

The Good News



Discover Life *Basic Course of Faith*



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1. In search of the origin God authors life

A frequently asked question: Does God exist?

Isn't that the question everyone wants answered? If God doesn't exist then it's also useless to search for him. In the Bible we read ***for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.*** (Hebrews 11:6) Although it is not possible to prove God's existence in a scientific or mathematical sense, many things that we know speak for Him.



The universe.

If one considers the universe a result of chance, then one raises a lot of new questions – and answers none of them. This is precisely the case with the „Big Bang Theory“. Where did the first matter come from? Not even the „Big Bang“ can bring something into being out of nothing. The theory of evolution is widespread, but nevertheless not at all assured: How is it, that out of nothing, the most unbelievably complex lifeforms can develop on Earth? Therefore it is still referred to as a theory.

The Bible contains a comprehensible explanation.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1) Our world is not the random product of a lucky coincidence of particles „that have always been there“. But rather, we realize that behind the Creation there must be a great intelligence. ***By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.*** (Hebrews 11:3) The Creation has its beginning and origin in God. ***For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.*** (Psalm 33:9)

A stunning order and design of nature and natural laws.

From the vastness of the Universe to the microscopic smallest creatures, everything has its order. But order does not just happen, and the laws of nature also point to a lawgiver. ***The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth,..*** (Acts 17:24)

The clearest evidence for the Creator is man himself.

Then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. (Genesis 2:7) In contrast to animals, man owns what is called „personality ". Man can think, feel, and desire. He has a conscience, he can make sound decisions, and he can distinguish between good and evil. He is capable of love and passion. Above all, he has a deep longing for God. Where did he get these attributes from? They couldn't possibly have come into being as the result of evolution or a chain of coincidences. Man is no accident. King David, who wrote down many of the Psalms (songs) of the Bible, puts it this way: ***I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are all your works; my soul knows it very well.*** (Psalm 139:14)

2. What is the foundation of our knowledge? God reveals Himself in the Bible

We need reliable informations about God.

A man named Job, about whom an entire book of the Bible was written, once was asked: ***Can you fathom the mysteries of God? Can you discover the limits of the Almighty?*** (Job 11:7) What should he have answered? We can not know God and therefore rely on Him to reveal Himself.

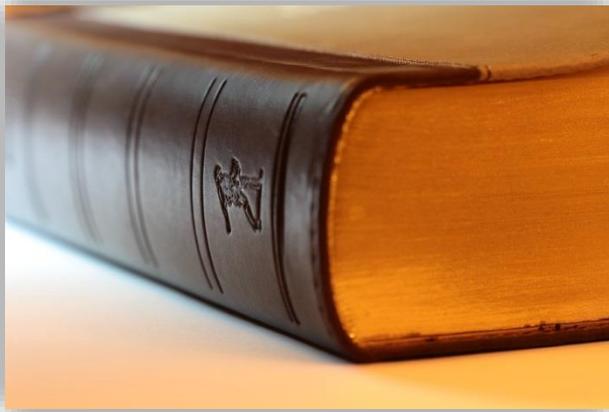
God reveals Himself in nature.

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. (Psalm 19:1) The universe itself, in its size and order, its diversity and beauty, reveals a lot about God who has made it. In the Creation of our Earth, God shows His great power, His unfathomable wisdom, and His outstanding creativity. ***For his invisible attributes, namely his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.*** (Romans 1:20)

God speaks to people.

Communication flows through words. God also has spoken to a few people. ***For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*** (2. Peter 1:21) In no other literary work do we find such an abundance of clear and detailed prophecies, which later were exactly fulfilled.

Just think about the birthplace of Jesus Christ or the details of His subsequent crucifixion. This can't be coincidence. God pursues a goal throughout the entire Bible. ***All Scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, for correction, and for training in righteousness. It helps us to get back to the right path and to live as it pleases God.*** (2. Timothy 3:16)



No other book has ever contained such life transforming power.

The special feature of the Bible can be seen by the impact it has in people's lives. ***And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what is really is, the word of God which is at work in you believers.*** (1. Thessalonians 2:13)

Millions of people over thousands of years have witnessed from their personal experience: ***The law of the Lord is perfect, it revives the soul and gives joy to the heart. On his commandments can be relied upon.*** (Psalm 19:7)

Whoever wants to know how God is, has to read His Word, the Bible. It is here that He allows Himself to be discovered and shares with us exactly what He expects from us.

