



***“No one...”***

*When Jesus says it, he means it*





*Strange, my soul, is it not?  
All men are negligent of their souls  
till grace gives them reason,  
then they leave their madness  
and act like rational beings,  
but not till then.*

*Charles H. Spurgeon*

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JD Wetterling



**CHRISTIAN FOCUS**





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## *Preface*

The world will never forget the tragedy of September 11, 2001, when 2,800 innocent people died in the twin towering infernos of the World Trade Center, my former home office in New York City. The visual images are so horrifying the human mind does not want to remember, let alone contemplate them. Yet one picture, of the many indelibly imprinted on my gray matter, refuses to recede from my conscious mind. It is a still photo of a man falling from one of the burning towers. He is just one of about seventy people who chose to jump to their death rather than be consumed by the fire. Just trying to imagine the thought process of that decision, in the chaos and terror of the moment, is so painful the mind refuses to process it.

The man in the photo, unlike the others that I saw, was not tumbling as he fell. I witnessed his fall real time and in the videotape as it was replayed that day. He was falling headfirst, straight down with perfect posture, arms at his sides with one knee bent as if he was about to take a step. That is not a normal way for the human body to fall. In my





*"No one..."*

adventurous youth when I was learning to skydive, my body was all somersaulting ankles and elbows until I learned to fall in a controlled manner, and it was not straight down headfirst. The profile view of the man was not close enough to see his face, but there is a strong sense of serenity exuded by his body language just seconds before his instantaneous death. And that is what consumes me. Did he know his eternal destiny? Did he have the blessed assurance of his salvation? Were millions of us witnessing the death of a saint?

If so, it was the second time for me. My saintly mother, who was my mentor in all the important lessons of living and dying, breathed her last with a serenity that was an overwhelming witness to her faith for her assembled family. She was wired up and kept alive by the machinery of modern medicine and could not sing, but she mouthed all her favorite hymns we sang at her bedside. Her last whispered words to me were, "I am almost there." I wonder if the falling man knew he was "almost there" and was in fact taking his first step into eternity with the Lord God Almighty, even as he fell.

Another thing about this tragedy I've pondered at length: many of those 2,800 people who were not instantly killed were trapped in the top floors of the towers. They had from thirty minutes to an hour in which imminent death was a certainty. We know from phone calls to loved ones that was so. We also know that there were a number of godly people among them who perhaps witnessed to them. As a novel writer I spend a lot of time trying to put myself inside the head of other people and inject myself into scenes I can only imagine. I wonder how many of them were spiritually born





## *Preface*

again in the last hour of their life. I want to believe many of them were. Hopefully those desperate men and women, knowing no other options remained, fought off the mental paralysis of fear and fell on their knees even as they felt the heat of the flames, the shuddering of the building and finally the floor giving way beneath them. I hope and pray they asked for forgiveness for their sins, begged a merciful God to admit them into paradise that day as they claimed the covering blood of Christ. In my experience as a combat fighter pilot I learned the wonderfully focusing effect that imminent death has on the mind. We can be sure those who prayed in their final hour had no problems with wandering minds, insincerity in their pleas for mercy or lack of intensity in their cries for salvation. God most likely gathered a number of his children in the last moments of the World Trade Center's existence.

By God's mercy, believers and unbelievers alike died with a minimum of pain, unlike the millions of people who suffer for long periods of time with the diseases that ravage humankind. But their greatest blessing was that they had the opportunity to get right with their Maker and Savior before they died. How many people today are banking on seeing death coming and getting prepared at the last minute? How many think they want to enjoy their life of sin and selfishness, have a deathbed conversion, then spend eternity in paradise? Dear reader, such depravity plays Russian roulette with your eternal soul. Many, both the damned and the redeemed, died instantly when the airliners hit the World Trade Center, but the wail of the damned will sound forever as they are eternally consumed in "the fiery furnace" (Matt. 13:42).





*"No one..."*

As a child I believed in Santa Claus, the tooth fairy and Jesus Christ. Fifty years of life experiences, Bible reading, comparative religion studies including evolution theories, and I still believe in Jesus, now with an informed conviction – head knowledge and heart knowledge.

Some folks have never known him except as a common curse word. For others he disappeared from their worldview soon after Santa and the tooth fairy. If the polls are correct, a majority of people who call themselves Christian think Jesus has no more relevance than Santa. They are lost and oblivious to their "lostness."

