



Becoming a Christian

This brief document seeks to provide (1) an introduction to the Good News, or Gospel, of Jesus Christ, and (2) how one responds to that Good News, or how one becomes a Christian. It will move through four main sections: Understand Who God Is, Understand Who Man Is, Understand What Christ Has Done, and Understand How to Respond to the Good News. Much of the material was adapted from the following tracts: “The Gospel of Jesus Christ” by Granted Ministries, and “Experiencing God’s Grace” by The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary’s Department of Evangelism and Missions. For a more in-depth study on the Gospel and becoming a Christian, we recommend checking out “What is the Gospel?” by Greg Gilbert. And as always, we recommend reaching out to a pastor.

Understand Who God Is

God is the beginning of all things ([Gen. 1:1](#))

- God is the Creator, Sustainer, and Ruler of all things.
- All creation reflects His majestic power and glory ([Ps. 19:1](#))
- As Creator, God alone is worthy of the praise and worship of His creation ([Rev. 4:11](#))

God, our Creator, is a God of holiness and love ([Rev. 4:8](#))

- God’s holiness reveals that He is completely unique and separate from His creation.
 - God is majestic, glorious, and perfect in every way ([Ps. 8:1](#))
 - The slightest sin or imperfection cannot dwell in His Holy presence ([Hab. 1:13](#))
 - God is righteous and just in His judgments ([Ps. 7:11-12](#); [11:7](#); [Isa. 5:16](#))
- God’s love is just as great as His holiness and might.
 - God’s love is demonstrated by His care for His creation
 - It is also demonstrated by His gracious disposition and compassion toward us ([Titus 3:4](#))
 - In His great love, God created human beings to reflect His power and glory—we are the pinnacle of His creation ([Ps. 8:4-6](#))
 - We have been created in the image of God Himself ([Gen. 1:27](#))
- Because God is our loving Creator and Ruler, we are responsible to love, worship, and obey Him alone.
 - Since He created us, He has the right to lay His claim on our lives ([Matt. 4:10](#); [22:37-38](#))
 - So, why do we not reflect God’s glory and obey Him as we should?

Understand Who Man Is

Soon after God created Adam and Eve (the first man and woman), they willfully chose to rebel against God, and sin entered the human race.

- Every person thereafter has inherited that sinful nature and has continued to rebel against our Creator.
- The result of sin is that we have failed to reflect God's glory and our relationship with Him is broken.

In order to dwell in His holy presence, God does not require that we merely do our best to live good lives; he requires us to reflect His perfection ([Lev. 19:2](#))

- God does not judge us based on how we compare to our fellow human beings, but on how we compare to Him.
- Clearly all of us fall short of His perfect standard; we have all broken God's laws ([Rom. 3:10-18, 23](#); [Gal. 3:10](#))
- We are all sinners both by *nature* (because we have inherited our sinful natures from Adam and Eve) and by *choice* (because we all willfully choose to disobey God) ([Rom. 5:12](#); [1 John 1:8](#))
- Even our good deeds are imperfect and polluted with sin ([Isa. 64:6](#))

Because God is perfect in Holiness, He cannot tolerate the presence of sin.

- Our sins have separated us from our Creator ([Isa. 59:2](#))
- Because sin separates us from God, it carries tragic consequences ([Rom. 6:23](#))
- One day, we will all stand before God to give an account for our deeds ([Heb. 9:27](#))

At the final judgment, God will separate the sinners from the righteous.

- The righteous will enter into eternal life in heaven to dwell with God.
- Sinners will be sent away from the presence of God into a place of eternal punishment called hell ([Matt. 25:46](#))

Understand What Christ Has Done

God, because of His great love for His creation, sent His Son Jesus into the world so that sinners may be reconciled to God ([John 3:16](#); [1 John 4:8-10](#))

- Peace with God was made possible by everything Jesus did on behalf of sinners. This includes His Life, Death, and Resurrection.
 - *His Life*
 - Jesus did for sinners what they could not do for themselves. He succeeded where we failed ([Rom. 5:1](#))
 - Jesus is God ([John 1:1](#))
 - Jesus became a man ([John 1:14](#))
 - Jesus lived a perfect, sinless life ([Heb. 4:15](#); [1 Pet. 2:22](#))

