

How can I  
**know**

**God?**

The  
***How Can I know God?***  
Series

***Lesson 2:***  
***We Can Know God through His Son***

Introduction to the:  
***How Can I know God?***  
Series

It is the purpose of this series to allow you to gain an understanding of who God is and how you can have a relationship with Him. It is our sincere desire that this study will be a great benefit to you.

We have made this series to be interactive. In each lesson there is a combination of written material and appropriate questions. These will cover an idea just previously discussed and the student should be able to identify the answer (perhaps not immediately, but possibly by looking back over the material). If the question is not clear or the answer does not seem obvious, do not hesitate to mention this to your Bible study leader. If you are doing this study alone, be sure to use the contact information to contact the church and someone would be glad to help you. No question is too trivial to ask. Make sure you also write down your Bible study leader's name so that you can contact him/her with any questions you may have as a result of this study.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

At the end of the study is a practical section designed to help these new ideas become implanted in your mind.

## *We Can Know God through His Son*

In the previous lesson we learned two things about God: He is holy, and He is just.

Though we learned some interesting things about God, we also discovered some very bad news for us! In contrast to God, we found that all men are sinners. Because of man's sinful condition, he cannot have a relationship with God. Man's sin has caused him to be separated from God in the present, and will cause him to be separated from Him for all eternity.

This lesson focuses on *Good News!* We want to look at how man can have a relationship with God. Basically, we will find out that we come to know God through His Son, Jesus Christ. How can this be?

The Bible tells us:

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only ...  
Son ..." (John 3:16)

According to the verse above, whom did God love?

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How did God demonstrate His love?

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God loved the world. His love was shown in the fact that He sent His Son.

Before we continue to discuss God's love, let's consider the term "Son of God." Some people *wrongly* assume that the term "Son of God" means that Jesus is less than God the Father. The term "Son of God" does not teach that Jesus is less than God the Father, rather it means that Jesus is *equal* to God the Father.

Let's illustrate it this way: You are your father's child, and that makes you as much a human being as your father – you share the same human nature. Since Jesus is God's Son, He shares the same nature and is *equal* to God the Father.

Again, we read in the Bible that:

Jesus is “the brightness of [God's] glory and the express image of His person...” (Hebrews 1:3)

Since Jesus is the “express image” of God, would you say He is the same as God the Father or different?

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Jesus Christ is said to be the “image” of God because He and God the Father share the same nature. Jesus said to one of His followers:

“He who has seen Me has seen the Father.” (John 14:9)

and

“I and [My] Father are one.” (John 10:30)

That brings us back to our discussion regarding God's love. We learned from John 3:16 that God loved the world, and His love was demonstrated when He *sent* His Son (Jesus) to the earth. The following verse begins to explain why sending Jesus to the earth was necessary?

“No one has seen God at any time.” (John 1:18)

According to John 1:18, how many people have *seen* God?

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Since no one has ever seen God, God had to tell us what He is like. He did this through His revelation of Himself which we have recorded in the Bible. But He also revealed Himself through Jesus Christ. That is why John 1:18 says:

“No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son...He has declared [Him].” (John 1:1-18)

Jesus, God’s Son, came to the earth to reveal God to us. He is the only One who could truly and completely reveal God to mankind because He Himself is God.

However, Jesus Christ not did not just come to the earth to show us what God is like. Jesus also came to the earth in order to make it possible to have a relationship with God – so that we could know Him and know Him personally! We want you to have a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

“that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship [is] with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.” (1 John 1:3-4)

The fact that God sent Jesus Christ to the earth reveals two more characteristics of God:

### ***1. God is loving.***

This very familiar verse in the Bible reads:

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only ... Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)

The result of those who believe in Jesus is:

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Because God is loving, He has provided a way in which we can have a relationship with Him and go to heaven (have everlasting life). God sent Jesus Christ into the world not only because He wanted us to know about Him, but also because ***He wanted us to have an eternal relationship with Him.***

We have already established that we are sinners. Because of this sin we deserve everlasting punishment in Hell. But Jesus came and *died* so that we would not need to die eternally.

