

Questions

1. Do you know for sure you have a relationship with God and that you will live forever in heaven?

The Bible says you can be certain: *“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”* (1 John 5:13).

2. Suppose you were standing before God right now and He asked you, “Why should I let you into my heaven?” What do you think you would say?

Now, let’s see what the Bible says about this important issue.

Fact 1

God wants to have a personal relationship with us.

We all need one permanent relationship that we can always count on.

Because God loves us, He wants to relate to us. The Bible says, *“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).

- **Eternal life is a free gift.** The Bible says: *“...the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord”* (Romans 6:23b).
- **God gives us fulfillment right away.** Jesus said, *“I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full”* (John 10:10).
- If you have a relationship with God it will **continue forever** in heaven after you die.

Jesus said, *“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am”* (John 14:3).

What keeps us from experiencing this relationship with God?

Fact 2

Our wrongdoing keeps us from relating to God.

- **We all do wrong things on purpose.** When we choose to go our own way against God, the Bible calls it “sin.” The Bible says: *“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”* (Romans 3:23).

Sin automatically separates us from God. If we are still separated from God on the day we die, we will stay separated from Him forever in hell. The Bible says it this way: *“For the wages of sin is death”* (Romans 6:23).

- **We cannot rescue ourselves** from being apart from God.

There is nothing we can do to work our way to God. So no one can say “I did it by myself.” The Bible says eternal life with God is: *“Not by works, so that no one can boast”* (Ephesians 2:9).

Because God is perfect and fair, He must punish sin. But God the Father loved us so much that He came up with a way to pay the penalty for our sin. Jesus said, *“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me”* (John 14:6).

Fact 3

Jesus Christ provides the only way to have an eternal relationship with God.

- **Jesus is God and became man.** The Bible calls Jesus “the Word” in this verse:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word became flesh and lived for a while among us” (John 1:1, 14).

- **Jesus paid the penalty for our sins** by dying on a cross so we don’t have to be separated from God forever.

“For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God” (1 Peter 3:18).

If you were drowning in the ocean, you would recognize that you couldn’t save yourself. You would need a lifeguard to rescue you. When the lifeguard reaches for you, you would grab on to him as your only hope. You would trust in him to get you safely out of the water. It’s like that when you place all your hopes on Jesus to save you from your sins.

- **Jesus came back to life after he died.** The Bible says: *“He was delivered over to death for our sins and raised to life for our justification”* (Romans 4:25).

The only way to have real relationship with God is to receive Jesus. The Bible says:

“Yet to all who receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12).

How do we receive Jesus?

Fact 4

To receive Jesus we must turn to God, put our trust in Jesus, and let Him take charge of our life.

- We make a radical change when we **turn to follow God** instead of following our own sinful desires.

The Bible uses the word “repent” to refer to this change of direction: *“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out” (Acts 3:19).*

- Repenting is **more than just being sorry for our sins.**

“Repent and turn to God, and prove... repentance by... deeds” (Acts 26:20).

We repent by turning away from our sin and turning to God through Jesus. It is as if you were driving down the road going north, and then you realize that you’re going the wrong way. So you make a U-turn to go south instead.

- We must **place our faith in Jesus.**

We can only receive eternal life by trusting what Jesus has done for us instead of relying on our own efforts to be good enough to earn heaven: *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God” (Ephesians 2:8).*

Faith is not just believing facts about Jesus. The Bible says that only having faith in facts about God is not enough: *“You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder” (James 2:19).*

The kind of faith you need is to trust only in what Jesus did for you on the cross to pay the penalty for your sin. It is like trusting an airplane will take you to where you want to go. Trusting in the airplane is more than just buying a ticket and saying that you believe it could take you where you want to go. If you really trust in the airplane, you will actually get on board, and trust it with your life.

- We must **let Jesus take charge of our life.**

Letting Jesus have control as our Lord is not just saying we give our lives to Jesus. Jesus said, *“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord’ will enter the kingdom of heave, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven”* (Matthew 7:21).

Having Jesus as your Lord is turning over control of your life to Jesus. It’s like driving a car. The car represents your life and you are in control as the driver. Giving control to Jesus is letting Him be the driver.

The Bible says this: *“... if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved”* (Romans 10:9-10).

Questions

- 1. Does this information about how to relate to God make sense to you?**
- 2. Is there any reason why you would not be willing to receive God’s gift of eternal life?**
- 3. Are you willing to turn from your sin and trust in Jesus Christ right now to receive eternal life?**

If you are willing to accept God’s gift of eternal life, you only need to pray to Him. Right now, you can pray the prayer below or pray similar words that mean the same thing.

Dear God,

I admit that I have gone my own way and have done wrong things. I realize this sin separated me from you. But I am willing now to stop going my own way and turn to follow you. Please forgive me. I am placing all my trust in what Jesus did for me when he died on the cross to pay the penalty for my sins. Thank you for raising Jesus back to life again. I invite Jesus to be in charge of my life from now on. Amen.

If you just prayed this prayer or a prayer like this, welcome to the family of God! You have just made the most important decision of your life. According to God’s message to us in the Bible, now you can be sure you have eternal life, and that you will enjoy relating with God forever in heaven.

As proof of giving Jesus control, we will want others to know that we belong to Him. To show others that you are following Jesus, the Bible tells us to be baptized and to worship God together with other Christians. And Jesus commands us to tell others the good news about how to receive God’s gift of eternal life!

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If you just made this important decision to invite Jesus Christ into your life, please let us know by sending us an email at relationship@iaii.org. We would like to send you some free materials to help you get started with this fulfilling new relationship with Christ. Welcome to the family of God!

God Bless,

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