3. Invisible – and yet discernible?

God, our creator, introduces himself

Everyone of us has his own idea of God. Some of us picture Him as a good-natured Grandfather with a long white beard, who will gladly overlook our faults. Others view Him as the big heavenly policeman. Still others think that He is a supernatural „Something“, that is unfathomable. Ultimately, only He can make right statements about himself. The following examples describe, what God Himself has revealed about His character in the Bible.

God is incredibly great.

There are many things about God which we are incapable of comprehending. **We cannot understand the great things he does, and to his miracles there is no end.** (Job 5:9) God is out of our reach. Human thought and reason cannot bridge that gap. But that shouldn't surprise us, because, if we could fully grasp God, He wouldn't be God. **God's power is so great that we cannot come near him; he is righteous and just in his dealings with us. No wonder, then, that everyone is awed by him, and that he ignores those who claim to be wise.** (Job 37:23-24)



God is a person.

God is not a thing, a force or an idea. In the way He thinks, feels, wishes, and acts, He reveals Himself as a living person. But He is not simply “the guy up there”, or the “good Lord” or a kind of “Superman”. **But the Lord is the true God; he is the living God and the everlasting King.** (Jeremiah 10:10)

God is eternal.

God has no beginning and no end. Expressed with words from the Bible: **Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.** (Psalm 90:2) There has never been nor will there be a time in which God does not exist. God introduces himself: **“I am the first and the last,” says the Lord God Almighty, “who is, who was, and who is to come.”** (Revelation 1:8) And He will remain the same forever. **Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.** (Hebrews 13:8) God is still the same how He was, and how He always will be.

God is independent.

Every creature is dependent on other creatures, certain circumstances and ultimately on God – but God is totally independent of His creation. **Nor does he need anything that we can supply by working for him, since it is he himself who gives life and breath and everything else to everyone.** (Acts 17:25)



God is just.

The Bible says: ***For the Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him.*** (Isaiah 30:18) But God is not only our Creator and Sustainer, He is also our judge. ***Righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.*** (Psalm 97:2) He rewards and punishes in time and eternity with a perfect and irrevocable justice.

God is holy.

Who is like you, wonderful in holiness? Who can work miracles and mighty acts like yours? (Genesis 15:11) God's holiness is incomparable. ***There is none holy like the Lord: for there is none besides you; there is no solid rock like our God.*** (1. Samuel 2:2) He is completely without flaw and weakness. And this holy God demands of us all that we should be holy. This demand is written in His book, the Bible. ***You shall be holy, for I am holy.*** (1. Peter 1:16)

God is omniscient.

His knowledge is complete. ***There is nothing that can be hid from God; everything in all creation is exposed and lies open before his eyes. And it is to him that we must all give an account of ourselves.*** (Hebrews 4:13) God knows everything about our past, present and future; He knows even all our thoughts, words and deeds. His wisdom is complete and beyond our understanding. ***How great are God's riches! How deep are his wisdom and knowledge! Who can explain his decisions? Who can understand his ways?*** (Romans 11:33)

God is almighty.

I am the Lord, the God of all people. Nothing is too difficult for me. (Jeremiah 32:27) However, that doesn't mean that God can do anything. For example He cannot lie or become unfaithful to Himself. He cannot make mistakes. He cannot sin or deny himself. But God can do anything He wants in accordance with His divine nature.

God is love.

This is certainly the most important and most beautiful. ***For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life.*** (John 3:16) His Son, who is one with the Father, gives His life for us humans. To lay down one's life for somebody else cannot be outdone. This is the ultimate expression of showing one's love, and this not theoretically, but practically.

4. Our greatest purpose

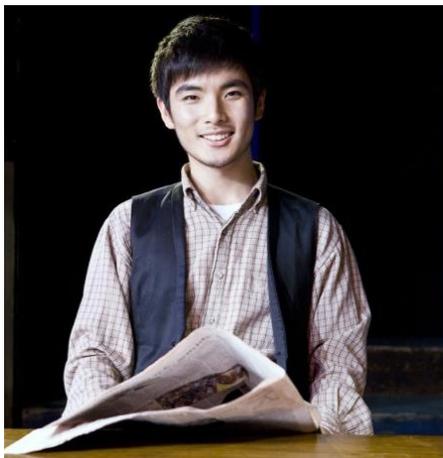
People are wonderfully made

We as people are longing to find the meaning of life.

