

HOW ARE WE SAVED?

The Catholic View of Salvation

Steven R. Hemler, President



Dr. Peter Kreeft and Fr. Ronald Tacelli:

“**Salvation is the ultimate reason for our existence:** our end, goal, point, purpose, hope, and meaning. The difference between **success and failure in life** is not the difference between riches and poverty, fame and obscurity, health and sickness, etc., but rather it is the difference between **salvation and damnation.**”

“For as Jesus said, ‘What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses his soul.’ Nobody ever asked a more practical question than this. In other words, ***don’t get all A’s but flunk life.***”

Video: Fr. Larry Richards is everyone saved?





Presentation Outline

- Why Were Christ's Passion and Death Needed for Our Salvation?
 - God's Loving Justice
- How Can We Accept God's Gift of Salvation?
 - Three-fold Response
- "Are you saved?"

*What Do These
Quotes Say
That We Need
For Our
Salvation?*

- “God proves his love for us: while we were still sinners, **Christ died for us.**” (Romans 5:8)
- “All have sinned and are deprived of the glory of God. But by the free gift of God's grace all are **put right with him through Christ Jesus.**” (Romans 3:23-24)

Christ Died for Our Sins

- We are **all** sinners.
 - Often governed by our pride, greed, anger, envy, lust, appetites, laziness.
- But why was Christ's **horrific** passion and death on the cross necessary for our salvation?
 - Why couldn't God just be **merciful** and simply forgive our sins?
- Seen *The Passion of the Christ* movie?



God's Justice

- Jesus' brutal passion and death on the cross highlight enormity of sin.
 - God must really hate sin if this was needed to "set things right."
- God is perfectly **loving**, but God is also perfectly **just**.
- God's **justice** demands that our sins be **punished**.
 - Not to punish would be unjust.
 - Court let contrite murderer go free?



Loving Justice

- We all deserve divine punishment.
 - None of us deserve, on our own, the rewards of heaven.
- However, for our sake God did the impossible and **took upon Himself** punishment we are due.
 - Son of God became human and out of love for us he embraced the consequences of every sin there ever was or ever will be.



Loving Justice

- St. Augustine: “Christ loved us so much that, sinless himself, he suffered for us sinners the **punishment we deserved for our sins.**”
- Pope Francis: “His love for us led him to sacrifice himself and to take upon himself our sins. This **astonishes** us: God saved us by **taking upon himself all the punishment of our sins.**”
- *Video: Fr. Larry Richards on how much Jesus suffered for us on Calvary*



Loving Justice

- If God was not **just**, there would be no **need** for His Son to suffer and die.
- If God was not **loving**, there would be no **willingness** for His Son to suffer and die.
- But, God is both just and loving. Therefore, **God's love is willing to satisfy the needs of His justice.**



Loving Justice


“God willed that His only-begotten Son should become man to suffer and die for the salvation of men. This divine decision manifests both the justice and the mercy of God. It manifests His justice, because it shows that God has actually demanded satisfaction for the sins of men against Him. It manifests His mercy, because no one but a God-man could have offered a suitable satisfaction for the sins of men. **Because he was God, Christ could offer God an infinite satisfaction for the infinite malice of sin. Because he was man, Christ could offer a man’s satisfaction for man’s sins.**”

— *My Way of Life: The Summa Simplified for Everyone*

Christ's Gracious Gift

- Christ paid the **highest price** possible to give us the **greatest gift** possible.
 - Christ's love has rescued us and made possible **eternal life** in heaven.
- Did we do anything to deserve this?
 - **Grace** is an unearned blessing to unworthy sinners.
- How does this realization make us feel?
 - **Gratitude**, which motivates our response.
- *Video: God's Gracious Gift*

Christ's Gracious Gift

- God is now offering Christ's payment for our sins to us as a pure **gift**.
 - One that we are totally free to **accept or reject**.
- We are saved by God's grace, but we need to **actively cooperate** with that grace by living as a follower of Jesus Christ.
 - If religious faith has no bearing on our daily lives, salvation is not certain.
- We're not trying to work our way into heaven or earn our salvation.
 - We allow God to work within & through us by cooperating with Holy Spirit.
- "God created us without us: but God did not will to save us without us."
St. Augustine (CCC #1847)
- How can we **personally accept** this gracious gift of God's love?
- *Video: Bishop Robert Barron on what is required of us to be saved.* 

*We are called to a three-
fold response to accept
God's gracious gift.*



What is *First Thing* (“leg”) Needed For Our Salvation?