- *His Death*
 - God has provided atonement between Himself and sinners through the substitutionary death of Jesus on the cross ([Rom. 3:23-26](#); [Col. 1:19-20](#); [2:13-15](#))
 - Jesus died as the substitute for sinners; He died in our place ([Rom. 5:8](#); [1 Pet. 3:18](#))
 - At the cross, an amazing exchange took place: our sins were credited to Jesus; His righteousness is credited to those who follow Him ([2 Cor. 5:21](#))
- *His Resurrection*
 - Jesus' death is not the end of the story.
 - Three days later, He arose victorious from the grave!
 - Death has been defeated! ([1 Cor. 15:54-57](#); [2 Tim. 1:10](#))
 - Jesus' resurrection is proof that God has approved His ministry ([Acts 17:31](#))
 - Jesus' resurrection brings us justification before God ([Rom. 4:25](#))
 - Jesus' resurrection is the promise of resurrection for His people ([Rom. 5:5](#); [1 Cor. 15:20-23](#))
 - Jesus alone is Savior and Lord! ([John 11:25-26](#); [John 14:6](#))
- The blessings of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection apply only to those who will follow Him as Savior and Lord.
 - By His life, Jesus attained righteousness on sinners' behalf.
 - By His death, Jesus paid the penalty that sinners owed.
 - By His resurrection, Jesus defeated death for all who will follow Him.
- This response to follow Jesus is called *conversion*.

Understand How to Respond to the Good News

We must all receive Jesus as our Savior and Lord by a voluntary and intentional act of the will.

- This act includes both repentance and faith.
- Repentance involves turning from sin to obey God.
- Faith is an active trust in Jesus' atoning life, death, and resurrection.
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To receive Jesus as Savior and Lord, we must trust Him alone for salvation ([John 14:6](#); [Acts 4:12](#))

And we must repent.

- To repent means to turn away from our sins and turn to Jesus in love and obedience ([Luke 13:3](#); [John 14:15](#); [Acts 17:30](#))
 - Repentance begins with a recognition and confession that what God says about us is true—we have sinned ([Psa. 51:3-4](#))
 - A genuine recognition of our sinfulness and guilt will also lead us to genuine sorrow, shame, and even hatred for what we have done ([Rom. 7:15](#), [24](#))

- Apparent sincerity of confession alone is never definite evidence of genuine repentance. It must be accompanied by a turning away from sin ([Isa. 1:16](#); [Matt. 3:10](#))

God offers us salvation as a free gift (Grace).

- God's grace comes to us through faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord ([Rom. 6:23](#); [Eph. 2:8-9](#))
- God's grace comes to those who receive Jesus by faith ([John 1:12](#); [Acts 16:31](#); [Rom. 1:16](#); [10:9](#), [13](#))
- To believe upon the Lord Jesus Christ is to exercise faith
 - Faith as defined in the Bible ([Heb. 11:1](#); [Rom. 4:21](#))
 - Faith based on the promises of God ([John 3:16](#); [Acts 16:31](#))
- A believer who has placed their trust in Christ is one who will "worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh" ([Phil. 3:3](#))

For those who repent of their sins and place their faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord, God gives the promise of eternal life ([John 5:24](#); [1 John 5:12](#))

- Jesus brings new life to all who place their faith in Him ([John 10:10](#); [2 Cor. 5:17](#))
- This promise of abundant life does not mean that we will be free from troubles in this lifetime. In fact, the followers of Jesus can expect to face trials and difficulties ([John 16:33](#))
- In spite of difficulties, Jesus promised His followers a peace beyond understanding ([Phil. 4:7](#))
- The peace of Jesus is something that only His followers can experience ([John 14:27](#))
- Nothing in the universe can separate believers from the love of God ([Rom. 8:35-38](#))
- The promise of God to those who trust in Jesus is peace with God in this world and eternal life in the world to come.

