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## **BUT GOD...**

Remember 9/11 and terrorists, global warming (maybe, I'm not sure), and West Nile disease? Many, many things are bad in the world. For example, I hear there's an asteroid coming toward the earth that will hit it way in the future. AIDS is awful, and so is mad-cow disease. You could list the bad things. People say there will be a World War III and a nuclear bomb will drop. Then there are Iran and Iraq problems. There's economic collapse; people are broke and can't get a job. There are hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes and floods. Man! It's terrible! But maybe the worst thing of all is abortion—killing babies.

All of this would be discouraging, and I wouldn't want to live. The world is not a good place to live except for two little three-letter words. I want to share with you two words (both of them are short) that make the difference between wanting to live and wanting to die. What are those two little words? "But God." One, two, three letters (b-u-t G-o-d). Little short words, but oh the difference they make!

You know something, the worse things become, the more we know that God is great. How do I know that? Because I believe the Bible. In the Bible, in I John 4:4, it says, "Greater is he that is in me than he that is in the world." God is greater, and the more power we see that Satan has, the more power we know that God has. I belong to God; you do too, I hope. The Bible, in Acts 13:29-30, teaches that the people laid Jesus in a tomb. Verse 30 may be the most powerful verse in the Bible. It's short, but it says, "But God raised him from the dead." Wow! That's a wonderful verse! But God. Jesus was dead in a tomb, but God. You can go through the Bible and see many, many times when the situation is awful, and then two words appear—but God. Then the situation becomes wonderful. God makes the difference.

God is powerful. The universe was empty, but God created the heavens and the earth. I could go on and on and on with "but God" phrases. Jesus had to be raised from the dead or God is a liar, because God promised that Jesus would rise from the dead. Jesus had to be raised from the dead or else He couldn't save us from our sins and take us to heaven.

I remember years ago when I was a young boy maybe in junior high. I lived almost three miles from town out in the country. But I loved to go to our little town of Skidmore, Missouri. Only 498 people lived there; it was small. But we had a school, and I loved to go to the basketball games. Our girls that year had started playing basketball (before they played volleyball), and they didn't know much about basketball. They were very poor players, and

at the end of the season, our girls' basketball record was 0 wins and 13 losses. But we were playing against a town named Quitman, and they were bad, too. Their record was the same, 0 – 13. It was a big night, because whichever one could win would not be on the bottom of the league. So I went to the game. I always got free popcorn, not because the people offered it to me free but because I was smart. I would go under the bleachers. People would buy popcorn, and the game would get exciting. They'd stand up and jump and wave their arms, and I would catch the popcorn they dropped and eat it for free. Wow! This game was exciting, and I had all the popcorn I wanted. So I went out to see them play the game. It was almost over; just a few seconds were left. The ball was free, rolling around. There was one girl on our team named Shirley. She was the best, and she was chasing the ball. The other girls were standing there like, "There's the ball, Shirley, go get it." The other team was doing the same thing. And those two girls—the best girl on each team—were fighting for the ball. But the clock was ticking down and Skidmore, my home, was behind by one point. I think it was a small number like 13 to 12. If Shirley could get the ball and put it up, we'd win. Oh, they were fighting for the ball. Finally, the Quitman girl got the ball. She started dribbling and put it up. It went through just before the clock ended the game. The crowd went wild. Why? Because the Quitman girl got confused and put it up in our basket, and we won the game!! You see, it looked really bad for Skidmore because we were behind 13 to 12, and we didn't have the ball. Quitman had the ball, and time was ending. It looked really bad, but we won the game!

Also, it looked bad for God that day about 2,000 years ago. It looked like Satan was the winner. You see, Jesus was dead on a cross. He had died and was then buried in a tomb. God looked like He had lost. Then Acts 13:30 says, "But God raised him from the dead." That's wonderful! Those two words, "but God," made the difference. Those two words can make a difference in your life. You need to get close to God. Read this good book and go to church. Find a church. You say, "There's no church. They don't offer sign language." So what? Encourage them to start sign language. Go and sit and try the best you can. Make a friend and teach the friend some sign language. Do something so you can know God better and grow as a Christian.

Two little three-letter words—but God. Those two words make the difference between hell and heaven, between life and death, between a good life on earth and a bad one. Please follow Jesus. Follow Jesus right to God and heaven. God bless you while you do that.



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