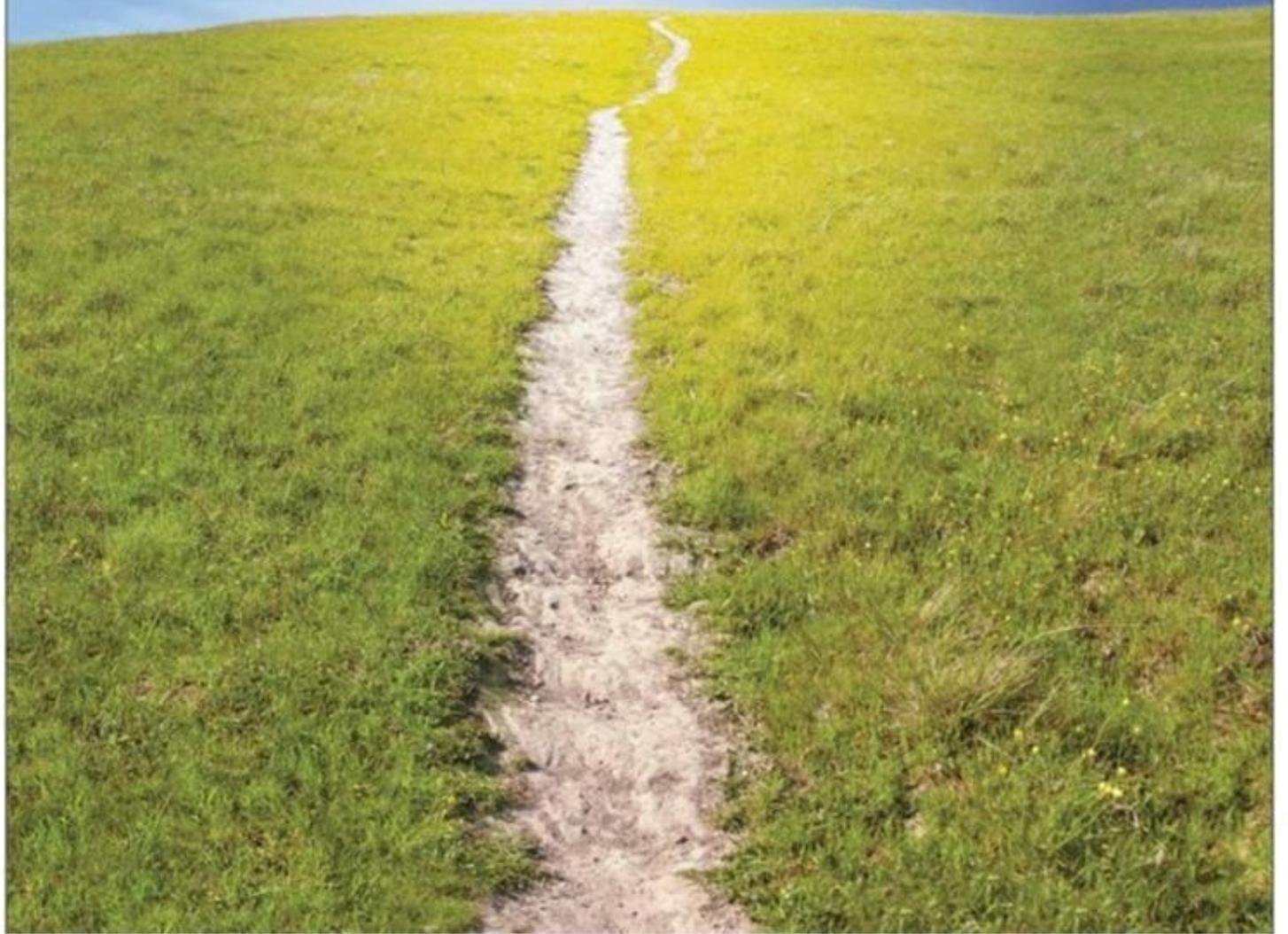


*Which path are
you on?*



What it means to know God

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The very first thing I want to do is make a very very bold claim:

**The Bible is the only reliable source of truth
given by God to man.**

Now, there's a reason that I believe that the Bible is the Word of God – the only Word of God given to man – and it's because it's true.

