

Sunshine Awaits



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.

On the sun-soaked island of Santorini, Greece, the main city of Thira sits above the jagged, towering cliffs, which are remnants of a volcanic caldera. The volcanic eruption occurred in 1650 BC, leaving behind a group of smaller islands known collectively as the Cyclades. Due to the harsh terrain surrounding the island, there are only five methods of getting to this precariously positioned vacation destination. If you are not flying in to the only airport on the island or sailing in on a seaworthy vessel, then you must choose to walk 580 steps, ride a donkey to the top via the zigzagging walking path, or ride in a cable car boasting a mesmerizing view. At its highest point, the cable car ascends to 220 meters above the gleaming blue water and unique volcanic rock faces below. My dad and I chose the cable car. As someone who absolutely loves heights, I can attest to the fact that the view of the striking seascape below was truly fabulous.

The entire day seemed as if we were driving our rental car within the confines of a movie set. The island landscapes were spectacular, offering photogenic panoramas in every direction. The highlights of the day were soaking in the warm waters of the Aegean Sea at Perissa Beach and enjoying Greek pastries at a small bakery we stumbled upon on our drive back into town. As we rode the cable car back down to sea level, I reflected on how this was an experience we would always remember, for it was one of those priceless days, which only God could coordinate.

Much like this picturesque isle offers a choice of transportation to travel to the main island's central hub; there are many other choices in life. When we sit down at a restaurant, we commonly receive a menu. We can choose anything we like, ranging from our favorite appetizer and entrée to our choice dessert and beverage. In many countries, individuals have the freedom to choose which church to attend, which school to send their children to, and which home to live in. From the style of clothing we want to wear to the make and model of car we prefer to drive, the choices we have are seemingly endless. An infinite number of choices, yet only one choice on this earth will make a difference for all eternity. The decision to accept Jesus Christ

as your personal Lord and Savior is the most important decision you will ever make. The only way to receive salvation is through Jesus Christ alone. Jesus said, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6). You cannot buy salvation, nor can you earn it through kindness or charitable acts. This world may offer many alternatives, but “salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation. He is the Son of the only true and living God. Jesus is the only source of eternal hope.

Perhaps you are adrift in a sea of hopelessness. You may feel unloved or unwanted. It may seem as if you are in the middle of a never-ending sunset with no dawn in sight. Regardless of your current circumstances, Jesus Christ loves you unconditionally. He accepts you just the way you are, with all of your battle scars and even the innermost secrets you keep hidden inside your heart. He wants to wash all of your sins away and give you a new beginning. Second Corinthians 5:17 says, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” All things become new through Jesus Christ!

The terrible mistakes you have made, the guilt-ridden regret, your past that haunts you—all of these things will be forgiven and forgotten forever when you confess your sins and make Jesus Christ the Lord of your life. Micah 7:19 (ESV) says, “He will again have compassion on us; he will tread our iniquities underfoot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.” God will cast all of your sins into the sea of forgetfulness, giving you the gift of eternal life.

I want to encourage you to call on Jesus Christ. Do not wait until tomorrow. In the past year, I have seen young children lose their lives in horrific accidents. I have lost dear friends unexpectedly due to cancer and other health problems. Terrorist attacks, roadside bombs, school shootings, drunk drivers, and other calamities are prevalent throughout the land. The world is in great turmoil. Many people are hurting, some are fighting for their lives, and others are grieving. Yet even when the sorrows of life seem hard to bear, God’s Word says we should “not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope” (1 Thess. 4:13). This does not mean that we will not grieve. Instead, it means we should remember the eternal hope we have in Christ.

In my own personal life, I have experienced a tremendous amount of joy, but I have also endured much sorrow. Although I can testify concerning many answered prayers, there have been times when it seemed God was silent. Having lost all three of my siblings as premature infants, my precious mom, as well as three grandparents and numerous friends and relatives, I have attended more funerals than weddings. Yet even in the midst of these heartbreaking experiences, I knew my help would come from the Lord, as God's Word promises in Psalm 121:2. Jesus said, "Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matt. 28:20). Jesus will never fail us, even when life is uncertain.

Beyond the confines of this earth and all of life's disappointments, God is preparing an eternal home for us in Heaven. The sorrow we have endured will fade away. The tears we have cried will be no more. The moment Jesus steps out on the clouds, the world will change eternally. God's Word says, "For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words" (1 Thess. 4:16–18). The coming of Christ is closer than it has ever been before. Let us comfort others with this glorious news, so they may ready their hearts for His return.

We must go forth and proclaim the name of Jesus Christ to everyone we meet before it is too late. Sadly, approximately 150,000 people die every twenty-four hours. How many of them die without knowing the marvelous grace of Jesus Christ? I shudder to think of the number of people who are dying and going to an eternal hell.

If you were to die tonight, do you know with absolute confidence where you would go? Would you hear our Heavenly Father say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant" (Matt. 25:21 KJV), or would you hear the words, "Depart from me" (Matt. 25:41 KJV)? Only you know what the outcome would be. No one else can answer this question for you. Your grandparent's salvation cannot save you. The wealth you may have accumulated cannot provide an escape. You must answer honestly, for God knows your heart. The time to answer is now, while you can still choose eternal life through Jesus Christ.

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). Jesus Christ was not looking for fame or fortune. He 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.

The Bible says we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). Every single person is in dire need of salvation. If a person is sick, they must seek medical care, so they can get well. Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick” (Matt. 9:12). In like manner, the souls of every single person on earth are sick and full of sin. The only anecdote for sin is the shed blood of Jesus Christ. He is the only way to Heaven, where eternal sunshine is awaiting you and me. 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,
Jennifer Campbell (jennifer@christwillreturn.org)

Visit www.jennifercampbell.net for information on Jennifer’s new book, *There’s Sunshine Awaiting You*, which will be released in summer 2019.

Visit www.cwrmusic.org and www.jennifercampbell.net for free articles, free mp3 downloads, and Jennifer’s *Be Encouraged* webcast.

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