiah was confirmed, when an angel of the Lord appeared to shepherds who were staying in the field tending their flock. The angel said,



“Don’t be afraid, for look, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: today a Savior, who is Messiah the Lord, was born for you in the city of David.”

Several months later some magi (wise men) saw His star in the East and came to pay homage to Jesus. King Herod had learned of His birth and he instructed the Magi to let him know where He was so that he, too, could come and worship Him. However, being warned by an angel that Herod planned to do Him harm, the magi returned to their home a different way. When King Herod learned that he had been tricked, he was furious and would later issue an edict that all the boys in the land, 2 years old and younger would be killed.

Soon an angel warned Joseph to take the Christ child and His mother and flee to Egypt, where they remained until King Herod’s death. After the king’s death, Joseph and his family returned home, but because Herod’s son Archelaus, was now on the throne, Joseph was fearful and returned to Nazareth, so that Jesus might be called a Nazarene.

After these early accounts, not much is known about Jesus, until he is 12 years of age. During this time, His parents had taken Jesus with them to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. After the feast was fulfilled and they headed home, they became separated from Jesus. It was three days later when they finally found Him. He was in the Temple conversing with the elders. His parents said, “Son, why have you treated us like this?” Jesus responded, “Why were you searching for me? He asked them, “Didn’t you know that I had to be in my Father’s house?”



When we hear about Jesus again, He is about 30 years of age. He begins His public ministry that only lasted three years. Jesus would soon be baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River, and these words are recorded in Matthew 3: 16-17: “As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

A short time later, Jesus began to call his 12 disciples. The first was Peter, then his brother Andrew. Jesus encountered them, as they walked along the Sea of Galilee. Going on from there, He called two other brothers, James and John, as they were casting their nets into the sea. They were fishermen. Jesus said, “Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men”, which means salvation, to save people from their sins, the reason God sent him to earth. Immediately, they left their nets and followed Him. Later, He would call eight more, and these uneducated men would literally “turn the world upside down.”

During his earthly ministry, Jesus taught the masses by parables. A parable is “an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.” Some of the parables include: “Believers are Salt and Light,” “Murder Begins in the Heart,” “Go the Second Mile,” “Love your Enemies,” “How to Give,” “How to Pray,” Keep Asking, Searching, Knocking,” “The Two Foundations,” “Entering the Kingdom,” “Cleansing a Leper,” and “A Cup of Cold Water.” Some of His many miracles were turning water into wine, raising Lazarus from the dead, cleansing a leper, feeding the 5,000, walking on the water, and healing a blind man.



While Jesus was Himself a Jew, most of His fellow Jews did not accept that He was the long-awaited Messiah. They were not looking for someone lowly who came to serve but rather a knight in shining armor who would show up and save them from the Romans who occupied their land and made life miserable for them. Their dislike and even hatred for Jesus was so great that they began a plot to kill Him. However, they could not actually take His life because only the Romans had the authority to put someone to death.

At the beginning of His final week on earth, during His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Jesus instructed two of His disciples to go into the city and untie a young donkey and bring it back to Him. As Jesus rode this donkey through the crowd, many people laid palm branches on the road and were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven.”

The night of His betrayal, Judas who had betrayed Him for 30 pieces of silver, led a mob of Jews to the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus and members of His “inner circle,” Peter, James and John, were praying. Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss that later became known as the “Judas kiss.” This sad, miserable man, who would pilfer the money bag, would later hang himself. This is a perfect example that sin does not pay. This was all part of God’s plan.

After His arrest, the chief priests and elders led Jesus to Caiaphas, the High Priest. The next day Jesus was brought before the Sanhedrin (Jewish Council) where they had a “mock” trial. Jesus



was charged and convicted of upsetting the religious system, because He claimed to be God. In short order, Jesus was brought before Pontius Pilate who would carry out the sentence. But before Pilate could sentence Him, Pilate's wife had a dream and told her husband not to execute this just man. However the Jews persisted. They were so vocal and demanded that Jesus be put to death that Pilate gave in to their demands and bound Him over to be crucified on Golgotha's Hill, "the place of the skull."

Jesus was nailed to a cross and hung between two thieves to die. You can just imagine the agony of having large spikes driven through your hands and feet. Even in His excruciating pain, Jesus looked down from the cross to those who were carrying out the sentence and said, "Father, forgive them because they know not what they do." One of the thieves repented and asked Jesus to remember him when Jesus came into His kingdom. Jesus told him, "This very day you shall be with Me in paradise."

It should be noted that the "cross" is the focal point of the entire Bible. Everything in the Old Testament points toward the cross, and everything in the New Testament points back to the cross. Jesus shed His blood on the cross for all and as previously stated, "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission for sins." Jesus was the perfect sacrificial Lamb of God who replaced the blood of bulls and goats once and for all. As Christians, we are not under the Law, but we are under grace, which stands for "God's Riches at Christ's Expense."

From noon till 3 o'clock in the afternoon, darkness came over the land and the Temple curtain was rent from top to bottom.