How so? The Bible is [historically](#) accurate, [scientifically](#) accurate and [archeologically](#) accurate, so I trust it. In fact, the very way that the Bible itself was put together is undeniably supernatural as [this shows](#).

The above facts give us an amazing list of the Bible and it's accuracy in scientific fields. The reason I believe that the Bible's claims are true is because I'm not a fool; I won't and don't disregard factual claims. Neither should you.

If I asked anyone the question, "Do you want to go to Heaven when you die?" the answer would – and is! – "Yes!". It's a no brainer that everyone, when they pass from this life into the next, want to be in a place of eternal bliss. Isn't that right? I mean, think about this... who truly desires to suffer eternal torment? No one.

While it's true that everyone says "Yes" to the question of Heaven, the answers become much different when asking the next question: "Are you willing to meet God's conditions for eternal life?".

You see, Heaven for some is a long ways off... at least a long ways in their minds. 70-80 years of life seems like an eternity to young people. For others, the idea of Heaven is a distant dream... because some lives in the here and now are filled with pain and sin and misery; they want Heaven now... not later.

While the Bible tells us that Heaven is for real it also lets us know that right now – in this life! – we can experience lasting joy, peace and freedom from sin and it's power. That's the entire reason that Jesus Christ was sent by God; to set prisoners of sin free.

Lets' read it:

1 John 3:8 "But when people keep on sinning, it shows that they belong to the devil, who has been sinning since the beginning. But the Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil."

So we see that Jesus came to destroy the works of satan. What are some of those works? Not in general... but in your own life? Think about it for a moment. All of the abuse, addictions, hate, lies, sexual immorality... these are the works of the devil.

The works of the devil are designed to do one thing: Destroy you. The work of Jesus Christ is designed to do one thing: Destroy the works of the devil.

This is amazing news!

This means that Jesus came to not only forgive you of your sin...but to completely take them away along with sin's very power! Let's read it:

John 1:29 "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

Notice the words "Takes away".

There are pretty important things we learn here from this verse:

1- You can't take away your own sins. There's no amount of charity work, doing good to others, praying or church attendance that can wash away your sins. It's only by God's Son, Jesus Christ, that your sins can be totally removed.

2- God is much more powerful than only forgiving you; He's able to completely and radically remove every single sin you've ever committed!

Just who is this Jesus? I mean, there are so many different ideas about Him... which one is the right one? Who sets the standard? You? Me? A religious leader? A scientist? Who gets to be the "know it all expert" on this Man they call Jesus?.

Jesus Christ is not simply a "good example" or a "great teacher". He's the Son of God and was sent by God to save lost sinners.

Like you and like me:

John 3:16-21 "For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him. "There is no judgment against anyone who believes in him. But anyone who does not believe in him has already been judged for not believing in God's one and only Son. And the judgment is based on this fact: God's light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil. All who do evil hate the light and refuse to go near it for fear their sins will be exposed.

But those who do what is right come to the light so others can see that they are doing what God wants.”

Here, we see that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; the One who left Heaven and came to earth to die that we might live; to give hope to the hopeless and joy to the joyless. Jesus is not only a “good example”... He’s Lord, Savior and man’s only way to God.

Jesus didn’t come to earth in order to point fingers. I’m aware that within religious circles that claim to follow Jesus that there are “Professional Finger Pointers”... but these poor souls don’t follow the Jesus of the Bible. They follow a Jesus of their own imaginations.

The Biblical Jesus – the historical Jesus! – came to love us into the heart of God through feeding the hungry, healing the sick and ultimately dying on the Cross that we might live with God in Heaven and experience spiritual life while physically alive on earth.

God is absolutely pure, holy and perfect; there’s only one reason that this God – the only true God! – would ever send His Son to die for our eternal life.

Love. *Unconditional* love.

