



The Good News About Jesus

How to Know Christ

Have you ever enjoyed a glorious sunset or stood by a thunderous waterfall and thought, *Only God could create something so beautiful*. Most people have these thoughts, and some people come away believing that yes, there is a God. But how do we come to *really* know Him?

The Source for Answers

Time-tested, loved, and read by millions around the world, the Bible presents several key truths which explain how we can know God and relate to Him. The first truth is very personal. Romans 3:10-12 describes each one of us when it says, *"There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."* Some people have a hard time believing that, so let's examine it further...



A Soul Exam

Almost every person thinks he is basically good. But are you? One way to find out is to ask yourself if you have obeyed the most basic common law known to man, the Ten Commandments. You can read all ten by looking up Exodus 20:1-17 in the Bible. Most people would say that they have broken one or two of the Ten Commandments, but nothing very serious.

But let's take a closer look. How would you measure up against the first commandment? Exodus 20:3 says *"You shall have no other gods before Me."* Ask yourself, "Have I always put God first in my life?" Jesus said to love God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength (Matthew 22:37). Another commandment says, *"You shall not murder"* (Exodus 20:13). Jesus explained, *"You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment"* (Matthew 5:21-22). God doesn't grade on a curve. The Ten Commandments reveal how *far* we fall short of God's standard for right living.

This is what the Bible means when it says, *“All have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God”* (Romans 3:23). So here we are, sinners by nature, trying to pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps. But every time we try to relate to God, we fall flat on our faces. The fact is, we cannot obey Him because we have neither the desire nor the ability to do so – we are rebellious by nature, following the desires, thoughts, and cravings of our sinful nature (Ephesians 2:1-3).

Now, are you ready for the *really* bad news? Our disobedience to God places us in danger of eternal punishment. Jesus said it’s a place of *“weeping and gnashing of teeth”* (Luke 13:28). In other words, hell. Second Thessalonians 1:8 puts it this way, *“He will punish those who do not know God...”* Why? God is holy and just (He wouldn’t be God if He weren’t perfect), and that means He must punish sin (sinners are anything but perfect!). Ezekiel 18:4 says, *“The soul who sins is the one who will die.”* What one of us stands a chance? Who can get us out of this mess?!

The Good News

Even though God's justice demands death for sin, His mercy and favor come shining through. *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life”* (John 3:16). He knows you’re a sinner; but He wants you to know He’s a Savior. Second Peter 3:9 says *“...He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”* His abundant love has provided a Savior, and His name is Jesus.



Jesus is the One who lived perfectly and honored God's law. This means He was able to bear sin’s death penalty, all so that we could be rescued from our predicament! *“For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God...”* (I Peter 3:18). Friend, meet Jesus, your Substitute. *“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God”* (II Corinthians 5:21).

Who is this Jesus?

Jesus often asked His followers what they believed about Him. *Who do you say Jesus is?* Your response to Him will determine not only the way you live, but where you will spend eternity. When Jesus walked on earth, many people were confused about His identity. Some thought He was a great prophet. Others thought He was crazy. But Jesus said, *“I and the Father are one”* (John 10:30). He claimed to be God in the flesh. Jesus embodied every element of God's character. Colossians 2:9 says, *“In Him all the fullness of the Deity dwells in bodily form.”*

Jesus is the perfect reflection of God, the Father – He is holy (remember, He's the only one who ever kept all those Ten Commandments!), plus He is full of mercy and favor. Jesus is the only one who can forgive and transform us, thereby delivering us from the power and penalty of sin: *"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved"* (Acts 4:12). When Jesus died on the cross, His death satisfied the demands of God's justice.

Again, the bad news is that we are sinners through and through, but Jesus Christ

is our Good News. He is our remedy for sin! Oh, friend, don't you long to be free of the fear of death? Do you long for release from guilt? Would you like to be assured of a home in heaven? Do you wish your life had meaning and purpose? Jesus is your "bridge over troubled waters" in this world. God the Father wants to give you His Son as not only your Substitute for sin's death penalty, but He wants Jesus to be your best Friend, Peace of mind and heart, and Purpose for living. The best part is, He wants to work through your life so that others might know Him too.



How Will You Respond to This?

Who do *you* say Jesus is?

He alone can free you from the power and penalty of sin.

He alone can transform you, restore you to fellowship with God, and give your life eternal purpose.

Turn away from your sin and embrace Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. How do you do that? God knows what's in your heart -- He's more concerned about that, than you reciting a formula-prayer. But if you need help, you might want to borrow the following words as a prayer...

Lord Jesus, thank you for paying the debt for my sin by dying on the cross. I confess my sins, which are many. Thank you for forgiving me and I want to show you my gratitude by turning away from my old sinful habits. I embrace you as the Lord of my life and I desire to follow you the rest of my days. Thank you for giving me power and strength to live a life that honors and pleases you! I pray this in the only Name that saves, Jesus Christ... Amen.

If you have opened up your heart to God and embraced His Son today, we would like to hear from you. We also encourage you to tell another Christian about your new life in Christ. Find a Bible and start reading it. The Bible is the Word of God and He gave it to us that we might learn more about following him. Set aside a time each day for reading your Bible – we recommend starting with the Gospel of John in the New Testament.



Talk to God often in prayer, daily confessing your sins – you’re not perfect, but obedience is your goal. When you pray, thank Him and tell Him what you’ve learned from His Word. Finally, locate a Christ-honoring church in your community where you can join a Bible study which focuses on the life of Christ. Second Peter 3:18 is now your goal: *“...grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”*



Be encouraged! In Luke 15:10, Jesus says, *“... I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”* Welcome to God's family! Please let us hear from you – we would love to send you some resources as you take your first steps as a follower of Jesus Christ.