

purchased for us at a great price... the suffering and death of God's only son. You don't need to earn this from God. Serve Him because you love Him.

Also, do good to others: give to the poor visit the sick and imprisoned, feed the hungry; forgive those who have hurt you. Speaking of doing good to others... don't you think it would be good to tell others about Jesus? He wants to help them too.

What If There Was No Christ?

Throughout history, Christianity has been maligned for its hypocrisy and self-righteous, religious ways. It has been accused of bigotry, judgmentalism, tyranny, and of even starting wars. Guilty? Yes, unfortunately this is true... because the unparalleled Word of Life was entrusted to mere men. Nevertheless, what would the world be like if there was no Christ and there were no Christians? At the time of Jesus' birth, people were being brutalized in the Roman arenas, the rise of Christianity put a stop to that. In fact, as Christians went out into the world, these types of practices were abated. There was (and still is) no end to the list of cruelties and atrocities perpetrated upon the weak and helpless: Women were abused (cattle were treated better); children were discarded in garbage dumps, the sick were left to die. But Christians intervened! Unwanted babies were taken into homes and orphanages, the sick were cared for, and hospitals were established, the widow was sustained, and the uneducated have been taught. Christian generosity has feed millions of starving people all over the world and women have been given dignity and a sense of worth... not by feminists, but by Jesus Christ!

Every type of loving concern began to emerge as the message of Salvation transformed the hearts and minds of those who would believe. The words of Christ, "*You shall love your neighbor as yourself*" were engraved upon their hearts. Over the years charities were formed, disaster relief given, and slavery was abolished... all by Christians. Even the founding documents of some of the greatest nations on earth were based on biblical principles. And the just laws that govern these prosperous countries were based upon the Ten Commandments. Christian, you can be very proud of your heritage. The brothers and sisters that went before you have accomplished mighty things. By the grace of God, they have worked tirelessly to fulfill their scriptural mandate. Many have even paid the ultimate price.

In contrast, look at the "achievements" of the atheists: hundreds of millions of people have been tortured and murdered; hopes and aspirations were crushed under the iron fist of Communism and other totalitarian regimes. The track record of the nations influenced by Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam fare little better: poverty, sickness, and social injustice abound. Dear reader, make no mistake about it. This world would be much more bleak... a harder, more fearful place if Jesus had never come.

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The Way to God

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'" John 14:6

Many, of course, have heard of Jesus, and perhaps have had some religious affiliation. But we're not talking about religion here... this is something far greater! It is possible for you to have a personal relationship with the glorious Creator of the universe, the loving God who made us. This is the main purpose of your existence: to have a loving relationship with God. Have you ever considered these things? It seems as though we spend more time thinking about what car to buy than we do about eternity.

Most world religions believe if you are somehow good enough you can apprehend God and perhaps earn your way to heaven. Christianity is quite different. Knowing that man is unable to reach up to Him, God lovingly reaches down to mankind through His son, Jesus Christ. God has made a way through Jesus. There is no other way.

Some may say, "How can you be so narrow? There are many good moral teachings, and many good religions." This may be so, but the exclusive claims of Christ warrant serious investigation. Jesus

Christ did not portray Himself as merely a prophet or a good moral teacher. We must not succumb to this patronizing option. Jesus claimed to be the Son of God. This is recorded in the Book of Mark. *“Again the high priest asked Him, saying to Him, ‘Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?’ Jesus said, ‘I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.’”* Mark 14:61-62. (There are similar statements throughout the four gospels.) This is incredible. Do you see? Jesus cannot be considered to be only a good man, or a good teacher. He is either who He says He is, the Son of God who rose from the dead and ascended into Heaven, or He is a liar... or He is crazy. There is no middle ground. Do you believe that Jesus Christ is God? Billions of people throughout world history have believed this to be true. Countless numbers of lives have been changed as a result of faith in Jesus Christ.

Actually, the Christian gospel (Good News) is quite simple: Jesus Christ suffered and died on the cross for us, for the remission of our sins....and He rose from the dead. By believing in Him, trusting in Him, we have forgiveness of our sins and He gives us the gift of eternal life. We are made "right" with God not because of our good works, but by the precious blood of God's only Son. God loves us so much that He gave His only Son to suffer and die... so that we could be set free from sin and live with Him eternally. Would you like to know this loving God? I don't mean know about Him; I mean know Him personally. What prevents you from coming to Him now?

Come humbly to Him ... just as you are.

Admit that you have sinned and ask God to forgive you. Decide to turn away from sin. "Sins" are the things that you do or say that offend God and hurt other people....lying, stealing, sexual sins (sex outside of marriage, pornography, adultery homosexuality etc) unforgiveness of others, occult activities (astrology, tarot cards, consulting psychics, fortune tellers or mediums, witchcraft, etc.),drunkenness, anger, violence, judgmental and critical words or attitudes, rebellion, selfishness and pride. Make no mistake about it. God will judge sin. There is a hell. God is loving and merciful but He is also holy, righteous and just.

Thank God for sending His Son to die on the cross for you. He suffered and shed His blood so you wouldn't have to pay the penalty for your sins.

Believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead. Jesus is Alive!

Invite Jesus to come into your life. Surrender yourself to Him...He loves you. Let Him be your boss. He will never hurt you. Trust Him with everything..... all of your problems, your pain, your desires.

Will you do this now? If not now, when? Don't put Him off. Pray something like this:

Dear Father in heaven, forgive me for my sins. With your help, I choose to turn away from them. (At this point confess your sins one at a time.) Thank You for sending Jesus to suffer and die for me. I believe that He rose from the dead. I invite You, Jesus, to come into my life. I accept You as my Savior and Lord. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit. Help me to love and serve You with all of my heart.

Congratulations! If you prayed this prayer from your heart I can assure you that God heard you... and that your sins are forgiven. You are a child of God, and heir of eternal life. Welcome to the Kingdom of God!

It is important to develop your relationship with God by talking with Him each day. Although there are many nice "formal" prayers, I think that God is more pleased when we speak with Him like a friend...expressing the feelings of our heart.

Find a good church. There are good and not so good congregations in every Christian denomination. Look for a place where the people love God, love each other and love and reach out to the hurting people of the world. You want a church that believes the Bible is true and where the Holy Spirit is not quenched.

The Bible tells us that we should be baptized. We encourage you to speak to your church leaders about Baptism.

Read the Bible frequently...Learn what pleases and displeases God. Begin to see the scriptures as a love letter ... not only rules and laws. God loves you and makes rules that protect you.

Ask God to continually fill you with His Holy Spirit so that you will have the power to resist sin, help others and live a life pleasing to God. Ask Him for every spiritual gift that you need to live a godly, fruitful life.

The Bible clearly states that Salvation is a free gift. It is free to us because it was