

The Three Books

Are You a True Christian?

Aids for the New Convert

The Secret of the Christian Life

The Discipleship Series

Are you a true
Christian?

Book One of Three to Help New Believers

5. Have you repented of your sins? Have you believed on Christ to save you?

6. What will this mean in your life?

7. Has the Holy Spirit testified with your spirit that you are a child of God?

8. If you sin in the future, does that mean that you are no longer a Christian?

9. What will you do if you sin in the future?

10. What does 1 John 1:9 say? Can you write it below from memory?

(Please note that praying a prayer does not necessarily make one a Christian. Nor does not praying prevent you from becoming one. To become a Christian requires repentance and believing on Christ. As best as this author can discover in the Bible, water baptism was the act that told God, Satan, and the world that one had repented and become a follower of Jesus Christ. We are not saying that water baptism is necessary for salvation, but it is the biblical method of showing one's decision to repent and follow Christ.)

Now, tell the person who gave you this book whether or not you have truly repented. If you still have questions, talk to him or her about your concerns.

May God bless you as you enter into a new life in Christ.

Study Questions

1. What is sin?
2. What is the penalty for sin?
3. What is repentance?
4. What sins have you recognized in your life?

Are You A True Christian?

Congratulations! You've recently made the most important decision of your life: to accept Jesus Christ as Lord of your life. We want to make sure that you have a good foundation for your Christian life, so we have prepared three little booklets for you to help you get established.

This first booklet has the simple goal of wanting to make sure that you are truly a Christian. People "accept Christ" for many different reasons: some want happiness, others do it to please friends of family. There are countless reasons why someone may want to be a Christian, but there is only one reason that really matters. The Bible says,

1 Timothy 1:15

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.*

Jesus did not come to make you happy, to give you peace, to remove your fears, or any other reason, except to save sinners. For the true Christian, Jesus *does* promise to give peace, to remove fears, and to fill with joy. But if you became a Christian for one of those reasons, then you may not be a true Christian.

To be a true Christian, you have to deal honestly with your sins, realizing that you – no matter how good of a person others may think you are – are a sinner in the eyes of a Holy God. This isn't to make you look bad in the sight of others. It is to cause you to realize that without Jesus you are criminal in God's sight. That is the bad news. The Good News is that Jesus came into this world to save this kind of person.

Finding out what the Bible says about us, without Jesus, is harsh. It's difficult to accept, and often people don't want to believe it. But what the Bible says is true, nonetheless.

This is what God says about your heart if you are not a true Christian:

Jeremiah 17:9

The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

In this booklet we will look at four things:

1. What sin is
2. What sin is in your life
3. What repentance is
4. The result of repentance in your life

What Sin Is

Here's what the Bible says sin is:

1 John 3:4

Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, *sin is lawlessness.*"

Which law is this referring to? It is not referring to man's law, a government's law, so that you will get in trouble with the police. It is talking about God's Law, which is given in the Holy Bible.

You may have been told how much God loves you, and it's true; He does love you. But God is also a righteous Judge, and one day you will stand before Him as a guilty criminal because you have broken His Law. It's this fact that we need to look at in our own lives.

If, in fact, you are guilty of breaking God's Law, and are a criminal in His eyes, a sinner, then you need to know what the sentence for breaking God's Law (sin) is:

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death.

This isn't referring to natural death, but to:

Revelation 21:8

But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars-- their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. *This is the second death.*

This death is referring to hell. All sinners are destined to go to hell as just punishment for their sins. That is why it is so vitally important to deal with your sins here and now. There is a way of escape, but we will come to that later on.

The Bible says:

When you sin, Satan may come to you and say, "HA! You're not a Christian. A Christian would *never* do *that kind* of thing." When Satan says something like that to you, say,

"Satan. It is written, 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from *all* unrighteousness.' Leave me now, in the name of Jesus Christ!"

Then pray something like this to God,

"Father, Your Word promises me that when I sin, I can confess those sins and be not only forgiven, but cleansed from all unrighteousness. Please forgive me for committing (*name the sin*). Thank You for Your forgiveness and cleansing. In the Name of Jesus, I accept Your forgiveness and cleansing. Hallelujah!"

When you sin, immediately ask God to forgive you. At the end of each day, review the past 24 hours and see if there are any sins you've committed that have not been confessed. If there are, confess the sins, ask God to forgive you, and ask Jesus to live His holy life through you. Be willing to make restitution (pay back) or apologize to someone for treating or doing them wrong, if necessary.

This does not, however, give you liberty to sin. Don't think, "I'll sin now and ask for forgiveness later." Do not play games with God. Seek to live a holy life by the power of the Holy Spirit Who lives in you (more about this in Book 3). Constantly talk to your Father in Heaven, asking for His help to live a life that is pleasing to Him.

What Now?

If you've come to the conclusion that you've never truly repented, and therefore are not a true Christian, you must decide whether or not you will repent right now and ask God to forgive you for your sins, and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness. More than that, ask Jesus to come into your life and live His life through you, changing you, making you more and more like Him.

