

Knowing Jesus

What it means to have a real relationship with Him.



by Roy Mack



TO BUY THE WORLD A COKE

When I was a kid growing up, Coca-Cola had what would be known as one of their most famous and memorable ad campaigns. A commercial that showed young people from all over the world gathered together on a hillside singing a very catchy song in which the lyrics in part were:

*I'd like to teach the world to sing
In perfect harmony
I'd like to buy the world a Coke
And keep it company.
That's the real thing*

Coca-Cola received more than 100,000 letters from the public praising them for the ad. Radio stations were overwhelmed by requests to hear the song on the radio.

The back story is that one of the people noted for coming up with the ad, Bill Backer, had an international flight that was grounded due to heavy fog in London. His plane was diverted to Ireland where many of the passengers were furious about their accommodations. The passengers

were told to stay near the airport so when the fog lifted they could travel. The next day Backer saw many of the same passengers sitting in the airport cafe, now all laughing and joking with one another sharing their stories over snacks and you guessed it, bottles of Coca-Cola. Baker said in that moment, "I realized something; I saw a bottle of Coca-Cola in a whole new light." He said, "I saw Coca-Cola as more than a drink that refreshed a hundred million people a day in almost every corner of the globe." He went on to say, "it seemed that having a Coca-Cola was a subtle way of saying, 'Let's keep each other company for a little while.'" More than a refresher, Coca-Cola was seen as a bit of commonality between all people. "The ad was so successful," Becker said, "sharing a Coke may just lead to world peace". If you don't know the ad, look it up, but be prepared to have the song stuck in your head for awhile.

I would like to share a metaphorical Coca-Cola with you for a few





minutes. I am hoping to share this booklet with thousands of people just like you, people who are perhaps searching for some peace or trying to understand what it means to “Know Jesus.” I don’t know that it will lead to world peace, but I am hoping that it will bring you some real peace. I could not help but think of this famous Coca-Cola theme song that is seared in all the people of my generation’s brains. I want to tell you about “the real thing.” His name is Jesus.

If I could sit down with the whole world over a Coca-Cola or a coffee at a cafe, in your home or mine, sharing and enjoying one another’s company and hospitality...I would want to ask you in the midst of our time together, the most important question you will ever be asked: “Do

you know Jesus?”

If we were sitting together, I would share with you that my great purpose and calling in life is to help people know Jesus, to help others to know that they too can become a child of God. The Apostle John tells us in I John 5:13 “I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.” You do not have to go through life wondering if you will go to Heaven or hoping you are going to Heaven, or worried that you are not. By the authority of the Word of God, you can know that Heaven is your home!

I want to share with you what I have shared with scores of people in my lifetime. I am asking if you would take a few minutes to read this booklet carefully and thoughtfully, as if we were sitting together having a conversation, to consider this question: do you know Jesus? Do you really know Him? If you continue to read, let me say, thank you for taking a few minutes to let me share with you how you can know Jesus.

Some Things to Consider

We have more in common than you might think.

We all (mankind) are created in God's image and likeness. No matter where you are from, male or female, we are all in His likeness
Genesis 1:26 *Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness..."*

We were all created for a purpose.

Genesis 1:26-28 *"And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. ²⁷So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸And God blessed them."*

God gave mankind the stewardship of the earth. Ultimately, God made us for a greater purpose of fellowship with Him, to enjoy God and be enjoyed by God. Enjoying God is to know God intellectually, to admire God in his beauty, to delight in him emotionally, and to dedicate ourselves to him. In essence, to enjoy God is to praise

God for the God that He is. We cannot do that unless we know God through Jesus.

All of us have the same problem, we were born into sin.

Romans 5:12 *"Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man (Adam), and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned."*

Romans 3:23 *"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"*

This is why most of the world is not enjoying God; our sin has separated us from a holy God.

We are all sinners. I did not ever need to be instructed on how to sin; I knew how to do that. The truth is, it is natural for us to be sinners. I raised four children, all girls. I never had to teach them how to lie, or be sneaky, or petty or jealous. They inherited all that from their parents, as did every person on this fallen planet. We are all sinners. And what is more, there is a penalty for sin that all of us have in common.

