



Here is a prayer to help you make this first step.

Dear Father God,

I admit that I have done wrong, living independently of you and need your forgiveness. I believe that Jesus Christ died in my place paying the penalty for my wrongdoing. I choose right now to turn from my sin and accept Jesus as my personal saviour and Lord. I commit my life to you and ask you to help me become the person you want me to be. Thank you, Father God for loving me.

In Jesus' name

Amen



If you prayed that prayer then you are now a member of God's family; one of His precious children. You can know for sure that you are forgiven and loved by God, and that when this life is over you will be with Him forever in heaven.

We all need encouragement in our Christian life, so I recommend that you find other Christians and spend time with them. Joining a church and getting involved is a good way to do this. Also, praying and reading the Bible is important to help you

grow in your relationship with God. Praying is really just talking to God. Here are some recommended materials to help you in prayer and Bible reading.

www.bibleinoneyear.org

Lectio 365 – 24/7 Prayer International

If you would like to know more but aren't ready to take this step, then an **Alpha course** is a good way to explore the Christian faith. This course provides an opportunity for honest discussion about the basics of the faith in a non-threatening environment, with no obligation to make a decision. And it is free! www.hbt.org/alpha

I hope and pray that if you do not yet know Jesus you will make a decision today to follow Him. Do not delay. None of us know how much time we have left.

May God bless you.

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Why do we need Jesus?

What is your reaction to the good news of Jesus Christ? Indifference? Confusion? Ignorance? Hostility? Some may say, 'Well, if you believe it that's great for you... but it's not for me'.

In some respects this is true. We all have the freedom to choose. Yet on a spiritual level **to choose to follow Jesus is not just a nice option... it is of vast importance – the most significant choice you can ever make.**

Maybe this will be the first time you have ever heard the Christian message, or you have heard about it but never thought it could be relevant to you. I urge you to read on and seriously think about what this message is saying. It could be the only time you ever hear this and it may be that God is holding out this opportunity to you to embrace the truth of His love for you and your need of salvation.

Why is it so important?

I will attempt to explain the Christian message as simply as possible. From the outset I wish to make it clear that I believe the Bible to be the complete truth and inspired Word of God. . I have been a Christian- a follower of Jesus Christ - since the age of seven. Knowing Jesus as my Saviour is a fundamental part of my life and without my relationship with Him my life would be empty, dry and with no real purpose. It is entirely on the Bible that I base my explanation, together with my own personal experience of the Holy Spirit in my life.

God intended humans to live in close relationship with Him.

Firstly, God created the world (Genesis 1-3) and the pinnacle of His creation was humankind. He designed humans to live in abundance, peace and harmony and in close relationship with Him. When Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden, they walked and talked with God. They knew Him and enjoyed His company. They had everything they wanted or needed. This perfection was God's intention from the beginning.

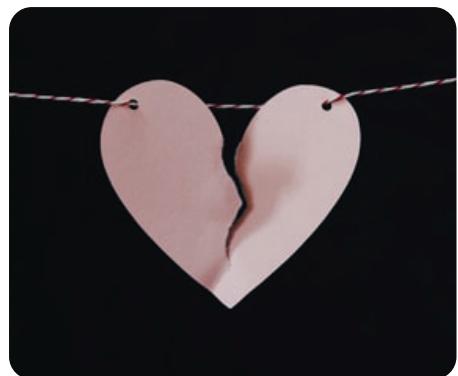




The relationship between God and humankind was broken

Then, this all changed when Satan, God's enemy, deceived Adam and Eve into doubting God's goodness, by implying that He was withholding something good from them. When they chose to believe this lie they chose independence from God and forfeited their perfect relationship with Him. Originally God had given them authority over the earth but they handed this authority over to Satan when they doubted and disobeyed God. At this point sin and evil entered the world, with strife, sickness, pain, hatred, fear and death. Sin now separated Man from God.

But God still loved humankind!



Even in their disobedience and independence, God loved them! It broke God's heart to see His beloved creation spoiled by evil and to see the beings He has lovingly created in His own image going their own way, lost and without Him.

God provides a rescue plan



Because of His great love, God did not want humans to be left in this hopeless state, so He provided a means to rescue us. He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross for us. Only a completely righteous person could pay the penalty for all our wrongdoing. Jesus, the only sinless person who ever lived, chose to come to earth and die as a sacrifice for the sins of every person who has ever lived or who will ever live. He provides the only way to be saved and for us to enter into a restored relationship with God.

Why do we need to be saved and from what?

1. Saved from our sin

God is holy and sin cannot stand in His presence. It is only through Jesus that we can be acceptable to God. Being a 'good person' is not enough and will not save us.

If we confess that we are sinners and repent (turn away from our sins) and receive God's forgiveness, then He will forgive us and we can start afresh.

2. Saved from hell

Hell is an unpopular concept which has been largely ignored or dismissed as being unacceptable, including in some sections of the Church. Surely a loving God would never send people to such a terrible place, for ever? But though many would dismiss hell as a myth, it is clear that many of us carry an awareness of it deep within us. Think about how often it is dropped into our everyday conversations – 'What the hell!' ...'all hell let loose'... just as 'Oh my God!' trips regularly off the tongues of many who say they don't believe in God!

In the Bible Jesus actually speaks about hell more than He speaks about heaven. Hell is described as a place of eternal torment. It is not reserved for particularly bad people, but for anyone who has chosen not to believe and accept the love and forgiveness of God through the sacrifice of Jesus. It is our default position, because this is the consequence of Adam and Eve's turning away from God. And it breaks God's heart. Imagine seeing your children walking straight into danger, ignoring your shouts of warning, and when you point out the escape route they say, 'no, there's no danger- you're crazy!' and continue on their way.



Faith in Jesus is the only way of escape

But there is a way of escape and that is Jesus. Jesus is the only way.

The way is open to everyone who believes. Thank God!

There is more!

Believing in Jesus and receiving forgiveness from sin are the first vital steps to life and freedom. Once we have received Jesus as Saviour we can then get to know Him and enjoy a close relationship with Him, as God intended from the beginning.

As we grow in this relationship we find we can experience peace, love and joy. Our attitudes to others changes as we respond to God's love for us. With God's help we can overcome fear, break with destructive habits and lifestyles and find strength to help us when we go through tough times. Our lives will have purpose and direction and we will receive help and encouragement in our daily lives. His Spirit in us is our comforter and helper.

So, what should I do now?

1. Accept you are a sinner – we all are, by nature.
2. Believe that Jesus is the Son of God and died as a sacrifice for your sin, and rose to life again, conquering sin, death and all the evil works of Satan.
3. Ask God to forgive you for all the bad stuff (sin) in your life.
4. Invite Jesus to come into your life by His Spirit. Ask Him to help you change direction and to live for Him from now on.