Before Jesus breathed His last, He said, “Father, into thou hands I commit my spirit.” Then, these words are recorded in Matthew 27: 54, “When the centurion and those who were with him were guarding Jesus, they saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified and exclaimed, “Surely he was the Son of God.”

A short time later, Joseph of Arimathea, who had become a disciple of Jesus, approached Pilate and asked for Jesus’ body. After being granted permission, he then wrapped Jesus in fine linen cloth, and placed His body in his own tomb. With the help of Nicodemus, they placed a great stone against the entrance of the tomb. The next day, the chief priests and the Pharisees came before Pilate and said, “Sir, we remember while the deceiver was still alive, He said that after three days, He would rise again.” Then, Pilate agreed to place a guard of soldiers before the tomb to make it secure. They sealed it with a stone and set guard over it.

As the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and some of the other women came to the tomb but saw that the stone had been rolled away. Mary ran to tell Peter and John. When they arrived, they entered the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying there. The wrapping that had been on Jesus’ head was not lying there but was folded up in a separate place. At this point, Peter and John did not understand what they had seen so they went home again. But Mary stood outside looking into the tomb, crying. She saw two angels in white sitting there, one at the head and one at the feet, where Jesus’ body had been lying. Then a voice said, “Woman, why are you crying?” Having heard this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, though she did not know it was Jesus.



When Jesus called her “Mary,” she knew who He was. He then said to her, “Don’t cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to My brothers and tell them, I am ascending to My Father and your Father – to My God and your God.” After this, Jesus appeared to His disciples a number of times. Also, He appeared to two men on the road to Emmaus and as many as 500 at one time.

There is no better source to quote than the Bible itself, so here, recorded in Luke 24: 44-49, are the words of Jesus, before He went back to be with His Father, “He said to them, “this is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.” Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them this is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.” Then He led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up His hands, He blessed them. He left them and was carried up into heaven. And they returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they were continually in the Temple complex blessing God.

With these final words, we have come to the end of Jesus’ life, as God incarnate, here on earth, and now a word about what has happened since that time, almost 2,000 years ago. For unbelievers who will give all kinds of reasons why the account I have just



given you from the Bible is not true, I would remind you of some facts that have truly influenced my thinking and perhaps they will yours as well. Of all the Apostles, we read in historical accounts that 11 of the 12 died a horrific death for their faith. John was the exception, as he would die peacefully on the island of Patmos. These men were with Jesus and were actual eyewitnesses to the accounts recorded in the Word of God.

After Jesus' ascension back to the Father, His followers remembered that He had told them that He would not leave them comfortless but would send them a helper in the person of the Holy Spirit. In the scripture, we see this occurring in the first chapter of Acts, where it says, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the Earth."

For the Christian, the Holy Spirit is our teacher. He tells me every day what is right and what is wrong and how I should act and treat other people. I know that I can trust Him, because He is always right. If you don't know Jesus, think about what that can mean to you and your future. The Holy Spirit comes to live inside of us, when we accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

The book of Acts is the story of the church and it began at Pentecost, which means, "God's empowering His church with the power of His spirit, so He will be glorified among the nations." The followers of Jesus were all together at one place and "Suddenly a sound like a violent rushing wind came from heaven and it filled the whole dwelling where they were staying and there were many cultures and nationalities among them and they were



each speaking in their own language and praising God.” The early church banded together and began to minister and serve each other. But the church and its influence really began to grow and add numbers because of the power of God and one very important person, and one very important event.

The person was the Apostle Paul, originally named Saul of Tarsus, who was a devout Jew. He persecuted the church and followers of Jesus to the high heavens. But God had other plans for this “Jew of Jews.” After getting permission from Jewish leaders in Jerusalem to travel to Damascus to arrest Christians, or followers of “The Way” as they were called then, on the road he had an encounter with the Lord that changed his life and the lives of millions of people. This account can be found in Chapter 9 of the Book of Acts.

The Apostle Paul, along with others, would travel on three missionary journeys and a trip to Rome. He established churches in much of the northern Mediterranean Sea area and would later visit and write to them. In a few cases, Paul wrote to churches more than once and his writing became 13 of the 27 books that make up the New Testament.

Some of the churches Paul established were at Corinth, Ephesus, Galatia, Philippi, Colossae, and Thessalonica. Some of the other apostles who wrote letters that are part of the New Testament are James, Peter, and John. The last book of the Bible is the Book of the Revelation, and is prophecy for the end times - events still to be fulfilled.



The other important event was when the Romans destroyed Herod's Temple in 70 A.D. This dispersed the Christians to all over the world where they would establish His church. To be sure, the Bible is truly the greatest story ever told and why it is the all-time best seller.

If you are not already a Christian, my prayer is that you will confess your sins, repent and ask Jesus to come into your heart and save you. The church is the Body of Christ and if you are already in church please don't ever leave. If you are not in church, I pray you will find a good, Bible-teaching church, join, and get active in it.

I can promise you, it will be the best decision you can ever make and there is much, much, more to the story.



