

**Consider This ...**





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*by Dennis Costella and  
Matt Costella*

Fundamental Evangelistic Association  
2251 E. Beechwood Ave.  
Fresno, CA 93720 USA  
[www.feasite.org](http://www.feasite.org)

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2251 E. Beechwood Avenue  
Fresno, CA 93720  
[www.feasite.org](http://www.feasite.org)

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# Have You Considered This?

*"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36)*

**WE ALL SPEND** a great amount of time, effort, and money to care for our earthly needs. However, few seem concerned about their eternal well-being. Are we too busy to consider what happens when this life is over? Long ago Jesus Christ asked, *"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"* (Mark 8:36-37). Do you have the answers to these vital questions? Do you know where you will spend eternity?

Life is full of questions, but this is one of the most important questions any person will ever consider. Whether or not you realize it, everybody is trusting in something; everybody is placing his or her faith in something or someone. You may be trusting your own ideas and opinions or your own feelings; you may be trusting the word of another person; you may be trusting in a church or religion. Regardless of your own ideas or opinions concerning

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God, the hereafter, or “spirituality,” you are basing your beliefs on something or someone. The purpose of this booklet is simply to share with you what God’s Word, the Bible, says concerning how to gain a relationship with God now and eternal life in the hereafter.

Please take a few moments right now to seriously consider what God wants you to know about life now and hereafter. It will be time well spent—perhaps the most crucial few minutes you will ever spend in your entire life. The written Word of God, the Bible, emphatically states what we must understand and what we must believe if we are to be brought into a right relationship with our Creator and experience eternal life the moment we take our final breath on this earth. It really does not matter what our opinions might be, but it makes all the difference in the world what God has said must be.

## **WE FACE A SERIOUS PROBLEM**

The Bible reveals our natural standing before God. We are “*by nature the children of wrath*” (Ephesians 2:3) and “*dead in trespasses*



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*and sins*" (Ephesians 2:1). We have proven time and again that we are sinners by birth and practice—no exceptions! *"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one"* (Romans 3:10). *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"* (Romans 3:23). We all fall short of the divine standard of absolute holiness. We stand before the righteous Judge—God Himself—guilty as charged.

Consider the consequences if, at this very moment, you were to die in this condition. The Bible removes all uncertainty concerning what lies beyond the grave: *"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment"* (Hebrews 9:27).



The Bible also reveals the outcome of this judgment. Until the sin problem is settled, a guilty sinner cannot possibly enter the glories of heaven. Revelation 21:27 states: *"And there shall in no wise enter into it (heaven) any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."* No one can enter heaven in the presence of God unless the defilement of sin has been erased and his name is written in the *"Lamb's book of life."* Heaven is the dwelling place of God, and no one who is yet in sin can be allowed to enter into the Lord's holy presence.

The next important question that must be asked is: **"If one who dies in his sin cannot possibly enter heaven, then where will**

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**he spend eternity?"** Revelation 20:15 provides the answer: "*And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*" Hell is a place of everlasting and literal torment. This eternal existence in the lake of fire is "the second death" and is the just penalty for sin—"*the wages of sin is death*" (Romans 6:23). All who die in their sins face the reality of eternal suffering—the bitter end of sin.

## WHAT WE CANNOT DO

Since God's Word plainly declares that we are all sinners and, therefore, justly barred from heaven and bound instead for hell, the following question is of preeminent importance: **"What are we going to do about our sin?"**

People give many different answers in response to this incredibly vital question. Many feel their sin can be erased by living a good life or by "turning over a new leaf" and trying to do better. Others consider themselves to be "just as good as the next person" and believe their good works will outweigh their bad deeds in the

