



A MATTER OF FAITH

by Pastor, Joel Lawler
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After Jesus raised from the dead, he spent time with his family and followers. They took great joy in seeing him again. He claimed to be the Son of God and proved it by fulfill-

ing the prophecies given to God's chosen people, the Jews. They had recorded them over many years and kept record of them in their scriptures. He had lived a sinless life, gave his life to pay the penalty of all our wrongs and rose from the dead. All of this he did out of love for his creation. He had accomplished what he had come to do.

In his final moments on earth, he gathered those close to him and gave them a mission. He told them to

go into all the world and tell everyone about him and what he had done. It was his final words to his people. They were to be the light in a very dark world. They

were to love and care for people as he had while he was here. They were to serve and give to those in need. This is "the gospel" or "the good news," God loves you. He came and died and rose again so that you may have a new start and a new life. He desires a relationship with you. He wants to hear from you. He wants to hear your thoughts. He wants you to bring your

The Good News

questions to him. He wants you to tell him your struggles. He wants to give you comfort, peace and strength in the hard times. He wants to hear about the good things. He gave them to you. Thank him.

When God created Adam and Eve, he loved to meet with them in the cool of the evening and walk and talk with them. He enjoyed their companionship. When Adam stood silently by as his wife Eve was deceived, a barrier was put up between us and God. We had chosen to break that relationship. We chose to walk away from God. We were created with the ability to choose to love and to choose to not love. We chose to go our own way. We chose to not love God. Love cannot be forced. That is just how God created it.

God's perfection could not relate to our imperfection. We rebelled against Him. We set ourselves against our

creator. God's justice demanded that the crime we committed be punished. Only someone who had not chosen to turn against God could take the punishment for us. God and God alone could take away our sin. He became a man, lived a perfect life, died in our place and defeated death so that we could receive his grace and return to a relationship with him. He loved us enough to give the sacrifice of himself so that we could once again be in a right relationship with him.

Man has twisted the pursuit of a relationship with God into many things. Religion is used to manipulate, control and steal from people. It is used to get people to follow rules and social preferences. This is not of God. This is man, once again, rebelling against God and using a false version of the gift God gave us in order to bring about their own agenda. Many have suffered from the abuse of those who

set themselves up as authorities on God.

They may have great knowledge of God but their hearts are far from God. They do not walk the path

that Jesus left for those who truly love him to walk.

Seek God. Search for him. Call to him. He loves you and wants to have a relationship with you.

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2 Th 2:10b Because they received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved v11: And for this cause of God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie.



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