

Dear friend,

I'm writing to you from the depths of my heart. You know I genuinely care for you and value your longtime friendship.

I know you're not big about talking about God, Jesus Christ, sin and salvation, but it's essential that you do. It's not compulsory, because God respects the choices we make with our free will, which He gave us. But it is essential.

We're not just flesh and blood bodies. The real you and me are soul and spirit. That's the heart and soul of us, where we make decisions and choices, where we think, reason and tell our bodies how to act.

We are spiritual persons, not just physical.

Most people think if you're good enough then you go to Heaven, and if you're not then you go to hell, if there is one. Even the Bible says this many times. But there is more to it than being good enough.

The Bible clearly says in Romans 3:23: "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God", and in Isaiah 53:6: "all we, like sheep, have gone astray." Not one of us, on our own merits, is good enough.

Which leads to a Bible verse that is both clear and generous. In Romans 6:23 the Bible says: "the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord". It is the most wonderful 'but' phrase that we can hear.

2000 years ago, God sent His son, Jesus Christ, to die in my place and yours on the cross. That part has already been done for us. Our part is to recognize our need for forgiveness (for not having obeyed His commandments) and to come humbly, seeking forgiveness.

God has given us a conscience so that we inherently know right from wrong. Anyone who is awake knows he has wronged God and must someday give an answer. The Bible calls it 'judgment day.' "We must all give account." (Hebrews 9:27)

That's the bad news.

The Good News is that because of Christ's death on the cross in my place, I can settle "out of court" if I respond to His invitation to be forgiven.

Unlike other religions, we do not have to earn our way into Heaven. Instead, we are given forgiveness and the promise of Heaven just by asking – asking the Lord to forgive us and asking Him to be our leader.

Jesus said: "I am the way, the truth and the life." (John 14:6) There is no other. He ends the search, and brings peace. Amazing peace.

Asking for forgiveness and accepting Jesus as your life's leader is just a prayer away. A lifetime of mistakes and errors in judgment can all be lifted from your shoulders and your heart, right now. That is God's offer of Grace and love.

Accepting this truth and new life has happened to both famous people and regular folks.

It has happened to golfers (Payne Stewart and Corey Pavin), actors (Tom Hanks and Olivia Newton-John), coaches of both the Colts and Bears football teams, the hockey player Paul Henderson, writers (C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien), musicians (Johnny Cash and Gladys Knight), Billy Graham, the Wright brothers, me, and millions of others.

There is more to life than the games we play and the things we do. The tug on your heart is God the Holy Spirit encouraging you to respond to the love of Christ.

I pray that you will take this step, and that this be real to you in the depths of your heart and mind, because "whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Romans 10:13).

"Oh how kind our Lord is, for He showed me how to trust Him and become full of the love of Christ." (1 Timothy 1:14)

"We were made for God and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in thee." (Augustine).

So many people feel lost, hurt and sorry – floundering in a vast sea of fear and doubt. Jesus is captain of the best rescue ship ever, and He is calling us to grab the life preserver that is within each reach. That is Grace.

While this letter may seem long, it flows right from my heart, and decades of enjoying the benefits of all that I am sharing with you here.

God has no favourites. He loves us all the same and longs for each of us to come to Him (II Peter 3:9). The peace and joy I know can be yours. I want this for you so very much.

Here is one last expression of what I've been thinking about lately:

Jesus is far more than you or I can imagine. His love for us was expressed on the cross at Calvary, where he spread His loving arms so that cruel men, who hated Him for no reason, could hammer nails through His wrists into wood that He, as God, created. He paid the price for our admission into Heaven. That was what He did. All we need to do is to reach out to Him, to accept forgiveness, and to be given that precious admission.

How utterly foolish not to respond to His loving plea for us – to be rescued and given eternal life.

“He has me on His heart,” says Psalm 139.
“He is always thinking about me.” (1 Peter 5:7)

How can we shun and refuse such love?

Please know that I pray for you every day, for your understanding and acceptance of this.

I am looking forward to seeing you, and would welcome an invitation to visit and talk.

I wish God’s very best for you.

Warmly yours, through Grace,