Why do we exist? Where do we come from? Is there even a purpose to our lives? First we must realize that we do not exist for the sake of existing. We are more than a random accumulation of atoms in a convenient compilation. The Bible tells us that we have been created by a wise and holy God as something special. ***So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*** (Gen. 1:27) Compared to the size of the sun, moon and stars we might feel tiny, but God has given us a unique and extraordinary position.

We are more than just a highly developed animal.

We can get a glimpse of this fact when we look at man's free will to live life according to our own designs; ***And God blessed them. And God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.*** (Gen. 1:28) We are created to be masters of God's earth. We have been granted responsibility for our own lives and the lives of all other living creatures on this earth.



We received a special dignity.

Created "in the image of God" doesn't mean that we are miniature version of God with all of His attributes only in a limited amount. It rather means that we are destined for fellowship and relationship with God. We are able, for example, to pray and fellowship with God. When people were first created they lived in a perfect environment, in a loving relationship with each other, and in perfect harmony with God.

In those days there was no “Identity-crisis”.

Not only we humans found fulfillment and complete satisfaction in our existence in the world - even God was satisfied with us! We know this, because the Bible tells us that everything was perfect when Creation was accomplished with the creation of Man . ***And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.*** (Gen. 1:31)
As long as we kept God’s commands in paradise, we lived happily, and in perfect harmony with God. Back then, people knew who they were and what their purpose in this world was.

Today’s situation is totally different. But why is it different? What has happened?

5. The greatest disaster in the history of the world Mankind rebels against God

What is the greatest disaster mankind has ever experienced?

Many of the headlines in our newspapers, on radio or television remind us that the world is not in order. It is easy to complain about the violence and the injustice, the chaos and failure in our society; but before we judge others, we should first inform ourselves about the real causes. The Bible says: ***Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.*** (Romans 5:12)



God gave us just one single limitation.

Our ancestors, the first people (Adam and Eve), lived in great freedom. ***And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."*** (Genesis 2:16-17)

Thus God wanted to see if we were worthy of the confidence he placed in

us, as well as the freedom he granted us. But the Devil tempted Eve into mistrusting the words of God and acting against them. ***When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.*** (Genesis 3:6)

“Sin entered the world” at this moment.

Through deliberate disobedience, Adam and Eve were separated from God. Suddenly there was a wall between God and Man. Instead of loving God, they were afraid of Him. ***Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden.*** (Genesis 3:8) Instead of being safe, satisfied, and happy, they were now feeling guilty and frightened as a result of their sin.

The consequence was separation.

God said that we would lose access to Him as soon as we were disobedient and that's exactly what happened. In this way we were separated from God at this awful moment and are therefore spiritually dead. Since then, physical death has also been the final result. But that's not all: Adam and Eve passed on their broken and sinful nature to us. And so it is up to the present day. ***Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned*** (Romans 5:12) Pay particular attention to the key word “all”. We are all included. We are sinners and we will die. ***If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.*** (1. John 1:8) Our lives prove this and the Bible confirms it.

So, do we live in a manner pleasing to God?

Are you always honest, loving, and selfless – therefore totally sinless? God knows the answers to these questions – and you, if you are honest, do too. ***For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*** (Romans 3:23) Everyone is a sinner - from birth on, by nature, through our own decisions and our own actions. You also should face up to this fact and its consequences.

6. Hopelessly at the end Mankind is enslaved by sin

Lost without remedy.

When a sickness is diagnosed, we immediately ask the question: “Is it serious?” Even more so we have to ask that question concerning our “spiritual sickness – sin”. We easily admit that we are “sinners” because we don't really know what it means. We think in terms of the general imperfection of human nature, or we hide behind the sentence: “Everybody does it!” But with these explanations we in fact avoid the real question: How bad is our state actually? The Bible gives us a clear answer.



The Bible says that we are wicked through and through.

This doesn't mean that we couldn't do anything good. But the Bible states that sin has infiltrated every aspect of our human nature – even our thinking, our feeling, our desire, our conscience, our mind, and our imagination. ***The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?*** (Jeremiah 17:9) The main problem is not what we have done in a particular situation and what could perhaps even

excuse us. The problem is what we are. We humans sin again and again, because we are tempted by our own nature. ***For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness.*** (Mark 7:21-22)

In God's eyes every sin is severe.

