

Knowing God
personally

GOD LOVES YOU

AND WANTS YOU TO KNOW HIM

We live in a world where many are pessimistic about the future. The media hype has done little to persuade us that life will be better in the third millennium. The problems of crime, violence, economic uncertainty and human suffering show little sign of going away. Against this background, Jesus Christ offers real hope. He highlights our basic need to find peace with God. He then makes such reconciliation possible

THE FOLLOWING PAGES EXPLAIN HOW

HOW CAN YOU KNOW GOD LOVES YOU?

'God loved the people of this world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who has faith in him will have eternal life and never really die.' *John 3:16*

WHAT IS ETERNAL LIFE?

'Eternal life is to know you, the only true God, and to know Jesus Christ, the one you sent.' *John 17:3*

Why is it that most people do not know God in this way?

WE CHOOSE TO GO OUR OWN WAY,

CUTTING OURSELVES OFF FROM GOD

WE ARE EACH RESPONSIBLE

We prefer to go our own way instead of God's; we may openly disobey God who made us, or simply ignore him. It's this self-centred attitude that the Bible calls 'sin'.

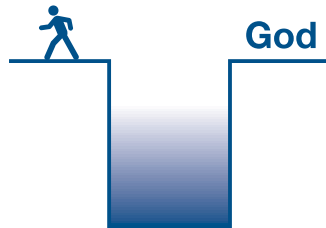
WE ARE ALL THE SAME

'All of us have sinned and fallen short of God's glory.'
Romans 3:23

WE EACH SUFFER THE EFFECTS

'That way of living leads to certain spiritual death.'
Romans 8:13

God is perfect, we are sinful, so there is a great gap between us. We may try to feel better through work, relationships, sport or religion. But all our attempts fail, because we have ignored the real problem - turning our back on God.



The third point gives us the only answer to this problem...

BY GIVING HIS LIFE FOR US, JESUS CHRIST OPENED

UP THE ONLY WAY TO FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD

JESUS IS UNIQUE

'I am the way, the truth and the life!' Jesus answered. 'Without me, no-one can go to the Father.' *John 14:6*

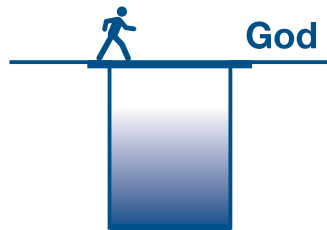
JESUS HAS THE POWER TO PUT THINGS RIGHT

'While we were his enemies, Christ reconciled us to God by dying for us.' *Colossians 1:21,22*

JESUS HAS POWER OVER DEATH

'For forty days after Jesus had suffered and died, he proved in many ways that he had been raised from death. He appeared to his apostles and spoke to them about God's kingdom.' *Acts 1:3*

Jesus took the consequences of our self-centredness by giving up his life on the cross. He proved he had broken sin's destructive power by rising from the dead. Jesus offers us freedom from guilt and a bridge back to God.



It's not enough just to know all this...

WE NEED TO ACCEPT JESUS CHRIST, SO WE CAN

KNOW GOD'S FORGIVENESS AND FRIENDSHIP

WE NEED TO ACCEPT JESUS CHRIST

'Some people accepted him and put their faith in him. So he gave them the right to be the children of God' *John 1:12*

ACCEPTING JESUS CHRIST INVOLVES:

- 1 Agreeing with God that we are to blame for turning our back on him
- 2 Trusting God to forgive us completely because Jesus has paid the price for our self-centredness
- 3 Choosing to follow Jesus

JESUS GIVES THIS PICTURE

'Listen! I am standing and knocking at your door. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and we will eat together.' *Revelation 3:20*

It's not enough just to know or feel that these things are true. We have a choice to make...