# Biblical Answers for Teen Questions!

## **1. Can a loving God sentence someone to Hell?**

*Romans 1:18, Matthew 10:28, I Peter 2:4, Galatians 6:7-8  
Ezekiel 18:23, 32 Ezekiel 33:11, II Peter 3:9, I Timothy 2:4*

## **2. What does the Bible teach about honesty?**

*Rev. 21: 27, Luke 8: 15, John 8: 44, II Corinthians 8:22,  
Proverbs 1:3, Ephesians 4:25, II Corinthians 4:2*

## **3. Where can I find Biblical answers to using drugs & alcohol?**

*I Corinthians 6: 19-20, I Corinthians 6: 10,  
I Corinthians 5: 11, Ephesians 5: 18, I Peter 4: 3,  
Proverbs 20:1, Galatians 5:21*



#### **4. Do people I know, who commit suicide, still go to Heaven?**

*Acts 15: 1, Romans 4: 4, 16, Galatians 2: 21,  
Ephesians 2: 8-9, Romans 5:15, Ephesians 1:7, John 3:16,  
John 10:28*

#### **5. Is Satan a real Person?**

*Matthew 4: 1, Matthew 13: 39, Matthew 25: 14, John 8: 44,  
Isaiah 14:12-15, Ezekiel 28:12-19, Matthew 4:1-11*

#### **6. What does the Bible say about abortion?**

*Genesis 1: 27, Matthew 19: 14, Matthew 18: 10,  
Exodus 21: 22-23, Exodus 20: 13, Genesis 9:6,  
Roman 1:28-29*



## **7. As a Christian, how should I treat homosexuals?**

*I Corinthians 6: 9-10, I Peter 3: 15, 2 Peter 3: 9,  
I Timothy 1: 10, I Peter 3: 8-12, Philippians 2:3-5,  
John 8:11, I John 3:16*

## **8. How should Christian young people deal with peer pressure?**

*John 12: 42-43, Leviticus 20: 26, Psalms 1: 1-2, John 15: 5, I  
Corinthians 6: 18, I Timothy 6: 11-12, Matthew 26:41,  
II Peter 2:9, I Corinthians 10:13*

## **9. How should I witness to my non-believing friends about Jesus?**

*Mark 1: 5, Romans 1: 16, Acts 1 : 8, Romans 6: 23,  
Ephesians 2: 8 - 9-10, Corinthians 15: 1-10,  
Matthew 22:39-40, John 15:1-8, Galatians 5:22-23*



**10. What are some scriptures that will help me in dealing with my siblings?**

*I Corinthians 13: 4, Ephesians 4: 32, II Timothy 2: 24-25,  
I John 4:20, Matthew 5:22*

**11. What does the Bible say about lying and how should I deal with it?**

*Romans 9: 1, I John 1: 10, I John 4: 20, I John 5: 10,  
Proverbs 12:22, Proverbs 6:16-20, I Peter 3:10-12,  
Colossians 3:9*

**12. Are there scriptures in the Bible that will help me deal with stress?**

*Matthew 6: 31-34, Philippians 4: 6-9, I Peter 5: 6-7,  
James 1:2-4, Psalm 94:19, Matthew 11:28-30*



**13. What does it mean to incur the wrath of God?**

*Romans 1: 18-32, John 3: 36, Romans 2: 5, Romans 9: 22, Zephaniah 1:14-15, Romans 2: 5-6, Psalm 78:56-66*

**14. Does the Bible specifically talk about the Trinity?**

*Matthew 28: 19, Galatians 4: 6, I Peter 1: 2 – II, Thessalonians 2: 13-14, John 14:26, I John 5:7-8*

**15. What does the Bible say about conditions in the last days?**

*II Peter 3:4-5, I John 2:18, II Timothy 3:1-4, Luke 17: 26-27*



**16. Do God's laws specially deal with polygamy in the Old Testament?**

*Deuteronomy 17: 16-17, I Kings 11: 1-4, Matthew 19: 1-9, Ezekiel 21:10*

**17. What does the Bible say about being racist, and why are people racist?**

*Genesis 11: 1-9, Acts 2: 37-41, Acts 17: 26-31, Acts 10: 25-29, Romans 10:12 James 2:9, I Samuel 16:7*

**18. If you don't ask forgiveness for a sin, regardless if you've asked forgiveness for your sins when you were saved, do you go to hell?**

*John 3: 16, Ephesians 2: 8-10, John :3: 18, I John 2:1, II Corinthians 5:17-18, John 10: 28, 30*



**19. How do people in other countries learn about God?**

*Acts 1: 8, Matthew 28: 19-20, Romans 1: 19-23,  
Matthew 24:14, Psalm 96:3*

**20. According to the Bible, can I be friends with people who have done bad things?**

*I John 1: 8-10, Proverbs 3: 5-6, Proverbs 17: 17-18,  
John 15: 13-15, James 5:16, Matthew 5:16 ,  
II Timothy 2:24-26*



# NOTES



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