When Jesus returns in power and glory, those who have trusted in Him for salvation will live forever in His glorious presence ([1 Thess. 4:16-17](#))

- This wonderful gift of eternal life is given to all those who have been saved through faith in Jesus.

Genuine Assurance of Salvation

- True conversion: A true Christian is a new creation and will live a life that reflects God's radical work of re-creation in his/her life ([Matt. 7:16](#); [2 Cor. 5:17](#))
- Assurance is based upon self-examination in the light of Scripture ([2 Cor. 13:5](#); [1 John 5:13](#))
- Tests of Biblical Assurance
 - Walking in the Light ([1 John 1:5-7](#))
 - Confession of Sin ([1 John 1:8-10](#))
 - Obedience ([1 John 2:3-4](#))
 - Love for Christians ([1 John 2:9-11](#))
 - Hatred for the things of the World ([1 John 2:15-17](#))

- Perseverance in Doctrine ([1 John 2:24-25](#))
- Righteousness ([1 John 3:10](#))
- The Spirit's Testimony ([1 John 4:13](#))
- Disciplined by God ([Heb. 12:5-8](#))

Where do I stand in the sight of God?

- On the cross, Jesus suffered the justice and wrath of God on behalf of all those who trust Him as Savior and Lord. On the other hand, those who do not trust Him as Savior and Lord will rightly suffer the judgment of God themselves ([Matt. 10:28](#); [John 3:36](#); [2 Thess. 1:7-9](#))
 - There is no middle ground with Jesus ([Matt. 12:30](#))
 - Everlasting life, joy, and peace await those who stand on the Lord's side ([1 Pet. 1:3-9](#))
- Are you on the Lord's side, or on your own side?
 - Are you living for God through Jesus, or are you living for yourself?
 - If Jesus returned today, would you experience the everlasting joy of heaven with Him, or would you suffer the wrath of God?
- Are you ready to follow Jesus as your Savior and Lord?
 - If so, then you must repent of your sins and place your faith in Jesus alone for salvation.
 - You must believe that he lived, died, and rose again for your salvation.
 - You must commit your life to Him as your living Savior and Lord.
 - If you are ready to have your sins forgiven and to receive the gift of eternal life, then trust in Jesus right now.

Are you ready?

- Go to God in prayer (prayer is talking to God).
 - Admit to Him that you are a sinner and in need of a Savior.
 - Ask Him to have mercy on you and to forgive you of your sins.
 - Thank Him for sending His Son, Jesus, whose life, death, and resurrection secured salvation for all who will follow Him.
 - Commit your life to Jesus.
 - Tell Him that you repent of your sins and trust in Him as Savior and Lord.
 - Ask Him to fill you with His presence by giving you His Holy Spirit to empower you to live a life that will bring glory to His name.
- The Bible says that you can know that you have eternal life ([1 John 5:12-13](#))

Living Daily in God's Grace

- As a new believer in Christ, you must always remember that Christ "died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for him who died and rose again on their behalf" ([2 Cor. 5:15](#))
- Only by putting Christ first can we Christians experience growth in our faith and in Christlikeness. We can do this through:

- Prayer
 - Pray daily. Speak to God as you would your dearest friend.
- Worship
 - Give God the praise that He deserves. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind.
- Bible Study
 - The Bible is the Word of God. Read it daily. The book of John is a great place to start.
- Fellowship
 - Meet regularly with other Christians who will help you grow in your new life with Christ. Finding a faithful church that believes the Bible and glorifies Jesus is a great way to begin.
- Service
 - Serve Christ and serve your fellow human beings. We Christians do not serve out of mere duty, but out of love for our Savior, seeking to be obedient in every aspect of life for the sake of Jesus, our Lord.
- Witnessing
 - Tell others about what Christ has done in your life. Share the good news of God's grace with all who will listen.

The next step

- As soon as possible, seek out a faithful church that will [baptize you \(ask the pastor to explain baptism\)](#) and give you guidance and help you in your new walk with Christ.
- Have you recently trusted Christ for salvation? We would love to hear from you! Call or email us using the contact information at the bottom of the page.

ATTRIBUTIONS:

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