

A FIELD GUIDE FOR MEN

The Last Battle

Leading a Dying Soul to Christ

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You are reading this because someone you love is dying, and as far as you know they are not ready to meet God. They never wanted to hear it. Now the clock is almost out, and you are the one standing in the gap. This is the hardest room you will ever walk into. It is also holy ground, because God is not done until the last breath, and neither are you.

Read this once, slow. Then go.

1. It is not too late

Start here, because the enemy will tell you the opposite. A whole life of turning God down does not cancel out one last yes. The proof is nailed up next to Jesus.

There was a criminal dying on a cross beside Him, a guilty man with no time left, no good deeds to show, no baptism, no cleaned-up life. He had hours. He turned his head and said, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!" And Jesus answered him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise" (Luke 23:42-43).

That man got in at the last hour with nothing in his hands. So can the person in that bed. A deathbed is not too late. It is late, and late still counts. Walk in believing that.

2. You are the watchman, not the judge

Get this straight before you go, or it will wreck you. Your job is to sound the warning and hold out Christ. Whether they turn is between them and God. You are the messenger. You are not the Savior, and you are not the judge.

Paul said it plainly about his own preaching: "I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God" (Acts 20:26-27). He warned them. Their answer was not his to carry. It runs all the way back to God's word to Ezekiel's watchman: warn the man, and even if he will not turn, "you have delivered your life" (Ezekiel 33:9).

And you cannot do the actual saving anyway. "I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth" (1 Corinthians 3:6). The turning of a heart is His work, not your skill. So fight like everything is on the line, because a soul is. Say the hard thing. Hold out Christ plainly. But hear this now, before you are standing in that room: leaving something unsaid is not the sin. Refusing to warn is. If you stammer, or freeze, or forget the verse you meant to reach for, that is not the thing that damns a man. And if he refuses, that refusal is his, not your failure. Hold all of that at once and you can walk in free instead of frozen.

3. Before you walk in

Do not go in cold. Go in prayed up.

Pray first, hard, before you ever open the door. Ask God to go ahead of you into that room and do what you cannot. Ask Him to soften a heart that a lifetime could not soften.

Get yourself right too. Confess whatever is between you and God so you walk in clean, with nothing hanging over you. You are about to talk about mercy. Come as a man who has needed it, not as a man who has it together.

And settle your own fear. You will be scared. Go afraid.

4. Lower the wall

A dying person can smell an agenda from across the room. If you march in with a script and a mission, the wall goes up and you have lost before you started. Love them first.

Be there. Sit down. Hold the hand. Talk about the real things, the fear, the pain, the regrets, the people they are leaving. Do not rush to the point. Earn the last conversation by being a man who actually came to be with them, not a salesman closing a deal on his way out.

Be honest. If they are dying, do not pretend they are not. Most dying people already know, and the ones around them lying about it only make them more alone. You can be the one person in the room telling the truth gently. That honesty is what opens the door to the bigger truth.

5. The message, stripped to the bone

You may have an hour. You may have five minutes and a mind going in and out. So carry the gospel stripped down to what a dying man can hold. Four things, plain:

- **God is real, and they were made by Him and for Him.**
- **Every one of us has sinned and turned away, them and you both.** "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).
- **Jesus, God's own Son, took that sin to the cross, died in their place, and rose again.** "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).
- **They can be saved right now, not by being good enough, but by turning from their sin and self to Christ and trusting Him.** "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8).

Say it in your own plain words. Something like this:

"You and me, we have both fallen short of God. Neither of us can fix that on our own. But Jesus already paid for it. He died for you and He is alive, and all He asks is that you stop running and trust Him. It is not too late. Right now, from that bed, you can turn to Him."

Short. True. No church words they have to decode.

6. The walls, and how to answer them

They will push back. Have an answer ready, and keep it to a sentence or two.

"I have been too bad. He would not take me." That is the exact lie the thief on the cross could have believed, and did not. Tell them the man who wrote half the New Testament called himself the worst of sinners: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all" (1 Timothy 1:15). Then Jesus' own promise: "the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out" (John 6:37). He has never once turned away someone who came.

