

A Gift Of God's Loving Kindness

With a Parable Illustrating
The Way of Salvation
Through Jesus Christ



Sherwood E. Haisty, Jr.

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Introduction

1 John 5:11-13

11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 He that hath the Son hath life; *and* he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. 13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

If you were to die tonight, do you know absolutely for certain that you will go to heaven? The Bible tells us in the proceeding passage that a person can know that he or she has eternal life. Throughout the Bible we can further discover how a person can be made right with God. As you read the following pages, you will discover God's one and only true plan of salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ. The good news is that a person can in fact go

to heaven and know with biblical assurance that he or she is truly right with God.

Many people find illustrations helpful as a tool to grasp concepts and truths. When Jesus was on earth, He often taught the people using parables. Parables were used to both conceal and reveal truths at the same time. The parables were sometimes confusing to certain people such as the Pharisees. On the other hand, Jesus revealed the real meaning of the parables later as He explained them to His disciples. These parables were vivid word pictures that served to illustrate the truths of the teachings of Christ. With Jesus as our model and example, we have attempted to construct a helpful parable that will illustrate the way of salvation in a modern context. This parable is not to substitute inspired Scripture but rather to further illustrate the Scripture with one unified illustration we call a parable. Notice the following verses that demonstrate how Jesus used parables.

Mark 4:2

2 And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine,

Matthew 22:1

1 And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said,

Mark 4:33-34

33 And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it.

34 But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

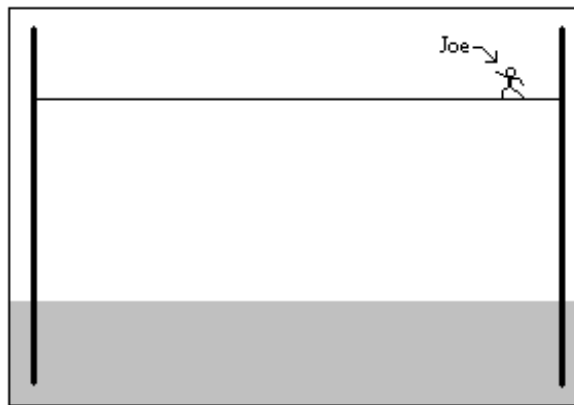
A Modern Parable ²

Imagine a man named Joe. Joe is in the circus and is doing the high wire act. When out in the middle and suspended high in the air he begins to

wobble. He falls. As he falls he manages to grab the wire with his hands. Dangling from the wire, Joe then proceeds to put one hand over another in an attempt to get to the other side. This proves to be very difficult. The distance is far too great and all hope of reaching the other side is lost. His heart is beating rather rapidly, Joe knows he can't hang on much longer and will soon drop to his death. While Joe is hanging in the air there is another man, Tom, who is standing on a platform lower down on the pole ahead. Tom is a trapeze artist. As a professional trapeze artist, Tom quickly mounts on his swing and calls out to Joe hanging from the wire. Tom says, "when I say let go, let go and trust me." Tom begins to swing and at the right time he yells, "let go!" Now Joe, who has been hanging on the wire, realizes that this is his only way of escape and he lets go. Joe falls as Tom swings. Tom catches Joe and securely carries Joe back to the platform and saves his life.

The Meaning of the Parable

Every Person is a Sinner and Has Sinned



First the man (we called Joe) who was walking on the high wire represents each of us. The wire he was on symbolizes sin. We have all taken deliberate steps in sin. We are sinners by nature and sinners by choice. No one had to teach you to sin, it is a part of your sin nature.

Romans 3:23

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

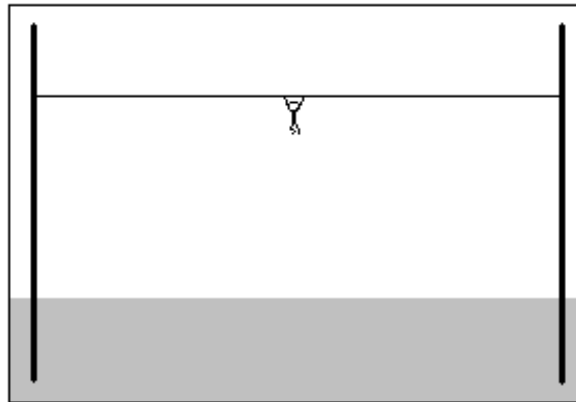
Romans 3:10

10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

Isaiah 59:2

2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear.

The Penalty for Sin is Death and Hell



The fact that Joe was dangling over the ground awaiting his physical death pictures a lost man dangling over hell awaiting the second death.