We are all going to die one day.

The statistics on dying are pretty

convincing, 100% of us are going to die. You may love this world and you may love your life the way it is. I have said this for many years, “you may not want to go to Heaven, but you can’t stay here.” We are all going to die. This is certainly sobering to think about. Romans 6:23a *“For the wages of sin is death...”*

God desires for the whole world, including you, to come to know Him through Jesus.

God is patiently waiting on you to come to Him.

2 Peter 3:9 *“The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.”*

“Repent” simply means a change of mind, change of heart, and change of direction in which you are going; to turn and go toward God.

We are all, as sinners, in need of a Savior. He (Jesus) died for the sins of the whole world (all of us).

John 3:16 *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”*

Any one of us who will confess Him by confessing their need for Him, turns from their sins and to God (repents), and receives Jesus as God’s gift of salvation, will be saved.

Romans 6:23b *“but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

We all have these things in common. Let me take a few moments and explain a little more for you.





Relationships and Religion

Religion is man's attempt to come to God on our own terms.

As we sit together for a little longer, let me explain the difference in a relationship compared to religion. Relationships speak of bonds and unions; friendship, family ties, brotherhood and sisterhood, marriage, intimacy as well as mutual conversation, commonality and community.

Many people are religious without a real relationship with God. Even those who have no church background, specific denomination, or any particular faith they grew up adhering to, have a belief system. To say you have no religion is, in a sense, a belief system. Many people today are just doing "their own thing." Maybe that has been you and that describes your life. The truth is even those who are claiming some religious affiliation, more often than not, are just going through life doing "their own thing."

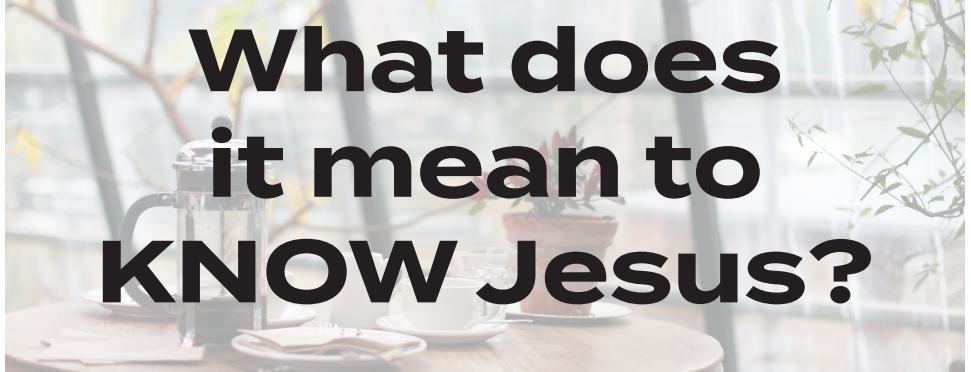
The best definition for "religion" that I find helpful is just this.

Religion, no matter what religion it is, is something that is basically mankind's attempt to come to God on the terms of his religious preferences. Religion instructs on what we must "do" to get to Heaven, the afterlife, have a better reincarnation, a higher level or whatever a particular religion says one must "do" and keep "doing" to get to whatever it is they are attempting to get to (God), or a god of their invention or imagination. The problem is, no one can seem to identify what exactly it is that one must "do" and how long one must "do" it or how good they must be at "doing" it to get to where it is they are trying to go.

In a nutshell, that is the problem with religion. If man can get to God by his own efforts and achievements, answer me this question. Then why did Jesus have to come to earth to suffer and to die on a cross? If we could be good enough to go to Heaven without his death, burial, and resurrection, why did He have to suffer and die? **Jesus came to be our gift from God for**

our salvation. When He died on the cross, He made the payment for our sin. There is nothing else to be “done.” True Christianity is not a religion, but it is a relationship based on what Jesus has already “done” not on what we are “doing.” This makes true Christianity unique among all religions which are based on you “doing” something in order to get to God.