If you truly desire to repent, then you may want to pray a prayer like this:

"Dear God. I have broken Your commandments. If I faced the Law on Judgment Day it would send me to Hell. Please forgive my sins. This day I turn from them and turn to Jesus Christ, trusting Him as my Savior and Lord. Thank You that He died for me and rose again on the third day. I will read the Bible daily, and obey what I read. In Jesus' Name I pray. Amen."

In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.’

“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

Christianity is not a religion like Buddhism or Islam. Rather, it is a relationship with Jesus Christ, a relationship with the one true living God, the God Who created the heavens and the earth. If you do not have a knowledge of this relationship, then you *may not be* a true Christian...

Don’t play games with this. Don’t pretend to be a Christian if you really are not. There are different reasons why someone may pretend to be a Christian:

- They may desire to marry a Christian, so they will pretend
- They may want to please a foreigner that is helping them with English
- They may want to please their friends, or ‘become a Christian’ because all of their friends are
- They may want to “try it out” before committing to become a true Christian
- Or, they may truly not understand what it means to be a Christian. They don’t mean to pretend, but that’s what they’re doing.

Once you have dealt honestly with your sins, and truly repented of your sins, receiving God’s forgiveness and cleansing, and the Holy Spirit has testified with your spirit that you are a child of God —

Romans 8:16

The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

— then you need to never fear sin again. As you allow Jesus to live His life through you, will find more and more victory over sin. If you used to be a liar, you will find Jesus Christ telling the truth through you. If you were filled with hate, Jesus will begin loving other people through you. If you were formerly impatient, Jesus will cause you to be patient. If you formerly had no peace, you will find His peace and joy flooding your life...as you allow Him to live His life through you, and as you daily walk with Him.

What happens if you sin after this? Does that mean that you are not a true Christian or that God doesn’t love you or hasn’t forgiven you? **No!**

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Memorize 1 John 1:9!

Romans 3:23

For *all* have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Isaiah 53:6

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way.

Romans 3:10-12

As it is written:

"There is no one righteous, not even one;
there is no one who understands,
no one who seeks God.
All have turned away,
they have together become worthless;
there is no one who does good, not even one."

That means that each one of us individually has broken God’s Law. We are all wicked, and each one of us will be sentenced to the “lake of fire” – that is, unless there is a way of escape. Fortunately, there is a way of escape! (More about the escape later on.)

What Sin Is In Your Life

If I tell you that you are a sinner...a criminal in God’s eyes...a bad person... you may get angry with me. You may disagree, yell at me, and walk off without listening to what I have to say. But if God tells you that you are a sinner, then it would be wise to listen to Him. In order to show us just how wicked we are, God gave us Ten Commandments for us to use to examine ourselves with. Look at these Ten Commandments and see if you truly are a sinner.

As we go through the Ten Commandments, honestly review your life and think about when you may have broken the specific commandment. You may think this is something to condemn you, to make you feel like a bad person. At the end of this exercise, we hope that if you realize that you are still a sinner before the eyes of a Holy God who judges in righteousness, you will fall on your face and cry out for the mercy, love and forgiveness that He very much desires to pour out on you. The Bible says,

Romans 5:8

But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Remember,

1 Timothy 1:15

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

As you read each commandment, ask yourself if you have kept or broken it, and *circle the answer*. Answer honestly.

1. "You shall have no other gods before Me."

Do you love God with all of your heart, mind, soul, and strength? Is He first in all areas of your life? Does the love you have for Him make your love for wife, husband, children, parents, boyfriend, girlfriend, and friends seem as hate in comparison?

If you love anyone or anything more than God, then you have broken this commandment.

Judge yourself: Kept or Broken
(circle one)

2. "You shall not make for yourself any graven image."

This means that you shouldn't make a god to suit yourself, either with your hands or with your mind. It is easy to make a god who ignores your sin, who doesn't mind your lust, greed, or lies. But, this is not the God of the Bible.

Your image of God is a figment of your imagination--an idol--until you see how He is described in the Bible. The Law reveals His utter holiness, supreme righteousness, and absolute truth.

Kept or Broken
(circle one)

3. "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain."

How often have you exclaimed "My God!?" This is blasphemy, and God will declare you guilty when you stand before Him.

Kept or Broken
(circle one)

4. "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

Do you set aside one day in seven to worship God with others?

Kept or Broken
(circle one)

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...If anyone loves Me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me will not obey My teaching. These words you hear are not My own; they belong to the Father Who sent Me."

An evidence of your repentance and of your love for Jesus is obedience to what He has commanded.

Please understand, Christianity is not a list of do and don'ts ("Do this..." "Do that..." "Don't do this..." "Don't do that..."). It is a relationship with the Living God and with His Son Jesus Christ. Look again at what Jesus said:

My Father will love him and We will come to him and make Our home with him.

