

the
LADDERS
to
HEAVEN

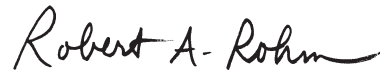
INTRODUCTION...

When I was 8 years old, my family and I attended a Bible study in a neighborhood home. My mother and father went into the living room, where the adults were being taught. I went to a back bedroom, where the children had gathered. We were taught by a kind lady, Miss Ruby Whitehead, who illustrated the Bible lesson by use of a flannel board. (That is a cloth-covered board on which cut-out pictures of people, places and things can be displayed. Today, we also use Velcro or magnets, but back then, flannelgraph was the main method used.)

One evening, I was taught a lesson which would change my life forever. It helped me to get the basic message of the entire Bible into my heart and life.

Several years ago, I was telling some friends of mine about the lesson. One person listening to my story was an artist. She asked if I would mind if she tried to draw the story as I had described it. A few days later, she presented me with several pages of drawings. I asked her to make a few minor changes in order to recreate the pictures as I originally saw them years ago. She did so, we adapted them in our computer, and to the best of my memory, the story and pictures on the next few pages reveal the greatest story you will ever read.

God bless you!

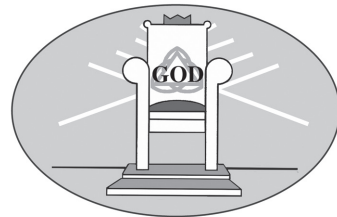


Robert A. Rohm, Ph. D.

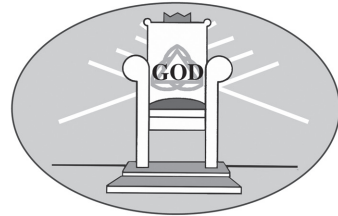
THE LADDERS TO HEAVEN

Many years ago God, who lives in heaven, decided that He would create the world. We know the story from the Bible. “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). God who is more powerful than we can even understand, can just speak things and make them happen, and this is how He created the world with land and sea. He put all of the fish in the ocean and the creatures upon the land.

“God created every living thing and saw it was good.”
- Genesis 1:20-25

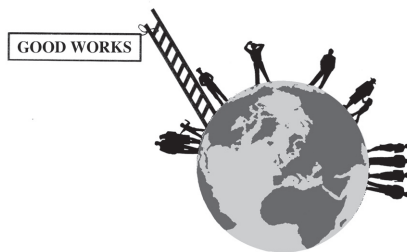
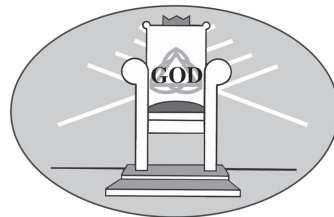


After God made all the animals and fish, He was still not finished. The Bible says He created people in His own image. God created Adam and Eve and they had children, and their children had children. It wasn't long until there were men and women, boys and girls living all over the earth. Some lived in one place; others lived in other places. The men, women, boys and girls were a lot like we are today. Some were tall, some short, some young, some old.



People wondered how they could get to God. They had seen people die from the very beginning. They wanted to be able to go to heaven and live with God after they died. But, they tried using their own methods and ideas to get themselves into heaven. The first idea people tried to get into heaven was “good works.” In the picture you see a ladder called “Good Works.” No one thought a real ladder could reach God, but in their minds, they thought doing good things would be good enough to get them into heaven. (When you get an idea in your mind about how to do something, you probably try to do it that way, too,)

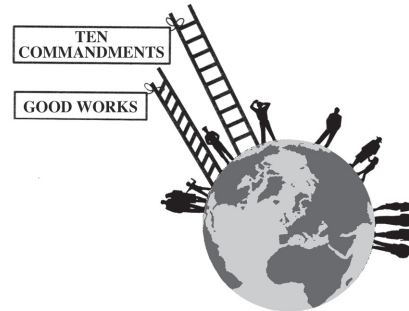
The ladder represents their idea. As you can see, “good works” doesn’t come anywhere close to reaching heaven. It was a good ladder, and there is nothing wrong with doing good deeds - they just don’t get you into heaven.