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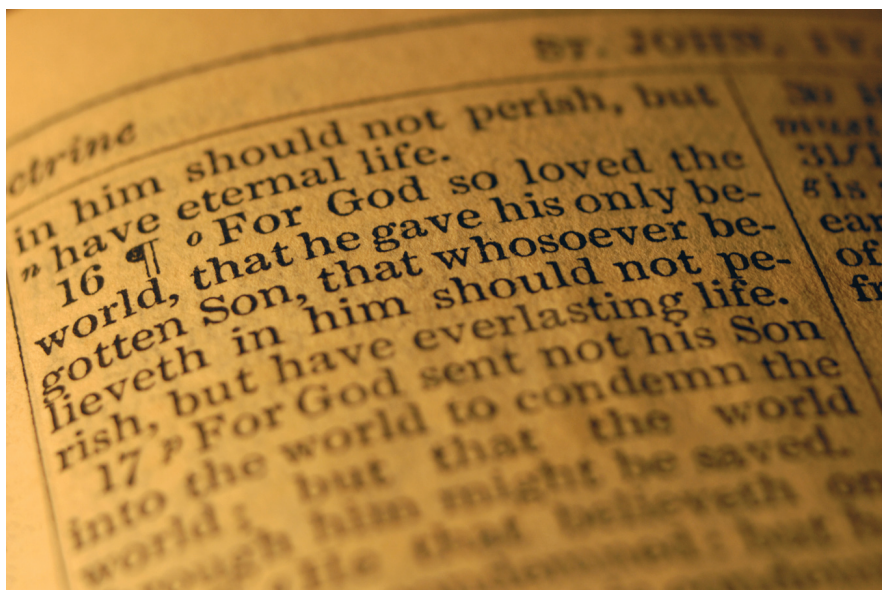
end. Still others sincerely believe that by joining a church or going through religious ceremonies (baptism, confirmation, confession, partaking of the Lord's Supper, etc.), the burden of sin's guilt and its awful penalty can be relieved.

The Word of God is very definite concerning the error of such reasoning and the futility of any self-effort to remedy our sinful condition. It is *"not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us"* (Titus 3:5).

Actually, we have no righteousness of our own, nor could we do any good work that would help in the slightest way to accomplish our salvation. The Bible says, *"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses [our good works] are as filthy rags"* (Isaiah 64:6).

We can make our lives appear more respectable to others by honest effort, holy resolve, and religious or spiritual activity, but inwardly the heart is still unchanged. We may conceal our sin before others, but we cannot wash it away. Good works, religious ceremonies, and pious intentions—*any* effort of our own—can never cancel our sin or make us acceptable to an all-holy and righteous God.





## WHAT GOD HAS DONE

What, then, must we do to be saved? Since the Bible plainly teaches that we can do nothing to save ourselves from sin and its penalty, how can we be made acceptable before God? Once again, the answer is found in God's Holy Word. What a wonderful answer we find: *"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly"* (Romans 5:6). Think of that! When we were without strength, completely unable to do anything to attain our own salvation, the Lord Jesus Christ—God the Son—died in our place.

God knew we were utterly helpless as hell-bound sinners, and in accordance with His grace (undeserved and unmerited favor), He intervened in our behalf. He sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into this world to shed His precious blood as the full payment for sin. In so doing, Jesus Christ died the death the sinner rightfully deserves.

Why did He do this? Why would Jesus die for us? Romans 5:8 has

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the answer: *"But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."* As Jesus Christ hung on Calvary's cross, He was not dying for His own sins, for He was the perfect, sinless Lamb of God. Jesus Christ died in our place and bore sin's penalty that we deserved.

*"But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all"* (Isaiah 53:5-6).

*"Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree"* (1 Peter 2:24).

*"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification"* (Romans 4:25).

The penalty for sin had to be paid, and God the Father placed our sin upon the bruised and bleeding body of His beloved Son. The full weight and penalty for sin—*our sin*—fell upon the crucified Lord of Glory. He was our sin-bearer, our substitute. God loved us



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while we were yet sinners and sent His beloved Son to die in our place. What amazing love!



When Jesus Christ cried out from the cross, "*It is finished*" (John 19:30), He had indeed finished, or completed, through His death, an all-sufficient offering for sin—a perfect salvation. We cannot add to it nor do any good work to de-

serve what God has provided full and free through Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. God has done it all! We must simply believe it and receive this gift by faith.

## A MARVELOUS SOLUTION

The Bible is very clear concerning what you must now do in order to receive the gift of salvation that God has provided by His grace. You must personally accept it, or His gift will profit you absolutely nothing. Only the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ that was shed on Calvary's cross has the power to cleanse us from sin, and it is through faith in the Person and work of Jesus Christ that the cleansing power of the blood is applied.

Jesus Christ was God manifest in the flesh. It is His sacrificial death on the cross that provides salvation for any lost sinner who will trust in Him as the only Savior from sin and its penalty, and as the only way to heaven. When we genuinely believe that Jesus died, was buried, and rose again bodily from the tomb, and that all this was done to provide a perfect salvation for sinful man, then we

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receive full forgiveness of sins and the gift of everlasting life.