Jesus makes it plain in the words of Scripture that He has come for a relationship with us, not to start a religion. I want to talk to you about what it means to have a **relationship** with Jesus.



What does it mean to KNOW Jesus?

We first need to understand what it means to “**know**” someone. In our English language, the word, “know” is fairly generic. I know that $2+2=4$. I know my neighbors, I know my wife. I know I am the pastor of Grace Fellowship Church. With that said, “knowing” someone can mean about anything someone intends about the subject. It does not necessarily speak of the depth of knowledge or depth of relationship without some further elaboration or further explanation, of just how it is we “know” someone.

For example, I can say I know the famous World War II General, Douglas MacArthur. I have read several books about him. I know where he was born, I know where

he was educated. I know what branch of the military he served in. I know he lived in the Philippines for many years. I know that when WWII broke out, he went to the island of Corregidor and was held out there for many months. I know that President Roosevelt arranged for him to escape the island fortress before it was overtaken by the Japanese army. I know that when he left there he went to Australia where he gave his famous speech that was broadcast in America and to the Philippines, in which he stated, “I shall return!” I know that he became the Supreme Commander of all allied forces in the Pacific Theatre of War Operations. I know that in time he did return to the Philippines and he was a liberator

of the captives there. I have walked where he walked on the island of Corregidor in the Philippines. I have had my picture taken under his statue there.

I know General Douglas McArthur, but the plain truth is this, I have never met the man. I have no relationship with him. On the other hand, I know my wife, April. I know where she was born, about her life, where all she has lived. I know her parents. We went to the same high school together. We have shared thousands of meals together. I have enjoyed her company, and she has blessed me by being my wife. We are in a relationship called marriage.

Marriage is a relationship in which both parties agree to terms. If you are married, you know it. You said covenant vows. You moved in together. You are sharing your lives together. This also is what salvation is, a relationship between two people who have agreed to terms and have said covenant vows together.

This is the point: there are a lot of people who know some about Jesus. They know about His birth and most even celebrate His birth at Christmas. They know about where He lived and even about what He said. They know how many disciples He had and some people even know all their names. They know about Jesus' teachings, His

