

The Bible says we have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). Every single person is in dire need of salvation. Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick” (Matt. 9:12 NIV). In like manner, the souls of every single person on earth are full of sin. The only anecdote for sin is the blood of Jesus Christ. He is the only way to Heaven. If you are looking for everlasting hope, a constant friend and help in times of trouble, pray these words:

Dear Jesus,

Thank You for loving me unconditionally. I believe You died on the cross and rose again. Please forgive me of my sins. Come into my heart and make me a new creation. I want to live for You. I want to worship and adore you forever. Help me share Your love with others.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.

If you prayed this prayer, I encourage you to read the Bible, find a church family who can encourage you in your new walk with Christ, and most importantly, pray for God to help you.

May God bless you always,  
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# The World

## CHANGED OVERNIGHT



This article was written by an English teacher. It was not written or produced by any particular religious group or denomination. It is provided free of charge as an expression of God's love for mankind. Be encouraged today!

In mid-July, I went grocery shopping for the first time in nearly four months. Considering my underlying health conditions, my dad had been shopping for groceries while I stayed in the vehicle. This method worked out well, since it meant that one of us was free of contaminants when it came time to bring groceries into the house. No, we still have not let our guard down. We are still wearing masks in public, and we are sanitizing our groceries when we bring them home. I just felt it was time that I saw for myself what the inside of the store was like after enduring four months of a pandemic. What I witnessed on that warm summer day in July was a stark reminder of how the world has essentially changed overnight.

COVID-19 signs plastered the doors, aisle markers directed one-way traffic through the store, and special markers instructed shoppers where to stand in line to encourage social distancing. What a drastic difference to our last trip inside the grocery store together. Being that my dad and I love to cook and bake, it only makes sense that we also enjoy grocery shopping. Yet, instead of a leisurely stroll through each aisle, we quickly grabbed the items on our list and vacated the premises. There was no fun found in looking at barren shelves, all while simultaneously trying to navigate between the shoppers with masks and those without. Even now, grocery shopping is not what it used to be.

### *A New Normal*

Not too long ago, someone commented to me concerning their disdain for the oft-repeated phrase, “a new normal,” when it comes to the effect the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the entire world. Unfortunately, I believe we are now experiencing a “new normal,” for it seems the “old normal” becomes more of a distant memory every single day. How fragile this world is for everything to be “normal” one day, only to rapidly change in a way we would have never expected.

One single cell emerged to inflict a global pandemic upon the earth, adversely affecting the lives of millions of people.

### *The COVID Crisis*

On the evening of March 13, 2020, the announcement was made that all schools in my home state of Florida would be closed. Other closures came about quickly, leading to a complete lockdown in many parts of the world. One moment, we were living our everyday lives. The next moment, we were striving to preserve our lives. Nearly thirty-five million people have contracted COVID-19 around the globe. Sadly, over one million people have lost their lives to this highly infectious disease. To make matters worse, the numbers are increasing daily at greater-than-anticipated rates in some regions.

Now, as the new school has gotten underway for a large number of students, there is much debate about whether children are safe in brick and mortar classrooms, with many individuals opting for virtual and hybrid learning models. There is equally great controversy over whether people should wear masks or not. Others disagree on whether the reopening of various types of businesses should move forward with zeal or slow down with caution. While everyone seems to have an opinion concerning the many unknown variables surrounding this plague, we are also battling the ill effects of civil unrest, abortions, sexual immorality, and a myriad of other negative influences on society. It seems human decency has been thrown out with yesterday's newspaper. Even with the state of the world's affairs, there is hope amid what seems like a hopeless situation.

### *The Only Lasting Hope*

Jesus Christ is the only source of everlasting hope. No matter what happens on this earth, we can always put our trust in Jesus Christ, for He will never fail. We can depend on Him to help us through every calamity in life. He said, "Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world" (John 16:33 NLT). No matter what happens in this world, we can rest assured that Jesus has already conquered our vilest storms. He will be our shelter from the storm, serving as our refuge and strength in times of trouble (Ps. 46:1).

Even though the world has changed drastically over the past few months, the world will change in an even greater way when the Lord

returns to this earth. For Christians, this will be the most glorious day of their lives. For non-believers, it will likely be the worst. God's Word says He will come as a thief in the night (1 Thess. 5:2). Think about it. A burglar would not call or text you to let you know they were planning to break into your house. The news headlines will never read, "Christ Comes Back Tomorrow." We must confess our sins and accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior before it is too late (see John 3:16; Romans 10:9).

If you have already put your trust in Jesus Christ, the Bible says we should share the Good News with everyone (Mark 16:15). First Thessalonians 4:16-18 (NLT) says, "For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, the believers who have died will rise from their graves. Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever. So encourage each other with these words." Let us encourage everyone, reminding them that this world is our temporary home. The trials and tribulations we endure will only last for a moment, but the salvation that comes from knowing Jesus Christ as our personal Savior will last for all eternity.

Although this world is ever changing, we can rest assured that Jesus Christ will never change. If you are burdened by the shortcomings of this world, take comfort in the knowledge that Jesus Christ will always love you more than you could ever imagine. Nothing in the entire world will ever change this wondrous fact. While the world may seemingly change overnight, remember, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8 NLT).

### *How to Receive Eternal Hope*

God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son to die on a cross for the forgiveness of our sins (John 3:16). Because of love, He paved the way for us to receive redemption: "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8 NIV). Jesus gave His life for us because of love (1 John 3:16). He rose again on the third day and is sitting at the right hand of God, interceding on our behalf. You may wonder why He would go to such great lengths for you. It is because of God's great love for humankind.