

How to Be Born Again:

Receive God's Rightness Once and for All

Anyone can know God's love and acceptance who would like to. Since he is pure goodness, he had to do something to take away the blame for all of our wrongness. Because God loves his creation so much, it hurts him when we hurt each other. We can't make up for our wrongs- we have to let him take our place on the cross of pain. I'll let God explain it himself straight from the Bible:

Romans 3:10 – As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

Romans 3:23 – For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Romans 5:8 – But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 6:23 – For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 10:9-10 – **...If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.** For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Romans 10:13 – For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Jesus Christ suffered gladly on the cross for you, personally. With all of his heart, he wants you to believe that his death paid for each of your wrong choices. Because of this, you can be just as pure in the Father's sight as he is. You never have to worry about being rejected by God again. All you have to do is receive this gift. Say "yes" to his death and resurrection in your place. This can help spark the courage to believe it.

The moment your heart says "yes," to him, you are **saved**. Your spirit has been born into a new life. You will go to heaven when you die, and nothing can **ever** take this away.



Now That You're a Christian

Welcome to Christianity! It's so simple to be born again, but it's the most important decision ever. Notice that the previous passage in bold gives two steps for being saved from hell. The first step is to thank God with your mouth for being sacrificed on the cross for you. (So if you thanked him silently, go ahead and let it out through your mouth. Add a war whoop if you want to.)

You also had to believe that God raised him from the dead. What good would it do to believe that Jesus loved you if you never got to know him (because he was dead)? He took every one of our pains, and was dead in a tomb for three days. But since he is God, death had no power over him. That's where the Trinity comes in. The one God exists in three persons: a Father, a Son and a Holy Spirit. After Jesus the Son died, the Father raised him from the dead. After living for a few more weeks on earth, he went directly to heaven. He is there now, preparing a beautiful home for everyone who is joining his family. The Holy Spirit is Jesus' way of being in a silent conversation with all of the Christians on earth at the same time.

Think about how many people believe these miracles and communicate with God daily. You can ask God for a group of Christians that will show you how to get to know him better. As you consider joining a church, look for people who are eager to talk about what God is doing in their lives. Ask them if they believe that the Bible is God's perfect word, without error. If so, and if they make friends with you, this is a good place to start growing as a baby Christian. Meanwhile, email me at instructor@sophiculture.com.

Remember that other Christians are often immature in their growth just like you are. As God's children, you won't always get along together. That's okay. What's important is that you look through each others' imperfect love to see glimpses of your Father God's perfect love. Becoming a Christian will not solve all of your problems. It has given you a perfect friend to go to in prayer when people let you down. Follow the instructions in our free *Worship Course* to get to know God, and your spirit will grow. (You can download this course in PDF form for free at this link: sophiculture.com/wp-content/uploads/The-Worship-Handbook.pdf)



How to Overcome Your Doubts

God speaks to us through the Bible to answer any doubts that we might have:

“What if I stopped believing or following God? Would I go to hell?”

It's normal to question whether or not you were truly saved from hell (and even to wonder if God is really real). To resolve this question, ask him for reassurance and then read what he said. Jesus said this: “And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.” -Jn 10:28-29

The fact is that nothing and no one can get you un-born-again, not even you.

“What if I do something unforgivable and lose my salvation?”

Jesus declared all sins forgivable except one: insulting the Holy Spirit. He said this: “All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.” -Mt 12:31

That makes sense, because a non-Christian has to believe the Holy Spirit's message in order for their spirit to be born again (salvation). So if they insult and reject him, they reject this opportunity. Obviously, those who reject salvation can't get saved. That's why it's unforgivable, because you need salvation in order to be forgiven. Once you have been saved, you are forgiven, and this is irrelevant. (You can un-reject salvation.)

How do I know that heaven will really be better than life on earth?

You know this because you feel deeply that you were created for more than this life. Think about the things that bring you happiness: friendship, beauty, wonder, power and delight. If God designed you for these things, he will provide them. The Bible describes this knowing as God's Spirit being a witness to our spirit that we're his.



“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; **heirs of God**, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that **the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.**” -Rom 8:16-19

We won't take the time right now to examine how the Bible describes our future home, but we know we will have new bodies (with no more pain), mansions, feasting and fun things to do as creative partners with Jesus. Considering that our beautiful earth is a tiny sample of his power, you could say that the sky's no limit.

"Am I going to feel regret in heaven because of my earthly choices?"

Each of us has our own God-given mission to use our talents to fulfill his plan for our life here on earth. Each of us also has difficulties that give us the humility we need to stay focused on partnering with God. No one else's story is comparable to yours. Each one is entirely unique.

As you live your story in conversation with God, you will begin to notice that your thoughts are improving. The Bible says to “**be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” -Rom 12:3

Your new thoughts and experiences will show you that God is changing all of the wrongness in your body, soul and spirit into the best possible outcome for you. In heaven you will never feel the pain of regretting your earthly mistakes, or of being jealous of other people's rewards. You will likely be building and creating and enjoying other people, all without any stress, boredom, drawbacks or regrets.

Other doubts will come up in your mind from time to time. This is normal. Give your doubts over to God, who knows exactly what you are struggling with. Trust that he will personally resolve them with his love as you learn and grow. The big picture that he is painting will all come together, stroke by stroke by stroke.



How to Make Your Reading Plan

Author Justin Johnson recommends starting your reading with Paul's curriculum:

1. **Romans:** Laying a doctrinal foundation; instilling right doctrine
2. **Corinthians:** Producing good works under grace; moving people to act
3. **Galatians:** Walking in the Spirit, not under law
4. **Ephesians:** The nature and mission of the church
5. **Philippians:** The mind of Christ; instruction in maturity
6. **Colossians:** Operating complete in Christ
7. **Thessalonians:** Comfort and hope waiting for the return of the Lord
8. **1 Timothy/ Titus:** Teaching and leadership instructions
9. **Philemon:** Paul's example of charity
10. **2 Timothy:** Final words for faithful men

You can see the natural doctrinal progression as you read through Paul's epistles that ends with the man of God being thoroughly furnished (2 Timothy 3:17). Every book fits somewhere in the Pauline curriculum... **Identify where you are in your growth, and start your study there.** Don't know where you are? Start at the beginning. Do not quit, and you will be able to teach others also (2 Tim 2:2)."

-Justin Johnson, *Start Rightly Dividing*, page 100

In order to get used to writing in your Bible, **get** a hard copy of the KJV and a pencil (or an app like **Logos** that lets you highlight and annotate). Read until you see something that has meaning for you and underline (or highlight) it. Underline one verse per day. Talk with God about it. Use *The Worship Handbook* and copy verses that interest you from its diagrams, notes and strategies.

