

saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.” “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God [God’s perfection]” (Romans 3:23).

Life is like our roll down the mountainside. The first thing we had to do was to realize that we couldn’t get to safety without help. Frank could have boasted about his 70-year, nearly perfect driving record, but that wouldn’t get us out of this mess. Some people think their good works will get them to Heaven. John 3:18 makes our good works irrelevant: *“...he that believeth not is condemned already,”* so belief in Jesus Christ is the issue, and we all need help.

Our lives are already in a mess. Janis and I had to trust the rescue crew to get us out of that car and up the mountain safely. The only thing that will rescue us from our sinfulness is to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, Who loved us enough to die for us to pay the penalty for our sin. *“Who hath delivered [rescued] us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins”* (Colossians 1:13-14).

It is not enough to know ABOUT God; we must know Him personally. You might ask, “But how can I have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ?” Romans 10:9-10 gives a clear

answer: “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. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

Trust only in Jesus to rescue you from sin’s eternal punishment. Turn from your sin and give your whole life to Christ. Give Jesus the steering wheel of your life and let Him have control. Let Him teach you what to think and how to live by His Word. *“And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again”* (II Corinthians 5:15). *“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved”* (Acts 4:12).

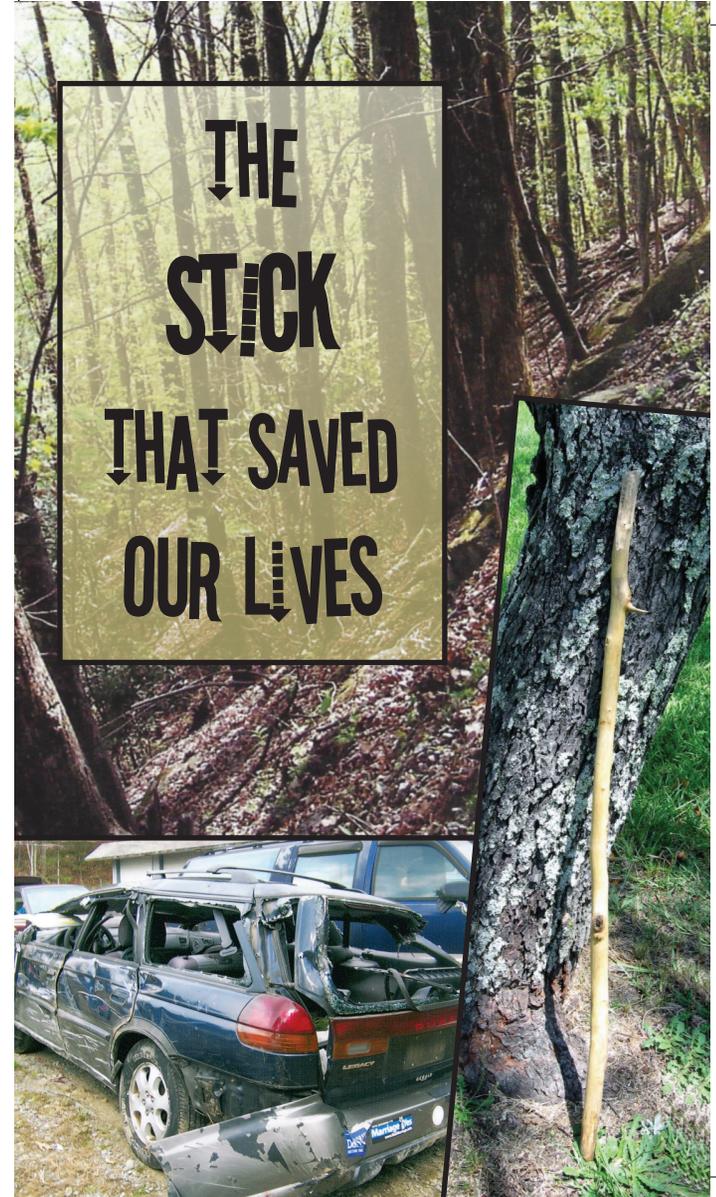
***“How shall we escape,
if we neglect so great salvation?”***
Hebrews 2:3

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“No one has ever rolled down this mountain and lived to tell about it!” said the police officer at the accident scene.

On October 29, 2011, my husband Frank and I, along with our friend Janis, went to NC for the better part of the day—sightseeing and shopping. Returning home about 5:15 PM on Hwy. 178, in very mountainous terrain, we skidded, then went off the road, rolled and rolled, and finally came to an abrupt stop up against a tree about 100 feet down the mountain.

Amazingly, no one seemed seriously hurt, but shocked, bruised, a little disoriented, and trapped. Frank (85 years old) was painfully able to squeeze through a narrow opening between the demolished car and the dirt to go for help. The hillside was so steep that the climb seemed impossible. Frank recounted later, “My first efforts to climb the hill were pathetic. I would find a few tufts of grass or weeds that would afford a little traction for my feet, and I would climb up three or four feet. Then the object I depended upon would break loose and I would tumble all the way back down to the level where I started. I must have tried and failed a dozen times before I was finally willing to admit this was impossible. ‘Lord, what am I going to do? I HAVE to get OUT OF HERE! Two ladies whom I love dearly are trapped inside that mess of a car, and I have to get some help to get them out! I am so tempted just to give up.’ God heard my

plea and made it clear that giving up was not an option. About that time I noticed a sapling about one inch in diameter that looked like it was about half dead. I broke it off and made a ‘walking stick’ from it. I put one end of the stick on the ground and pushed and twisted until it had penetrated 4 or 5 inches; then I would put one foot in front of the stick (getting traction!) and climb up a couple of feet. Next, I would search for a root, a bush, or a rock that I could hang on to while I moved the stick up a few feet and try again. That way I finally made it to the top, but it took me an hour!”

It was about 7:00 PM when we finally got help. The rescue team had to cut off the top half of the car in order to get Janis and me out. They air-lifted badly bruised Janis to a trauma center at a hospital in Greenville, SC, and Frank and I were taken by ambulance to a hospital in Brevard, NC. Friends graciously came for us, and we arrived home at 2:20 AM. Praise God, we were alive—bruised and hurting, but remarkably with no broken bones! The officer who wrote the accident report said many cars had gone off the road at the same place we did, but with no previous survivors. Our only fatality was our 1999 Subaru, which, incidentally, only had 54,600 miles on it.

As word of our accident spread, reporters from newspapers and television stations interviewed us. Invariably, one of their questions was, “What were you thinking as you were rolling down the hillside?” They expected us to say, “We thought we might die.” We all realized that we might die, but it was not a terrifying thought for any of us. We knew our ultimate destination would be Heaven.

If somebody had asked me, “Why aren’t you concerned about dying?” I would have answered, “Because my confidence is in Jesus Christ, and I know I am going to Heaven.” Janis said, “Apparently the Lord isn’t ready for me yet.” The Bible assures us, “*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...*” (1 John 5:13).

What would you have thought if it had been you? Are you afraid of dying? Are you ready to die at any moment? Are you absolutely sure that when you die you will go to Heaven? If so, what do you base that assurance on? We cannot count on our goodness, our church membership, or our sincerity and good intentions—only on Jesus’ death on our behalf alone. Ephesians 2:8-9 makes that clear, “*For by grace are ye*