God knew there was no way that people could earn their way into heaven. Yet, as time passed, they continued to try. God decided to give the Ten Commandments to help people see exactly how hard it would be to live a perfect life. These Commandments showed people how sinful they were and how far away they were from God. But people misunderstood and thought they could earn favor with God by keeping His laws and commandments. The ladder of the “Ten Commandments” is good, but no one could use it to get into heaven - it cannot reach that far! God gave the Ten Commandments to teach us how to live with our neighbors and friends in peace, but He never designed them to get us into heaven.

“By the law is the knowledge of sin.”
- Romans 3:20

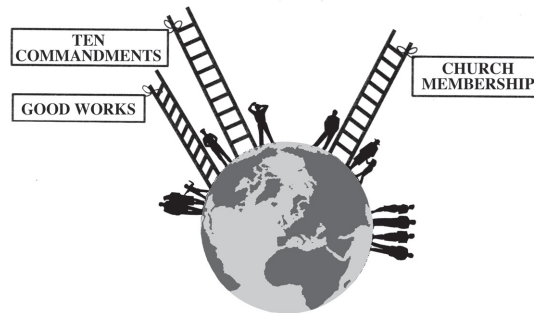
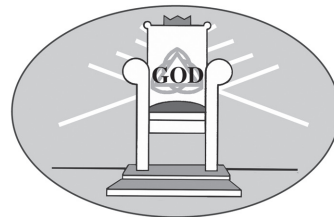
This means God’s law shows us that we have failed His standards and are sinful.



As years and years passed, people thought of other ways they could try to get to God. Some thought they could do it by being a member of a church. The ladder of “Church Membership” is a nice ladder. (Remember, there is nothing “wrong” with any of the ladders.) But like the other ladders, this ladder cannot reach into heaven.

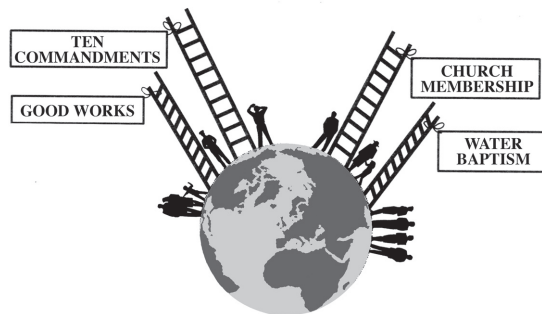
There are many different churches. Some people like to go to one special kind of church because their parents took them there as a child - they are simply in the habit of going. While going to church is a wonderful experience, it will fail to get us into heaven.

Someone once said, “If walking into a church could make you a Christian, then by that same thinking, walking into a garage could make you into a car!” We can understand how that is a wrong idea about cars, but some people don’t understand that it is also a wrong idea about God.



In time, many people figured out that going to church was not the answer, because they saw how badly some church members acted toward each other. So, they decided being baptized in water might work to get them into heaven. There is nothing wrong with being baptized. Sometimes people are sprinkled with water, and sometimes people are dipped into the water. But as you can see, the ladder of water baptism doesn't reach into heaven, either.

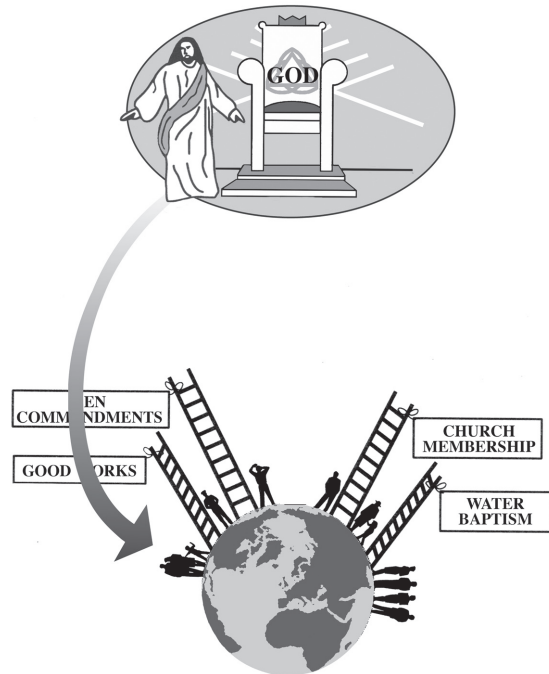
There is nothing "wrong" or "bad" about any of these four ladders - they just don't go far enough to get anyone into heaven. There are many other ladders that people can try, but all of them fall short and cannot reach God.