Romans 6:23

23 For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Revelation 20:11-15

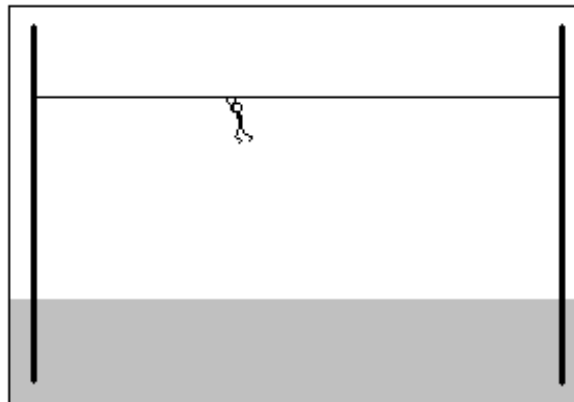
11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And death and hell were cast

into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Matthew 25:41,46

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: 46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

Man Cannot Save Himself by Self Effort or Good Works



Joe did not wish to die so he then began to put one hand over another in an attempt to get to the other side which symbolizes getting to heaven. This attempt at getting to the other side failed as the man could not have the strength to make it. This pictures the failure of trying to get to heaven by our own effort and our own good works. No amount of works can save, or help save, or keep one saved.

Ephesians 2:8-10

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Titus 3:5

5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

Matthew 5:48

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

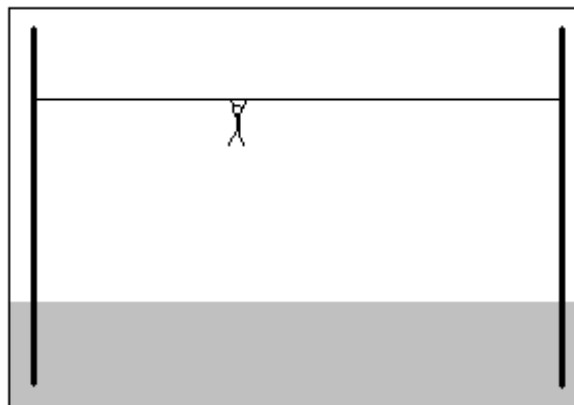
Matthew 5:20

20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 7:21-23

21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

A Man Lost and Without Salvation is in a Fearful Condition



Joe was in a terrible predicament and without hope if it were not for Tom.

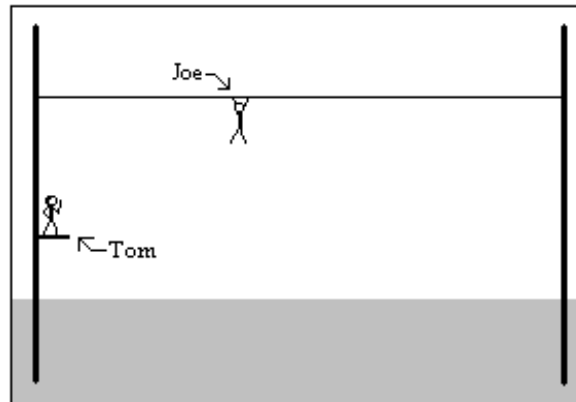
Hebrews 2:3

3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*;

Hebrews 10:30-31

30 For we know him that hath said, *Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense*, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. 31 *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

The Gospel Call is Given



Joe was in peril but had a friend who could save him. We have "a friend that sticketh closer than a brother," Jesus! Tom who was the trapeze artist called out to Joe, "let go", "trust me." This pictures the gospel call and that we must let go in repentance and trust Jesus Christ for salvation.

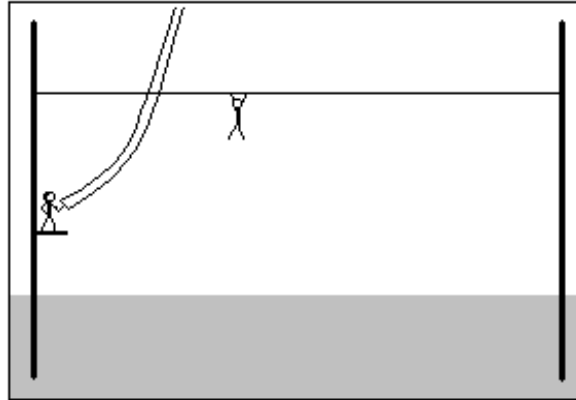
Revelation 22:17

And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

Hebrews 12:25

25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more *shall not we escape*, if we turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven:

Jesus is Able to Save to the Uttermost



Someone may ask, "Is Tom able to save Joe?" The answer is, "Yes." Someone may feel that they can not be saved. They may question if Jesus can really save them from their sin. The good news is, "Yes He can." Jesus is able to save to the uttermost. Salvation is of the Lord. The Lord's arm is not short but is mighty to save.

