

The Gift of God





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What happens when we die?

We live in a world where nothing seems to be certain. But we can all be sure about one thing. It is this. We are all going to die. And we would like to know what will happen to us then. Most people would like to go to heaven. (They would like to have a life that never ends.)



But people have their own ideas. They want to go to heaven. But they think that they must do something first. Some people try to follow a religion. Other people try not to think about it. Some people try to do good things. They may try not to do bad things too. Then they just hope that perhaps they will do more good things than bad things.

Whatever we hope, whatever we think, the Bible has the answer. And it is the main message of the Bible. It is that we can be sure of a life that will never end. So we can have a great life now. Then, when we die, we can continue that life in heaven!

This is what God says in the Bible:

A life that never ends is a free gift!



The gift of God is life that never ends. Jesus Christ our Master is the one who brings this life to us.

Romans 6:23

God has saved you because he is so very kind. He has saved you because you believe him and because you trust him. You could not save yourselves.

This is God's gift to you....

Ephesians 2:8



A life that never ends is a gift. It is like any real gift:

We cannot earn it; we do not deserve it



To do good things would not earn a life that never ends. And to follow a religion would not earn it.

There is only one way that we can have life that never ends.

The Bible says:

... it is God's gift to you. He has not saved you because of any good thing that you have done. So nobody has any reason to say how good he or she is!

Ephesians 2:8-9

There is only one way to go to heaven. God must offer us a place in heaven. It must be a gift, or nobody would ever go there.

This is because:

Every one of us has sinned

People have different ideas about what it means to sin. Some people think that sin is to kill someone. Or they think that sin is to force someone to have sex. They might think that it includes not being loyal to your husband or wife. Or they might think that sin is to use a gun to steal something.

We all have our own ideas. We all have our own standards. But, when we think about heaven, only God's standard matters. And God's standard does not just mean bad actions. It does not just mean wrong thoughts.

God says that hate is sin, just as much as murder. Lust is sin, just as much as adultery. (Lust is when someone wants to have wrong sex. Adultery is to have sex with a married person.) This is because hate and lust show two things. First, they show that we are selfish. Second, they show that we do not know God's Laws.

Here are God's most important laws. The first one is to love God. We must love him with all our heart (emotions). We must love him with all our soul. (Our soul is what makes us different from other people. It goes on living when our body dies.) We must love him with our entire mind. And we must love him with all our strength. The second most important law is about other people. We must care for other people as much as we care for ourselves. Mark 12:30

So sin is not just bad things that we might do. It is not just bad things that we might think. We are sinning when we do not love God as much as we should. We are sinning when we do not help other people as we should!



**... Everyone has sinned.
Not one of them reaches God's standards. ...
Romans 3:23**

And because of this...

We cannot do anything to save ourselves

There is a reason why we cannot do anything to save ourselves. It is because we have already failed to reach God's standard. God's standard is that we must be perfect.

**Be perfect, the same as your Father above is perfect.
Matthew 5:48**

No matter how good we are, we are not perfect. Any sin spoils everything. It might seem to be a very small sin to us. But we have failed to reach God's standard. So we are not perfect. And God tells us that we must be perfect.

**We must obey every one of God's laws.
We might fail to obey just one small rule.
But that would mean that we have failed to obey all of God's laws.
James 2:10**

Some people are better than other people are. But to be better is not good enough if we still fail to reach God's standard. Imagine something. You have to jump from one side of a deep valley to the other side. You nearly reach the other side. And someone else can only jump a little way. But this would not make it better for you. The result would be the same. You would both fail to reach the other side. You would both fall into the valley.



Because we do not reach God's standard, we are sinners. (A sinner is anybody who sins.) We are not able to save ourselves from God's punishment. But God offers us a life that never ends. We cannot earn it, and we do not deserve it. But he wants to give it to us as a free gift! There seems to be no reason why God should do this.

But the reason is that:

God loves us and he is very kind. He does not want to punish us

The Bible tells us -

God loved all the people of the world very much. So he gave his Son to save them. Now all those who believe in God's Son (Jesus) have a life that will never end.

John 3:16

God is love. He shows his love in everything that he does.

