

# What is My Responsibility to God?

## Life's Most Important Questions

Is there a God? If so, what is He like and what does He require of me? These are the important questions of life. These questions address the very purpose of our existence as human beings. To deny the existence of God is irrational in view of the complexity and order of the universe. There is obviously intelligence involved in the detailed, purposeful design observed in nature. Random processes cannot explain it. Human beings have a highly complex design, including a moral conscience (an internal monitor of right and wrong). If there is no God, there is no right or wrong. What makes murder wrong? Because it hurts others? What makes hurting others wrong? We do not assign guilt to animals for hurting each other. We as human beings have a moral awareness because our Creator has given this to us for a purpose.

## Has God Spoken?

What kind of God would give His creation a moral conscience, but give them no clear idea of their purpose and responsibility to Him and each other? Has God spoken to us? The history of ancient Israel is filled with promises of a Savior who would come from God. Approximately 2000 years ago, a man named Jesus claimed to be this promised One from God. The record of the nation of Israel and Jesus is comprised in 66 books which are commonly referred to as the scriptures. According to the scriptures, Jesus made many extraordinary claims. Some of them are:

### Jesus claimed to be the only way to the Father

*I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (John 14:6)*

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. (John 10:1, 7-9)*

### Jesus claimed to be the light of the world

*Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. (John 8:12)*

### Jesus promised to give eternal life to His sheep

*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. (John 10:27, 28)*

### Jesus said a person must lose his life for Him in order to truly find life

*He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it. (Matthew 10:39)*

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## Jesus promised to manifest Himself to those who love Him

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. (John 14:21, 24)

## Jesus explained why some people do not hear God's words

He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God. (John 8:47)

## Jesus claimed to be the long-promised Savior prophesied in the Old Testament scriptures

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. (John 5:39)

And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. (Luke 24:44)

## Jesus claimed to be one with the Father

I and my Father are one. (John 10:30)

Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? (John 14:9)

## Jesus claimed to exist before Abraham

Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. (John 8:58)

## Jesus claimed to be greater than Jonas

The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here. (Matthew 12:41)

## Jesus claimed to be greater than Solomon

The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here. (Matthew 12:42)

## Jesus promised to raise Himself bodily from the dead

Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. (John 2:19-21)

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*Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father. (John 10:17,18)*

### Jesus promised to come again

*And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. (John 14:3)*

### Jesus promised He would judge the world

*The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew 13:41,42)*

*Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. (Matthew 7:20-27)*

### Jesus promised to be with His followers to the end of the world

*Matthew 18:20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*

*And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (Matthew 28:18-20)*

### Jesus accepted worship

*While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live. (Matthew 9:18)*

*Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God. (Matthew 14:33)*

*And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. (Matthew 28:9)*

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## Who is Jesus Christ?

For some reason, most people today regard Jesus as a great moral leader, or a great teacher, or just one prophet among many other prophets of like kind. Most religions that are considered “nonchristian” even say this about Jesus. The problem with these positions is clear: Jesus Himself claimed to be much more than this. He claimed to be greater than the past prophets and kings. He claimed to be one with the Father and to be the only way to the Father. He claimed to be greater than Jonah and Solomon. He promised He would raise Himself from the dead. He promised He would come again and judge the world. He accepted worship, which He Himself said should be given only to God (Matt 4:10). Any man who is just a “good teacher” does not make claims such as these. No other prophets made these claims. If Jesus is not who he claimed to be, he was certainly not a good teacher or moral leader. If Jesus is not who he claimed to be, he was a liar, intentionally deceiving people, or a lunatic, who was deluded himself. What arrogance and deceit if He is not who he claimed. But if Jesus was indeed Lord, as he claimed to be, it is important that we understand what he said about Himself and our responsibility to God. The same question Jesus asked the Pharisees rings down the corridors of time to us, “What think ye of Christ?” (Matt 22:42). It is the same question Pilot asked during Jesus’ trial, “What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?” (Matt 27:22).

## The Problem

Unfortunately, many people today have dismissed Jesus Christ without really understanding Him or his message. Their rejection of Christ has been unjustly biased by their observance of “Christians” who professed, or profess, to follow Christ. Regrettably, many who profess to be followers of Christ are not. However, the hypocrisy and errors of such people do not in any way detract from Jesus Christ. Jesus even warned there would be such people. A person’s decision about receiving or rejecting Christ should not be based on prejudice, ignorance, and misinformation. If a person chooses to reject Jesus’ claim as his Savior and Lord, that person should at least attempt to have a clear understanding of Jesus before he makes such a decision. There are numerous excuses offered by people for not trusting in Christ. But if you are reading this paper, and you have access to the scriptures, what will be your excuse?

