

## HOW TO KNOW GOD'S LOVE

“There is a God in Heaven who loves you as you are and not as you should be.”

Yes...you are right...there is a God. You know that must be true. The heart of the human being longs for God, and logic demands divine existence.

While everyone believes God is...most sense separation from God. We know God must be holy and good. We see ourselves as unholy and not good. We conclude that God is angry with us and we cannot know Him.

Good News! God's Word tells us that He loves us as we are. That love will save us from our sin and make us what we should be as God's children.

Please start your journey to God and His love by simply turning the page.

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For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

John 3:16

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We hear Jesus say, "God so loved the world." God's love has no limitations. He loves "so." More than we can imagine. He loves everyone—not just some ones.

Romans 5:8 tells us that God loved us so that "when we were in our sin, Christ Jesus came to die for us."

Yes, God loves us, not because of who we are or what we do, but because He is love. Then, why is it that many do not know God and experience His love?

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For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23

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This verse tells us that all people have sinned. We have fallen short of God's intended purpose for us. God made us to know Him...to receive His love and to love Him in return.

For love to be love...for God to be God...and for humans to be humans...God gave us a choice. We can choose to love ourselves and turn to our selfish pursuits. That is sin. In our sin we cannot know God and His love.

The result of this sin is that we are lost...separated from God.

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For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23

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Wages are just payment...due reward... what one has coming because of labor. The just payment for our sin is death.

Death here means spiritual insensitivity. When we are still in our

sin, we have no life with God. We are alive physically but dead spiritually. If we continue in that condition, we will be separated from God for all eternity.

The wages of sin is death, but God's free gift is eternal life. While wages are earned, a gift is offered...no strings attached. God says He will give us eternal life—life with Him—in the place of sin's payment of death.

How can God remain true to His holiness and forgive unholy sinners? Because Jesus, His Son, has paid the price for sin by His death on the cross.

Second Corinthians 5:21 says, "He who knew no sin became sin for us, that we may be made the righteousness of God through Him."

Jesus arose from the grave to conquer sin and death for all who receive Him as God's free gift.

How can you receive God's free gift of love and life?

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If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.  
Romans 10:9-10

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A person receives God's free gift of love and life by placing faith in Jesus Christ. To believe is simply to take God at His word. With our heart (whole being) we believe that Jesus is God's Son who died for our sin on the cross and arose from the grave to live in us as Savior and Lord.

To believe in Jesus will result in confessing that faith with one's mouth.

Do you acknowledge that you are a sinner?

Do you believe by faith that Jesus, God's Son, died for your sin on the cross?

Will you now confess Him as your Savior and Lord?

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For "whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Romans 10:13

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This verse says that any person who will call upon the name of Jesus, the Lord, shall be saved.

To call means simply to ask in prayer. The verse does not require you to know more...do better...clean up your life...or in any way try to add to what Jesus has done for us.

Will you now call upon Jesus to save you from your sin so that you can know God's love and forgiveness?

Pray like this: "Dear God, I confess that I am a sinner, and I am sorry. I need a Savior. I know I cannot save myself. I believe by faith that Jesus, your Son, died on the cross to be my Savior. I believe He arose from the grave to live as my Lord. I turn from my sin. I ask You, Lord Jesus, to forgive my sin, come into my heart. I trust you

as my Savior and receive you as my Lord. Thank you, Jesus, for saving me.”

When anyone calls on the Lord in this manner, that one is saved according to God’s Word. If you pray a prayer of repentance and faith, you are saved. You have God’s word on it.

If you have prayed this prayer to receive Christ as your Lord and Savior, look at the next page to record your decision to follow Jesus.

# MY CONFESSION OF FAITH

Believing by faith that God loves me and sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die for my sin and arise from the grave to live in me,

I, \_\_\_\_\_,

do this day, \_\_\_\_\_,  
repent of my sin and accept Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior.

According to the promise of God in Romans 10:13, I have called upon His name and have His word for the assurance of my salvation.

Desiring to obey God's Word and confess Him as Lord (Romans 10:9-10), I now want to learn how I can share the love of God with others.

(Continue to the next page)



## HOW TO SHOW GOD'S LOVE

When you have come to know God's love by repenting of sin and receiving Jesus by faith, the next thing to do is to share that love with others. The joy of knowing that God loves people as we are and not as we ought to be is to be shared.

As seen in Romans 10:9, we are to confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord of our lives. Jesus told us to tell others of His love and salvation.

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Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.  
Matthew 10:32-33

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Jesus said the natural result of knowing that He confesses us before His Father is our confession to others of His love and forgiveness.

It is awesome to know that Jesus has entered the presence of God to present us as forgiven and worthy to be God's children. How can we ever stop praising Him and telling others of His love?

The ultimate profession of our faith is obedience to believer's baptism.

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Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Acts 2:38

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When Peter had preached at the Feast of Pentecost about Jesus' death for sin and resurrection from the grave, the people cried out, "What must we do?"

They were told to repent of sin and to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Regardless of their past religious experience or lack of it, all were to turn from sin and acknowledge Jesus through baptism because of the forgiveness of their sins.

Baptism is a picture witness of saving faith in Jesus. The dramatic testimony pictures your death to sin with Jesus and resurrection to new life in Him.

In the book of Acts we read of an Ethiopian official being baptized.

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But an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip saying, "Get up and go south to the road that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a desert road.) So he got up and went; and there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure; and he had come to Jerusalem to worship, and he was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go up and join this chariot." Philip ran up and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

And he said, "Well, how could I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. Now the passage of Scripture which he was reading was this:

"He was led as a sheep to slaughter; and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so He does not open His mouth. In humiliation His judgment was taken away; who will relate His generation? For His life is removed from the earth."

