

Heaven Forgiveness



purpose
& hope



WHY

Jesus had to
die on the

CROSS



1

a short test

Do you want hope, purpose, forgiveness and the assurance of going to heaven? Read on to find out more. And if you haven't seen the 3D animation video depicted on the front cover you can view it here — answersaboutlife.com or scan the QR Code.



Let's start by doing a quick fun test. Score yourself on a scale of 0 to 7 (0 = Never, 3-4 = Sometimes, 7 = Always)

1. I give to charities



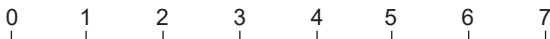
2. I pray



3. I help strangers in need



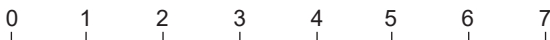
4. I read the Bible



5. I forgive people when they hurt me



6. I love and help family members



7. I am loyal with my friendships



8. I put other people first when they need me



9. I am totally honest in the things I say and do



10. I see the best in people



Total up your score out of a possible 70. Put your score in the box below.

SCORE

68 - 70	Angelic
64 - 67	Saintly
35 - 63	Good
25 - 34	Struggling
under 25	Seek help

Thank you. Most people who sit this test discover they rate as 'good'. However, what most people don't realise is that the standard for entrance to Heaven is one big step past the 'Angelic' rating – it's perfection. Here is why the standard is so high...

God and Heaven are **perfect**

If God is perfect and Heaven is perfect, how can people who are not perfect, go to live with God? Logically, it would seem impossible. Yet, there is a way for people to get to Heaven, regardless of their imperfections. Let's start by talking about our souls.

1 The Soul

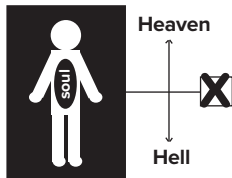
All people have a soul. Your soul is the non-material (unseen) part of you that lives on after you die. By non-material we mean that it cannot be x-rayed or viewed with the natural eye. Your soul is the life-force within you. It's the unseen part inside you that makes you uniquely 'you'.



Jesus warned that if you forfeit your soul, you have lost something more valuable than the total value of the whole world.* When Jesus said this, He was urging people to think seriously about what really matters in life and the critical issue of life after death. Please consider the following carefully. In this life you may live 60, 70, 80, maybe 90 years. Who knows? But one day you are going to die, ie. life here on Earth is fragile and finite.

2 After death experience

After your body dies, your soul lives on and God will give you a new perfect body. Ultimately we will end up in either Heaven** or Hell. There is no third place.



3 The Problem

The Bible explains that when a person breaks God's perfect moral law (e.g. lied, cheated, hated, etc.), this is recorded on heaven against their name. That list for most of us would be very long! Every wrong thought, attitude and motivation, on top of the things we do or things we should do and don't. If we are honest, we would not want anyone to see that list. But God sees everything, even our thoughts and motivations. We have all broken God's laws***, and have imperfect records. How can we have a relationship with a perfect God or live in Heaven, a perfect place? If God let us in then ultimately Heaven would end up just like Earth. On the surface it seems like no one is

going to make it! This seems harsh, but please read the following illustration.

illustration

Justice and Jesus

Think about someone you really love & care about...

Now this would be terrible, but imagine someone murdered the person you love. After a huge police hunt they catch the murderer, bring him to court and he pleads guilty.

But to everyone's horror, the Judge says "I'm a loving judge, I'm just going to let you off".

Would that sound right to you? No way! Because when someone has broken the law there must be a punishment, otherwise there is no JUSTICE.

In the same way, God has to punish us for the laws we have broken, otherwise He'd be the same as that judge.†

Bible References

*Matthew 16:26 *What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?*

**Matthew 25:46 *Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life*

Other references are: Isaiah 66:24; Luke 16:19-31; Mark 9:43-48

***Romans 3:10 *As it is written, "None are righteous, no, not one"*

† Deuteronomy 32:4 *For all His ways are just, a God of truth and without injustice*

Jude 1:14-15 *Look, the Lord is coming with thousands of His holy ones. He will bring the people of the world to judgement. He will convict the ungodly of all the evil things they have done in rebellion and of all the insults that godless sinners have spoken against Him*

Hebrews 9:27 *... it is destined that each person only dies once and after that comes judgement*

We want justice when it comes to other people but want God to just 'let it slide' when it comes to us. We think we are not too bad. But consider the following questions...