*"To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission [forgiveness] of sins"* (Acts 10:43). This is how the sin problem is resolved. When one believes in Jesus Christ—who He is and what He has done for us on our behalf—his sin is forgiven, and, as a cleansed sinner, he is made acceptable before God. He is no longer guilty—he has been justified!

Note the following promises from God's Word that describe the present and future standing of the one who trusts Christ as Savior:

*"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life"* (John 5:24).



*"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power [authority] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name"* (John 1:12).

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*"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand" (Romans 5:1-2).*

*"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).*

*"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).*

*"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. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned..." (John 3:16-18).*

*"To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Romans 4:5).*

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## AN IMMEDIATE OPPORTUNITY

Yes, my friend, the moment you genuinely believe (and believing is nothing more nor less than taking God at His Word), you receive forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life! In so doing, you stand before God complete and perfect in Christ's righteousness rather than condemned in your own self-righteousness, which is but "*filthy rags*" in His sight. When you receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, you are "*made the righteousness of God in Him*" (2 Corinthians 5:21). "*To declare ... His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus*" (Romans 3:26).

Do not be deceived by the widespread belief that no one can be absolutely certain as to whether or not he or she has truly been "saved" or "born-again." God says we can know, and this is because God's salvation is based upon the sure promises of His Word and upon the finished work of Christ on the cross.

First John 5:11-13 tells the believer that he can know for certain that he has passed from death unto life and that his sins have been forever forgiven: "*And this is the record, that God hath given to us*



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*eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. 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."*

Consider several other texts from God's Word:

*"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" (Hebrews 7:25).*

*"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand" (John 10:28).*

In fact, Scripture tells us that once we are saved, we are "sealed" by the Holy Spirit. God says, *"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption"* (Ephesians

4:30). The Holy Spirit gives us certainty of our eternal relationship with God!



Would you like to receive Jesus Christ as your Savior right now? Would you like to have a personal

relationship with God right now and know that when you die you will experience eternal life with Him? If so, then trust Him and Him alone. Trust Christ not only with your head but with your whole heart.

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What does it mean to believe in Jesus Christ with your heart? It means that you not only believe the *facts* concerning who you are (a sinner) and what Jesus Christ has done for you (died on the cross in your place and arose from the dead), but that you place your complete trust in Him and what He has done for you for your eternal well-being.

Believe what God's Word says concerning the following facts:

**First**, we all are sinners and need the Savior; **second**, we are totally unable to do anything to save ourselves; and **third**, God has provided a full and eternal salvation through the death, burial, and resurrection of His dear Son.

Turn your confidence away from those things through which you had hoped to attain salvation—"doing good," sacraments, rituals, church membership, morality, baptism, spirituality, or any other thing. Do not believe the false notion that "death ends it all." Rather, place your trust—your faith—only in the Lord Jesus Christ and what He has accomplished *for you* on Calvary's cross. Receive this glorious invitation that God extends to every sinner.



Along with this simple invitation, however, please keep in mind the dire condition of all who disregard God's offer to receive His free gift of salvation. The apostle Paul preached to all the unsaved

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*"repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Acts 20:21). This speaks of the condition that exists between God and all who are without Christ—a change toward God is desperately needed! We must be convicted of the fact that our sin has separated us from an all-holy, all-righteous God. All who have not believed this gospel message and have not, therefore, received His Son are at this very moment alienated from Him.

No matter how religious or how good someone may seem to be, if he has not yet received Jesus Christ as his Savior, then he is utterly lost in sin and, in reality, is an enemy of almighty God. The Bible states without equivocation, *"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him"* (John 3:36).

