

Getting Right with God

God wants you to be close to Him. And, God has the power to transform your life and give you an unbelievable lasting peace. Nothing else in this world will be able to fill the longings of your soul; ONLY God can give you what you need.

Yet, we humans are sinners, and every one of us has done wrong things – or sinned. It is sin that ruins and destroys lives. Every time we sin, we get hurt, others get hurt, and the worst part is that we break faith with God. That's why every human ends up separated from God and without the power to remedy the situation. God knew we humans were helpless in our sinful state, and so, He Himself made a way for us to get right with Him. God's way is Jesus and Jesus alone. As God in human form, Jesus came to earth to die the death that we sinful humans should have died. Jesus' life as a human and his subsequent unjust death on a cruel cross was an extreme act of God's love! And best of all, Jesus won victory over sin and over death when He rose back to life and then back to God. Anyone who accepts and understands God's love shown in Jesus has the opportunity to get into a right and healthy relationship with God simply by following Jesus as their own personal leader (or Lord). Getting right with God in this way is what we call salvation.

How to Get Right with God

Bow your head and pour out your heart to God. Your prayer should be in your own words but needs to include these three ideas:

1. *Admit to yourself and to God that you are a sinner.* Tell God you are sorry and ask for His forgiveness. (Romans 3:23)
2. *Thank Jesus for His love* – for dying on the cross for your sins and for being raised in victory. (Romans 5:8, 8:1)
3. *Ask Jesus to take over your life.* Tell God you are willing to turn away from sinful things and that you want to start living to please Him. Ask for His Spirit to help you. (Acts 3:19, Ephesians 2:8, Matthew 7:21)

When you sincerely pray a prayer like this to God, at that moment you become a true Christian! You are saved and will forever be a different kind of person. Now you will live with God in your life. At times, you will stumble and fall, but God will always be waiting on you to trust Him again. And finally, as a true Christ-follower, you will live in heaven after your life on earth has ended. Have you prayed a prayer like this? If so, then congratulations, and welcome to the family of God!

First Steps after Getting Right with God

(Matthew 10:32-33; Acts 2:38, Hebrews 10:24-25)

1. *Get Baptized* – God established baptism as His way of showing allegiance to Jesus publicly.
2. *Tell your story of salvation* to everyone you can.
3. *Tell a pastor* and/or other trusted Christian leaders so they can help and guide you.
4. *Get involved in a local church.* The Bible calls the church Jesus' body. Though no church has perfect people, God established churches so that Christians could grow strong and serve together in His name. You need to be active in a church if you hope to be healthy as a Christian.

To Get the Most out of Your Life with Jesus

1. *Learn what God says in the Bible.* Almost everyone feels inadequate in their Bible knowledge. Don't be discouraged. Take advantage of every opportunity to learn what God says.
2. *Pray all kinds of prayers.* Pray prayers of thanksgiving, share your concerns, and learn to pray for other people and situations.
3. *Share your faith with others.* Surely if Jesus is making a difference in your life, others would benefit from knowing Him as well. So, be sure to share your faith with the people you know.
4. *Be an active participant in church.* Get to know people in your church, make friends with your fellow Christ-followers, and learn how to serve alongside of them. This is God's way of helping you and of using you for His big eternal purposes.
5. *Obey God.* To be a good follower of Jesus, you must learn to do what He wants. Disobeying God always causes unnecessary pain while obeying God, even when it involves something we dislike, always turns out for the best. God knows what He's doing; so, learn to trust Him!

Finally, don't let Satan drag you back down. God has a plan for your life. Consistently practice the five things above and you will be able to stay close to God!