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Our problem lies in the fact that God is holy and we are unholy. God cannot condone sin without compromising his own holiness and righteousness. Our sins must be punished. God has never forgiven any sin unless there is a proper and just payment for that sin. God chose to show his great love for us by becoming a man and taking away our sins. He did this by giving his only begotten Son to live a sinless life and voluntarily die for our sins (John 3:16; Isa 53:4-12; Dan 9:26; 2Cor 5:21; Gal 3:13; 1Cor 15:3; 2Cor 5:21; 1Pet 2:24; 1John 2:2).

Having paid our sin debt on a cruel Roman cross approximately 2000 years ago, God offers forgiveness and eternal life as a free gift to all who will receive it (Rom 5:18; 6:23; John 3:16;

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John 1:12). With Jesus having returned to the Father after his resurrection from the dead, God has sent His Holy Spirit into the world to reprove the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to testify of Jesus (John 15:26; 16:7-14).

Man's responsibility is to receive God's free gift of eternal life by believing on Jesus Christ (John 3:16,18,36; 6:47; 11:26; 20:31; Acts 16:31; Rom 4:5; 1John 5:5).

*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. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (John 3:16-18)*

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. (John 6:47)*

*Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: John 11:26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? (John 11:25,26)*

*And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name. (John 20:30,31)*

Believing in Jesus Christ is to believe that he died for your sins and that he rose from the dead (1Cor 15:3-5). Believing on Jesus Christ is also a commitment. It is more than intellectually believing some facts about Jesus. It is trusting in him with all your heart (Rom 10:9,10; Acts 8:37; Luke 24:25; Rom 6:17; Rom 15:12; 2Cor 3:4; Psalm 32:10). It is to rely on him alone to save you from your sins. True belief in Christ involves repentance--a change of mind about sin and Christ (Luke 13:3; 18:9-14; Acts 17:30). This belief requires an humbling of one's self. It requires approaching God as a child who utterly depends on his father's provision (Matt 18:3,4). This means God gets the glory for our salvation--not man. Believing on Jesus Christ is the only way we can receive eternal life. If we could earn a right relationship with God by our own good works or righteousness, then Jesus' cruel death would not have been necessary (Rom 4:4,5; Eph 2:8,9). Our good works are just not good enough. God is holy and his standards are much higher than we can attain by our good works. Furthermore, our good works do not pay for our sins. Even with our legal justice system, a murderer is not acquitted because he has done many good works for his mother. Regardless of how many good works one has done, when the law is broken, a penalty must be paid. God has paid the penalty for us. Therefore, the ultimate offense to God is to refuse His sacrifice and believe instead, "I am good enough without Jesus Christ".

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## After a person believes on Christ

Once a person believes in Jesus Christ, God then deals with that person as a spiritual baby who needs to grow. Through trust and obedience, a person can grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. God's ultimate purpose is that each person be conformed to the image of Christ. In other words, God desires that we glorify him by becoming more and more like Jesus in our thoughts, words, and deeds. Good works should become more abundant. Character flaws and sinful habits should diminish as our love for God and other people grows. This should be a continual process throughout our lives. Many other things could be said about the responsibilities and blessings of a believer. The purpose here was to give the overarching purpose of the believer's life after believing in Christ.

## Food for Thought

This paper was written to provoke thought about our very purpose in life and our responsibility to God. It presents Jesus Christ as the key figure in God's plan to reconcile us to himself. To summarize, God's love for us was demonstrated by Jesus Christ sacrificially dying for us and conquering death. In light of this great act of love and power, God has communicated to us what our response should be: Believe in Jesus Christ.

This paper has dealt with the most crucial matters of eternal life and death. The important thing this paper does is to draw your attention to the claims of Jesus Christ. Is he who he claims to be or not? You may not be prepared at this point to accept the claims of Jesus and trust him as your Savior and Lord. If not, would you be willing to pursue a study of Christ? If what Jesus said about Himself is true, your life and eternal destiny depends on your assessment of Him. The historical account of Christ's life is presented in the four books in the Bible which begin the New Testament section. Matthew, Mark, and Luke present Jesus' work and ministry in a strong Jewish context, emphasizing Jesus' role as the legitimate heir to the throne of David. John emphasizes Jesus' role as Savior of the entire world. Thus, if you are not very familiar with the Old Testament scriptures, the book of John is a good place to start. The book of Romans presents a detailed explanation of Christ's ministry and how it affects us. This is recommended as the second book to read.

*When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, **But whom say ye that I am?** And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. (Matthew 16:13-17)*