- Have you ever told a lie?

We all have at some stage.

- Have you ever taken something that didn't belong to you; a paper clip or pen, downloaded pirated music etc?

That is stealing.

- Have you ever felt hatred toward someone; even for a moment?

The Bible says if we've been angry with someone in our heart it's the same as murdering them in our hearts.*

- Have you ever used God's or Jesus' Name in a disrespectful way?

This is called blasphemy, disrespecting the One who gave you life.

- Have you always put God first in your life?

No one can claim to always have done this all their life. The Bible calls this idolatry, putting anything in the place of God.

If we went through ALL of God's laws we should all be deeply ashamed, we are guilty.

Obviously we shouldn't be allowed into a perfect Heaven; we deserve punishment. But the good news is that God loves us, wants friendship with us and has made a way possible to be forgiven.

“Good” is a relative term

A mother and daughter are going down the road in the car. The daughter says, “Look Mum, that sheep in the green field looks so white.” The mother agrees. One week later, the mother and daughter are going down the same road and the same lone sheep is in the same field but this time snow has covered the field. The little girl says, “Mum, the sheep looks so dirty!” The mother explains that the sheep is no more dirty than it was last week. It’s the background that has changed.

*It’s the same with us. When we compare ourselves with ourselves, we look like the clean sheep. But when we compare ourselves with the standard of perfection, we all look dirty.***

Bible References

*Matthew 5:21-22

**Isaiah 64:6 *All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags*

4 Jesus – the solution

Based on what the Bible teaches we could imagine the following happening before Jesus came down to Earth: God looks down and thinks,

'I don't want these beautiful people to go to hell. But they have broken my laws, so there must be a just punishment. So I have a plan! I'll send Jesus to Earth, as a human being, to live a perfect life and to die a cruel, painful death on a cross to take their punishment for them.'

And Jesus did!*

He died and also rose from the dead, proving He is God.

Out of His amazing love for us, Jesus made a way possible to be forgiven, to become part of His family, and have a friendship with God both here on Earth and forever in Heaven. Only Jesus can give you His perfect record and forgive you.** A 'good' record will not be good enough for entry to Heaven. This is why, tragically, some good people (those without Jesus' perfect record) will not go to Heaven.



**Jesus' soul
is perfect**

5 How about you?

Be honest. If everything you have read here is true (and it is, for this is what the Bible teaches, which has never been found to be wrong about anything), and if you died right now, where would you go?

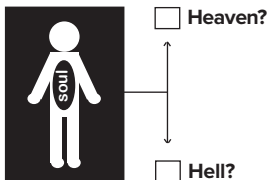


Illustration of God's great love and forgiveness

In some parts of the world it is possible for people to be executed by capital punishment (eg. the electric chair or lethal injection). Imagine you're in the electric chair for the laws you have broken and just before they're about to turn the power on, Jesus bursts into the room and offers to take your place. This is an illustration of the love and forgiveness He is offering you today. But we need to get out of the chair.

Someone has to be punished for the laws we have broken. We can either take the punishment ourselves the other side of death or we can humbly let Jesus take the punishment for us this side of death.

Receiving a perfect record and being completely forgiven for breaking God's Laws doesn't happen automatically. The Bible teaches that for this to happen, we must:

1. Be willing to TURN away from everything that we know to be wrong. God does not expect us to be a perfect person. He loves us even with all our imperfections, fears, and failings, but we must be willing to change.***
2. SURRENDER our lives to Jesus, who is a loving, caring and who only wants the best for us.

The next section of this booklet explains in more detail what it means to 'turn' and 'surrender'.

