

# KEY QUESTIONS

## Which CHURCH Saves?

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### Missionary at Large

Are you one of the countless people who have wondered about this? Interestingly, the Bible says nothing about a particular church saving anyone. Because church *membership* has nothing whatsoever to do with how you get to Heaven!

The Bible tells of many people who had never joined a church, yet they went to be with the Lord. *Hebrews 11* lists Abel, Enoch, Noah, and Abraham (among many others) who were saved, not by church membership, but by having faith in the promises of God. The thief on the cross had no opportunity to join a church, but because he trusted in Jesus, the Lord assured him: "Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise." *Luke 23:43*

### HOW TO GET TO HEAVEN

The Bible nowhere says that joining a church assures us of Heaven. Rather it repeatedly tells us that the only way we can be with God forever is by having a personal, intimate, life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ. In *John 14:6*, Jesus says: "***I am the way***, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Not by a certain church, but by trusting Christ!

There is nothing we can do to *earn* our way into Heaven. Jesus has already done all that we need, but what we must do is admit that we do not deserve heaven because we are rebellious sinners:

- "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." *Romans 3:23*
- "There is none righteous, no not one."

*Romans 3:10*

- "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way." *Isaiah 53:6*

It's not hopeless, however, because God has offered us a way:

- "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." *Romans 10:9-10*

- "God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." *II Peter 3:9*

*John 3:1 6-17* tells us why and how God saves us:

- "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved."

- "...believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." *Acts 16:31*

To "believe" means to put your total trust in Jesus personally. Absolutely nothing is said about church membership or certain church rituals being required. In fact, membership on church rolls did not exist in apostolic times at all.

### SO WHY GO TO CHURCH

Faithful church attendance is important, even, commanded, as in *Hebrews 10:25*:

"Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is."

Many other passages in the Bible also indicate that we are to meet together regularly with other believers for:

- spiritual fellowship
- Bible study
- praying for others
- witnessing
- singing praises
- helping the needy
- sharing what Jesus has done for us
- communion service (the Lord's Supper)
- checking doctrine (teachings), etc.

While we do not have space here, you might wish to read some of the following passages for yourself to learn why it is important for every Christian to attend a Bible-believing church regularly:

- *Acts 2:47; 14:23-27; 17:11, 20:7-28*
- *Romans 16:1-23*
- *I Corinthians 1:2; 4:17; 11:18; 12:28*
- *Ephesians 1:22; 5:23 -32*
- *Colossians 1:18-24; 4:15-16*
- *Revelation, chapters 1-2.*

Have we confessed to God our sinful rebelliousness? Have we asked for the blood of Jesus shed on the cross to be our payment for being forgiven? Do you now have the assurance of being with the Father and your loved ones in Heaven? If not, please read the next section: DO YOU KNOW GOD?

“Thou ungodly one,  
who hears or readest these words!  
Thou vile, helpless, miserable sinner!  
I charge thee before God,  
the Judge of all,  
go straight unto him with all thy  
ungodliness..., as altogether ungodly,  
guilty, lost, destroyed,  
deserving and dropping into hell; and  
thou shalt then find favour in his sight  
and knoweth that  
he justifieth the ungodly.  
The Lord hath need of thee...oh, come  
quickly! Believe in the Lord Jesus,  
and thou, even thou, art reconciled  
unto God.”

*John Wesley*

## DO YOU KNOW GOD

How can you know *God personally*? Every person’s sinful, selfish rebelliousness separates him or her from God. Therefore it is vitally important that each of us must be sorry for our wrongdoing, ask Jesus to forgive us, and to believe that He does!

Consider the following verses that show how each of us comes to know God:

- “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” *Romans 3:23* “But we are all as an unclean

thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags...” *Isaiah 64:6*

- “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” *I John 1:9*-- “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. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” *Romans 10:9-10*

- “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.” *John 3:16-17*

Do you know to “believe on Jesus” means to admit that Jesus is **God**, and to put your trust totally in Him? *Acts 16:31* assures us: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved....”

### WHAT YOU DO:

- Agree with God about your wrongdoing and that you need to change. *I John 1:9*
  - Believe that Jesus Christ is your Lord and risen Saviour. *Romans 10:9*
  - Receive Jesus Christ into your life. *John 1:12*
- All of this you do on the authority of God’s Word—the Bible. YOU do these things because you take God at His Word.

### WHAT GOD DOES:

- Jesus Christ becomes your personal Saviour and Lord. *John 3:16*
- Jesus Christ forgives your sins as He said He would in His Word. *I John 1:9*
- You are now His child. *John 1:12*
- You are now a new person. *II Cor. 5:17*
- You now have the Holy Spirit in-dwelling or living inside you. *John 14:16-17*
- You now have eternal life. *I John 5:12*

All of this God does for you because you take Him as His word! You believe God means what He said!

### WHAT YOU DO AS A FOLLOWER OF JESUS:

1. Read the Bible daily. *Acts 20:32, I Tim. 2:15*
2. Talk to God (pray) every day. *Heb. 4:16, John 16:24*
3. Obey the Bible’s teaching. *John 14:23*
4. Tell others about Jesus. *Romans 10:9*