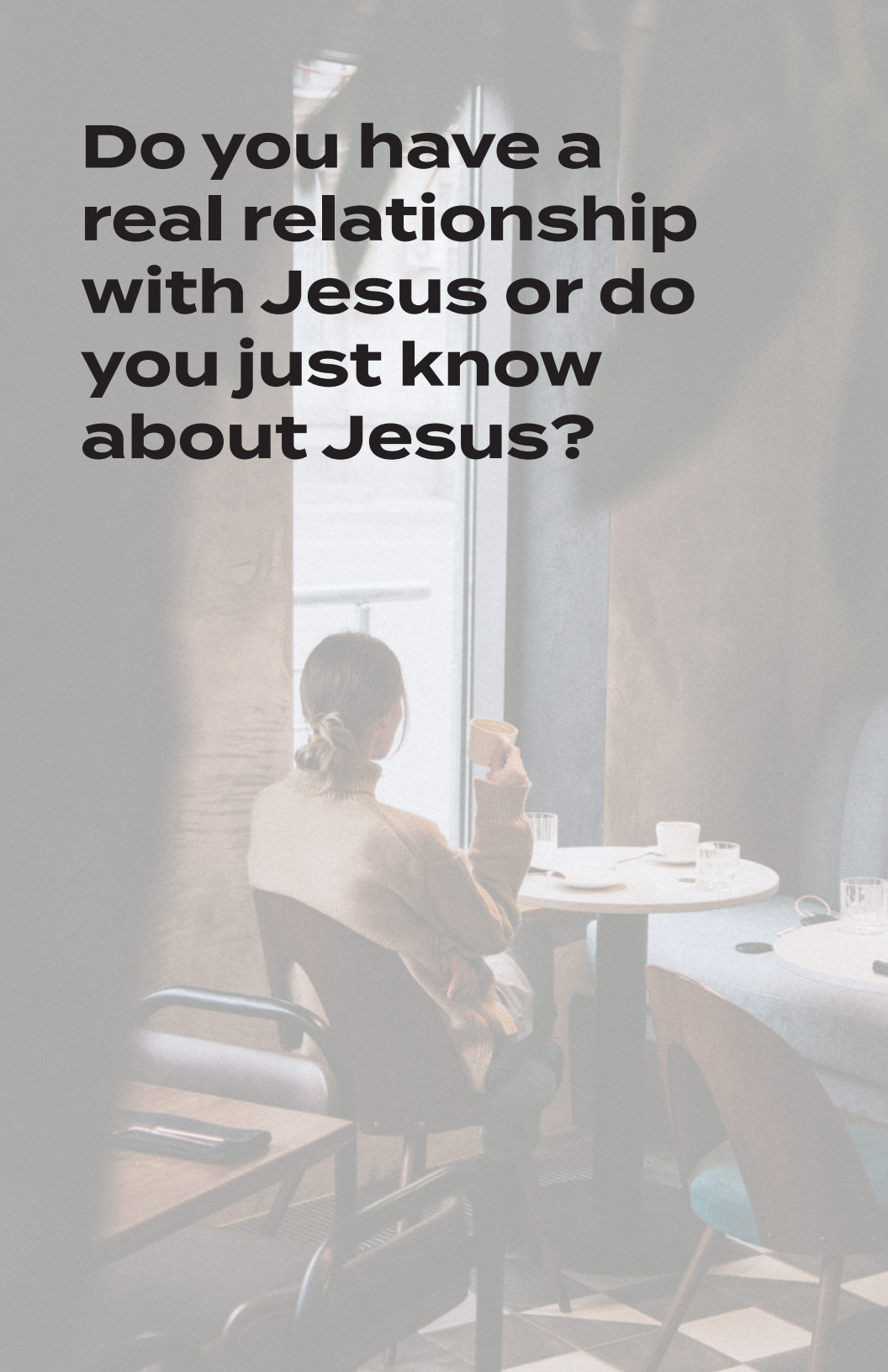
miracles and His parables. They know that Jesus also said, "I shall return" (John 14:3). They know that He is the Supreme Commander, King of kings and Lord of lords (I Timothy 6:15). They know that He is a liberator and has come to set the captives free (Isaiah 61:1 and Luke 4:18). Some people have even walked where He walked, visiting the Holy Land and perhaps they have even been baptized in the Jordan river, where Jesus was baptized. But the question is still this: "do you know Him?" Do you have a real relationship with Jesus like I have with my wife, or do you know about Jesus, like I know about General Douglas McArthur?

Now look at what I believe is the most sobering passage of Scripture in all of the Bible. Jesus tells us in His most famous message, the Sermon on the Mount:

Matthew 7:21-23

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²²On that day (Judgement Day) many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' ²³And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

**Do you have a
real relationship
with Jesus or do
you just know
about Jesus?**



There are “many” people who are talking about heaven who are not going. In fact Jesus warns in the same sermon, *“Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are ‘many.’¹⁴ For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are ‘few.’* (Matthew 7:13-14)

“Many” are on the wide way that leads to destruction (Hell). “Few” are on the narrow way because it is hard. It is unpopular and unorthodox, in that, it is not a religious practice, but rather all about coming to Jesus on His terms and having a real relationship with Him.

Sadly, the people standing in judgement on Judgement Day in Matthew 7 are offering up all of the things that they have been told or have sincerely believed would get them to Heaven. They are telling about all of their good deeds they have done in Jesus’ name. They are saying, “Did we not prophesy (preach), fight evil, build hospitals, feed the hungry, give to the poor? Have we not been good neighbors, good husbands, good wives, good parents? We have volunteered in our communities, all in the name of being a Christian.”