When you repent, and place your trust in Jesus Christ for your total salvation, then He comes into you and makes His home in you. More than that, He desires to enter into an intimate love relationship with you.

Not only are we to love God with all of our heart, mind, soul, and strength, which is the greatest commandment (Mark 12:30), but we are to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31). What will this look like in daily life?

Romans 12:9-21

"Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

"Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.

"On the contrary:

'If your enemy is hungry, feed him;
if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.

What Repentance Is

Jesus said,

Luke 13:3

Unless you repent, you will perish.

We can turn this around, so that it says, "If you repent, you will not perish — you will live."

To repent means "to turn around," like when you're walking in one direction, but turn around and walk in the opposite direction. In the past, you have lived for yourself. When you repent of your sins, you choose to no longer love yourself first and foremost, but to love God first. You put God on His rightful throne in your heart, and you obey His commands, loving Him supremely, and loving others like you love yourself.

When you made a decision to follow Jesus Christ, did you truly repent of your sins?

If not, then you *are not* a true Christian.

What else is involved with this repentance?

The realization that you can do nothing to save yourself.

You must believe on Christ to save you from your sins, with the knowledge that He died on the Cross for *your* sins.

John 3:16-17

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.

The Result Of Repentance In Your Life

If you truly repent of your sins, then there will be a hatred of sin in your life. You will not want to sin (this does not mean that you won't sin, but if you do sin, you will find that you don't like it). Repentance is setting your affections on Jesus Christ, loving Him, obeying Him.

John 14:15, 21, 23-24 (Jesus speaking)

"If you love Me, you will obey what I command...Whoever has My

5. "Honor your father and mother."

Do you respect and obey your parents? Failure to do so is as much a sin as breaking the other nine commandments. In fact, the Bible says you should keep this command so that "it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth" (Ephesians 6:3), implying that if you fail to keep this command, things will not go well with you and you will not enjoy long life on the earth.

Kept or Broken

(circle one)

6. "You Shall Not Murder."

Jesus warned that if we got angry without cause that we would be in danger of judgment. God says that if you hate "your brother," then you are a murderer at heart. How many people have you "murdered" in fits of anger?

Kept or Broken

(circle one)

7. "You shall not commit adultery."

Elsewhere in Scripture it is found that all the sexually immoral, including fornicators (those who have sex before marriage), will not inherit the kingdom of God, but have their place in the lake of fire. Jesus said, "Whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5:28). Lusting after someone is the same as having sex with them in God's sight.

Kept or Broken

(circle one)

8. "You shall not steal."

Have you ever taken anything that did not belong to you? A car? Clothes? A paperclip? God is not concerned with the value of the thing. If you have ever taken something that belongs to someone else, then God calls you a thief.

Kept or Broken

(circle one)

9. "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."

Have you ever told a lie? an exaggeration? a white lie? If so, then God sees you as a liar, and the Bible says that "all liars shall have their place in the lake of fire" (Revelation 21:8).

Kept or Broken

(circle one)

10. "You shall not covet."

This means to be materialistic or greedy; wanting things that don't belong to you.

Kept or Broken
(circle one)

Now notice the following verse:

James 2:10

For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.

Even if you have only broken just one commandment, you are still guilty of breaking them all. You still must receive the due punishment. Remember, the Bible says, "The wages of sin is death."

LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF CONSCIENCE:

Are YOU:

Innocent?
or
Guilty?

1 John 1:8

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

Are YOU heading for:

Heaven?
or
Hell?

Hebrews 9:27

Man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment.

It may help for you to look at how much God hates sin. Look at these Five Points:

Point One:

Although the Bible says that humanity hates God "without cause" (John 15:25),

most would refute that statement.

Point Two:

This is because we feel secure in our concept of God. We have made a "god" to suit ourselves; he is not angry at sin, nor would he create Hell...because he could not — he doesn't exist! He is a figment of your imagination. You have shaped a god to conform to your sins, and you love your god.

Point Three:

To most, the Biblical revelation of God is offensive.

He is the God who:

1. Slew the whole human race, except for eight people, because of their thought life. (Genesis 6:5)
2. Killed Uzzah because he steadied the ark of God, which held the Ten Commandments, when it began to fall. (2 Samuel 6:7)
3. Told King Saul to kill men, women and children showing no mercy. (1 Samuel 15:3)
4. Who slew a husband and wife because they told one lie. (Acts 5:1-11)

Point Four:

Whether we like it or not, "our God is a consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:29), a God of burning holiness who "will by no means clear the guilty" (Exodus 34:7). He is the God of uncompromising justice and what's more, each of us must stand before Him in Judgment:

The Scriptures warn,

Hebrews 10:31

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God.

Point Five:

When this holy God revealed Himself in the person of Jesus Christ and said, "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do" (John 8:44), we hated Him without cause, because what He said was true!

Hopefully, you have already or now realize the sin that is in your life and that your sin has separated you from God. Now, what do you – a guilty, condemned sinner – do in order to escape the fires of hell? Is there a way of escape? Yes! There is a way of escape.