All who turn to God from their false confidences and, instead, believe in simple, childlike faith what the Bible says concerning these imperative truths will have, at this moment, everlasting life! Upon believing the gospel, your sins are washed away, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within, and you become a child of God. You





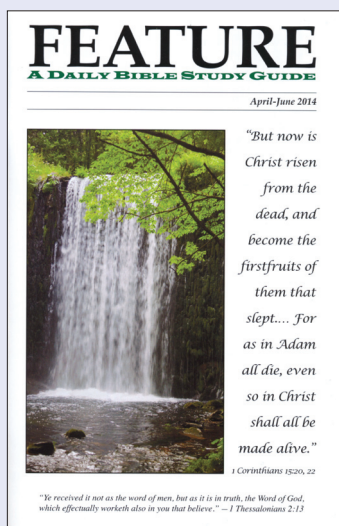
actually possess a relationship with the one, true God. Accept the blessed promises of the Word of God as your own and rely upon the Author of those promises to keep them both now and for all eternity. Receive Jesus Christ as your personal Savior today!

*"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2).*

*"Let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Revelation 22:17b).*

# FREE BIBLE STUDY GUIDE!

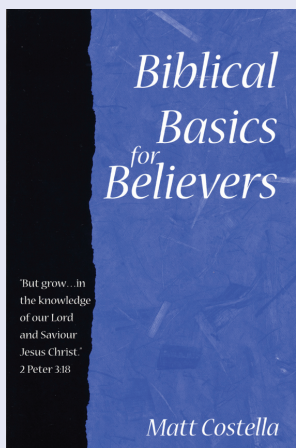
If you have trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior, we would like to help you in your new life with Christ. Write to us, and we would be happy to send you a complimentary copy of *Feature: A Daily Bible Study Guide*. This quarterly publication seeks to guide you into the truth of God's Word each day and provide a practical and relevant application of Scripture to your life.



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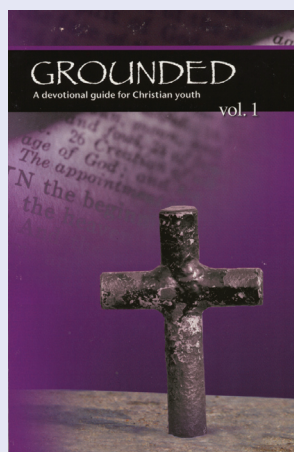
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## OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE FROM THE FEA:



*Biblical Basics for Believers* is a 166-page book specifically designed to direct the new Christian as well as the growing Christian into a program of discipleship through a careful study of the teaching of the Word of God and the application of biblical doctrine to everyday living—good for personal, one-on-one, or group study.

*Grounded: A Devotional Guide for Christian Youth* is a Bible study guide written especially for Christian young people. It is both *relevant* and *reverent* and seeks to guide the Christian young person into the Word of God with personal application. This first volume contains 100 Bible studies plus thought-provoking questions at the end of each study—great for teens or family devotions.



***Biblical Basics for Believers:*** \$10.00 (+ \$3.00 postage)\*  
***Grounded:*** \$8.00 (+ \$2.00 postage)\*

\*Prices for U.S. only. Contact us for price information for non-U.S. or bulk orders.

## About the Fundamental Evangelistic Association (FEA)

The FEA was organized by M. H. Reynolds Sr. and six other godly men in 1928 and incorporated in the state of California as a religious nonprofit organization in 1929. The purpose of the FEA from its inception has been to boldly preach the gospel, teach God's Word, and contend for the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3). The local church headquarters from which the FEA ministry is carried forth is Grace Bible Church in Fresno, California.

