

How To Become a Christian

by: Billy Graham

The central theme of the New Testament is God's love for you as an individual. This love was revealed through Christ's coming into the world and living among men, his dying on the cross, and rising from the dead. Through Christ's death God offers you forgiveness for your sins, and through his resurrection the promise of everlasting life. Christ died and rose again for the whole world, but for you to become a Christian is an individual matter. The only way to establish a personal relationship with Jesus Christ is to accept his offer of forgiveness and everlasting life. The following Scripture passages show God's part and yours. Read each verse and believe it, for it is the Word of God speaking to you.

God's Love Is Revealed

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). God loves you and all of mankind. He wants to bless your life and make it full and complete. He offers you not only an abundant life here and now, but a life which is eternal – his very own life.

Man Is Sinful

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). The saying, "Well, we are just human – nobody is perfect," is Biblically sound. When we acknowledge this truth, we can see our separation from God, for he is holy.

Sin Has a Penalty

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23). To continue in sin will result in spiritual death, which is separation from God forever. The alternative is to personally receive God's free gift, which is pardon for sin and provision of life everlasting.

Christ Paid the Penalty

"But God demonstrates his own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). You may think you must lead a "good" life and do charitable acts before God will love you. This is not so. God loves you even in your sin. He sent Christ to die in your place and to pay the penalty for you sin so that

you can be reconciled to him.

Salvation Is a Free Gift

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9). Grace means undeserved favor. God graciously offers to you what you could never do for yourself. God's gift to you is free. You do not, and cannot, work for a gift. All you need to do is receive it. Believe with all your heart that Jesus Christ died for you to provide deliverance from your sins.

We Must Receive Christ

"But as many as received (Christ), to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name" (John 1:12). When you receive Christ – when you accept what he has done for you – you become a child of God. Picture, if you will, Jesus Christ standing at the door of your life. Invite him in. He is waiting to be received into your life.

Receive Christ Now

You can invite Jesus Christ into your life right now by praying to God something like the following: **Dear Lord, I know that I am a sinner and that I need your forgiveness. I believe that Christ died in my place to pay the penalty for my sin and that he rose from the dead. I now invite Jesus Christ to come into my life as my Savior. Thank you for making me your child. Help me learn to please you in every part of my life.**

Promises from the Word of God

"For whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13). If you just now received Christ by calling upon the name of the Lord in prayer, the following took place: your sins were forgiven (Colossians 1:14); you became a child of God (John 1:12); you were made heir to all of God's blessings (Romans 8:16-17); you now possess everlasting life (1 John 5:12-13).

You became a Christian the moment that you received Christ. Don't trust your feelings, for they will change; but take God at his Word and believe his promises. Review the above passages whenever doubts arise. You should be able to say with assurance, "I have received Christ. On the authority of God's Word, I have eternal life." May God grant you *"all joy and peace in believing"* (Romans 15:13).