- “The Son of Man must be lifted up so that everyone who **believes** in him may have eternal life.” (John 3:14-15)
- “Whoever hears my word and **believes** in the one who sent me has eternal life.” (John 5:24)
- “**Believe** in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved.” (Acts 16:31)

FIRST LEG: Faith

- **Faith** in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier.
- Faith is more than intellectual belief or acceptance of Church doctrine.
 - Repent of our sins, reject selfish ways, and seek a trusting relationship with God.
 - Vatican II: “By faith, man freely **commits** his entire self to God, making the full **submission** of his intellect and will to God.”

FIRST LEG: Faith

Quote from book *Renewal of Faith*

- Written by 2 Catholic Priests

“Perhaps some of us thought that we could follow Jesus satisfactorily just by believing certain truths and by doing certain good acts.”

“Following Jesus demands that, but it **demands much more**; it calls for a deep change, a radical turning about, a **total commitment** of our lives to Jesus.”

FIRST LEG: Faith

Quote from *Renewal of Faith* (continued):

“But this is not easy; it implies a **total surrender to God’s will**. We are not trying any longer to make God fit into our ideas; we are rather making ourselves fit into God’s ideas.”

“Conversion is a free, personal and radical **offering of one’s whole self to God**. Have we ever done this? Have you ever done it? Or have you perhaps **drifted along** since your childhood doing Christian things? **Have you ever given yourself completely to Jesus?**”

FIRST LEG: Faith

- Faith includes initial conversion: **commitment, surrender, trust.**
- Conversion is a lifelong process.
 - Moving from self-centeredness toward obedience to God's will as expressed in the Bible and Church teachings.
 - The only conversions that count are those confirmed by a life of discipleship.
- *Video: Fr. John Riccardo on conversion and discipleship.*

What is *Second Thing* (“leg”) Needed For Our Salvation?



- “**Faith** of itself, **if it does not have works, is dead.**” (James 2:14,17-18)
- “Whatever you **did** for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me... you will go to eternal life.”
(Matthew 25:40,46)
- “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life? You shall **love ... your neighbor** as yourself.” (Luke 10:25,27)

SECOND LEG: Loving Service to God and Others

- Genuine faith requires an active response.
 - Prayer for others.
 - Committed service and acts of charity.
- Love awakens love.
 - Love of God awakens our acts of love.
- Loving service to God and others flows as fruit of our faith.
 - Good works not done to earn God's love or our salvation.
 - In gratitude, we seek to live kind of life that will bring joy to God.
 - "Faith working through love." (Galatians 5:6)

SECOND LEG: Loving Service to God and Others

THE WORKS OF MERCY

CORPORAL & SPIRITUAL

FEED THE HUNGRY 	 INSTRUCT THE IGNORANT
GIVE DRINK TO THE THIRSTY 	 COUNSEL THE DOUBTFUL
SHELTER THE HOMELESS 	 ADMONISH SINNERS
CLOTHE THE NAKED 	 FORGIVE OFFENSES
VISIT THE SICK 	 COMFORT THE AFFLICTED
VISIT THE IMPRISONED 	 BARE WRONGS PATIENTLY
BURY THE DEAD 	 PRAY FOR THE LIVING AND THE DEAD