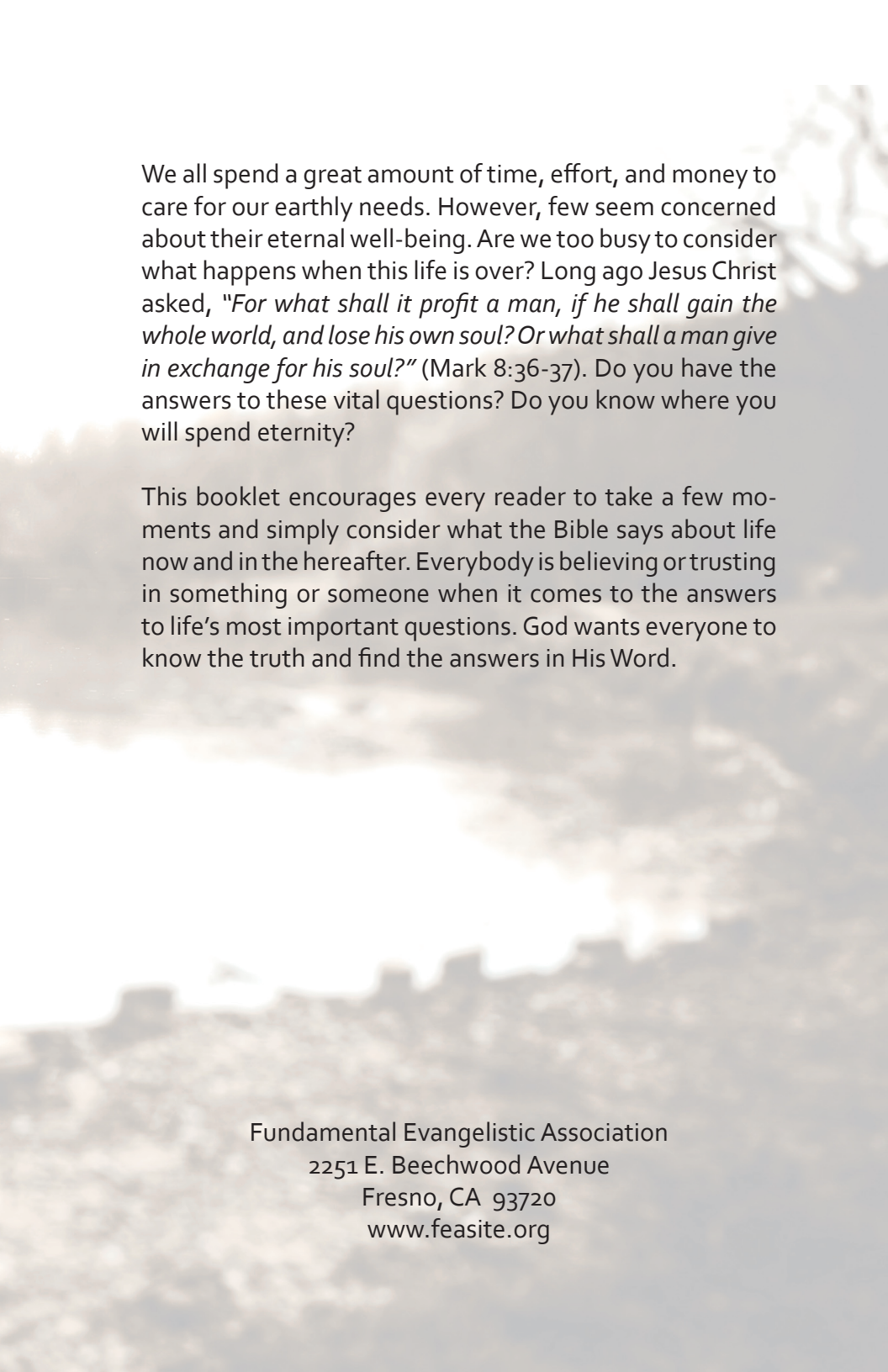
The FEA strives to be a help and encouragement to God's people through the publications of *Foundation* magazine, *Feature: A Daily Bible Study Guide*, *The Bright Spot*, and several other books and leaflets. In addition, the "What Does the Bible Say?" podcast and other Internet resources are available through the FEA's website. Because the FEA is a faith ministry not dependent on advertising, denominational funds, fund raising programs, or outside revenue, support from individuals and churches that agree with its position and see a need for this ministry is of paramount importance. Fellowship, prayers, and financial support are greatly appreciated. For further information about the FEA, visit [www.feasite.org](http://www.feasite.org).

## About the Authors

**Dennis Costella** (1948-2011) served as the director of the Fundamental Evangelistic Association from 1997-2011. He pastored churches in Los Angeles, Los Osos, and Fresno, California. For years, he served as the voice of the "What Does the Bible Say?" radio broadcast and was the editor of *Foundation* magazine and a contributor to *Feature: A Daily Bible Study Guide*.

**Matt Costella** currently serves as the director of the Fundamental Evangelistic Association and is a pastor at Grace Bible Church of Fresno, California. He is the editor of *Foundation* magazine, a contributor to *Feature: A Daily Bible Study Guide*, and the author of several books and articles available from the Fundamental Evangelistic Association. He also co-hosts the "What Does the Bible Say?" podcast.





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This booklet encourages every reader to take a few moments and simply consider what the Bible says about life now and in the hereafter. Everybody is believing or trusting in something or someone when it comes to the answers to life's most important questions. God wants everyone to know the truth and find the answers in His Word.

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