

How can I be right with God? What is the Gospel?

The question has been asked since the beginning of time: How can someone be right with God ([Job 9:2](#))? We answer this question below, very briefly. You'll see references to the Bible throughout (like [John 3:16](#)). Hopefully your web browser will allow you to hover over the reference and see the sentence(s) being referenced. We do this to show that we're not just making this stuff up, or just following some man's ideas about this vital subject; we're just telling you what God says about it in His words to us – the Bible. This is important, since we're talking about subjects as important as getting right with the Creator of the universe, and your eternal destiny. Are there any subjects more important for you and I to understand correctly, and to get the right information from the right source?

The Gospel is the good news about Jesus Christ, but it starts with bad news. God is perfect, and He made us to walk before Him in love and respect for Him, our Creator. As Creator He alone has the right to set the rules of our existence and to place demands on us ([Acts 17:22-27](#)). But all of us have broken His rules and gone outside His boundaries ([Rom. 3:22-23](#)). All of us have gone our own way, lived our own lives, not the one He wanted ([Is. 53:6](#)). All of us are full of sin in our hearts ([Matt. 15:18-19](#)). All of us have a completely-wrong relationship with God; we've been nothing less than rebels against Him ([Rom. 3:10-12](#)). And none of us can do anything that comes close to making ourselves right with God. Our debt to Him is too great. God, being a just God, doesn't just look the other way ([Ex. 34:6-7](#)): His anger and punishment is against everyone for their sin ([Rom. 1:18](#)), against us for all the ways we have gone against Him. God has already fixed a day on the calendar when He will judge everyone for their sins, for being full of sin, and for not loving or honoring their Creator ([Acts 17:31](#)). After that comes eternal torment, punishment that we are continually aware of, lasting forever ([Matt. 3:12](#), [Matt. 25:46](#), [2 Thess. 1:5-9](#), [Rev. 20:15](#)). Without help, we are guilty and hopeless in our sins ([Eph. 2:1-3](#)). That's the bad news.

The good news is that God, being full of mercy, sent His Son Jesus, to die for our sins ([1 Cor. 15:3](#)). Jesus is God ([Is. 9:6](#), [John 1:1](#), [1:18](#)), but came to earth as a man ([John 1:14](#), [Luke 2:11](#)), experienced everything we do and yet lived a perfect life ([Heb. 4:15](#)), and died willingly on a cross (a terrible death) ([Matt 27:32-56](#), [Mark 15:21-41](#), [Luke 23:26-49](#)). He was buried dead ([John 19:28-42](#)), but God rose him to life again (John 20). Why did he willingly go through this suffering of punishment and death? He did it to be our substitute, to take upon himself the punishment that was due us for all the wrong things we have done ([Is. 53:4-6](#), [Rom. 4:25](#)). Jesus bridged the infinite gap between God and man ([1 Tim. 2:15](#)). Through Jesus we have forgiveness of sins ([Mark 2:1-12](#)), right standing before God, and peace with God ([Rom. 5:1](#)). Jesus did for us the very things we needed most, things that as spiritually-dead people we could not do for ourselves.

But how does it apply to you and me? Only by trusting in Jesus – what we call faith. Only by trusting in what he did in your place, by asking for forgiveness of your sins out of faith in what Jesus did on the cross. Only by trusting in Jesus to make your relationship right with God and to stand right before God. **No matter your past, no matter what you have done, God’s mercy and forgiveness are available to you by faith in Jesus Christ** ([John 3:16](#), [Rom. 10:11-13](#)). As we trust in Jesus, God calls us to repent ([Acts 17:30](#)) – the turning away from our old life and following Christ. This means following him as a servant follows his Lord ([Matt. 11:25-30](#), [Luke 9:23](#)). When we call him “Lord”, this is what we mean, that we acknowledge that He has authority over all of our lives. We follow him like this gratefully, for all that He has done for us. And we follow him like this knowing that since he is raised from the dead, so we too one day will be raised from the dead with him ([1 Thess. 4:17](#)), to enjoy being with him forever ([Phil 3:20-21](#), [Col. 3:4](#), [2 Tim. 4:8](#), [Titus 2:11-13](#), [1 Peter 5:4](#)).

This is good news!

As a young, single woman, I was living life for myself. I had heard about God and Jesus growing up, but I had not heard that Jesus was the Savior of the world, nor that I needed to do anything in particular about that. I didn’t know that He died for me and that I needed to surrender my life to Him, accepting His payment for my sin. I became pregnant. The pregnancy was like getting hit on the head with a 2 x 4 (so much for a whisper from God). I felt God was trying to get my attention. It worked. A friend of my sister’s (now my brother-in-law) was a strong Christian. He led me to a great church where I heard God’s truth and desired to be changed. My life had been empty, though I was “successful” as a bookkeeper.

The people in that church accepted me where I was at, trusting that Christ was going to do a work in my life. Upon accepting Him as my Lord and Savior, I can’t explain the peace He filled me with from the beginning of my walk with Him, even facing the embarrassment of an out-of-wedlock birth. HE worked mightily and provided (endurance, financially, materially) so greatly that I wanted to serve Him. Not only did I have “strength on loan from God” to face a possibly difficult and lonely future, but through my boss and friends, He provided all the furniture I would need for an infant.

God, in His great grace and mercy, blessed me with a husband who adopted my sweet daughter. We’ve had more children and are a close family. It hasn’t been easy, nor are any of us perfect, but we are very grateful for His Scriptures and the teaching we receive at church that helps us grow.

There is much to be thankful for: His forgiveness, His love, His provision in so many ways over the years, His peace in trials which is like nothing describable on earth when I am focused on Him, His wisdom and perfect ways, that He is in control (Whew! or we’d be a mess!), His guidance through His Word and through people who love Him, and I could go on and on. I am truly grateful to God for so much. I love God because He first

loved me (see [1 John 4:19](#)). I was forgiven much, and I love Him much – though not perfectly. I delightedly and seriously desire to follow Him and His Word. I fail often, but that doesn't change my desire. Christ died for ALL my sin and took my place on the cross. I deserved death, but I've been redeemed!

~ Lesli

Like to hear the Gospel again, from another perspective? We invite you to read the material [provided here](#). It gives a great graphical description of the same good news we've just shared above.

Like to do more reading on this? We invite you to get your Bible and read [the book of Mark](#). It's the shorter of the four accounts about Jesus' life and death and resurrection. We also encourage you to look up the Bible passages referenced above in your own Bible, to read them in their context. (The first word or abbreviation is the English title of the book (sometimes preceded by a number); the first number after the title is the chapter of that book; the second number after the colon is the verse within the chapter, often one sentence.) If you don't have a Bible, just call us at 596-3333 or stop by our office at 3435 Maizeland Road, and we'll provide you one for free. And if you have questions, it would be our privilege to walk through the book of Mark with you and answer any questions you might have.

We also recommend a book called "What Is the Gospel?"; it's fairly short and easy to read. To get a copy, just call the church or stop by and we'll give you one for free.

Again, we're here to help as you consider the Gospel. We're happy to try and answer any question you might have about Jesus and why he came and died for us. Please feel free to call us anytime at.