It is remarkable that in this Bible verse thoughts, words and deeds from all areas of life are listed. Sometimes we limit our view of sin on crimes like murder or robbery. But the Bible doesn't give us the right to such a limited understanding of sin. Everything that doesn't measure up to God's standard is sin. Everything imperfect – what we say, do or think, is sin. Be honest: ***Who can say, "I have made my heart pure; I am clean from my sin"?*** (Proverbs 20:9) Can you?

Sin is rebellion against God's authority and his laws.

Everyone who sins, also practices lawlessness; to sin means: to disobey God's commandments. (1. John 3:4) No law forces us to lie, to deceive, to have impure thoughts, or to sin in any other way. You decide to do these things for yourself. When we step over God's good orders, and thus disobey God deliberately, this is severe, because God cannot let us get away with it. ***God is a righteous judge.*** (Psalm 7:11) God will never condone sin. We can be sure that not a single sin won't get punished. To some extent God's punishment for our sins reaches us in this life. But the final punishment will take place after death on Judgement Day. ***So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.*** (Romans 14:12)

7. Our future without God

Man steers towards eternal damnation

We all have the most diverse ideas of what happens when we die. Some believe that everything is over then, others think that we will all go to heaven. Again, others believe in a place where the souls of sinners are being purified for heaven. However, none of this can be found in the Bible.

God's statements are completely different and clear.

And just as it is appointed for man to die once and after that comes judgement.

(Hebrews 9:27) Whosoever is in the right relationship with God, will be accepted into heaven to spend eternity in God's glorious presence. For all the others, there is a different eternal abode. ***They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might.*** *(2. Thessalonians 1:9)*
The Bible usually uses the word "hell" for this state.



Hell is real.

It is not something invented by the Church. The Bible talks even more about hell than about heaven. Jesus once asked the religious people of his time: ***How will you escape God's Judgement and being sentenced to hell?*** *(Matthew 23:33)* This was not just a rhetorical question. Jesus talked about this in another part of Scripture: ***But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell.*** *(Luke 12:5)*

Hell is a horrible place.

Many images are used to describe this place - images of a place filled with suffering. They speak of darkness and fire. ***...and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*** *(Matthew 13:42)* Those are harsh words, but nevertheless true. The people who are there, are under the curse of God. There is nothing good to be found there – not the slightest help or relief.

Hell is a final place.

There is no exit or return from hell, no escape. This means that man can not go from hell to heaven after death: ***And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.*** (Luke 16:26) The horror, the loneliness, and the anguish of hell are not for man`s reeducation, but for eternal punishment.

Hell is a self-imposed place.

But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgement will be revealed. He will render to each one according to his works. (Romans 2:5-6) Accordingly, there are only volunteers in heaven and hell. The wrath of God will hit those who rejected Jesus Christ in their lifetime and lived in injustice. They refused God's saving offer. They wanted to live without God her on earth; He accepts their decision. Injustice is therefore something God can not be accused of.

Scaremongering or love?

Christians are often accused of scaremongering for using words like „sin“ or „hell“. What should God do? Should He let mankind run headlong to it's doom? Is that love? The Bible tells us God's motive: ***Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent.*** (Revelation 3:19)

In the face of hell you should carefully think about your life.

8. Being religious is not enough ***Jesus Christ is the key***

We are "incurably religious".

In all cultures there are hundreds of attempts to satisfy our desire to find peace with God. Our search in the various religions of the world focuses on the sun, the moon and the stars; on the earth, fire and water, on statues of wood, stone, and metal, on fish, birds and other animals. People worship countless gods and spirits. Even in our seemingly enlightened world, money and romance, for example, quickly become idols. ***But when I look, there is no one; among these gods there is no counselor who, when I ask, gives an answer. Behold, they are all a delusion; their works are nothing; their metal images are empty wind.*** (Isaiah 41,28-29)



Religiosity can't blot out sin.

Religious communities have the aim of helping people to get right with God. But where they demand our own efforts for our salvation, this is always in vain. This is so, because our best religiosity is imperfect and insufficient before God. God demands perfection. Through human and religious efforts or experiences like baptism, communion, confirmation, visiting church services, prayers, acts requiring energy and time, reading the Bible or anything else, will not a single sin will be blotted out.

Good deeds can't make up for bad ones.

If you want to find peace with God, you need trust in Jesus' offer. ***For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.*** (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Religiosity cannot change the nature of Man.

Our behavior is not the actual problem, it is only a symptom. If we go to church or attend other religious events, we may feel good. However, that doesn't change our essential state of being. ***Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? There is not one.*** (Job 14:4)

Excellent - but not enough.