There is just one thing they lacked and it was the only thing that

mattered, Jesus did not know them. They were not born again into Jesus’ family. Jesus tells us in John 3:3b *“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”* The people in Matthew 7 were not born-again, they lacked a real relationship with Jesus. They were left with only empty religion. They were religious, but they had no relationship with Jesus. So, Jesus says to them, “I never knew you...”

For many, Jesus is just like the statue of General McArthur. He is a picture on a church wall, or a crucifix on a living room wall. He is like a religious certificate perhaps you have earned in your church. People say, “I believe in Him!” They also say, “I am doing all I do for Jesus.” But your religious efforts and religious good works will **not** get you to Heaven.

Religion is the man-made attempt for man to get to God, which cannot be done. There is no religious ladder we can build tall enough to reach Heaven’s standards. Only a relationship with Jesus will get you into His Heaven.

Jesus just invites us to Himself, not into any religion. Matthew 11:28-29 *“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly*

in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

It is following a religion, without a relationship of following Jesus, that is a heavy burden. It makes a person's soul weary. Jesus is saying to us, lay all that striving, toiling and heavy lifting of religious practices that make the soul heavy and weighed down and instead, come to me and learn of me. Learn what it means to know Jesus and find rest in Him. Come and learn of His **grace** to you.

A close-up photograph of a white ceramic coffee cup filled with a latte. The coffee has a light brown, foamy texture with a delicate, symmetrical leaf-like latte art design in the center. The cup is set against a blurred background of green foliage.

Grace and Faith

Ephesians 2:8-10 *“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”*

Salvation is God's gift of Jesus to a hopelessly lost mankind. It is *“by (His) grace you have been saved,”* which simply means, it was all about His decision to offer His salvation to us, not about us being deserving of it, *“this is not your own doing.”* (Your own doing would be your own efforts of religious practices.) It was *“through faith in Christ,”* not through my own efforts, good deeds, or faithfulness to any creed or religion bearing His name, *“not a result of (your) works.”* No one will get to Heaven and brag about what they did to get there,

“so that no one may boast.” We will all be saying the same thing, “Jesus gave me His gift of salvation when I put my hope, trust, and faith in Him and all He did for me on the cross.” He died in my place, was buried, and rose again. I know that and I know Him. *“Through faith”* I have asked Him to forgive me of my sins and to be my Savior.

After we come to know Jesus through putting faith in Him and Him alone, now we can do plenty of good works. *“We were created in Christ Jesus for good works...”* God has planned for us to do good in His name, but those good works are not what will save us. Those good works will be done by us because we are saved, because we know Jesus and love Jesus.

**For you to find
Jesus you have
to know that you
were once lost.**



You see, only lost people can be found, and only lost people are candidates to be found. Jesus came for the spiritually sick. If you do not have need of the Great Physician Jesus, then you think you are well, but in fact, you are still sick. Jesus came to save sinners, and therefore, sinners are all that can be saved.

Listen to the Apostle Paul's words to the Corinthian church.

I Corinthians 15:1-4 *"Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, ²by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.*

³For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures."

The Gospel means good news. It is defined by the Apostle Paul as the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is good news because He died for our sins, paying a debt we could not pay. He was then buried, but on the third day He rose again, conquering death, Hell and the grave. We, through Him, now can overcome death and escape eternal damnation in Hell by accepting His gift of salvation to us. That is good news indeed!

My friend, I have shared a lot with you. I am trusting and praying that while you have been reading this that the Spirit of Jesus has actually been tugging at your heart. I pray that He is leading you to Himself and saying to you that what I have been sharing with you is truth. Jesus said of Himself in John 14:6 *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*

Only through a relationship with Jesus will we ever come to the Father. There is no other way (religion), there is no other truth. Any other teaching that promises Heaven without a relationship with Jesus is a lie. No other name will bring life, only Jesus. As Jesus said, the way is narrow. Will you be one of the "few" that finds the way, discovers truth, and finds eternal life through a relationship with Jesus? **Do you want to really know Him?**