Notice that Tom also does not drop Joe but safely brings him all the way home. We don't have to worry about Jesus dropping us. His salvation is complete. We don't hold on to Him as much as He holds on to us.

Matthew 1:21

21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Luke 19:10

10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Hebrews 7:25

25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

Romans 10:13

13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

When Jesus died on the cross, He paid for the sin of all those who would put their trust in Him. He satisfied the wrath of the Father by His payment for sin.

1 Peter 1:18-19

18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

2 Corinthians 5:21

21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

1 Peter 2:24

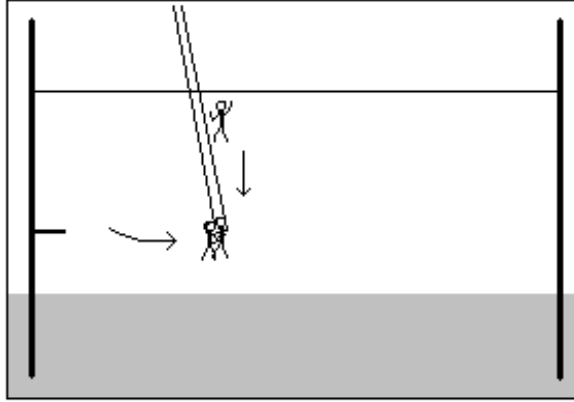
24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Romans 3:24-25

24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

You Must Let Go, Repent and Trust Christ as Your Lord



But Joe still had the responsibility to let go. He had to choose to let go of the wire which symbolizes sin. Letting go of it pictures biblical repentance. He also at the same time placed his faith and complete trust in (Tom) to catch him which pictures biblical belief and faith in Christ.

Joe's choice to let go first pictures repentance and second it pictures faith. By repentance, it pictures letting go of sin, self effort, and self control. By faith, it pictures totally trusting in Christ as his Lord and Master to save him.

Repent from Sin, from Self Reliance, and from Self Control

The Bible teaches that a person must repent of His sin and turn to Christ as Lord and Master of his life.

Acts 3:19

19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

Acts 20:20-21

20 *And* how I kept back nothing that was profitable *unto you*, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house, 21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 26:18-20

18 To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and

inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. 19 Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: 20 But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and *then* to the *Gentiles*, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

Acts 17:30

30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

Hebrews 6:1

1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

Trust Jesus as the Lord and Master of Your Life

One must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. This means to trust Christ and Him alone for salvation.

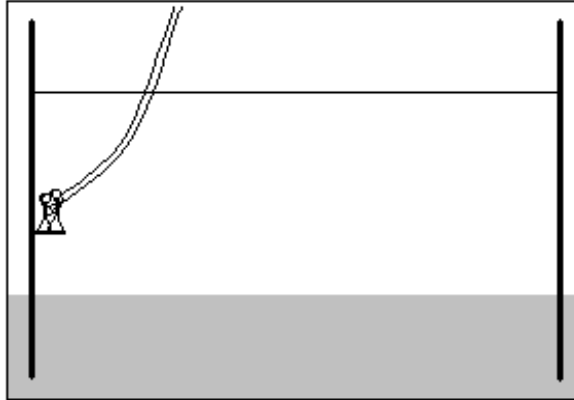
Acts 16:30-31

30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? 31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

Romans 10:9-13

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Jesus Promises That He Has Prepared an Eternal Place in Heaven for Those Who are Saved



The person who is believing on the Lord Jesus Christ to save him can rest in the fact that he is loved of God and will spend eternity with Him in heaven. The Lord saves us from sin and to Himself for His only glories sake. The saved will dwell with the Lord for eternity.

John 3:16

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 14:2-3

2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.

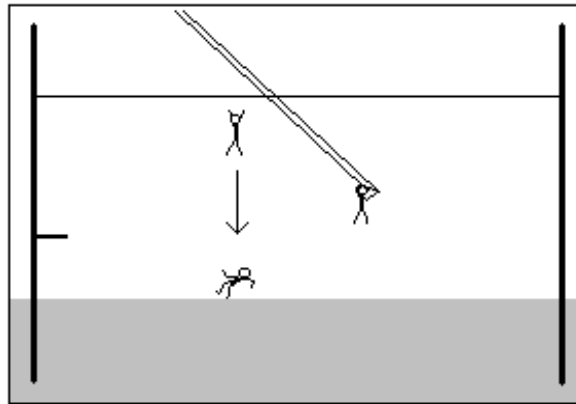
John 3:3,5

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Mere Intellectual Belief in Jesus is Not Saving Faith