Because God is so perfect and holy, He knew there was no way that sinful people could reach Him. So, He made a plan to come to us. God's only son, the Lord Jesus Christ, left heaven and came to Earth. - He was born as a baby. We celebrate His birth every year at Christmas time, when we remember that Jesus became one of us.

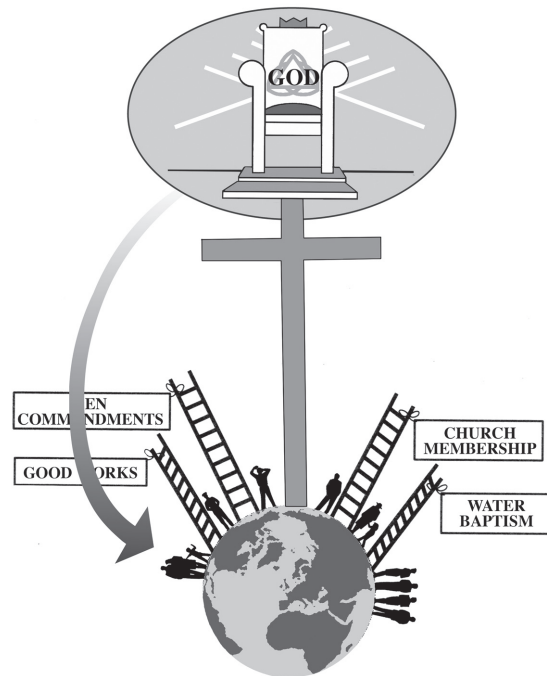
Think about it... if you wanted to talk with birds, to have them understand you and not be afraid, the best way would be for you to become a bird. God wanted us to trust Him, so He became one of us, so we could understand Him and not be afraid - what a great idea!

He lived with real people, and taught them and guided them, and gave them His wisdom - all to show us that He is the only way to know and reach God. But, He is more than just a good teacher or example to follow. He came to be our Savior!



Even though Jesus grew up and lived among people, where they could see Him and hear Him, many did not accept Him. Some even hated Him. After He lived an amazing life, healed the sick, caused the blind to see, the crippled to walk - and most of all, helped people to be forgiven for their sins and find a special friendship with God - the religious leaders did not want to listen to Him any more. They planned to kill Jesus on a cross made of wood because He told them He was God's Son.

If you had been standing there that day, you would not really have seen a giant cross stretching all the way up into the clouds. But God knew that the cross Jesus died on was going to be the special way - it would reach from Earth all the way to heaven!



Some of the people Jesus came to save beat Him. They put Him up on the cross with nails in His hands and feet. They stuck a crown of thorns on His head, and a sword in his side. After suffering this cruel punishment, Jesus died. But even His enemies said...

“I wash my hands of this man. I find no fault in Him at all.” - Pontious Pilate (Matthew 27:24)

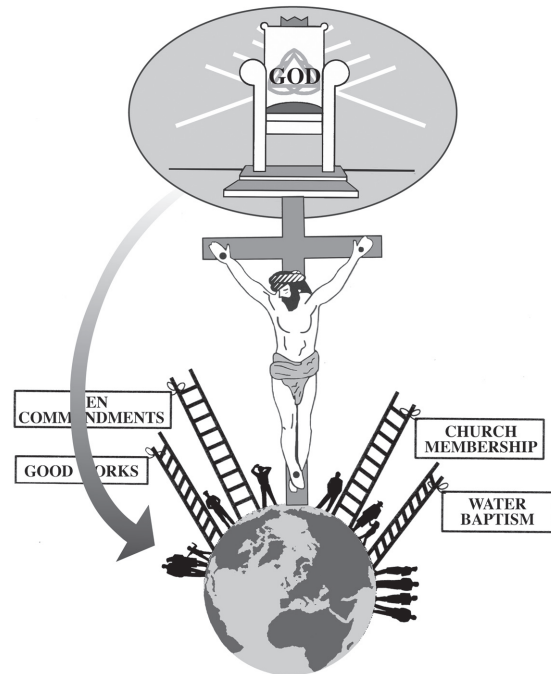
“We deserve to die for what we have done, but this man has done nothing wrong.”

- Thief on a nearby cross (Luke 23:41)

“Truly this man was the Son of God.”