"It is too late for me." No. The thief proved it is not. God says, "now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2). Now. Not yesterday, not a clean life ago. Now.

"I do not even believe." Then tell God that, honestly, and ask Him to help. You do not have to feel it or understand all of it. You have to turn toward Him and trust Him. A man once cried out to Jesus, "I do believe; help my unbelief" (Mark 9:24), and Jesus met him there.

"I am scared." Good. That is honest. Tell them they do not have to walk through the door alone, that Christ walked through death first and comes out the other side, and that the moment they trust Him they are not facing this by themselves.

Anger, or silence. Do not argue and do not fill it. Sit with them. Love does more here than words. Come back to it. Sometimes the wall comes down on the third visit, not the first.

7. When they cannot speak

Do not give up because they have gone quiet, or slipped under, or cannot get words out. The last sense to go is often hearing, and God is not limited by what a dying person can say back.

Speak to them anyway. Tell them the gospel out loud, simple and slow, like you would to a child you love. Read Scripture over them, John 3:16, Romans 10, the twenty-third Psalm. Pray out loud, and let your prayer preach Christ to them even when they cannot answer. Tell them plainly that they can turn to Jesus in their heart right now with no words at all, and that He will hear what their mouth cannot say.

You do not know what passes between a soul and God in that last hour. Neither does the enemy. Keep speaking life into that room.

8. Helping them respond

If they are ready to turn to Christ, help them, but do not turn it into a magic spell. There are no saving words. There is a Savior. What matters is that their heart turns to Him and trusts Him, not that they repeat a formula.

You can lead them simply. Tell them they can pray it with you, or just in their own heart, or only mean it if the words are hard to get out. Something like:

"Jesus, I have sinned and I cannot save myself. I believe You died for me and rose again. I am turning to You now. Save me. I am Yours."

A weak call is still a call. "Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Romans 10:13). If a man truly turns to Christ with no strength left but a whisper or the lift of his eyes, God hears it, because God reads the heart and not the performance.

But be honest with yourself about the other side of that. A squeeze of the hand is not proof. A dying body grips and twitches on its own, and a grieving heart will read faith into a reflex because it needs to. You cannot see a soul, and you cannot manufacture a man's salvation by deciding for him that his hand meant yes. So do not appoint yourself his judge in either direction. Hold out Christ with everything you have, plead with him to turn, and then leave the verdict where it belongs, with the God who alone can see whether he did.

9. When it is over

If they clearly turned to Christ, then you just watched heaven throw a party over one sinner coming home. Hold onto that. Rejoice, even in your grief.

If you do not know, and most of the time you will not know, hear this, because it is where the enemy will come for you next. Faithful does not mean you performed it flawlessly. It means you showed up and told the truth. You warned, you loved, you held out Christ. Whether he took it was never yours to control. Paul put it in one line: "I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God" (Acts 20:26-27). You did that. His blood is not on your hands.

Now guard your heart from both lies. Do not declare him lost, because you cannot see what passed between him and God in that last silent hour. And do not declare him saved to soothe yourself, because you cannot see that either. You are not his judge. Entrust him instead to a God who is perfectly just and more merciful than you are, and who wanted him home more than you did. Leave the verdict with Him, unknown to you, and let Him carry what was always His to carry.

Then grieve. You are allowed to grieve.

The verses to have ready

Fold this in your pocket. You will not remember them in the moment, so carry them written down.

- **It is not too late:** Luke 23:42-43
- **Now is the time:** 2 Corinthians 6:2
- **All of us have sinned:** Romans 3:23
- **What Christ did:** Romans 5:8
- **Saved by grace, not by being good enough:** Ephesians 2:8-9
- **Too bad to be saved is a lie:** 1 Timothy 1:15, John 6:37
- **How a person is saved:** Romans 10:9-13
- **For unbelief:** Mark 9:24
- **To read over the dying:** John 3:16, Psalm 23

Go. Walk in believing it is not too late, because it is not.

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