Romans 5:10-11 puts it this way: “For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son. So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God.”

Friends of God.

Who wouldn’t want to be a friend of God?! You’d be surprised! Some people feel it’s their duty to lie, cheat, steal and harm others... so being friends with God isn’t on their agenda. But that’s not you; at least I don’t think it is. Otherwise, you probably wouldn’t even be on this page reading any of this.

The fact is that you and I are sinners. A sinner is someone who does what God hates: sin.

Sin is anything that goes against what God calls holy. Let’s take a moment to see God’s basic commands and what He expects of humanity.

Exodus 20:1-17 gives us God’s idea of what means to be holy and perfect... pay attention because it’s quite a list!:

“Then God gave the people all these instructions:“I am the Lord your God, who rescued you from the land of Egypt, the place of your slavery.“You must not have any other god but me.“You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods. I lay the sins of the parents upon their children; the entire family is affected—even children in the third and fourth generations of those who reject me. But I lavish unfailing love for a thousand

generations on those who love me and obey my commands. "You must not misuse the name of the Lord your God. The Lord will not let you go unpunished if you misuse his name. "Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. You have six days each week for your ordinary work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath day of rest dedicated to the Lord your God. On that day no one in your household may do any work. This includes you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, your livestock, and any foreigners living among you. For in six days the Lord made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything in them; but on the seventh day he rested. That is why the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart as holy. "Honor your father and mother. Then you will live a long, full life in the land the Lord your God is giving you. "You must not murder. "You must not commit adultery. "You must not steal. "You must not testify falsely against your neighbor. "You must not covet your neighbor's house. You must not covet your neighbor's wife, male or female servant, ox or donkey, or anything else that belongs to your neighbor."

I'm not even going to take the time to ask you if you've ever broken even just one of God's Laws. You know you have. Now, here's the problem:

1 John 3:4 says that "Everyone who sins is breaking God's law, for all sin is contrary to the law of God."

You may be thinking, "Yea... but God forgives."

Let's take a look at what James 2:10-11 says:

"For the person who keeps all of the laws except one is as guilty as a person who has broken all of God's laws. For the same God who said, "You must not commit adultery," also said, "You must not murder." So if you murder someone but do not commit adultery, you have still broken the law."

Have you ever looked at the evil behavior of another person and thought, "I'm glad I'm not like that!" or, "I can't believe they'd do that!?" The Bible is clear: You break one law of God... you're as guilty as the next person who you think is "really bad". You're just as guilty as the worst sinner who's ever lived. Why? Because God doesn't compare your sins with the "really bad sinners"... He's compares you exclusively to His own Law. No one else's.

That means we're all in the same sinking boat together. Whether a person has committed murder or stole a paperclip from the company who hired them... we're all drowning in sin. Your sin may not be "as bad" as a murderer's sin ... yet in the eternal aspect, you're still going to the same place as the murderer:

Revelation 20:11-15 says, "And I saw a great white throne and the one sitting on it. The earth and sky fled from his presence, but they found no place to hide. I saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God's throne. And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books. The sea gave up its dead, and death and the grave gave up their dead. And all were judged according to their deeds. Then

death and the grave were thrown into the lake of fire. This lake of fire is the second death. And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire.”

Now some people don't like to hear that they're sinners; that's offensive to them but it's also a clear cut sign that John 3:21 is true of such people:

“All who do evil hate the light and refuse to go near it for fear their sins will be exposed.”

Hating the light means not accepting the reality that you're a sinner; a rebel against God's holy standards. What a fearful day it will be when God judges the living and the dead:

1 Peter 4:4-5 “Of course, your former friends are surprised when you no longer plunge into the flood of wild and destructive things they do. So they slander you. But remember that they will have to face God, who will judge everyone, both the living and the dead.”

