



Prescriptions for the Heart

God's Plan for You

The most important life-changing decision that you will ever make is to accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. The following Scriptures explain how and why you should do this. If you have more questions about God's plan for you, ask your doctor about this, directly, or ask him or her to refer you to a local pastor in your community. Your doctor not only cares about your physical health, but your spiritual health as well.

One of the best known passages in the Bible is where Jesus says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him" (John 3:16-17)¹

Jesus came as God's gift, so that all who believe in Him can have eternal life instead of eternal separation from God, which is what He meant by the word "perish." Put a different way, Jesus came to save us from our sins. You may remember in the story of Jesus' birth, how the angel appeared to Joseph, and said, "She [Mary] will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). It is no coincidence that Jesus' name, which is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua, means "the LORD saves."

Because God is holy, He cannot be in the presence of sin (or sinners). And, although we may not like to think of ourselves as sinners, the Scriptures are clear that all humans have this in common: "...for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Sin separates people from God, and "...the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

This last verse means that although we as sinners deserve "death" (spiritually speaking) God is willing to give eternal life to all who believe in Christ, because Jesus, who never sinned, died to pay the penalty for their sins.

God's plan for you is for you to be "born again," as Jesus described it. "I tell you the truth," He said, "no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again" (John 3:3). Just as being born, physically speaking, facilitates our entry into this world, being born again, spiritually speaking, is how we begin a new life of faith.

Jesus wants us to trust Him and invite Him into our hearts, "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in..." (Revelation 3:20).

You may wonder if you are worthy to receive this gift from God. The answer is no ... and yes! Before God, we're all sinners. But through faith in Christ, anyone can be saved. In the days of the

early church, a jailer asked Paul and Silas, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” Their answer was simple: “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved...” (see Acts 16:30-31). In another place, Paul wrote, “...everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Romans 10:13).

The revolutionary message of the Christian gospel is that while our good works cannot save us, we *can* be saved by grace, through faith in Christ. “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

What do you need to do to receive this gift? The Bible’s answer is very simple, “...if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9).

You could express this in a prayer something like this: “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, who died on the cross for me, rose from the dead, and is alive forevermore. At this moment, I am making Him the Lord of my life, and I will strive to serve Him in any way that I can.”

After you pray this prayer, tell someone. In fact, you should share this news with your doctor so that he or she can help you find a church home where you can grow in your faith and enjoy the fellowship of other Christian believers.

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