To share knowledge

To give advice to those who need it

To give correction to those who need it

To forgive those who hurt you

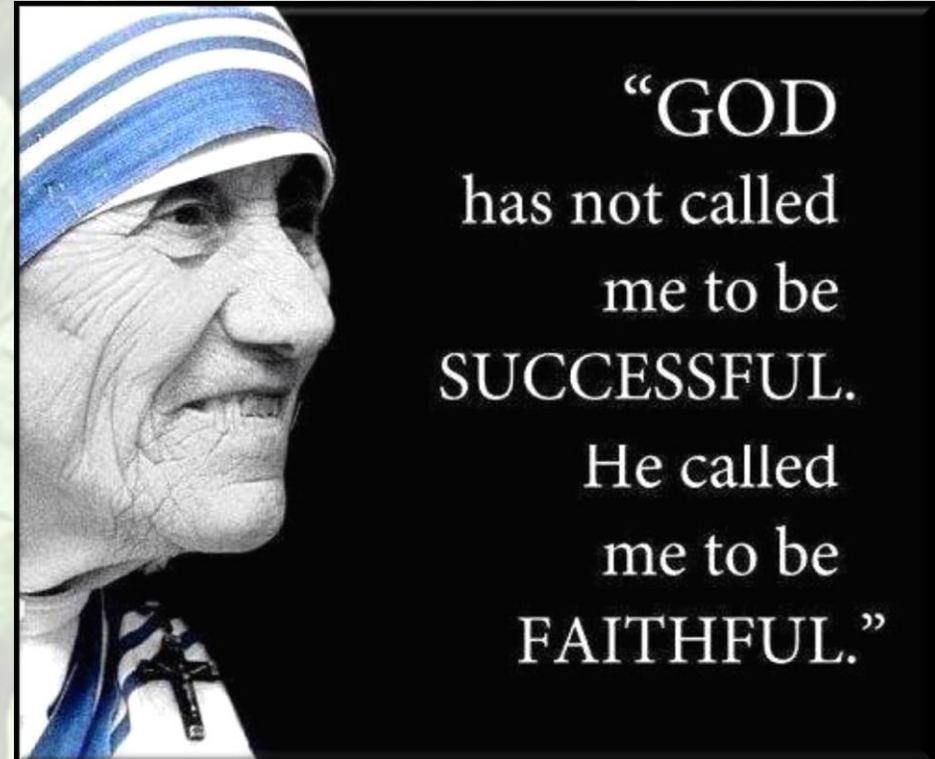
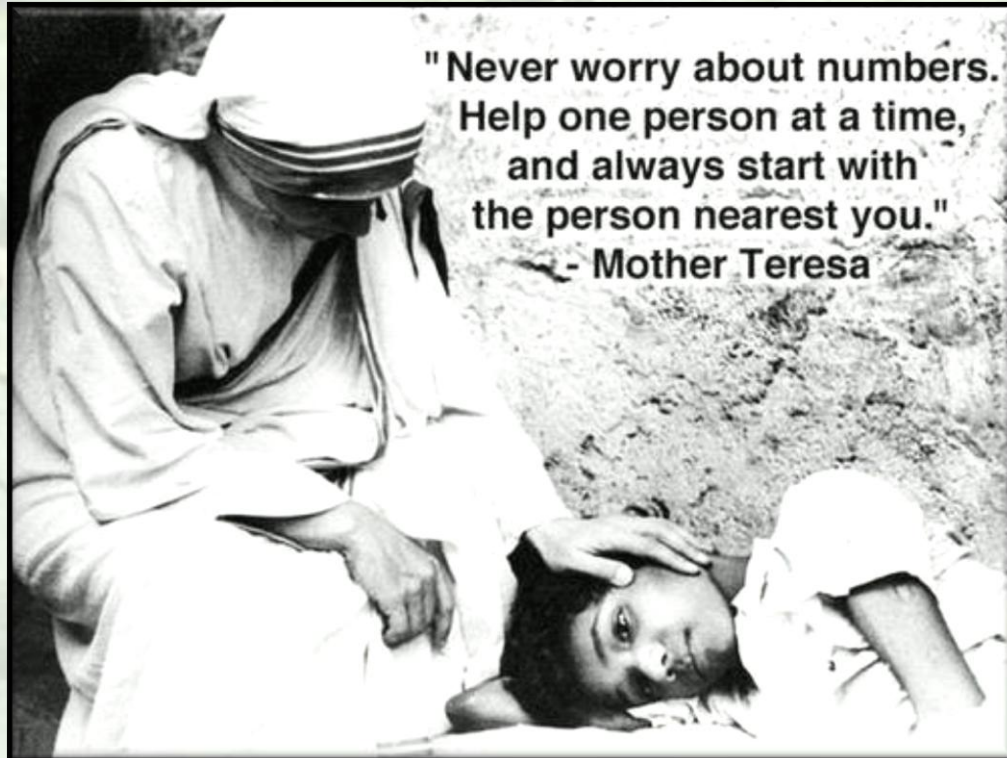
To comfort the suffering