Bible References

*John 15:13 *Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.*

Romans 5:8 *...but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

**Acts 4:12 *Jesus is the only One who can save people. His name is the only power in the world that has been given to save people. We must be saved through Him*

***2 Peter 3:9 *The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance*



HOW

to be forgiven
‘TURN’ and
‘SURRENDER’



Most people think about entry to Heaven in two ways:

1. All we need to do to get to Heaven is be a good person.
2. If we have done certain bad things (murder, adultery, rape, etc), it is impossible to get to Heaven.

Both these statements are untrue. We have discovered from the first section that no matter how 'good' or 'bad' we are, to enter Heaven we need a perfect record. But to be completely forgiven, we need to 'turn' and 'surrender', which is what it means to become a follower of Jesus. Followers of Jesus call themselves 'Christians'.

Becoming a Christian involves a change of attitude (a new way of thinking), which leads to a change of behaviour. Someone who is considering becoming a Christian must be genuine in agreeing with God on the following seven attitudes. Agreeing with these seven attitudes will show that you are willing to 'turn' and 'surrender' your life to Jesus.

1. I admit that I have broken God's Laws and God would be justified in punishing me.*

I can agree with this

I can't agree with this

2. I am genuinely sorry for breaking God's Laws and I sincerely desire to turn away from the wrong ways of my past (your conscience will alert you to what is right and wrong. Reading the Bible will clarify any uncertainty about this).

I can agree with this

I can't agree with this

3. I understand that Jesus wants to be my friend and to fulfill my deepest needs. If I become a Christian, He will commit Himself to lovingly and gently changing me into the person He wants me to be. I understand that real change will only happen as I co-operate with Him.** Change will sometimes be painful and at times I may fail. When I fail I must be sincere in asking Jesus to forgive me,

knowing that He will. No matter how many times I fail, I'm going to keep living for Him.

I can agree with this

I can't agree with this

4. I acknowledge that Jesus, as God, is loving and absolutely awesome. He is the Supreme Ruler and Creator of the world. Because this is true, I understand that He owns me and has the right, in love, to ask me to do anything that is His Will for me.*** I want to surrender my life to Jesus, have a personal relationship with Him and follow Him with all my heart.

I can agree with this

I can't agree with this

What does it mean to “follow Jesus with all your heart”? It includes a new attitude towards the Bible, the Church and the World. If we are genuine in our decision to follow Jesus we will want to agree with these last three attitudes.

5. **The Bible** I may not know what this Book teaches yet, but I understand it is God's message to me. It shows me how He wants me to live. I want God to help me obey what it says with all my heart.†

I either agree or am willing for God to change me in this area

I can't agree with this

Bible References

*Romans 2:2 *God, in His justice, will punish anyone who does such things*

**Amos 3:3 *Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?*

***Colossians 1:16-17 *For by Him all things were created: things in Heaven and on Earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together*

Ezekiel 18:4 *Every living thing belongs to Me. The life of the parent is Mine, and the life of the child is Mine. The person who sins is the one who will die*

†John 14:21 *Whoever has My commands and obeys them, He is the one who loves Me. He who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I too will love him and show Myself to him*

6. **The Church** I can see that all churches, like all people, have strengths and weaknesses. I want to learn from the strengths and help with the weaknesses. I will start going to church regularly and contribute to the life of it.*

I either agree or am

willing for God to

change me in this area

I can't agree with this

7. **The World** All people in the world have needs (eg **physical** – food & clothing; **spiritual** – peace with God; **emotional** – acceptance, love & laughter; **relational** – deep & meaningful relationships; **intellectual** – How did the world begin? What is my purpose here on Earth? What happens after death? etc). I want to love people so that these needs, especially the spiritual, can be met.

I either agree or am

willing for God to

change me in this area

I can't agree with this

How did you go? Write in the box what you scored out of seven.

7

If you genuinely agree with all seven attitudes you are ready to begin your life as a Christian by praying carefully and sincerely through the prayer on the next page. If you couldn't agree on one or more of the attitudes, perhaps you need to do some more thinking. Don't give up. Ask God to help you change. He will give you the strength to replace your old attitudes with new ones. If you don't understand these attitudes, ask an enthusiastic Christian to help you. Thinking, asking questions and reading will help you on your journey to becoming a Christian. At some point however, you must agree with all seven

attitudes and begin your relationship with Jesus. Only then will you know the peace of being completely forgiven and of being absolutely sure you will spend your eternity in heaven.

