

**God's Acceptance
of *Good* People**
(like you and me)

You're a Pretty Good Person, Right?

With that assumption, explore a few related questions and concepts below...

Does God Exist?

Do you believe there is a God? If so, why?

Why do you believe there is a God, a heaven, maybe a hell too? Most people do - even those who have never been exposed to Christianity. It seems human beings intuitively know it to be true.

Romans 1:20-22 sheds light on this.

Rom 1:19-22

(19) ... that which may be known of God is manifest in them [in mankind]; for God hath shewed *it* unto them.

(20) For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

(21) Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

(22) Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

If there is a God (and there **is** - even nature makes this obvious), what makes a person think that they can define God any way they want? If a being exists, it exists as it actually is, not necessarily as we may want it to be. What makes a human being think that the terms of a relationship with a vastly superior being would be according to human whim or dictate?

It seems to reason that if God expects human beings to have some kind of relationship with him in this life, and/or

beyond, that he would give us some clear information about himself, and what that relationship should look like.

What can we know about God?

There is vast evidence that the Bible, although physically penned by men, is literally authored by God. It is impossible to have been authored by any group of authors, or even a single author that was not supernatural, outside the bounds of time, etc. Highly skilled investigative reporting, scientific and legal experts of an atheistic view point have set out to disprove this and have been converted from atheism to Christianity simply by the overwhelming evidence they found. God has not only authored the Bible, but he preserved it for us. The Bible contains the information that God has provided for us to know who he is and how he relates to us as human beings.

A Big Problem

Contrary to what many may want to think, we are not “good enough” just because we may be kind, gentle, loving, never-killed-anyone, etc. The Bible actually says that we are all in serious trouble.

Romans 3:10

(10) As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

God's standards are so high that even when we think we are doing pretty well, he sees through to the very heart, sees all our motives and more. His view of our own goodness, our own righteousness may be startling:

Isaiah 64:6a

(6) But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags

God reinforces this “we're all in the same boat, and it's sinkng” truth, and tells of the consequences here:

Romans 3:23

(23) For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Romans 6:23

(23) For the wages of sin is death....

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9

(7) ... when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,

(8) In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

(9) Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

God **is** loving, gracious, etc., but he is no less holy and just. He will carry out justice. His holiness demands that falling short of his standard of righteousness (the standard is perfection – a standard no man but Jesus Christ has ever met), results in death (not just physical death).

Ezekiel 18:20

(20) The **soul** that sinneth, it shall die.

That does not sound like good news, and it paints a grim picture for mankind.

“Still, aren't I good enough? If I look at the summary instructions God gave, the Ten Commandments, I'm sure I stack up pretty well...” Really? Have you ever told a lie? Probably more than once, right? Have you ever stolen something, regardless of its value? Have you ever taken the Lord's name in vain? That one, which may seem minor to many, God actually put way up on his list of commandments, 3 *notches* higher than murder! Have you ever looked at a man or woman with lust? Jesus said “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” Regardless of how good our general behavior is, by God’s standards, most of us could be sadly classified as liars, thieves, blasphemers, adulterers, etc. As stated earlier and reaffirmed by the following verse the eternal consequences are **not** good.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10

(9) Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, (10) Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

The Bible says that the ultimate purpose of the Law, the Ten Commandments, is not to make us good, but to show us that we are not. Speaking of the purpose of the Law, Paul wrote this:

Romans 3:19b-20

(19) ... that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. (20) Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

If we do not want to be taken by surprise at the end of our physical lives (and find ourselves in a terrible place), we need to take an initial step toward truth and understanding by conforming our assessment of ourselves to the view that our Creator has of us.

Worse News Yet

God’s holiness demands perfect righteousness and zero unrighteousness.

1 Kings 8:61

(61) Let your heart therefore be perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments...

Nowhere does the Bible indicate that our acceptance before God is based on how things hang in a balance, or that there is an accounting where a net positive or net negative is considered by God. Even if our good deeds could outweigh our bad, we would still be in trouble, for perfection would not be attained.

Job 9:20

(20) If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: *if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.*

As mentioned earlier, God indicates that “the wages of sin is death.” It is also stated this way in Hebrews 9:22, “without shedding of blood is no remission [of sin].” Sin, any amount of it, cannot be pardoned or forgiven without the payment of shed blood, i.e. death. Well, if God is so holy that I have to be destroyed/die to be forgiven, what's the point?!

Good News

Fortunately God does not leave us without hope. He has provided a way for us, and it is not complicated (although it does involve swallowing our pride). Only the first half of Romans 6:23 was quoted earlier, but completing that verse we begin to see what God has in mind as a solution to our trouble. Here is the verse in its entirety.

