



GET IN THE WHEELBAROW

WHERE AM I GOING?

TRY JESUS COURSE BOOK 08

REMEMBERING GEORGE "He'd be the first to say there's nothing to be gained by bitterness or anger, hatred... I mourn for my friend."- Tom Petty.

(Interviews by Mim Udavitch and david Wild, Rolling Stone #887)

WHERE AM I GOING?

08 – GET IN THE WHEELBARROW!

Olivia Harrison, on the release of her late husband's posthumous album **BRAINWASHED** said George never felt in control during his lengthy battle with the disease. "He had spent years trying to achieve self-realisation and peace with God." "He aspired to a higher kind of consciousness, a higher life."

In "Any Road" George Harrison sings:
 You may not know where you came from
 May not know who you are
 May not even have wondered how you got this far ...
 But, oh, Lord, we pay the price with a
 Spin of a wheel - with a roll of a dice
 Ah, yeah, you pay your fare
 And if you don't know where you're going
 Any road will take you there.

Reviewer Anthony DeCurtis says of the album:
 "it stands among the best work that Harrison ever did. It is a deeply personal statement from a deeply private man, and it reflects the intimacy he nurtured with questions that had gripped him since he began writing songs as a member of the BEATLES:

WHO AM I?
 WHAT AM I DOING HERE?
 WHERE AM I GOING?

We live in a society that has lost its sense of meaning and purpose, because we've lost our connection with God. The "modern" dream that grew out of evolution and rationalism has ended!

This was the dream that human beings, without God, could "create a perfect social order through the rational instruments of science, technology and bureaucracy." We now live in what's called a "post-modern" society. Of this society, sociologist Richard Eckersley says:

"It is a world characterised by relativism, pluralism, ambivalence, ambiguity, transience, fragmentation and contingency [uncertain events]. Its danger is an 'anything goes' morality, a belief that values are just a matter of personal opinion, and that one set of values is not better or worse than another. Values cease to require any external validation, or to have any authority or reference beyond the individual and the

moment.” (Redefining Progress: Shaping the future to human needs, *Family Matters*)

It’s no wonder many feel disconnected and lonely, because they are! Bruce Headey & Alex Wearing found: “A sense of meaning and purpose is the single attitude most strongly associated with life satisfaction.” (*Understanding Happiness.*)



Mother Teresa has said:

“In the West there is loneliness, which I call the leprosy of the West. In many ways it is worse than our poor in Calcutta.” (Time)

We live in a broken world - of broken relationships: with God, within ourselves, with each other and with nature. ***There is a God-shaped hole in every one of us – and only God can fill it.***

We’re disconnected until we make the connection with Him. The unbearable longing in our hearts, the desire for a “higher conscienceness,” is a longing for God.

We learned in the previous guide that we’re all sinners. We’ve all broken God’s absolute standard His law. The consequence of this is a broken relationship that results in death.

Yet God can forgive us and accept us without any contribution on our part. He does this freely on the basis of what Jesus has done for us. Jesus died in

our place to pay for our sins. He also lived a perfect life that He credits to our account. In this way God can treat us “just as if we had not sinned. This is a free gift for whoever wants it.” The question is: How do we receive this gift and what are the consequences of receiving it?

This guide is about how sinners, in this postmodern society that has lost its values, can find answers to the questions: **WHO AM I? WHAT AM I DOING HERE? WHERE AM I GOING and find peace with God, and meaning for life.**

The Right Road

1. How does Paul, writing to the Romans, say the free gift of eternal life becomes ours? Romans 3:27, 28 (page 797 in NIV Bible: International Bible Society, 00195)

For we maintain that a man is justified _____ apart from _____ the law.

Faith is, as it were, the hand that reaches out to receive the gift. It’s not doing, but receiving. When we accept Jesus by faith, we are accepting that everything He has done is credited to our account.

Why by Faith?

2. While we are justified by faith, what does Paul say is the virtue, or value, of faith? Galatians 2:15, 16 (page 824)

We who are Jews by birth and not "Gentile sinners" know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith _____. So we, too, have put our faith _____ that we may be justified by faith _____ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no-one will be justified.

The virtue or value of faith is its object - Jesus. Let's illustrate what this means. If you lived in an underground cavern where there were no lights whatsoever, having eyes would be of no value at all. Eyes are only useful if there's something to see - so with faith. Having faith, or the amount of faith, is not the issue. Everyone has faith. We wouldn't travel on a plane if we didn't have faith in the pilot, or in the mechanical reliability of the plane. If we didn't have faith we wouldn't eat a meal without chemically analysing it first to see it was safe. We wouldn't do anything if we didn't have some faith.

The virtue of faith that saves is not in having it, or in how much we have. The value of faith, as with sight, is in its object. The object of saving faith is Jesus, particularly in what He has done in providing for our salvation. To ask ourselves the question: "Do I have enough faith?" is the wrong question. **The question we need to ask is: "Is Jesus great enough and gracious enough for me to rely on?" In other words, "Can I trust Him?" The answer is always "Yes!"**

3. If we could be rescued from the problem of evil by anything we do, what does Paul say would be the significance of Jesus' death? Galatians 2:21 (page 824)

I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, _____!



