

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” John 3:16-18

### My Final Plea to Friends and Family

Dear Father, as your Word has never went out without accomplishing your purpose, please send your Spirit to reach the hearts of those gathered in our presence, that they may know the desire of your heart and this final request of mine. To those I love, my family, friends and acquaintances, as you remember my life rejoice, for God has welcomed me into His presence. My desire this day is to plead for your deep introspection to consider or reconsider what you really believe regarding God’s free offer of Salvation, through faith and trust in the redemptive death of Jesus Christ on the cross for you and His Resurrection, yes, the Gospel message. As faith and trust has brought me into His presence, we have been told the destination of those who choose to reject our God who has made Himself known through the magnificence of nature and the heavens, yes all of His awesome creation. With the intensity and passionate plea of the rich man in the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus in the Gospel of Luke, who after his realizing his eternal destination, pleaded that one would be sent to warn his family that they would not also join him in his torment, I implore you to consider the eternal ramifications of the choice you make. Most here have attended numerous funerals and wakes such as this. During times of viewing and remembrance, family members and/or friends rise to speak, many speaking glowingly of the person usually relating too many of their finer qualities or characteristics. Many times the destination of their spirits are not mentioned or considered, especially if they were not a professed Christian. Everyone prefers to think (or hope) for an optimistic and rosy unknown for their loved one then move on. However, God does not grade on a curve. Dear Lord may all clearly understand Salvation and heaven are not reserved or earned by those who feel they have lived good or moral lives. It is guaranteed to those who understand the gospel and have met the requirement by faith. For those who die without Christ, they will not be ”going to a better place.” We are told in Hebrews; “Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.” Every day we express our faith in a vast array of items, believing they will do what we are told they will do, even though we don’t understand how they work. However, that faith thought finishes stating ”without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” Through prayer we have been given access to God the Creator, able to come to His throne of grace with confidence and boldness. Looking at all creation and the testimonies of changed lives throughout the centuries, is it so difficult to believe there is a God who is able to do what He has said He will do? Many times we think we have it figured out, thinking more highly of ourselves than we ought, thinking we know more than we really do. But I ask you, can you answer the questions God asked Job in chapters 38-41 of the Book of Job about the nature of creation with questions such as ”Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation? “Who kept the sea inside its boundaries?

“Where does light come from, and where does darkness go? Can you direct the sequence of the seasons? Do you know the laws of the universe? Can you use them to regulate the earth? Can you make lightning appear and cause it to strike as you direct? Who gives intuition to the heart and instinct to the mind?” Put your pride aside and may each person here consider that a person may have tremendous material wealth but be spiritually and emotionally bankrupt. Are you satisfied with your life as it is, having went through your (many?) years, satisfied for the most part with your life and what you have obtained or accomplished? Without the Savior, all your pleasures, comforts, material wealth, celebrity, recognitions for philanthropy etc. will be your only reward as it was for the rich man in the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus - Luke 16:19-31, and after your last breath this life will be as a dream but the reality is you will wake up to an eternal nightmare (read Psalm 73 NLT). Accept God for who He is and what He has done, not who you want Him to be. Trust in His truth and promises that are offered to you as a gift, but as any gift it is not yours until you reach out and accept it. In doing so He will be to you what you need Him to be. God has said ”You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.” I believe many would prefer to go through life with a guide, on a lighted path, to a desired destination. Let God be your promised Refuge, your Fortress, a Light to your path instead of being pridefully persistent, determined to stumble through life’s unknown and dark times on your own, without the guidance, comfort and compassion of the One who gave His Son for you! Let God be The Rock, your Rock, on which you stand. Please do not let your pride stand in the way - removing you from you the Grace that He lavishly bestows on His own. No one is beyond His merciful redemption except the one who continues to reject God’s Gospel message and continues down the broad road to destruction, not realizing their eternal destiny, separated from His light and love, exiled to darkness and despair forever, the consequences of their inherited sinful nature without the forgiveness of God. Lord may all understand your unconditional love, knowing that even while you know our every thought and deed you have said ””Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near,” and also ””In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you.’ Behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.” Please realize and understand how wonderful this plan of Salvation is. God has said ”All have sinned” and ”The wages of sin is death.” He has shown us clearly that we could not keep His laws and thereby are destined for eternal separation from Him for He is Holy and sinners cannot dwell with a Holy God. No man, only God, could have conceived such a profound plan to send Jesus, God the Son, as the only sinless man to walk this earth, acceptable as the only perfect sacrifice to take all the sins of man past, present and future upon Himself and pay the price of death He did not owe for a debt we could not pay. And it is because of His love and Grace (giving us what we do not deserve) that He justified us through faith in His Son, as if we had never sinned, allowing us to be His own and to spend eternity in heaven. May you open your heart so that we may be together again because of God’s grace.

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.” John 14:6, John 5:24