How can this be?

Is Jesus God? \_\_\_\_\_

Is Jesus holy? \_\_\_\_\_

According to the following verse, what causes men to die?

“For the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23)

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Since Jesus is God, He is holy. The Bible tells us that He is sinless and that He did not sin even while He was on this earth (Jesus “knew no sin” according to 2 Corinthians 5:21). Since Jesus is God and not a sinner, He should have lived forever in His human body. But the Bible records for us the awful account of Jesus’ death. Men took Christ and hung Him on a cross, after they had severely whipped Him. He died while hanging in agony on the cross. The Bible then tells us that after three days Jesus rose from the dead, and is living right now.

“Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and...He was buried, and...He rose again the third day...” (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

But why did Jesus die if He did not need to?

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8)

According to the verse above, why did Christ die?

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Jesus death, burial and resurrection do two things. First, they prove that God loves us, because He was willing to allow His Son to die for us. Secondly, we are told:

“Christ died for our sins according...” (I Corinthians 15:3-4).

Write down the second reason for Christ’s death.

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We are told that Jesus died in our place, *for our sins*. The Bible says:

“He Himself [Jesus] is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.” (1 John 2:2)

The word *propitiation* means “an appeasing, or satisfaction.” God’s anger, which resulted because of our sin, has been appeased, or satisfied. Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection provided a way in which God’s holy and just nature could be satisfied. Because His holy law had been broken, His law demanded that a proper punishment be made. Jesus took the punishment which we deserved.

That means that God allowed His Son, Jesus Christ, to come down to this earth, specifically to die! You see, God tells us:

“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,” (1 Peter 3:18).

For whose sins did Jesus die?

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According to the above verse, why did Jesus die?

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The above verses declare that “Christ died for our sins” and “Christ...suffered for sins, the just for the unjust.” *Jesus Christ did not die because he had to, He died in our place so that He might “bring us to God.”*

According to the above verse, did Jesus die for you?

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You and I deserve the punishment (death) for our sins. Yet the Bible tells us that Christ took our place and died, even though He did not deserve to die.

Just like our national laws have punishments attached for those who break them, so God’s Law demands that a penalty be paid. The Bible says:

“The wages of sin is death.” (Romans 6:23)

The penalty which we deserve, because of our sin, is death and Hell. Jesus *paid that penalty* by dying in our place so that God’s Law could be satisfied. Holiness is the standard which was broken. Justice seeks proper punishment when the Law is broken. But God’s love provided an alternative. Jesus, in His love for you, took your penalty upon Himself so that you would not need to suffer for your own sins. The Bible tells us:

“But He [Jesus] was wounded for our transgressions [sins], He was crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His stripes we are healed.” (Isaiah 53:5; ESV)

This payment which Christ paid on your behalf is complete.

“The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:7).

According to the above verse, how many of your sins did Jesus pay for?

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This verse tells us *all* our sins were paid for by Christ. To think that you need to *earn* your salvation by good deeds, or keep your salvation by good deeds is to not trust what God said.

God is loving, and He has provided a way that you can have a relationship with Him and live with Him forever in Heaven. He did this by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to the earth so that He would take the penalty of your sin upon Himself.

Now that is *Good News* – but wait there is more!

## ***2. God is Gracious.***

When we say that God is gracious, we mean that He is full of grace. Grace is God’s goodness extended to man, which man does not deserve. It is only by God’s grace that we could hope to have a relationship with Him and live with Him forever:

“not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us...” (Titus 3:5)

According to Titus 3:5, how many good deeds must we do in order to earn eternal life?

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According to this verse, what saves us from Hell?

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God *will not* save us because of our good deeds. We cannot do enough good things to earn salvation, because all the good deeds in the world cannot erase the sin we have already committed. How does the following verse describe salvation?

“For by grace (God’s goodness) you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

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What is a gift? If you work 40 hours a week and receive a pay check at the end of that week, is that a gift?

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No, what you deserve is not a gift. A gift is something you have not earned.