The eunuch answered Philip and said, "Please tell me, of whom does the prophet say this? Of himself or of someone else?" Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him. As they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look! Water!

What prevents me from being baptized?" [And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." ] And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch, and he baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch no longer saw him, but went on his way rejoicing. Acts 8:26-39

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The Ethiopian treasurer was told about Jesus by Philip. He saw his need to be saved and baptized. Philip baptized him in the water. He went on his way rejoicing.

Once you have received the saving love of God in Jesus, you too will rejoice to be baptized and show that love to others.

After we have been baptized to testify of our commitment to Jesus

Christ, our commission is to tell others so that they too may be saved and baptized.

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And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20

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The risen Lord Jesus met His disciples on a pre-appointed mountain. There He declared that all designated authority in Heaven and Earth was His. In that authority He gave to them and to us His one assignment. It is the commission of Christ to His followers to see that everyone has the opportunity to become His disciple.

The commission is to make disciples. That word means "a learner of" as well

as “a follower after.” No one can follow Jesus until hearing of the Good News of God’s love through Him. The believer is to tell everyone in his or her normal traffic pattern of life how to receive God’s love in Jesus. Our assignment is to make the others aware that God loves them as they are, and by receiving Jesus, they can be saved.

When people respond to the message and accept Jesus...they are then to be baptized as the testimony of that faith and salvation.

The saved, baptized believer is now ready to be trained as a disciple. That is the purpose of the Church. The Church was established by Jesus Christ to carry out this commission of making disciples, marking the believers in baptism, and maturing those disciples through training in the church. Through Bible study, prayer, and fellowship with others, the believer grows in Christ.

Every person who accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior is to be actively involved in a local congregation of believers assembling to worship, training to serve, and going out to share Jesus with others.

On the next page you will learn how you can grow in God's love by taking your place in His Church.



## HOW TO GROW IN GOD'S LOVE

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You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth. Acts 1:8

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The first assignment Jesus gave to the disciples after the statement of his purpose in Matthew 28:18-20 was to wait together for God's power to come upon them in the Person of the Holy Spirit. In that power they and all believers can carry out the work of the Church.

In Acts 2:1 we read that on the day of celebration of the Jewish Feast of Pentecost, the followers of Christ were assembled. The Scripture literally states, "They were all together together." They were together in spirit, mind and heart, and together in one place. Then the Holy Spirit came upon them. In His power they began to witness and preach. On that day three

thousand more people were saved and added to their number.

It is when God's people are together in heart, in purpose, in praise, and in assembly that we most often experience growth in His love and grace. Jesus established the Church for that purpose.

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Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. I also say to you that you are Peter, and

upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it."

Matthew 16:13-18

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At Caesarea Philippi, a place filled with various philosophies and teeming with religious expression, Jesus Christ asked His disciples what others were saying about Him. They answered by naming some of the prophets with whom others identified Him. Jesus then asked, "Who do you say I am?"

Simon Peter, speaking for the group, answered accurately, "You are the Christ... the Son...the living God." This confession acknowledged Jesus as Son of the living God. All the pagan gods had "no breath in them." Jesus noted that this confession could only come from the Father in Heaven.

Jesus then said, "You are Peter (*petros*, a small stone) and upon this rock (*petra*, a large ledge of rock) I will build My church." Jesus would not build His church on Peter or any other one person. The church is built on

Jesus Christ Himself as the chief Cornerstone (1 Peter 2:6-8). Individual believers are “living stones” chosen by God and equally placed into His spiritual house (1 Peter 2:4-5).

To His Church Jesus has given the “keys to the kingdom.” Through our witness and by our service we open the doors of kingdom life upon this earth. The promise of Christ is that the very gates of death and Hell cannot stand up against the mission of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Everyone who believes in and follows after Jesus is placed in the Church as the Body of Christ. Each one is then to find fellowship and ministry in a local body of believers.

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Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest

over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

Hebrews 10:19-25

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Because we have discovered and received God's love through Jesus Christ, we have entrance into the very presence of God through prayer. Jesus is our one great or High Priest who has made each believer acceptable to God through His sacrifice on the cross (v.19-20). Because of this, we can be certain

we are forgiven of our sin and invited to draw near to our loving Father for fellowship (v.21).

This fellowship with God puts us in relationship with other believers. The Church is the way our Lord Jesus has established for us to minister and be ministered unto in fellowship with others in His Body.

In the Church we express our consistent witness (v. 23). We are admonished to hold fast the confession of our hope or faith. This means we are to live in and share our hope in God's love and grace with others. Our witness stays strongest when we stand with others in sharing the Good News through the Church.

The Church is the place for compassionate watch-care (v. 24). In the Church we encourage one another to grow in our love relationship with God. We also stimulate one another to do the works of grace that God has planned to perform in us (Ephesians 2:10).

Corporate worship is the purpose of the Church. In Hebrews 10:25, we are taught that we are not to forsake assembling together. The word for "forsake" is the same word that Jesus used from the cross when He cried, "My God, why have you forsaken me?" It means to abandon. We are not to abandon the gathering of God's family, the Church. The best way for a believer in Jesus to grow in God's love and grace is through active participation in the Church.

The Church will encourage you. The Church will help you learn to pray and study the Scriptures. The Church enhances our witness. Determine now to let the Holy Spirit lead you to a church where the Word of God is preached and taught. Be baptized. Become a part of the local congregation of believers.

Show up, and you will grow up. When your church has Bible study, show up! When your church worships, show up! When the church prays, pray. Whatever the church does as an expression of its witness, show up! As

you participate in God's church, you will grow up in God's grace and love.

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