Salvation

For you to receive Christ and His free gift of salvation personally, let me quickly summarize a few things you must understand and believe in your heart (your innermost being). I will ask them as questions:

1. Do you believe that God loves you? The motivation for God sending Jesus to the cross was founded in God's love for you. John 3:16 *"For God so loved the world (you) that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever (you) believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."*

2. Are you willing to confess that you are a sinner?
Do you agree with the Scriptures about your sin? Remember, we are all sinners and not one of us is perfect nor can we be good enough to earn Heaven.
Romans 3:23 *"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,"*
Romans 3:10 *"There is none righteous, no, not one;"*

3. Do you believe there is a penalty on your sin?
The penalty for sin is death, Hell, and separation from God for all eternity for those who are not found in relationship with God. Romans 6:23a *"For the wages of sin is death."*

4. Do you believe that God does not want you to be separated from Him for all eternity?
Therefore, God sent Jesus as God's gift to you and you do not have to die and be banished to Hell to pay for your own sins. Jesus has already willingly suffered and died in your place for your sins because He loves you. He offers Himself to you. Romans 6:23b *"but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*
Do you believe this?

5. Are you willing to receive the gift of salvation by receiving Jesus as your Savior?
This is done by confessing with your mouth (prayer) what you know to be true in your heart. You know that God loves you, that you are a sinner, that Jesus died on the cross for you. You believe that Jesus rose from the dead on the third day. Romans 10:9 *"that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."*

If you want to receive Christ as your Savior **please pray a prayer like this** from your heart:

“Dear Heavenly Father, I believe that you truly do love me. I also confess to you that I am a sinner. I believe that you sent Jesus to suffer and to die on the cross in my place. I am asking you to forgive me of my sin and to be my Savior and my Lord. I am asking by faith, and I am asking this in Jesus’ name. Amen”

Here is a precious promise for those who put their faith in Jesus by praying what you just prayed...

Romans 10:13 *“For whoever (you) calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”*

John 10:28 *“I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.”*

If you have just prayed this prayer, I would love to know about it. Like I said when you started reading this little booklet, I have given my life to help people know that they can know Jesus. I would love to know of your decision. Would you please take a moment to let me know by visiting:

gracelives.com/knowingjesus

I would like to send you some free materials to help you take some next steps in your faith walk.

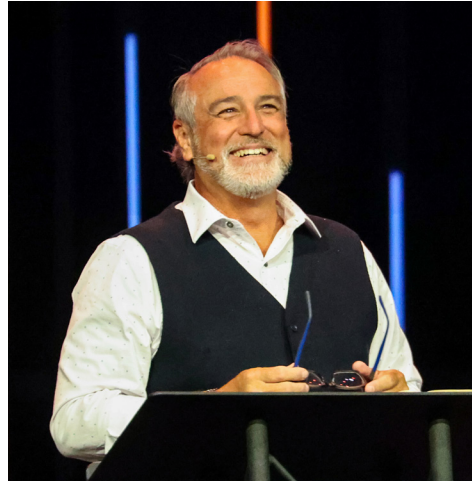
Maybe someday we can sit down together and share that Coca-Cola or a coffee together. If not here, in Heaven.

More about Pastor Roy:

Roy Mack is the Senior Pastor of Grace Fellowship Church in Niles, Ohio. He has 30+ years of full-time pastoral experience. Roy became the pastor of Grace in 2013. Since then, Grace has tripled their missions giving, recorded thousands of salvations and built a new church campus that was dedicated in 2021.

Pastor Roy has traveled extensively and ministered on foreign mission fields. He lends his influence to a few different world mission boards. His passions are his family, leadership training, mentoring couples, and leading people to find their life's mission. He also is passionate about training national pastors and reaching unreached people groups. He is an avid outdoorsman who loves fishing and hunting.

Pastor Roy has been married to April since 1986. They have four grown daughters and ten grandchildren.



Email: rmack@gracelives.com

Find his weekend messages at:
gracelives.com

**Do you have a real
relationship with
Jesus or do you
just know about
Jesus?**