Romans 6:23

(23) For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Fundamental to God's expressed opinion (i.e. the truth), is that we need to actually believe the truth of our own unworthiness, and that we stop thinking that we can be good enough (re-read Romans 3:10 and Romans 6:23). The

apostle Paul, before he became a Christian, was a very righteous Jew. He was a *good* man by Jewish standards, and certainly he felt he was *good enough* to be approved and accepted of God. He learned, however, that God had something in store for mankind not based on how good a person was, not a performance-based acceptance.

Here is what he wrote to the church in Philippi:

Philippians 3:4-9

(4) Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:

(5) Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

(6) Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

(7) But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

(8) Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ,

(9) And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

When Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus, he wrote this clarifying statement:

Ephesians 2:8-9

(8) For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:

(9) Not of works, lest any man should boast.

The following verses also bring added clarity.

Romans 4:2-6

(2) For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God.

(3) For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

(4) Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. [meaning if eternal life came as a reward for our goodness, God would actually OWE it to us – it would be of debt; but that is not the case, rather eternal life is freely given – it is of GRACE]

(5) But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

(6) Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

Romans 3:21-22a

(21) But now the righteousness of God without the law [the performance-based Law of Moses] is manifested, ...

(22) Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe:

Please notice the critical underlined phrase in that last verse. The gift of righteousness (God counting a person righteous regardless of their performance (without the law)) is available to all, **but** it is only upon all “them that believe.”

It is not enough to simply hear of, or know, this information.

For the righteousness of God to be applied to a person, the person must truly believe (agree & trust).

And when a person does agree with God, believing what he says about the state of man and God's solution, trusting

God's solution (the sacrifice of his Son Jesus Christ, in our stead), an amazing thing happens. Here is Paul's description of that in his letter to the church that was in Rome.

Romans 3:24-27

(24) Being justified [being reckoned just or righteous] freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

(25) Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation [fully satisfying payment] through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

(26) To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

(27) Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

Romans 10:9

(9) ... if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

God has a prescribed a way to extend grace to us, as just shown. His grace does not extend just on whims, in response to special circumstances (oh, she did not really understand or he did not get things explained to him well, etc.). No, God only extends his great mercy in such a way that it does not compromise his other attributes. He cannot, for example, extend grace at the expense of his justice.

God's ability to execute justice and simultaneously extend grace is based on the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ. It may sound a bit complicated, but God brilliantly came up with a plan whereby when a person trusts in Jesus, the Holy Spirit baptizes/immerses that person into Jesus Christ, and Jesus literally becomes guilty of that person's sin. So when Jesus died on the cross, he paid for your sins, satisfying the

justice of God. Here are some of the words God used in the Bible to explain this:

2 Corinthians 5:21

(21) For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

1 Peter 3:18

(18) For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

Isaiah 53:5

(5) But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

So Now What?

We first need to lay aside our pride and recognize that no merit of our own can win favor with God. Then, knowing that our acceptance with God can come only by his grace and through our faith in his Son Jesus Christ, we can be spared from an eternity separated from all that is good.

Only then, does the wonderful message of Romans 5:1 apply to us: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

As soon as we put our trust in Jesus Christ alone, God's Holy Spirit seals us such that nothing from then forward can ever separate us from God and his love.

Romans 8:35,37-39

(35) Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

...

(37) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

(38) For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

(39) Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Take God at his word, believe him, rely on his provision for counting you fit for heaven, and claim His promise regarding your salvation.

Would you like to put your trust in Jesus Christ and accept the gift of salvation he offers?

If your answer is no

One of the few guarantees in life is that we each will eventually die. But after these bodies of flesh die, our soul and spirit persist, and a simple decision of faith determines what that ongoing state will be like. Our only time to make this decision is while we are yet alive in these bodies. In the Bible it is written in Hebrews that "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." (Heb 9:27). Only you can make this decision. Please reconsider, and choose life (by putting your faith in Jesus Christ) while there is still time.

If your answer is yes

You can simply declare to God that you are relying on Jesus Christ for your salvation. There are no special words to say to him – it is your faith in Jesus Christ that activates your salvation. You can say something like:

"God, I may have deceived myself into thinking my own goodness was *good enough*. But I know that of my own self, I could never stand before your pure and perfect judgment.

God, I know that I have sinned against you and am deserving of punishment. But I now understand and believe that Jesus Christ took the punishment that I deserve, so that through faith in Him, I can be forgiven. With your help, I place my trust in You alone for salvation. Thank You for Your wonderful grace and forgiveness - the gift of eternal life! Amen!"

Resources:

<https://GodsSoulSolution.yolasite.com/questions-and-answers.php>