Remember, if you become a Christian, your life will belong to God. You will commit to following Him and let Him, as a loving God, rule over you. He will help you do this.

After considering this carefully, are you ready to commit fully to becoming a Christian?

We have put together a prayer for you, which will help you start your new life as a Christian and your relationship with Jesus. You should conclude your prayer by asking God to come into your life and fill you with His Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will help you to live to the fullest the new life you have chosen. A suggested way to do this is on the following page.

Bible Reference

**Hebrews 10:24-25 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. 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. Another reference is: 1 John 2:19*

“ *Dear Jesus. I'm sorry for breaking your laws. Thank you for dying on the cross to take my punishment. I want to become a Christian right now. Please give me Your perfect record. I want to turn from everything I know to be wrong and fully commit myself to following You.*

Holy Spirit, I invite You to come into my life, to fill me and empower me to live for God.
Amen

”

Praying this prayer is like going through a gateway – forgiven, cleansed and empowered – to a new life as a follower of Jesus.

What now?

It is extremely important as a new Christian to...

1. Start reading your Bible regularly.
2. Talk to Jesus every day
3. Find a good Christian church immediately. A good church is one where the bible is valued, you come away feeling closer to God, challenged and encouraged. You will sense that the people in the church have a genuine, living, vibrant relationship with Jesus. Make friends with enthusiastic Christians. They will help you live out your decision to become a Christian.
4. Tell people what you have done and encourage them to do the same.

genuineness

There have been people who have just 'ticked the boxes' and 'prayed the prayer' but have not been genuine in their decision to become a Christian. If you are genuine, then points 1-4 above will become part of your life. This will be evidence of your sincerity to follow Jesus. Our hope and prayer for you is that your decision will be genuine, your life will change and that you will experience a close relationship with Jesus.*

It would be good to contact the person who gave you this booklet and let them know what you have done. This will really encourage them. If they didn't leave a phone number or email address, use info@traintoproclaim.com and we will try to get a message to them.

Bible References

**James 2:14 & 17 What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such a faith save him? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead*

John 15:8 This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples

Other references are: Ephesians 2:10; Matthew 3:8 & 10; Acts 26:19-20



HOW

**your life
would change
IF YOU
became a Christian**

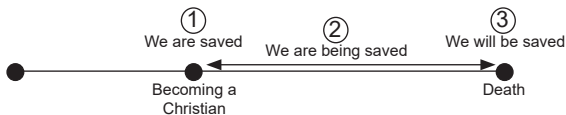


When you become a Christian, the Bible says you are ‘saved’. What does this mean?

The Bible talks about being saved in three ways:

1. We **are** saved
something that happens now and instantly – a point in time
2. We **are being** saved
something that happens over a period of time – a process
3. We **will be** saved
something in the future that happens after death

Look at the time line below. For a Christian the most significant event in life is becoming a Christian.



We are saved *This is a point in time decision and happens instantly when we become a Christian. Our imperfect record is replaced with Jesus’ perfect record and we know for sure we are going to Heaven at death. We are forgiven once and for all. Our records are made perfect. We are saved from the consequence of breaking Gods’ Law, which is eternity in Hell. We make peace with God.

We are being saved **This is a process and happens between becoming a Christian and death. What happens if a Christian fails and does wrong? Our perfect record remains in Heaven. However, in order to keep an open, honest, living relationship with Jesus and with others, we must confess our failures and ask Him to forgive us and clean us afresh. We must not only ask God for forgiveness for the

things we have done wrong, but we must forgive others when they have wronged us.** God helps us to forgive and change. Confession, forgiveness, forgiving and cleansing are vital for the process of 'being saved'. What are we being saved from? We are being saved from ourselves. What most people don't realise is that our worst enemy in this life is ourselves. If we look back over our lives, we can see that many of our problems, heartaches and disappointments are the direct result of our own choices or attitudes.'

