

# GROWING DEEP IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: RETURNING TO OUR ROOTS

“MR. SMITH, MEET YOUR SUBSTITUTE”

ROMANS 3:9–31



## The Heart of the Matter

A substitute is someone who takes the place of or acts instead of another. In education, substitute teachers stand before a class that is usually taught by someone else. In the game of baseball, a substitute hitter or runner is commonly used to take the place of another player. Even the president of the United States, if undergoing a surgical procedure, appoints the vice president as his substitute and gives him the full authority of the presidency. What is true in the classroom, sports, and politics is also true in our relationship with the living God. We, as sinners, need someone to take our place and act in our stead. Otherwise, we cannot stand before the holy, righteous, and glorious Lord. Today, we shall meet our substitute, the one who “Himself bore our sins in His body” (1 Peter 2:24), who “though He was rich, yet for [our] sake[s], He became poor” (2 Corinthians 8:9).



## Discovering the Way

### 1. Four Major Issues (Romans 3:9–31)

Seeing Jesus as our substitute demands that we each understand the realities surrounding our condition, God’s character, our need, and God’s provision.

### 2. Three Crucial Questions

When we consider our salvation, we must ask and answer three questions: Is there any hope for lost sinners? Isn’t there any work for seekers to do? And is there any way to lose eternal life?

### 3. Two Possible Responses

When presented with Christ as our substitute, we can believe it and accept God’s gift, or we can refuse His gift.



## Starting Your Journey

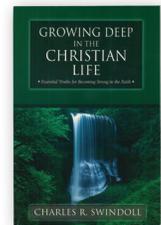
As you think about our sinful state, remember: you don’t have forever. Sin is a terminal disease.



## Tools for Digging Deeper



**Growing Deep in the Christian Life: Returning to Our Roots**  
by Charles R. Swindoll  
CD series of 23 CDs



**Growing Deep in the Christian Life: Essential Truths for Becoming Strong in the Faith**  
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**Essential Truths: A Pocket Guide for Growing Deep**  
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