Visiting a church service or reading the Bible isn't wrong. It is good to go to church, to read the Bible and to pray. God has even told us to do so. But nevertheless, we won't become Christians through these efforts.

9. God reaches out to us

Jesus Christ demonstrates his uniqueness

If our own deeds can't save us, how could it actually work that we go to heaven? Do we have a chance? To answer this question it's absolutely crucial to understand what happened at Jesus' death, and what His death can mean for us.



Because of His justice and holiness, God has to punish our sins.

But the Bible also tells us: ***God is love.*** (1. John 4:8) God indeed hates sin, but He loves the sinners and gladly wants to forgive them. How can we receive forgiveness, if God's justice demands our spiritual and physical death? Only God himself could solve this problem – and He did that in the person of Jesus Christ. ***God, the Father, has sent his Son into the world to be our Savior.*** (1. John 4:14)

The Son of God became man.

Though Jesus was completely human, He kept his divinity. Only in Christ God can be found: ***For in him the whole fullness of the Deity dwells bodily.*** (Colossians 2:9) Jesus Christ is unique. The Bible declares this fact over and over again.

His birth was unique.

Jesus didn't have a human father. Through the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus was conceived in the body of a virgin. ***The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy-the Son of God.*** (Luke 1:35)

His words were unique.

... and they were very astonished at His teachings, for His words possessed devine authority. (Luke 4:32)

His miracles were unique.

When Jesus was asked what his legitimation was, He referred to His miracles. ***The blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, and dead are raised.*** (Matthew 11:5)

His whole life was unique.

Jesus Christ had to fight the same temptations as we do but, in contrast to us, he never sinned. (Hebrews 4:15) This Bible verse confirms that Jesus, as a human being, obeyed God's law in every respect. Therefore, He did not have to suffer the punishment for sin, which is death. However, He was arrested based on false accusations.

He was condemned as the result of false testimony, and He was finally crucified on a hill outside of Jerusalem. But His death was not a “tragic accident“. ***This Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God...*** (Acts 2:23) The Father sent His Son to take the punishment for sin upon Himself, and Jesus voluntarily obeyed. ***He came to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.*** (Matthew 20:28)

His death was as unique and as meaningful as his life.

The means of redemption through Jesus Christ can be summarized in the following Bible verse: ***For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*** (John 3:16)

By the way: you can read the reports about Jesus Christ in the Bible, in the first four books of the New Testament.

10. God’s love becomes visible ***Jesus Christ gives everything for us***

There would be a lot to tell about Jesus - His astounding miracles, His exemplary life. But at the end all statements of the Biblical accounts culminate in Jesus’ death and his resurrection. What is so special about these events, that the Bible would place so much emphasis on them? The answer is: He died in our place, laden with our sins, and for our salvation.



Jesus died in our place.

Before God’s holiness, sinners are guilty and hopelessly lost. God demands a just punishment for every sin. But instead of condemning us, we read in the Bible of a brilliant solution: ***...but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*** (Romans 5:8) This was a wonderful rescue mission which God’s son was willing to accept. He took our place and paid the price for us sinners. ***For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God...*** (1. Peter 3:18)

This demonstrates God’s love for us.

Jesus died bearing our sin.

This demonstrates the holiness of God. At the death of Christ nothing was „posed“. The punishment for sin had to be paid completely. Jesus suffered the most agonizing pain. When he was hanging on the cross he cried out: **“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”** (Mark 15:34) In this tormenting moment, God the Father, turned away from His beloved Son. He had to suffer the punishment of separation from God, the Father. When Jesus died in our place, He was made responsible for our sins as if He Himself had committed them all.

Jesus died for our salvation.

By raising Jesus Christ from the dead on the third day, God declared, that He accepts Christ’s sacrifice as full compensation for our sins. **And he was raised from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit , and so God confirmed him as his Son.** (Romans 1:4) This became the foundation of full forgiveness for everyone, who would otherwise be condemned to hell eternally.

But how does this concern you? How can you get right with God? How does Christ become your personal savior?

11. My decision ***Finding salvation***

Do you want to be saved?

If God has shown you what you are lacking and if you want to be saved, **then you have to turn to God and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as your savior.** (Acts 20:21)

Turn to God.