To be patient with others

To pray for the living and the dead

SECOND LEG: Loving Service to God and Others

While we can't do everything, we can do something.



What is *Third* Thing (“leg”) Needed For Our Salvation?



- “Whoever believes *and* is **baptized** will be saved.” (Mark 16:16)
- “No one can enter the Kingdom of God without being **born of water and Spirit.**” (John 3:5)
- “Whoever **eats my flesh and drinks my blood** has eternal life.” (John 6:54)

THIRD LEG: Sacraments

- Eucharist
 - “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.” (John 6:54)
 - Jesus literally meant what he said in John, chapter 6.
 - Let many of his disciples walk away.
 - Did not say they misunderstood.
 - At the Consecration during Mass, bread and wine become the Body, Blood, Soul & Divinity of Jesus Christ.
 - Spiritual nourishment and strength to do first 2 “legs.”
 - *Video: Bishop Barron on why Eucharist is so important for our salvation.*



How Do We Merit Eternal Salvation? (In Summary)

By God's Grace thru Christ's Passion and Death

Our **Three-fold** Response:

1. **Faith**: Commitment, Surrender, Trust
2. **Loving Service** to God and Others
3. **Sacraments**, esp. Eucharist
 - Provide divine strength and grace needed to fully live the Christian life (first two "legs of tripod")

Are you saved?



- “I ***hope*** to be saved & ***am being*** saved.”
- Salvation is more than one moment of a person’s initial conversion to Christ or the reception of any single sacrament.
 - We are not the best judge of our own spiritual condition.
- We possess our salvation in ***confident hope.***

As St. Paul says:

“I have **hope** that I myself will be raised from the dead. I do not claim that I have already succeeded or have already become perfect. I keep striving to win the prize for which Christ Jesus has already won me to himself. Of course, my friends, I really do not think that I have already won it; the one thing I do, however, is to forget what is behind me and **do my best to reach what is ahead**. So I run straight toward the goal in order to win the **prize**, which is God's call through Christ Jesus to **the life above**.”

(Philippians 3:11-15)

Are you saved?



- “I **hope** to be saved & **am being** saved.”
- God, through Jesus Christ, did his part.
- However, salvation is a two-way street.
 - We need to do our part & accept God’s gift.
- We accept God’s gift by living a life of:
 - (1) Faith: commitment, surrender, trust
 - (2) Loving service to God and others
 - (3) Sacraments: especially the Eucharist

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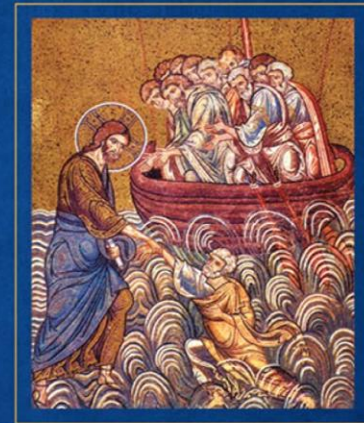
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THE REALITY OF GOD

The Layman's Guide to Scientific Evidence for the Creator

Steven R. Hemler

Catholic Stories of Faith *and* Hope



How God Brings Good Out of Suffering

AUTHORED AND COMPILED BY

Steven R. Hemler

A bright, sunny sky with scattered white and yellow clouds. The sun is visible in the lower-left quadrant, creating a lens flare effect. The overall tone is warm and optimistic.

Questions?

Comments?

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