

“What if?”!

You think of a lot of “what ifs” sitting in a prison cell. “What if” I didn’t do that? “What if” I did better in school? “What if” I never picked up that pornographic magazine? “What if I never smoked those cigarettes or that pot my friend brought to the party? “What if” I helped that old lady with her grocery bags on the bus that day? I can sit on my bunk and stare out these bars thinking of “what ifs”, it won’t do me any good. I guess my Bunkie got tired of me asking my “what ifs”, so he asked me one “what if” you...confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. (Romans 10:9) I sat on my bunk for hours thinking about that one. It must have been 2AM or so, but I had to know, so I woke him up and asked, “saved from what”? He asked me one question in response, one that I never expected, one that changed by life. That man asked me if I was tired of running, hiding, drinking, smoking, lusting and trying to “what if” my problems away. He told me the void in my heart was not meant to be filled with those “what ifs”! I didn’t sleep very well. I thought “what if” I died, would anyone care? Who is this Jesus? Who cared about him so much they raised him from the dead? I thought about that good and hard. I didn’t even hear Chow call. When I got up to go down the hall I noticed someone wrote on the wall, “Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift”. When I came back my Bunkie was reading. I had 100 questions and all of them were written on my face. I asked him what “the unspeakable gift” was that was written on the wall. He told me it was from 2 Corinthians 9:15, and it meant Jesus Christ. Then he showed me John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish but have everlasting life. We talked for hours. He

showed me so many truths in the Bible that day. Romans 3:23 says “for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God”. I thought to myself, ain’t that the truth? I was tired of lusting over magazine girls, smoking, drinking, and hiding from the truth. The truth is that I needed God in my life. Soon, my Bunkie got his parole date and I knew he would be leaving. Being bad about good-byes, I went to the weight yard until I was sure he was gone, then I returned to my cell. I found a note and his Bible he left on my bunk. The note said, “What if”, and the Bible was open to Romans 10:9. That night I got down on my knees and prayed, “God help me! I know I’m a sinner. I know you love me so much that you gave your only begotten son so I don’t have to die for my sins. My Bunkie told me that if I confess the Lord Jesus and believe in my heart that you raised him from the dead, I will be saved. I believe! Can you save me too, please”? With that, I got back in my bunk. The next morning in the chow line, I saw it again, “Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift”. I read it over and whispered, “Thanks, God”!

HOPE BEGINS WITH KNOWING JESUS AS YOUR PERSONAL SAVIOR

It is possible to have a complete assurance that you are going to heaven. The Bible says, I John 5:13 “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

What must you do to know you are going to heaven?

1. You are a sinner and do not deserve to go to heaven.

Rom. 3:10 “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one.”

Rom. 3:23 “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;”

2. The only way to pay for your sins yourself is by spending eternity in hell.

Rom. 6:23 a “For the wages of sin is death... “
Rev. 20:14 “And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. “

3. You cannot do anything good enough to earn your way to heaven.

Titus 3:5a “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us...”

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

4. Believe Jesus died to pay the price for your sins.

Rom. 5:8 “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

5. Believe that Jesus not only died but rose again from the dead.

1 Cor. 15:3-4 “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: “

6. Know that Jesus freely offers forgiveness for your sins.

Rom.. 6:23b “...but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

7. Repent and turn from your sin to Christ.

Acts 3:19a “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out...” “