Paul's point is we are saved by faith alone, in Jesus alone. What we "do" is never the basis of our acceptance with God, but our response to His acceptance of us. Many people don't understand this. They think they have to earn God's favour by reaching some level of holiness before God will accept them. A Christian writer has said: "If you see your sinfulness, do not wait to make yourself better. How many there are who think they are not good enough to come to Christ. We must come to Christ just as we are." (*Steps to Christ*, page 31)

What We Ought to Know

4. What does John say we receive when we accept Jesus as Saviour? 1 John 5:11-13 (page 864)

And this is the testimony: God has given us _____, and this _____ is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

I write these things to you who _____ in the name of the Son of God so that you may _____ that you have _____.

Eternal life is a present possession for those who have accepted Jesus and trust in Him. It has to do with a quality of life in relationship with Jesus our Friend. John is saying that we ought to have the assurance of eternal life now.

Let's illustrate. A woman came up to a preacher after hearing his sermon and said she could not understand salvation.

The evangelist asked, "Mrs Franklin, how long have you been Mrs Franklin?"

"Why, ever since I was married," she replied.

"And how did you become Mrs Franklin?" he asked.

"When the minister said 'Will you take this man as your husband?' I just said, 'Yes.'"

"Didn't you say, 'I hope so,' or 'I'll try to'?" asked the evangelist.

"No," she replied, "I said, 'I will.'"

Then pointing her to the Bible, he said, "God is asking you if you will receive Jesus and what He has done for you. What will you say to that?"

Her face lighted up and she said, "Why, how simple that is! Isn't it strange that I didn't say 'Yes' long ago?"

It's that simple! When you say "Yes" to Jesus and accept what He has done for you, you become part of God's family and a citizen of heaven.

5. What did Paul want more than anything else? Philipians 3:7-9 (page 832)

... not having a _____ of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through _____
in Christ—the _____ that comes from God and is by _____.

Remember the illustration of the two high school students' report cards? (Guide 7). One received all 'As' the other all 'Fs'. The teacher somehow swapped the names on the cards. Based on those report cards the "F Student" passes and the "A Student" fails. That's what Jesus has done for us. He puts His perfect record (His righteousness) on our report card in heaven, and He accepts our failure as His. We accept this by faith.

6. How much condemnation exists for those who accept what Jesus has done for them? Romans 8:1 (page 800)

Therefore, there is now _____ for those who are in Christ Jesus.

The term "in Christ" occurs about 150 times in the New Testament. It means to be in a right relationship with Jesus. Justification is the opposite of condemnation. If there's no condemnation for those who trust in Jesus, then there must be complete justification, or acceptance and forgiveness. Jesus said He didn't come here to condemn us but to save us (John 3:17, page 752).

Our Response to the Gift

7. How strong are Paul's words to those who think they can be justified by works of the law? Galatians 5:4 (page 825)

You who are trying to be justified by law have been _____ from Christ; you have _____ away from grace.

8. While salvation is a free gift, what does Paul say is the evidence that we have accepted the gift of justification? Ephesians 2:8-10 (page 827)

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no-one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do _____, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

9. What does James say about those who claim to have faith that is not accompanied by good works? James 2:14-17, 26 (page 855)

What good is it, my brothers, if a man _____ to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not _____ by action, is _____.

While we're saved by faith alone in Jesus, true faith is never alone—it always results in good works. James says, "Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do" (v 18).

"It has been said that separating faith and works is like separating the heat and light from a candle. You know both are produced by the candle. You know they are not the same thing. You also know you cannot separate them." (Robert C Shannon, *1000 Windows*)

10. When Jesus comes again the second time (see Guide 12), on what basis did He say people would be rewarded or judged? Matthew 16:27 (page 694)

For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to

This is not a contradiction to what has been said so far. While we are saved by faith in Jesus alone, we are judged by the things we do. This is because what we do - our lifestyle - reveals what we really believe.

If we're trusting in Jesus, our lives will show it. We may not practise what we profess, but we always practise what we believe.

11. What did Jesus say we would do if we love Him? John 14:15 (page 764)

If you love me, you will

Obedience is
always the
response of
faith in Jesus.
Can you
imagine a sick
person going
to a doctor
and saying...



"Get in the Wheelbarrow!"

Charles Blondin was the pseudonym of Jean Francois Gravelet (1824-97), French acrobat and tightrope walker. His career as an acrobat began when he was about six years old, and he quickly won acclaim for his daring performances, becoming known as the Little Wonder.

Outstanding among his hazardous feats were his exhibitions, in 1859 and 1860, on a 335 m (1100 ft) long tightrope stretched 49 m (160 ft) above Niagara Falls. Blondin varied his act, crossing the falls blindfolded, while pushing a wheelbarrow, with a

man on his back, and even while balancing on stilts. (Microsoft® Encarta.)

The story is told of him turning to the crowd before one of his Niagara Falls crossings, and asking: "Who believes I can walk across blindfolded, wheeling a wheelbarrow?" One man stepped forward, "I believe that you can do it, Blondin!" "All right," said Blondin, "then get in the wheelbarrow!" I don't think the man did. But that's the real test of faith!

The poet has said:

I would not work my
soul to save
For that the Lord has
done
But I would work like
any slave
For love of God's dear
Son.

While salvation is a free gift received by faith alone in Christ alone, saving faith is always accompanied by good works. The response of one who accepts Jesus as Saviour is to obey Him as Lord. Good works, or obedience, is the evidence of faith. True faith always leads to action – to getting in the wheelbarrow!



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**Are you willing
to get in the wheelbarrow?**

Yes, I would like to accept by faith what Jesus

I've learned that to trust in Jesus always leads to _____

How will your life be different now that you know what Jesus has done for you? _____