These illustrations describe two kinds of people



Self-centred person

- Self in the driving seat
- Jesus Christ outside
- Interests centred on self, often resulting in discord and frustration



Christ-centred person

- Jesus Christ in the driving seat
- Self following Jesus Christ, drawing on his life and power
- Interests centred on Christ, resulting in growing harmony with God's purpose

*Which illustration better describes you?
Which illustration would you like to describe you?*

TO ACCEPT JESUS CHRIST, YOU MUST PUT YOUR LIFE IN HIS HANDS. GOD IS NOT SO CONCERNED WITH YOUR WORDS AS HE IS WITH YOUR ATTITUDE. HERE IS SOMETHING YOU COULD SAY TO HIM:

'Lord Jesus, I am sorry that I have been going my own way. Thank you for paying the price of my self-centredness by dying on the cross. Please come and take first place in my life. Make me the kind of person you want me to be.'

COULD YOU SAY THIS TO GOD AND MEAN IT?

*Why not say this to God now?
Jesus Christ will come into your life as he promised*

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU PUT

YOUR TRUST IN JESUS CHRIST?

IF YOU HAVE INVITED JESUS CHRIST INTO YOUR LIFE, MANY THINGS HAVE HAPPENED, INCLUDING:

- 1 Jesus Christ has come into your life by his spirit and he will never leave you *Revelation 3:20; Hebrews 13:5*
- 2 You have been forgiven completely *Colossians 2:14*
- 3 You have a new power in your life, enabling you to change *Colossians 2:15*
- 4 You can begin to experience life with God as he intended *John 17:3; John 10:10*

HOW CAN YOU BE SURE

ALL THIS HAS REALLY HAPPENED?

YOU CAN KNOW THAT JESUS CHRIST IS IN YOUR LIFE BECAUSE GOD HAS PROMISED AND HE CAN BE TRUSTED

'God has said that he gave us eternal life and that this life comes to us from his Son. And so, if we have God's Son, we have his life. But if we don't have the Son, we don't have this life. All of you have faith in the Son of God and I have written to let you know that you have eternal life.' *1 John 5:11-13*

'Thank God often that Jesus Christ is in your life and that he will never leave you.' *Romans 8:38,39*

You can know that the spirit of Christ lives in you and that you have eternal life from the moment you invited Christ into your life, because this is what he has promised.

WHAT ABOUT FEELINGS?

Do not depend on how you feel

We can always rely on God and his promises in the Bible. But we cannot always rely on our feelings. Because of this, the Christian lives by trusting God and what he has said through the Bible, rather than by trusting feelings, which may come and go.



It would be impossible for the guard's van to pull the train. In the same way, it is important to rely on God and what he has said in the Bible, and not be pushed around by our feelings. Just as the coal needs to be put into the engine from the coal truck in order for the train to run, so we need to put our trust in God's word.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

OUR FAITH IN GOD GROWS AS WE TRUST GOD WITH EVERY DETAIL OF OUR LIVES. YOU WILL FIND IT HELPFUL TO:

- **G**et to know God by reading the Bible *2 Timothy 3:14-17*
- **R**espond to God in prayer *Philippians 4:6*
- **O**bey God moment by moment *Luke 6:46-49*
- **W**alk in the power of the Holy Spirit *Colossians 2:6; Ephesians 3:14-21, 5:18*
- **T**ell others about Jesus Christ by life and words *Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Ephesians 4:1*
- **H**ave contact with other Christians *Hebrews 10:25; Acts 2:42-47*

Several coals burn brightly together; but put one aside and its fire goes out. In the same way, it is very hard to live the Christian life by yourself.

Go to a church where Jesus is worshipped and the Bible is taught, and join others who have come to know God personally and are growing in their relationship with him.



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Agape Ministries Ltd
Registered in England No. 949989
Registered office as above
Charity reg no. 258421

Agapé UK is a member of the Evangelical Alliance, the Evangelical
Missionary Alliance and part of Campus Crusade for Christ International

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02/2001 ISBN 0 948860 22 7