Yes, God will forgive... but based only on the following two conditions that He's set out in His Word:

1- Repentance:

The Bible's command to repent is clear; not only are we called to believe in Jesus Christ but we're also called – commanded by God! – to repent:

Acts 17:30-31 ““God overlooked people's ignorance about these things in earlier times, but now he commands everyone everywhere to repent of their sins and turn to him. For he has set a day for judging the world with justice by the man he has appointed, and he proved to everyone who this is by raising him from the dead.”

Since pretty much only religious people use the word “repent” now-a-days, let's define this word so we're on the same level concerning what it means to repent...

The Greek word for “repent” is the word metanoeo and is a verb meaning “lit., “to perceive afterwards” (meta, “after,” implying “change,” noeo, “to perceive;” nous, “the mind, the seat of moral reflection”), in contrast to pronoeo, “to perceive beforehand,” hence signifies “to change one's mind or purpose,” always, in the NT, involving a change for the better, an amendment, and always, except in Luke 17:3,4, of “repentance” from sin.” (source: [Vine's](#))

To repent means that you change your mind about sin and turn to God; it's a turning from one view (you're not a sinner) to another view (you are a sinner). Not only is it a changing of the mind but it results in a changing of your lifestyle. In other words, to repent means to go in a direction that's completely opposite to the direction you were in.

Repentance – turning from sin and turning to God – isn't optional; it's commanded, as we've already seen above. But what if a person says, “I believe in God but that repentance stuff – turning from sin!

– is too harsh”?

Luke 13:15 “About this time Jesus was informed that Pilate had murdered some people from Galilee as they were offering sacrifices at the Temple. “Do you think those Galileans were worse sinners than all the other people from Galilee?” Jesus asked. “Is that why they suffered? Not at all! And you will perish, too, unless you repent of your sins and turn to God. And what about the eighteen people who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them? Were they the worst sinners in Jerusalem? No, and I tell you again that unless you repent, you will perish, too.”

Did you know that Jesus was talking to His own followers in the verses above? He told them – people who followed Him! – that unless they repented that they would perish just like anyone else who refused to repent. In other words, anyone who claims to be following Jesus has to be a person who’s known as a person who repents.

Or they’ll perish.

Pretty clear words from the Son of God.

To be accepted by God, you must – it’s essential – repent of your sins and turn to Him in faith... which is what we’re talking about next.

2- Faith:

Not only are we commanded by God to repent of our sins and turn to Him... but we’re also called to put our faith in Jesus Christ. Completely and totally. Why? Because repentance doesn’t give us Salvation... it doesn’t make us right with God. What repentance does is it shows we’re serious about our sinful condition and want to change... and do change! But it falls short of actually making us acceptable to God. When we repent, we’re saying, “I’m done living my own way and being an enemy of God”... but it doesn’t remove the sins you’ve already committed; that’s where faith in Jesus Christ comes in.

But what is faith? I mean, it’s a word that’s lost its true meaning ... so let’s get back to basics and see what the Bible means when it talks about faith.

The Greek word for faith is *pistis* and means “primarily, firm persuasion, a conviction based upon hearing (akin to *peitho*, “to persuade”), is used in the NT always of “faith in God or Christ, or things spiritual.” (Source: [Vine’s](#))

So we see that the meaning of the word faith is being firmly persuaded and having a conviction about something which is based on hearing. Faith is when we’re absolutely and totally convinced about something... and it’s putting our very lives on the line for what we believe.

This begs the question: “What do you have to have faith about concerning Jesus?”

First, you have to be convinced that He is who He said He is... God’s Son:

John 8:24-25 “That is why I said that you will die in your sins; for unless you

believe that I Am who I claim to be, you will die in your sins.” “Who are you?” they demanded. Jesus replied, “The one I have always claimed to be.”

(Click [here](#) for more)

Next, you have to believe that He died to save you from your sins:

1 Peter 2:24 “He personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. By his wounds you are healed.”

(Click [here](#) for more)

Lastly, you must believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead:

Mark 16:5-7 “When they entered the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a white robe sitting on the right side. The women were shocked, but the angel said, “Don’t be alarmed. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He isn’t here! He is risen from the dead! Look, this is where they laid his body. Now go and tell his disciples, including Peter, that Jesus is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there, just as he told you before he died.”

