

THE GIFT

Forgiveness cannot be earned! Going to church, praying, living a 'good' life and helping others are good things but none of them can give you a perfect record before God. To receive this forgiveness you must...

1. Admit that you have offended God by your attitudes and actions.
2. Turn away from anything that offends God. It is critical that you are sincerely sorry and want to change (God will help you do this).
3. Accept that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross and rose from the grave.
4. Through a prayer of faith (trust) give God control of your life.

If you are willing to accept God's gift of forgiveness you must also accept the cost.

THE COST

Jesus warned us about counting the cost before deciding to follow Him:

"But don't begin until you count the cost..."
Luke 14:28

He made it clear that we are to submit to Him and be willing to face suffering and tough times just like He did. However, as a Christian, God will teach, encourage and help you even in times of failure. He knows what is best for you. As you surrender control of your life to Him He will give you new desires and the power to change...this is a life long process.

SUMMARY

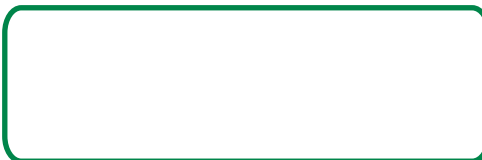
The meaning of life is to know God, live for Him on this earth and enjoy Him forever in heaven. To begin this journey with God the following is a suggested prayer....

Dear God,

I confess that I have rebelled (sinned) against You many times and am truly sorry. I now turn away from those things that offend You and ask for Your forgiveness. Thank You for sending Your Son Jesus to take the consequences of my sin (past, present and future) on Himself. Please enter my life by Your Spirit and help me be the person You want me to be, Amen.

To help you grow as a Christian, read the Bible daily, obey what it says, join a Bible believing church, be baptised and tell others about your decision. Talk to God as much as possible, He hears and answers prayer. For more information go to

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THE MEANING OF LIFE

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To understand the meaning of life we need to start with...

"In the beginning God created..."
Genesis 1:1

The Bible teaches that God created all things including you and me. In the beginning the world He created was perfect (no pain, no war, no suffering, no death) and God said that it was good.

However, a lot has happened since that time and it doesn't take long to realise that things are no longer perfect. This is because mankind (you and me) decided to rebel against God, ignore Him and live our lives however we please. This rebellion is what the Bible calls 'sin'.

THE PROBLEM

The Bible makes it clear that we are all guilty of breaking God's laws and rebelling against Him .

"...all have sinned..."
Romans 3:23

Have you ever told a lie? Have you ever stolen something? Have you ever used God's name as a swear word?...the list goes on.

Not only are we all guilty of breaking God's law by our actions but also by our thoughts and motives. Nothing is hidden from God's sight.

When we disobey God it shows that we would rather live without His loving rule over our lives. In reality, we are rejecting our all-knowing, all-powerful Creator.

If this attitude towards God continues there are

THE CONSEQUENCES

Firstly, by rejecting God we are also rejecting the true meaning of life which is to know God, live for Him on this earth and enjoy Him forever in heaven.

Secondly, God knows everything including what is best for us. By rejecting God's guidance we hurt ourselves and others.

Thirdly, since God is a good, honest judge He can't overlook or leave our rebellion unpunished. Our sin is so serious that He cannot let it enter His perfect heaven.

"It is appointed for a man to die once and then to face judgement" *Hebrews 9:27*

The truth is, none of us deserve to get to heaven, we all deserve hell. By our own efforts there is nothing we can do to change this fact. We need help! Fortunately God has done something incredible for us.

THE SOLUTION

Instead of giving us what we deserve God actually wants to forgive us. He does not want anyone to go to hell and has made a way for us to be forgiven.

"But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." *Romans 5:8*

This forgiveness was made possible when He sent Jesus Christ (the Son of God) to earth to take the consequences of our lawbreaking on Himself. Jesus willingly suffered and died an agonising death on the cross to take the consequences of our lawbreaking on Himself. He was then buried in a tomb and 3 days later God bought Him back to life again. Through Jesus death God has made a way for all of us to be forgiven.

However, forgiveness is not automatic, like any gift, we must personally receive it.