Now remember the initial story. Imagine that the story ended in a different way this time. What would happen to Joe who was hanging on the

wire if he did not let go and trust Tom? Suppose Joe heard Tom cry out, "let go." But instead of letting go and trusting Tom to catch him he continued to hold on to the wire. But Joe believed in Tom and in what Tom was saying. Suppose Joe merely had an intellectual knowledge that Tom was real and was there to save him. His failure to "let go" and fully trust Tom to catch him would be his doom. This pictures what many people do. Many believe in Jesus intellectually and are members of churches and have been baptized and so forth but have never repented of their sin and cried out to Jesus Christ and trusted in Him alone to save them. Some continue to believe they can save themselves by what they can do for God. The Bible warns that many people will be mistaken in this way.



Mere intellectual belief in Tom would not do Joe any good at all. He had to let go and trust Tom. We must be sure to do so with Jesus. Not being deceived because we merely have intellectual belief in Christ. We also must be sure that we have repented and trusted Christ as our Lord and Savior.

Matthew 7:21-23

21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

2 Corinthians 13:5

5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

Intellectual belief is not the same as saving faith. Even the demons believe intellectually in Christ but are not saved.

James 2:19

19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

Matthew 8:28-29

28 And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. 29 And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?

Luke 4:41

41 And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking *them* suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.

Do You Understand the Parable?

Does what has been shared have a ring of truth to it? or do you think that you have been told a lie?

Have you come to the place where you are trusting in Christ alone as your Lord and Master to save you and not in yourselves or any works that you have done or could do?

If yes, can you tell someone about it?

If not. Do you believe you will go to hell if you don't turn your life over to Jesus Christ?

When Tom called out to Joe, there was a sense of timing about when he said let go. A person must heed the call to repent and not assume he or she can delay. We may not have another day. The Bible says that today is the day so salvation. You must repent and trust Christ today!

Proverbs 27:1

1 Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

James 4:13-16

13 Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:

14 Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

15 For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

16 But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.

2 Corinthians 6:2

2 For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

Isaiah 55:6

6 Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

Hebrews 3:7-8, 12-13, 15

7 Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, Today if ye will hear his voice,

8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

15 While it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

You Should Repent and Trust Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior Today!

¹The title of this booklet uses the words "loving kindness" or often expressed by one word "lovingkindness". The single Hebrew word *hesedh* translated lovingkindness is rich with meaning. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia edited by James Orr provides some helpful insights regarding this wonderful word. The following is a partial quote from this resource.

Lovingkindness in Hebrew, (*hesedh*): "Lovingkindness" in the King James Version always represents this word (30 times), but of *hesedh* there are many other renderings, e.g. "mercy" (frequently), "kindness" (38 times), "goodness" (12 times). The word is derived from *hasadh*, meaning, perhaps, "to bend or bow oneself," "to incline oneself"; hence, "to be gracious or merciful."

When used of God *hesedh* denotes, in general, "the Divine Love condescending to His creatures, more especially to sinners, in unmerited kindness" (Delitzsch). It is frequently associated with forgiveness, and is practically equivalent to "mercy" or "mercifulness" (Exo. 20:6), "showing lovingkindness unto thousands of them that love me"; (Exo. 34:6), "slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness; (Exo. 34:7) "keeping lovingkindness for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin" (compare Num. 14:18); (Mic. 7:18), "He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in lovingkindness". This quality in Yahweh was one by which He sought to bind His people to Himself. It is greatly magnified in the Old Testament, highly extolled and gloried in many of the Psalms (Ps. 136 has the constant refrain, "For his lovingkindness endureth forever"). In (Deut. 7:12) it is associated with the covenant, and in (2Sam. 7:15) with the covenant with David (compare Isa. 55:3, etc.). It was something that could always be relied on.

International Standard Bible Encyclopedia; James Orr, General Editor

²The story we here call a modern parable may not perfectly fit the biblical literary style of a parable. For one thing, in the Bible, parables never used proper names. For our purposes we have crafted an illustration that we feel will help explain in one complete story the sinful condition of man, judgment, the Gospel message of Christ and salvation by grace, and the response and reception of salvation by repentance and faith. This presentation has

been used countless times and progressively expanded and refined by the author through years of personal encounters with people in an attempt to explain to them in simple but thorough terms how a person can be truly saved.

If you would like more information
you may contact,
First Baptist Church of Fillmore
1059 First St. Fillmore, CA 93015
Pastor Sherwood Haisty, Jr.
(805) 524-1472
or
(805) 727-1720
or click

Contact Us