But Jesus wants to change us, His intention for all people is that they really live. In the movie "Braveheart", William Wallace (Mel Gibson) said, "All men die, but not all men live." Jesus wants you to really experience a full, vibrant, purposeful life."

Certain things (the negative) take away from this quality of life and certain things (the positive) add to it. Look at the following diagram...

Bible References

*Ephesians 2:8 *You have been saved by grace through believing. You did not save yourselves; it was a gift from God*

2 Corinthians 5:21 *Christ had no sin, but God made him become sin so that in Christ we could become right with God*

**1 Corinthians 1:18 *For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God*

***Ephesians 4:31,32 *Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you*

†Genesis chapter 3

††John 10:10 *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full*

<p>Things in us that take away from life – THE NEGATIVE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lying • cheating • lust • anger • jealousy • pride • greed • selfishness • laziness • resentment and so on 	<p>Things that God wants to bring into our lives – THE POSITIVE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • instead of being a liar, He wants to make you a person of truth. • instead of being a cheat, He wants to make you a person of honesty. • instead of lust, He wants to make you a person of love. • instead of anger, He wants to make you a person of peace. • instead of jealousy, He wants to make you an encourager. • instead of pride, He wants to make you a person of humility. • instead of greed, He wants to make you a person who is generous. • instead of being selfish, He wants to make you kind. • instead of being lazy, He wants to make you hard working. • instead of being bitter and resentful, He wants to make you able to forgive. and so on ...
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Let's face it, when we do the things that take away from life, we feel terrible, hopeless, depressed, purposeless etc. On the other hand, when we are truthful, honest, loving, encouraging, generous, humble, kind, hard working, forgiving, full of vision and hope and so on, we feel truly alive! Right feelings follow right attitudes and actions.

One of the great benefits of becoming a Christian is having God work on changing you. The more you commit to Him, the more you let Him change you, the more **real life** you will experience. His intention is also to restore us to wholeness and heal us from past hurts and disappointments. He does this in four ways: through the Bible, as you read it day by day; through the Holy Spirit, who will live in you and help you; through the love of fellow Christians; and even through suffering. God doesn't want you to suffer, but unfortunately it happens in this broken world we live in, whether you follow Jesus or not. God can use anything to help change you, and can turn a negative into a positive. Through these means He gives us the power to change. It's impossible to **really** change without His power.

As a Christian, you will have a perfect record before God, but you will not become a perfect person on this Earth. You may still fail – lie, cheat, be selfish, lash out in anger etc but over time God will replace

these negative behaviours with the positive. The good news is that your future failures can be confessed, forgiven and cleansed. Your record, made perfect by Jesus, still stands. Thus at death, and only because of Jesus, you can be **absolutely sure** of your forgiveness and of your entry to heaven.

We will be saved* This happens at death and is in the future. Here, the decision we made to become a Christian at some point in our lives, is confirmed or ratified. Instead of going to Hell, we go to Heaven. All suffering and pain finally ceases once and for all.

If you want to become a Christian right now, turn back to page 15.

Bible References

**Romans 5:9-11 So through Christ we will surely be saved from God's anger, because we have been made right with God by the blood of Christ's death. While we were God's enemies, he made friends with us through the death of his Son. Surely, now that we are his friends, he will save us through his Son's life. And not only that, but now we are also very happy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we are now God's friends again.*

Is all this true? How can I know?
Check out the following website ...

www.answersaboutlife.com

SCAN ME



Here you will find answers to questions like ...

What about all the other religions?

How can I know if the Bible is really true?

If God is love, why is there so much suffering?

Can't I just live a good moral life?

Don't all paths lead to God?

But isn't evolution true?

Does God even exist?

*The big difference between Jesus and any other religious
'guru' is the claim that He rose from the dead.*

How do I know this really happened?

This booklet is endorsed by people from mainstream Christian churches and organisations as a clear and accurate summary of the message of the Bible and the Christian faith.

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