- Roman soldier (Mark 15:39)

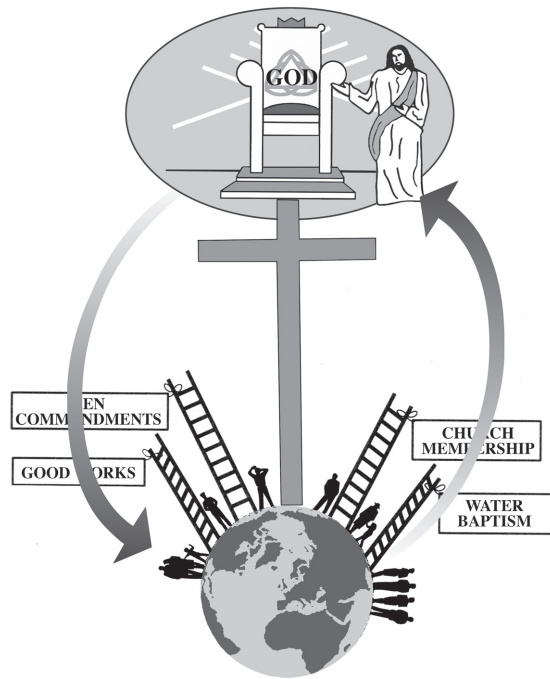
God’s plan was almost complete. Jesus had died to pay for our sins. There was only one more thing left to do.



Jesus came back to life again! The grave where they buried Him could not hold Him; and death could not keep Him.

After three days, He got up and walked out! That empty grave proved that He had won the victory over sin and death.

Then, Jesus went back to heaven and told His Father, "I did everything You told Me to. I went to Earth. I lived My life without sin and helped people understand Your love. I died on the cross, and my blood has paid for the sins of everyone in the world who will trust in Me. And then, I arose from the dead. Now, We have made a way for people to be with Us forever and ever."



What you must do...

The Bible says that in order to have this special relationship with God, we must put all of our faith and trust in what the Lord Jesus has done for us. He died on a cross to pay for our sins and He arose from the dead so we could have a new life with Him forever. If you will trust Him by faith and receive His forgiveness, you can have eternal life.

“For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”

- Romans 3:23

“The wages of sin is death.”

- Romans 6:23

“God commends His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

- Romans 5:8

“Whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

- Romans 10:13

Here is a simple prayer. If it says what you truly feel in your heart, simply pray it. Only the true and living God can hear your thoughts. You can make no mistakes.

“Dear God, I believe that Jesus died for me, paid for my sins and arose from the dead. I put my faith and trust in him as my only hope for heaven. God, I understand that Your salvation is not based on what I can do for You, because I might fail. I want to receive what You did for me, because I know You cannot fail. Thank you for letting me be a new member of your family. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

“To all who receive Jesus... he gave the right to become children of God.”

- John 1:12

If you prayed this prayer by faith - based on the successful plan of salvation completed by Jesus Christ - you are now part of God’s family. Jesus said...

“Truly, truly I say unto you, he who believes in me has eternal life.”

- John 6:47

Knowing that God will never leave you is good news, but there is still one more piece of good news- can you believe it? The good news just keeps on getting better!

Now that you have trusted in Jesus Christ for salvation, the best news of all is available for you: Jesus has come to live His life in you and through you. He is not asking for you to live for Him. Instead, He is asking you to allow Him, through the power of His Holy Spirit, to live His life through you. This is the important part that so many people miss when they become Christians: you allow Him by faith to guide you, direct you and help you day by day.

Jesus does not save us based on how perfect we have been in our life. Now He does not demand that you do everything perfectly in order to stay in His family. This is because everything He does is by His grace.

("Grace" means that God does for us what we cannot do for ourselves - and He does it even though we do not deserve it and there is nothing we could do on our own to earn it!)

As a Christian, your part is to obey His Word, the Bible, through His powerful Holy Spirit, whom He has sent to live inside you. His gift of the Holy Spirit now makes all the difference in the world. He is the missing piece and peace who will now complete your life...

"Christ in you. The hope of glory."

-Colossians 1:27



*"The purposes of man's heart
are deep waters, but a man of
understanding draws them out"*
Proverbs 20:5

for information on deeper walk with God, please contact:

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