The latter category I call casual Christians. They know what is needed for salvation but just procrastinate when it comes to acting on it. Next Sunday I will go to church. ... As soon as I get past this big project at the office I will find time for daily devotions. ... I suspect the majority of souls in hell fall into this category. They simply put off asking God to change their hearts one day too long. A significant number of those who perished in the top stories of the north tower of the World Trade Center died not knowing what hit them. Those who die from terrorist bombings around the world do not see it coming. People die suddenly every day. In 2001, 41,730 Americans died in auto accidents, 93,000 in other accidents, 15,000 were murdered, 160,000 died from strokes, 700,000 died from heart disease, many of them instantly.

Life is uncertain, as the terrorist attack of 9/11 so graphically demonstrated. "No man knows when his hour will come" (Eccl. 9:12a) – the hour that God determined before we were born. The Psalmist says, "All the days ordained for me were





### *Preface*

written in your book before one of them came to be" (Ps. 139:16b). That same Holy Writ contains the only certainty there is in an uncertain world. In spite of so much evil, so much hatred and so little love for the God who made us all, there are some unshakable certainties we can cling to in this unstable powder keg called planet Earth.

This little book is an effort on the part of a sinner saved by grace to witness to the power of a handful of the most important of them. They are unshakable certainties that can, God willing, open your eyes to his truth, fill you with the peace that transcends all understanding, and show you the way to the unimaginable joy of life, both now and forever, with him.

One of my favorite newspaper columnists, the late Mike Royko, wrote, on the sudden death of his wife, "If there is someone you love and have not said it lately, do it now. Always, always, do it now." In the same manner, if you have not asked God to change your heart, do it now. Always, always do it now. God willing, the following words of Jesus who saves can save you too.







## *Introduction*

The Gospel of John contains six things certain and unshakable that can change your life. They are six sayings for the ages, six profound revelations of God's truth from the Son of God's own lips.

What Jesus Christ said counts forever. He is not a figment of someone's imagination. He was a real figure in the history of mankind. We have more historical proof that he lived than for any other person of antiquity. The miracle of his resurrection from the dead, witnessed by hundreds besides his inner circle of disciples, capped a brief lifetime of miracles witnessed by thousands that verified he was who he repeatedly claimed to be – the Son of God. In his own words, "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30). Unique among all religions, the historical Jesus Christ walked this earth for over thirty years and fulfilled over 250 prophecies made about him by a score of Old Testament prophets living and writing over the preceding fifteen hundred years. His own graphic prophecy of the horrible destruction of Jerusalem and its temple (Matt. 24, Luke 21, and Mark 13), that occurred just as he predicted forty years after his death





***"No one..."***

and resurrection, could stand alone as irrefutable proof of his divinity. All who are truly born again acknowledge, as did Peter, his disciple, and Martha, his friend: "You are the Christ, the son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16 and John 11:27). When the Son of the Living God speaks, his words are not mere theory but fact, and it behooves all mankind to listen: "...my word that goes out from my mouth ...will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it" (Isa. 55:11).

This brief witness to Christ focuses uniquely on just six statements Jesus uttered that can profoundly affect anyone regardless of race, religion or lack thereof. The subject of all six sentences consists of two simple monosyllable words that are beyond argument in their clarity. Some parts of God's Word are not easy for the human mind to grasp, but the subject of these six sentences is not among them. The subject of these unshakable certainties is "No one." No one argues about what the phrase, "No one" means. "No one" means not one ... none ... zero. It does not mean some. It does not mean a few. It means none, with no qualifiers, no exceptions, no divine loopholes.

These six factual statements are absolute truth, not relative truth, not true-today-because-I-feel-that-way-but-who-can-say-about-tomorrow. Absolute truth is an out-of-favor term among many today. In their blindness to things of God they refuse to believe that anything could be true yesterday, true today, true tomorrow, true in all circumstances everywhere and forever. That malady is called post-modernism. Sadly, the epidemic has spread even to those who profess to be believers. In a George Barna poll taken shortly





### ***Introduction***

after September 11, 2001, 68 percent of those who called themselves born again Christians did not believe in the existence of absolute moral truth. Something is alarmingly wrong here. A Christian by definition believes in the absolute moral truth of God's word proclaimed in the Bible. Sadly, man is a master of self-delusion. He can hold mutually exclusive beliefs without a clue as to the peril of his position.

Jesus has a warning for these poor souls.

*"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers'"(Matt. 7:21-23)!*

Holy Writ makes the concept of absolute truth crystal clear for those who have eyes to see and the most basic understanding of language. Thirty times in the King James Version of the gospels Jesus is quoted beginning a sentence with "Verily." That means "truly." A third of those thirty quotes he repeats, "Verily, verily," for emphasis. He said, "...my words will never pass away" (Matt. 24:35). He said, "I am ... the truth" (John 14:6a). Coming directly from the Son of God's own mouth, that is as absolute as truth can get. The following unshakable certainties are absolute truth from the Son of God.

