

How to Become a Christian

God has designed a life for you that has meaning, purpose and fulfillment. The Bible says that God has planned your life with such care and detail that it is immeasurable. Psalm 139 says, "How precious are your thoughts of me O God, how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand." How much sand is there in the world? That is how much love God has for you and how much detail He has planned for your life. Even though God knows that very few people will follow His purpose, He still loves you so much that He planned a life for you that will fit in perfect harmony with everything about you so that you would have His love as an option if you are willing to choose it. Many people think they must get cleaned up before they can be acceptable to God, but God calls for sinners to come. You can't be holy enough for God; you can only receive His righteousness into your life. Salvation and the grace of God are for the sinner. The Bible says, "For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Romans 5:6). If you are ungodly, you qualify for salvation.

Ephesians 2:8-10 says, "For by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works so that no one can boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

You can't measure up to God's standard. You can only receive His grace. Many people believe that if your good works outweigh your bad deeds you will get into heaven. But God says that all of your righteous deeds are filthy rags before Him. Ultimately, you do good deeds for selfish reasons – to feel good, to be liked, to bargain with God and try to earn His favor, but only the righteousness and holiness of God is acceptable to God. Anything that falls short of His character fails. The good news of this problem is that the Bible says that grace and salvation is for the ungodly. If you are not ungodly, you can't be saved. We are all ungodly, but many people can't see it. Until you see your need for God's mercy, you will reject it believing in error that your way is better. The Bible says that God is the God who forgives, but He takes vengeance upon our deeds. Even if we could do more good deeds than bad, we still have the problem of accountability for sin. God said that He will judge and avenge every sin and no sin will go unpunished. The wages of sin is death and only the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ could pay that debt. Only Jesus, God manifested in the flesh, had the right to pay for your sin. Sin is a debt incurred by violating God's law and the debt is to God. We can't and don't have the right to erase our debt.

The Bible says that the person who works to earn God's favor fails. Works do not count toward God's grace, but toward our debt. But the person who does not work but believes on Jesus who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness (Romans 4:4-5). The Bible also tells us that God made Him (Jesus) who knew no sin, to be sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Jesus made it clear that sin is not only outward actions, but inward imaginations as well. Jesus said that those who lust are equal to adulterers and those who are greedy or envious are the same as thieves in God's eyes. God looks at what is inside. Jesus paid all of our debt on the cross. Colossians 2:13-14 says that we who are dead in our sins and the corruption of our flesh, Jesus has made us alive together with Him. He forgave us of our transgressions against God and wiped out the written account against us on the cross. Jesus took your debt, paid for it on the cross with His own blood so that you could be as righteous before God as Jesus is, not because of your deeds, but because of your faith to receive the gift of grace offered to you on the cross. The Bible says we can rejoice in God, "For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness". That covering is the blood of Jesus Christ.

It is not your works that make you right before God; it is by faith in Jesus Christ. You must surrender what you have in exchange for what Jesus has given you. A gift is only an offering until it is received. To receive God's grace, you must give Him your sins, lifestyle and failures in exchange for the life He has created for you and the righteousness and holiness He longs to pour into your heart. God wants to clothe you with salvation and give you His robe of righteousness. This is the only way anyone can become right with God.

Your goal is not to get to heaven, but to take up the life He has created for you and to fulfill the purpose God has designed for your life so that when you stand before Him you can be complete and victorious. You will long for the day instead of fearing that day. No sin is unforgivable because God does not despise the sinner, but does hate the sin and will judge it. No one is judged for their sins, they are judged with their sins. There is no doubt that all our sins will be punished. The question is where? Will you pay the penalty of your sins and sacrifice your soul? Or will you receive His forgiveness through the payment of your sins that Jesus paid on the cross with His own blood on your behalf? Your sins have already been judged if you will receive the completed work of Jesus on the cross.

If you want a new life in Christ and want to exchange your sins for His righteousness, it is as simple as surrendering yourself to God. Knowing Jesus died for you intellectually means little, but we must have faith in His completed work. The surrender to Christ has to come from the heart.

If you, by faith, confess your sins and receive God's forgiveness, you are forgiven for your sins. The Bible then commands that we follow Christ in baptism. We bury our old sinful nature in baptism and God raises us as a new creation and a child of God.

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