

HOW CAN I KNOW IM GOING TO HEAVEN?

To answer this question, we must first ask why people don't go to heaven. In the Bible, which is God's message to us, we read that "without holiness, no one will see the Lord." (Hebrews 12:14) Heaven is God's dwelling place, and for us to go there and stand before Him, we must be holy. Sounds easy right?

Actually, to be holy in God's eyes, we must be as holy as He is. How holy is that? Jesus said, "Be perfect, as my heavenly Father is perfect." (Matthew 5:48) To earn heaven, we must be perfect! In fact, God tells us himself that "no one is righteous, no not one," and "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23) In other words, none of us are good enough to earn heaven!

This is the problem with any religion in the world today. Man's belief systems concentrate on good works or a "balance" of deeds to please God, reach heaven, achieve nirvana, balance your chi, or whatever other goal religions have dreamed up. But we can't please God or reach heaven our way. We must do it God's way. There are people who come regularly to

their mosque, synagogue, place of worship, or even church, who are trying to use good deeds to earn eternal life. This will never happen because we will never be perfect.

Further, the Bible calls the wrong things we do "sin," and tells us that "the wages of sin is death." (Romans 6:23) When we take a deeper look, we realize that this means more than just physical death. In Revelation 21:8, we read that, for all who sin, "their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death." So then, the price of sin is not just physical death, but eternity without God in punishment.

Before you get discouraged, however, there is hope. In Revelation 20:15, we read "If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire." If you can get your name in the book of life, God's record of those who have given themselves to Him, you will be spared from punishment and given eternity in Heaven. But how can you achieve this? How can you gain eternal life in heaven?

Remember how Romans 6:23 told us "the wages of sin is death?" It goes on to say that "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Eternal life is given, not because of good works, but through Jesus Christ. Ephesians 2:8 tells us "by grace you are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the

gift of God." If we put faith in Jesus Christ, we can be saved from Hell and have the promise of Heaven.

This is made perfectly clear in Romans 10:9, where we are instructed that "if you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

First, you must confess that Jesus is Lord. When the Bible says He is "Lord," it means He is our God and our Master. We must except that God the Son deserves control of our lives and seek to give it to Him.

Second, you must believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead. That means recognizing your own sinfulness, since Jesus died for your sins, and accepting His forgiveness through His death, since the wages of sin is death. By extension, it also means accepting the Bible as God's Word, since it tells us about Jesus.

Are you willing to do this now? If you do, you'll have God's promise through Jesus Christ of eternity! Pray the following prayer:

Dear Jesus, I'm sorry for my sins. I thank you for dying for me and I accept your forgiveness. I give you my life, recognizing you are my God and my master. Help me to live for you the rest of my life. Amen.

WHAT DO I DO NOW ?

Congratulations! You have been saved from hell and have the promise of eternity in Heaven. Because of His forgiveness, you can now have a relationship with God that will last for eternity! Here are a couple of things every Christian can do to maintain their relationship with God:

1. Remember that God is real and that being saved is real. The devil and the world will try to fill your head with doubts. Remember God's promise in Romans 10:13-
"everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved." You called on Jesus today, and He saved you, just as He promised!

2. You will fall short, you will stumble, you will sin. While we must strive to live free from sin, we must remember that our salvation is based on faith in Jesus. If you have real faith, it will change your actions and make you want to be godly, but you still have a sinful nature and you will still fall short. When this happens, it doesn't mean you are no longer saved. What it does mean is you need to confess your sin to God and receive His forgiveness. 1 John 1:9 tells us that "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from unrighteousness." We can

confess our sins to God, and he not only forgives us- He helps us to change and become more like Him!

3. Every Christian should pray and read the Bible on a regular basis. We are called by God to read His Word: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15) It is also the right and privilege of every Christian, made righteous by Jesus Christ, to pray to God: "the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer." (1 Peter 3:12) Many Christians refer to prayer and reading the Bible as "devotions", because it is an expression of devotion to God.

4. It is important that you go to church. Church doesn't save you, but once you are saved, fellowship with other Christians helps maintain your relationship with God and encourage you in the Lord. We are told to go to church and meet together with other believers in Hebrews 10:25: "Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another- and all the more as you see the Day approaching." We encourage you to come to Hillsdale Assembly of God or another Bible-believing church. Please call us at (517)849-2187 so we can help and encourage you in your new relationship with Jesus Christ.

How can I know I'm going to Heaven?

"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."
(John 3:16, NIV)