This means to have a completely new outlook on life. For this, a fundamental change in your attitude is necessary. You must admit that you are a sinner who is in rebellion against a holy and loving God. A change of heart is necessary – a true sadness and shame over the reprehensibility of your sin. Then you have to be willing to give up sin in order to give your life a new direction. God invites people to turn to Him. The Bible says: **that they should repent and turn to God. The way that they live must prove that they have changed.** (Acts 26:20) It’s all about this.



Conversion means: to take a new direction.

Wholeheartedly strive to live as it pleases God. This means to confess from all your heart: **“You are Christ, the Saviour sent from God, the Son of the living God.”** (Matthew 16:16) The point is to completely trust in Jesus Christ, who has laid down his life for you.

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.
(Romans 5:6)

Diversionsary tactic.

Your pride and your sinful nature certainly want to convince you that you should just rely on your own honesty and religiosity. But you have no choice. You must not rely on anything or anybody other than Christ, who is the only one who can save you.

Consequently, he (Christ) is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

(Hebrews 7:25)

Turning will into action.

If God has shown you what you lack, and has given you the desire to turn to Christ – do it now! But how does that work? Confess to God that you are a guilty and hopelessly lost sinner and ask Christ with all your heart to save you. Pray that He becomes the Lord in your life as He deserves it, and that He helps you to quit sinning, and to live for Him.

A sincere prayer could sound like this:

God, I recognize that I have lived without you and that I am separated from you through sin. Please forgive my sins. Thank you that Jesus Christ died in my place and rose from the dead. I want you to be the center of my life from now on. Thank you for your love for me. Amen.

God stands by his promises.

If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9) Whoever genuinely trusts in Christ as his Savior and accepts him as Lord may consider this promise applied to him.

12. Enjoying the new life

First steps in your life as a Christian

If you put your trust in Jesus Christ, you became a new person in the sight of God. This event can be compared to a new birth. This explains, for example, that you now have a completely different relationship with God. The Bible calls this „being justified“.

You now have peace with God.

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:1)

Through Christ the problem of your guilt is settled.

All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sin through his name. (Acts 10:43)



You now belong to the family of God.

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

Your eternity is secured.

Therefore, there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1)

God Himself stepped into your life in the person of the Holy Spirit.

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 1:13) Is that not marvellous? Now you can grow in your new spiritual life. The following four points are especially important during this process.

Prayer – Speak with God everyday.

God is glad whenever you speak with Him, because, as your friend and father, He is interested in every little detail of your life. You should talk with Him about your family, your work, your joys, your worries and your desires. Thank Him for His graciousness. Ask for forgiveness if you have failed again. God always has an open ear for you. He wants to forgive you and always wants to stand by your side. You can ask Him every day for forgiveness. Even God's children are not perfect. ***If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all nrighteousness.*** (1. John 1:9) Your prayer doesn't have to take place at a special time or a special location – although both can help you to come to rest before God and to listen to His voice. In prayer God wants to bless you – therefore, pray regularly.

The Bible – Make the Word of God the foundation of your life.

God wants to tell you what He has on His mind. He can do that in different ways. You can hear His voice especially by reading the Bible. By this means, you will come to a better understanding what God is like and what His good plan for your life looks like. ***And find out what pleases the Lord.*** (Ephesians 5:10) It would be preferable for you to start with one of the Gospels in the New Testament, The Gospel of Luke, for instance. Then you can read the Epistle to the Romans, where the meaning and goal of our life is explained very vividly. The Holy Spirit Himself will guide you in reading the Word of God. You will experience, how you will gradually understand more and more.



Fellowship – Search for Christians who will support you in your life of faith.

It is God's wish that we do not walk through life as lone fighters, but rather meet other Christians and build loving relationships with each other. You can learn from each other, listen to God's Word together, accompany each other, and jointly carry the message of God's love to other

people. God's friends need each other. For this reason: You should join a Christian church and experience how much the fellowship with others will strenghten your faith. There you will gain joy from using the gifts and abilities, which God has given you, for others. God takes this matter very seriously. He even pronounced a warning about it. ***Do not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encourage one another - and all the more as you see the Day approaching, when the Lord comes.*** (Hebrews 10:25)

Service – Show your transformed life as a Christian.

And now, what does the Lord your God ask of you but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul.

(Deuteronomy 10:12) To live a life that is pleasing to God should be your highest goal.

Furthermore, you should be interested in dedicating your special skills to God's work.

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. *(Ephesians 2:10)*

Be willing to tell other people what the Lord has done for you. That is not only a duty for us who trust in Him, but also a joyful experience.

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. *(1. Peter 2:9)*

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