

How to Become a Christian

Did you know that the Bible tells how you can know for sure that you have eternal life and will go to be with God in Heaven?

The Plan of Salvation

How would you like to know God personally? You can. The fact is, God is so eager to establish a personal, loving relationship with you that He has already arranged for it to be possible. Now, He is waiting for you to respond to His invitation. You can receive His forgiveness for your sins and through faith in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, receive assurance of eternal life.

There is a barrier that prevents us from knowing God personally, though. That barrier is ignorance of who God is and what He has done for us. The following principles will help you discover how to know God personally and experience the abundant life He has promised. Read on to discover for yourself the joyful reality of knowing God personally. If you have a Bible, you may want to look up suggested verses.

God's Love

"God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." John 3:16

God loves you and wants you to know Him personally. In fact, that is the reason He created you! What prevents you from knowing God? Man is sinful and separated from God. Because of this, the loving relationship He desires with us is unattainable unless we confess our sin and ask Him to come into our lives.

Man Is Sinful

"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23

Although we were created to have fellowship with God, we chose to be independent and go our own way. Our stubborn self-will broke the fellowship with God we were created to have. This self-will characterizes itself in two distinct forms: active rebellion and passive indifference. Both of these are attitudes, and the Bible calls these attitudes "sin."

Man Is Separated

"The wages of sin is death [spiritual separation from God]." Romans 6:23

God is holy and we are sinful. It is simply the truth. A great gulf separates us from Him. We can try to live a good life; we can try to be religious; we can attempt to unlock the truths of life through philosophy. Yet no matter what we do through our efforts to reach God, we inevitably fail. The fact is, we can do nothing to overcome the gulf between God and us.

God's Plan

"God demonstrates His own love for us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8

But there is a way. Jesus Christ is God's only provision for man's sin. Through Him alone we can know God personally and experience God's love. How? Jesus Christ died in our place and rose

from the dead. Through Jesus Christ's death and resurrection, He made it possible for us to know God and to experience His love.

Jesus Is the Only Way

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.'" John 14:6

God bridged the gulf that separates us from Him by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross in our place to pay the penalty for our sins. It is important to know these truths, but even still just knowledge of the facts is not enough. We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; then we can know God personally and experience His love.

When we receive Jesus Christ into our hearts, we experience new birth. Receiving Christ involves turning to God from self. This is also called "repentance." We must trust Christ to come into our lives to forgive us of our sins and to make us what He wants us to be. Just to agree intellectually that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that He died on the cross for our sins is not enough. Nor is it enough to have an emotional experience. We receive Jesus Christ by faith, as an act of our will.

You Can Receive Christ

"...and everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved." Acts 2:21

You can receive Christ right now through prayer. You can pray aloud if you choose to, but it is not important. God knows your heart and is not so concerned with how you pray to Him. He is most concerned with the attitude of your heart. If you would like to ask Jesus Christ into your heart and life, here is a suggested prayer. If you pray to Him, you can be assured that He will come into your life and begin showing you how much He really does love you:

"Lord Jesus, I want to know You personally. Thank you for dying on the cross for my sins. I want to open my life to you and receive You as my Savior and Lord. Thank you for forgiving me of my sins and giving me eternal life. Take control of my life. Make me the kind of person You want me to be."

Some Important Things To Remember

Praying to receive Jesus as your Lord and Savior is optional. In other words, God will not force you to have a relationship with Him. It is a free gift of life that you can accept or refuse. With your decision comes consequences, but ultimately the choice is yours.

When a person prays to receive Christ, two things become a reality:

1. Jesus comes into your life and begins to change your heart. What's more, He will never leave you: "...Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." Hebrews 13:5
2. The Bible promises that all who receive Christ also receive eternal life: "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life." I John 5:13

What Happens When Someone Prays to Receive Christ?

If you have prayed to receive Christ, you have received the greatest gift there is to offer: Your sins are now forgiven. (read Colossians 1:14)

You have been welcomed into the family of God as His child. (read John 1:12)

You have received eternal life. (read John 5:24)

You have agreed to be restored into a right relationship with Him. With your permission, He will shower your life with His blessings and freely express in ways you have not yet imagined His love for you. Your purpose for living has now been fulfilled. (read John 10:10, I Thessalonians 5:18)

If You Have Prayed to Receive Christ, Here's a Message Just For You

Congratulations! You are firmly secured in God's loving arms. That means today, tomorrow and forever. You can be assured that when this life is over your place will be with your Father in Heaven. He loves you and can't wait to show you. Hold tight to Him as He reveals His plan and purpose for your life.

Tell someone about your faith. Eventually, you may need to share your newfound faith with someone who does not know Jesus, but it is a good idea to first tell someone that does. Another good idea would be to get involved in a local church. The support you receive will help you in your walk with Christ.

Now it is time to grow. Like all other of God's creations, we are to grow both physically and spiritually. Spiritual growth takes a lifetime, but here are some practical things that we can do to grow in Christ forever:

Pray Daily. The way to really get to know someone is to talk with them often. God is no different. You must talk with Him: "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given to you." John 15:7

Read the Bible Daily. If you do not have a Bible, you can find one at any church, bookstore, or library. One way that God talks to His children is through the scriptures. You may want to begin reading His Word in the book of John. This is a good introduction to the Bible.

Trust God. God will help you live for Him everyday. You can not change automatically. Only God can change you over time if you allow Him to. Faith in Him brings about the necessary changes in your life.

If You are Still Unsure About a Relationship With God, Here's a Message For You

It is okay to be unsure. If you have never been faced with the prospect of knowing God through a relationship with Him, the thought can be a little strange, even scary. But there is nothing strange or scary about a God who loves you and wants the best for you.

While it is okay to be unsure, it is not okay to pass from this life into the next without having known Him as your Savior. The Bible is clear about what is in store for those who reject Christ as Savior and Lord. The existence of hell is not merely a threat, but instead a reality. God does not want to ruin your life, but instead He wants to show you what living is all about. Please explore further the possibilities of a life in Christ. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

How will you respond to Him today?