(Click [here](#) and [here](#) for more)

Paul the Apostle wrote to the Corinthian church in the Bible all of the above in one statement:

1 Corinthians 15:1-9 “Let me now remind you, dear brothers and sisters, of the Good News I preached to you before. You welcomed it then, and you still stand firm in it. It is this Good News that saves you if you continue to believe the message I told you—unless, of course, you believed something that was never true in the first place. I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve. After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles. Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw him. For I am the least of all the apostles. In fact, I’m not even worthy to be called an apostle after the way I persecuted God’s church.”

(Click [here](#) for more)

So we see **that faith** – absolute trust in Jesus based on being convinced – is what saves us. It’s required by God, just as repentance is required by God. Both repentance and faith are commanded by God in order to be accepted by Him.

So... now comes the final part of this page: “How do I take what I’ve read above and apply it to my life... right now?”

If you’re asking that question, it’s clear that God is the One who’s tugging on your heart just as John

6:44 says where we read what Jesus said about people who choose to follow Him:

“For no one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them to me, and at the last day I will raise them up.”

(Click [here](#) for more)

If you're longing to know God and turn to Him in repentance and faith... this is because God is calling you. It's obvious that it's Him who's calling you to become His friend through Jesus Christ:

John 14:6 “Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.”

(Click [here](#) for more)

To come to God in repentance and faith, you can do so right now wherever you are by calling on Jesus Christ as Lord and believing in your heart that God raised Him from the dead on the third day:

Romans 10:5-13 “For Moses writes that the law’s way of making a person right with God requires obedience to all of its commands. But faith’s way of getting right with God says, “Don’t say in your heart, ‘Who will go up to heaven?’ (to bring Christ down to earth). And don’t say, ‘Who will go down to the place of the dead?’ (to bring Christ back to life again).” In fact, it says, “The message is very close at hand; it is on your lips and in your heart.” And that message is the very message about faith that we preach: If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

To bring all of this down to practical terms, let's look at a final passage of Scripture. The Apostle Peter stood up and explained to thousands of Jews gathered in Jerusalem what they needed to do in order to be saved from sin, its power and accepted by God. This is what he said:

Acts 2:37-41 “Peter’s words pierced their hearts, and they said to him and to the other apostles, “Brothers, what should we do?” Peter replied, “Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This promise is to you, and to your children, and even to the Gentiles—all who have been called by the Lord our God.” Then Peter continued preaching for a long time, strongly urging all his listeners, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation!” Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all.”

If you will repent of your sins, turn to God and place your faith in Jesus Christ, you'll be instantly made a child of God. Not by your own power or even by your faith or repentance... but by the Spirit

of God performing the miracle of what the Bible calls new birth. You can make this prayer your very own:

“God, Your Word says that if I repent of my sins, turn to you and trust in Jesus Christ alone to save me from sin and it’s power that I’ll be given new life and become Your friend. I confess with my mouth that Jesus Christ alone is Lord and I believe in my heart that You have raised Him from the dead. I ask that You wash all of my sins away, set me free from it’s power and fill me with Your Holy Spirit. In the Name of Jesus Christ I pray, Amen.”

If you have come to God in repentance from sin, turned to Him and placed your trust in Jesus Christ alone to save you... you’re now a Friend of God! This is what the Bible teaches...very clearly. In fact, the Holy Spirit will confirm to your heart that you belong to God now!

3- Water Baptism:

Your next step? Water baptism.

Water baptism is like a funeral service and a birthday all in one! Going under the water is saying, “This is my funeral; my old life is gone!” and coming up from the water is saying, “I’m coming up to new life in Jesus!”.

Romans 6:1-4 says it this way:

“Well then, should we keep on sinning so that God can show us more and more of his wonderful grace? Of course not! Since we have died to sin, how can we continue to live in it? Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death? For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives.”

Looking for a church in your area or have further questions? Get in touch with me at <http://www.danlurette.ca>