Salvation is a *gift* which God offers you and me through Jesus Christ. If eternal life was obtained by doing good deeds, then we would have something about which to be proud.

“not of works, lest anyone should boast.” (Ephesians 2:9).

But God says eternal life comes by *faith* in His *grace*. If you are counting on your good deeds or on being a good person to take you to heaven, are you trusting in His goodness, or are you thinking you deserve something?

If you are counting on your good works *plus* God’s goodness are you really trusting in God’s goodness at all, or are you thinking that you are pretty good and you can do some good thing that will make you worthy of eternal life?

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We must see that salvation comes *only* by God’s grace. We cannot do anything to earn eternal life.

So then, if eternal life is a gift which God offers freely, based upon Christ’s death on the cross, how are we to obtain this life?

The Bible tells us that we must *receive* it by faith. Just as you would reach out and accept a gift given to you by another, eternal life is something which you must receive from God by faith. The Bible tells us:

“But as many as received Him [Christ], to them He gave the right [authority] to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.” (John 1:12).

We receive the gift of eternal life by believing in what God has done for us through Christ. Notice the passage speaks of *believing* and *receiving*. God gives eternal life when we receive Christ (His payment) as sufficient to pay for our sins. That means that we are to believe God’s Word in what He said about Christ and Christ’s death, and make it personal.

According to the above verse, if one believes in Christ and receives Him as his/her Saviour, what does he/she become?

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The Bible makes our responsibility clear. We must believe and trust God:

“whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”  
(Romans 10:13)

In order to receive Jesus Christ as your Saviour, you must *repent* of your sins and put your *trust* in Jesus Christ alone as the only hope of eternal life. The Bible says...

“Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out...” (Acts 3:19)

Repentance is remorse for your sin, recognizing that it is sin that condemns you. It is also the desire to turn from anything that is not pleasing to God. The Bible makes it clear that man is going his own way...doing his own thing in rebellion to God:

“As it is written: ‘There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside...there is none who does good, no, not one.’” (Romans 3:10-12)

“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way...” (Isaiah 53:6)

Repentance is a change of mind. It is the recognition that we have been living in rebellion to God’s Law and the sadness which results from this understanding.

Let’s summarize what we have looked at:

In order to have a relationship with God and to know that you are going to heaven when you die, you must: 1) believe you are a sinner deserving of hell, 2) change your rebellious attitude, 3) believe that Christ died to take your penalty of sin upon Himself and is willing to forgive you, and 4) in *faith*, call upon Him as your Saviour and Master.

Jesus Christ said,

“he who hears My word and believes in Him [the Father] who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. (John 5:24).

What is promised to those who believe?

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Do you believe that you are a sinner and that you deserve Hell for your sin?

Are you remorseful over your sinful rebellion to God?

Do you believe that God sent Jesus Christ to take the penalty of yours sins upon Himself?

Do you believe that Jesus paid your sin debt and that He rose again from the dead?

If you answered yes to the above questions, why not express that belief in the form of a prayer?

A prayer, in itself, does not save anyone – people can say words and not mean them in their hearts. It is *faith* in the Person of Christ which saves us. However, if you really believe in Christ and what He has done for you, you can express your faith in the form of a prayer like this:

Dear God, I know I am a sinner and that I deserve Hell. I believe that Christ died and rose again to provide a place for me in heaven with You. Please forgive me for my sins. I repent of my sins and accept the free gift of salvation which You offer to me, by receiving Christ as my Saviour and my Master.

Before you read on, why not take the time right now to prayer a prayer like that to God?

Our sins separate us from God. When our sins are forgiven, we will gain a relationship with God. When our sin has been forgiven, then the separation between man and God is removed.

Did you receive Christ as your Lord and Saviour?

Yes                      No

If so, read the following verses:

“God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life...” (1 John 5:11-13)

According to these verses, if you placed your faith in Christ for eternal life, what do you now possess?

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How long is eternal?

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According to this verse, can you lose eternal life? \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Practical Section***

Memorize the following verse (with its reference) and be prepared to repeat it to your Bible study leader the next time you meet.

“And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life...” (1 John 5:11-12)

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