

The First Step

One thing that anyone who takes a sincere look at the Bible will discover is that God is not a God of formulas or religiosity, of stuffy theories and meaningless rituals.

He is a God of *relationships*. The sin that marked Adam and Eve for death was disobedience, yes, but the grave result of that sin was the wedge driven between them and the God who loved and created them.

Adam and Eve suffered. And God grieved.

By our outright disobedience or by our disinterest in the God who made us, we humans have carried on that pattern to the present time.

Even before those early days of creation, God knew the world would need a Savior, a relationship-restorer. Jesus, God's Son, was His choice. The perfect choice.

The Bible makes it clear that God loves us and wants to enjoy a rich and meaningful relationship with us—for our benefit and His glory. But it also makes it clear that the wedge of our selfishness, our indifference, our dishonesty, and our moral failures creates a separation that nothing in our power can bridge.

Jesus is the only One who has never disappointed God the Father. He alone is sinless, and that makes Him the ideal connector.

By living a sinless life and then dying on the cross for us, Jesus bore the price our sins charged to our account. By rising from the dead, He conquered the fear of death and its power over us. He offered to erase our debt and make possible the intimate Father/child relationship our hearts crave. And they do crave the connection. We understand that truth when we allow ourselves to grow quiet enough to listen to the silent cry deep within us. God made us that way—to hunger for Him.

In our Heartbeat broadcasts and printed materials, you've seen hope-giving thoughts, life-affirming ideas, and practical help drawn from God's Word.

*"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."*

—Romans 10:9

But God's promises and His graces are reserved for those who accept, acknowledge, and embrace the gift He offered us through His Son, a gift that includes unshakable inner peace, power to live meaningfully and fully and wisely, and a secure future in heaven after death.

Connecting with God the Father through Jesus Christ His Son is the first step. The starting point.

That connection is made through a heartfelt commitment to Him and admitting our need to have our sins forgiven. After we make a decision to follow Jesus, then real life begins.

“He who has the Son has eternal life,” the Bible tells us. **“And he who has not the Son, has not life”** (1 John 5:12).

The book of Romans in the Bible notes how we can take that first step. **“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”** (Romans 10:9).

Talking to God to make that connection and accept the gift of His Son, the gift of forgiveness, the gift of eternal life can sound as simple as this:

Father God, I know I need You. I know I've sinned against You. I accept the forgiveness You've offered me through Your Son, Jesus. Thank You for allowing Jesus to bear the penalty for my sins and make it possible for me to know You. I want to live for You. My life is Yours.

If you just now prayed that prayer or used your own words to commit your life to the Lord, please let us know. We want to cheer you on, to support you in your decision to follow Jesus. And we'd appreciate the opportunity to send you additional, Bible-centered materials to guide you through the early days of your relationship with the Lord.

We're rejoicing with you!