1 John 4:8



**... God is good.
He is always loving and kind.
Psalm 100:5**

**... Your God is kind and he gives good gifts.
He does not become angry quickly.
And he has great love.**

Joel 2:13



But God's love does not stop the fact that he is also fair. The Bible tells us about his love. The same Bible also makes something else very clear. It is this:

God is completely fair; so he must punish sin

**... all the things that he does are fair.
Deuteronomy 32:4**

**... I will not let anyone go free who has
done a wrong thing.
Exodus 23:7**

**I will punish the people of the
world for their bad acts.
I will punish those who are bad
for their sins.
Isaiah 13:11**



**... Every person must die.
Then God will be the judge.
He will decide what is fair for each person.
Hebrews 9:27**

God could forget our sins because he loves us. But this would not be fair. His laws are perfect. He has already declared his punishment for those who do not obey them:

**... People who sin (do not obey God) must die.
Romans 6:23**

But, God loves us and God is fair. Both these things are true. And God has brought them together in a wonderful way. They join in Jesus Christ.

But who is Jesus?

The Bible makes it clear that ...

Jesus is God

Jesus was in the beginning. Jesus was with God. Jesus was God.

[Note: The Bible calls Jesus The Word]

John 1:1

The Word (Jesus) became human. He came to live among us.

John 1:14



God became a man in Jesus Christ. This is what we especially remember at Christmas time.

There will be a young woman who has never had sex.

She will have a son. People will call him Immanuel.

This name means 'God is with us.'

Matthew 1:23

There is a reason why Jesus came into the world.

Each one of us is guilty because of our sin. So God must punish us. But God loves us very much. So he put our sins onto Jesus.

He came to take the punishment for our sins



**We all have wandered away
like sheep.
We each wanted to go our own way.
But God put the sin of us all
on Jesus.
Isaiah 53:6**

A judge once had a young mother in front of him. She was guilty. She had stolen food from a shop.

The judge knew that the mother had no money. Her punishment was to pay a large amount of money. She could not pay it. But she wanted very much to stay out of prison. This was because she had two children. And she knew that prison would have a bad effect on them.

The judge came down from his special place. And he offered to pay the money himself. The mother accepted and she was free!

She had not earned it. She did not deserve it. But the judge had pity for her. In this way, he obeyed the law. He paid all her punishment. At the same time, he showed love to her.

This is what God has done for us

Jesus died on the cross. He did this to pay the punishment for our sin. But his act also showed that God is fair.

**But God has shown us how much he loves us.
While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
Romans 5:8**

On the third day, Jesus came back to life. Now he is alive forever. This is what we especially remember at Easter time.



Because Jesus died on the cross, we can be friends with God. Now God offers us a gift. The gift is life that will never end. And he will give that gift to anyone who accepts it.

Those who accept God's gift can come close to him. It will be as if they had never sinned.

What you have just read is the main message of the Bible. It is the good news. It is what God has done for us in Jesus. These words from the Bible explain it: -

**God loved all the people of the world very much.
So he gave his only Son to save them.
WHOEVER believes in Jesus will not die.
He or she will have life that never ends.
John 3:16**

Life that never ends is a special gift. This gift is for **WHOEVER** believes and trusts (has faith) in Jesus.

And that word – **WHOEVER** – includes **YOU!**

YOU can receive the gift of this special life



**God saves you because he is so kind. God saves you when you
have faith in him. (You believe and trust in Jesus.)
Ephesians 2:8**

Perhaps you have been trusting in your own efforts. Perhaps you thought that your human reason was enough. Perhaps you even prayed, or did other religious things. But none of these things can save you. Because he is fair, God must punish those who sin. Faith (that means to believe and to trust) in Jesus is the only way.

But faith that saves you does not just mean to believe about Jesus. It does not just mean to pray to him when you are in trouble. These things are good, but they are not enough. A faith that saves you means that you must:

Trust in Jesus Christ only



You might decide to travel to another country by aeroplane. You might know about the aeroplane that will get you there. You know the time that it should take. You know the route. And you know the cost. But none of that would be enough. You must do something about what you know. You must get on the aeroplane. And you must trust it to take you to where you want to go! To do that is to have FAITH in the aeroplane.

You must be sorry for all the bad things that you have done

**There is a way that seems to be right to a person.
But that way leads to death.
Proverbs 14:12**

You need to confess that you have made God sad. You have done this in two ways. You have chosen to do what you want. And you have refused to do what God wants you to do.

You need to be sorry about the things that you have done wrong. It is like when you go along the wrong road. Then you must turn around and go in the opposite direction. This means that you agree to change the way that you live. It would be God's way.

You need to ask Jesus Christ to forgive you. And you need to trust him to show you the right way to live.

When you say sorry to God it is like turning around



**God is patient with you. He does not want anyone to die.
He wants all people to be sorry for the bad things
that they have done.
2 Peter 3:9**

Jesus is Lord **(Jesus is always most important in your life)**

So you stop doing what you want. You choose to do what God wants you to do. When you do this, you are agreeing that -



The Lord Jesus knows what is best for you. You can trust him to lead you into a great life. But he can only do this while you do things in his way. Jesus said:

If anyone loves me, he will obey my words.
John 14:23

To obey him will mean doing some new things. It will also mean doing some things differently.

To do good things will not save you. But to live in a way that pleases God will prove something. It will prove that you have the new life that God gives to you. It will also prove that Jesus is Lord in your life. Jesus is always most important in your life.

God has worked in us.
He has made us into new people in Christ Jesus.
He had already prepared good things for us to do.
Ephesians 2:10

To make Jesus your Lord means that you will choose to obey him. He will always be most important in your life. And that is not easy. Your new life will mean that you must change some things. And you might find that some things are hard to do. You must decide for yourself. God will not decide for you. But, when you accept his gift of life that will never end, something happens. His Holy Spirit will be living in you. And He will give you the power to obey God.

**You ought to know that you yourselves are God's house.
You ought to know that God's Spirit lives in you.
1 Corinthians 3:16**

The Spirit of God gives life



God's Holy Spirit will live in you. He will give you a new life. He will give you the power to live your new life. He will also give you a new purpose for your life.

**A human baby is born from a human mother. But a person's new
life is born by the work of the Holy Spirit.
John 3:6**

The new life that we receive through God's Holy Spirit means something special. It means that we are part of a new family.

The family of God

**Some people accepted him (Jesus). They believed in his name.
And he allowed them to become children of God.**

John 1:12

Because of Jesus, we can all come to the Father by the one Holy Spirit. When you do this, you are not strangers any more. You are not foreign any more. Now you belong with God's people. You belong to God's family.

Ephesians 2:18-19



Children grow up best in a family. And God's children are the same. God's family on earth is called the church. The real church is not a building. But members of God's family, the church, usually meet in a church building. They will belong to that particular church. This should be the natural thing to do, when it is possible. A home is natural to a human family. And so should the church be natural to the believer. [Sometimes, a church group do not have a special church building. But they are still a church.]

Time to stop and think

Do you understand the good news of the Bible?

(pages 4 to 14 of this booklet)

The Bible teaches about God's gift of life that will never end. God offers this life because of what Jesus Christ has done. Do you believe this?

Do you understand what God wants you to do?

(pages 15 to 19 of this booklet)

Would you like to have God's gift of life that will never end?

Will you trust Jesus Christ only to save you?

Are you really sorry for all the bad things (sins) that you have done?

Do you turn away from all those bad things (sins)?

**And do you want Jesus Christ to be Lord of your life?
(This means that he will always be most important in your life.)**

Would you like to become one of God's children, part of his family, the church?

If you can say **'yes'** to all these questions,
there is a prayer for you.

This prayer may help you to accept
God's invitation.



Prayer of response

My Lord and my God,

I have lived my life in my own way.

I have done many wrong things.

I am sorry for all my sin: I turn away from it.

Please forgive me.



Lord Jesus, I trust you now to save me, to be my Saviour.

Thank you for dying instead of me.

I ask you now for your gift of life that will never end.

I ask you to control my life.

I ask you to be my Lord, to be most important in my life.

Help me to live in a way that pleases you.

I cannot do this by myself. So please give me the power of
your Holy Spirit.

I pray these things in the name of Jesus. Amen



You can be sure

You know if you have truly turned away from your sins. You know if you have put your trust in Jesus Christ. God knows too. And God wants you to know something great. It is this. You now have life that will never end.

The Bible says:

**This is for you who believe that Jesus is the Son of God.
I want YOU TO KNOW that you have life that will never end.
1 John 5:13**

Jesus said,

**I am telling you the truth.
The person who believes HAS life
that will never end.
John 6:47**



Notice that Jesus Christ himself said these words!

Notice that the promise is for now. It does not say 'will have'. It does not say 'might have'. It says 'has' life that never ends. Jesus says it. If you believe (trust in him), you have life that will never end. Think about the words that you have just prayed. Look at what you have read from God's word. If you truly believe, you can know that you have life that never ends.

Here is a promise that you can sign. This will remind you about the decision that you have made.

My promise to God

I believe that God loved all the people of the world very much. So he gave his Son to save them. Whoever believes in Jesus will not die. He or she will have life that never ends.

Therefore, I have turned away from all my sin. And I now trust Jesus Christ to save me. I believe that he has forgiven me. I believe that he has given me the gift of new life. And that is life that will never end.

I choose to live as a member of the family of God. I choose to obey Jesus as my Lord. He will always be most important in my life. I know that I cannot do this by myself. But I will ask for the help of God's Holy Spirit. I will try to love God more and more. And I will learn to tell other people about God's love for them.

Signed _____

Date _____

God causes us to hope for good things. May he fill you with much joy and peace. He will do this as you believe and trust in him. Then you will have more and more hope. And it will flow out of you by the power of God's Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13

I know that God has begun to do good things in you. And he will continue to work in you until the day when Jesus Christ returns.

Then God will finish this work in you. I am sure about that.

Philippians 1:6

Human life begins with physical birth.
A person's new life begins with spiritual birth.

The Bible calls it being 'born again' by God's Spirit.
Now you have life that will never end.

Where there is life there is growth. And ...



God wants you to grow strong



**New babies always want their mothers' milk.
The milk makes them grow strong.
And you should be like them.
You should always want the milk of
God's word. Then you will know God
more and more.
And you will grow strong in your new life.
1 Peter 2:2**

**Grow in what you have learned about all of God's goodness.
Grow in how much you know Jesus Christ. He is our Lord.
So he should always be most important in our lives.
And he is our Saviour, the one who saves us.
2 Peter 3:18**

God will help you to grow stronger in your new life by -

- His Holy Spirit
- His Word, the Bible
- His gift of Prayer
- His loving family – the Church (the people, not a building)
- His plan for your life

You will never again be alone. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, has promised this.

God will be with you

**Do not worry, because I am with you. Do not be afraid,
because I am your God. I will make you strong.
I will help you. I will support you.
Isaiah 41:10**



Jesus said,

**You can be sure that I will be with you always.
I will be with you until the end of time.
Matthew 28:20**

**You ought to know that you yourselves are God's house.
You ought to know that God's Spirit lives in you.
1 Corinthians 3:16**

God wants you to know how he wants you to live. So he has given the Bible to you.

Everything that is in the Bible comes from God's Spirit.

And we can use the Bible to teach what is true.

We can use it to tell people when they are doing wrong things.

And it will show them what is right.

We can also use the Bible to teach people how to live good lives.

So, a person can always be ready.

He will be ready to do every kind of good work.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

God's Word, the Bible



Read and study the Bible. Then you will soon be saying:

Your word is like a torch for my feet.

It lights the path in front of me.

It shows me the right way to go.

Psalm 119: 105

God speaks to you by the Bible. You speak to God by prayer.

You do not have to use any special language when you pray. Just talk to God naturally. He very much wants you to talk to him. It does not matter to him what words you use.

You can talk to him at any time, anywhere, about anything. He has given you:

His gift of prayer

**Do not worry about anything. Instead, pray about everything.
Ask God for all that you need.
And when you pray, always thank him.
Philippians 4:6**

**Continue to pray. Do not let anything stop you praying.
And thank God when you pray.
Colossians 4:2**

**Until now, you have not asked for anything in my name.
Ask and you will receive. And your joy will be complete.
John 16:24**



Those who believe and trust in Jesus Christ are called believers. There is something special between them. It is like this when they first meet. And it has been like this from the beginning of the church. They love each other and they accept each other. This is because they now belong to:

God's loving family, the church



**All the time, the new believers were learning from the leaders.
They shared their lives with each other.
They ate meals together. And they prayed together.
Acts 2:42**

God's family is called the church. The building in which they meet is often called a church too. When it is possible for you, meet with other believers. Ask God to show you where he wants you to go. If there is no church building, perhaps a small group meets somewhere. You will find great help and strength from other believers. People who are mature believers will help you especially.

God has a plan for your life. And he wants you to discover what that plan is. As it says in the Bible:

**God has worked in us. He has made us what we are.
He had already prepared good things for us to do.
And God has joined us with Christ Jesus.
So, we can do those good things.
Ephesians 2:10**

God has a plan for your life

You will discover God's plan for your life as you:

- Let his Holy Spirit guide you
- Obey his Word
- Pray for his help
- Take your place in his family



To be a disciple [A follower who learns]

The more you live by God's plan the more you live!

God wants you to be a loyal disciple of Jesus Christ. The Bible says that loyal disciples are like a plant that gives fruit. This means that they care for other people. And they tell other people the good news about Jesus. Then these people, too, can have life that never ends.



Jesus said:

**There should be much fruit in your lives.
This will show that you are my disciples.
And it will bring great honour to my Father.
John 15:8**

**You did not choose me.
I chose you and I gave you special work to do.
Then you will be like a plant that gives much fruit.
John 15:16**

You trust in Jesus only now. So, tell somebody. Tell a relative or a friend as soon as possible.

**Do not boast about tomorrow,
for you do not know what a day may bring.
Proverbs 27:1**



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