

Can You Earn Your Way to Heaven By Good Works?

Have you ever heard someone ask, "I'm a good person.....why won't God let me into heaven?" God's word tells us that **NO ONE is GOOD ENOUGH to get into heaven** on their own merits, and **God does not "grade on the curve"** as we do with ourselves. In case you don't know what "grading on the curve" is, it is a method used by some teachers and professors in determining the grades to be given for school work. **If no one scored high enough for an "A" they just lower the scale**, so that what would have been only a "B" is now an "A" - how convenient! Now nobody feels bad or stupid, but is it really a good idea? Does it show REALITY, or is it only a form of DENIAL? The teacher wants to look good in the eyes of his or her associates by making the students look smarter than they really are! God does not deal with us that way. His standard is PERFECTION or NOTHING - **He does NOT lower the standard** to fit our selfishness, or laziness, or stupidity, or rebelliousness, or PRIDE! In Matthew 19:17, Jesus says that "No one is good but One, that is God", which indicates that the standard we must live up to is absolute perfection. Here are **three reasons WHY** we cannot come to God on the basis of our own good works, charitable deeds, keeping religious ordinances or rules, or trying to keep the Ten Commandments:

1.) No one can do ENOUGH good works CONSISTENTLY to merit, earn or deserve salvation or earn their way to heaven.

- Romans 3:23 "For ALL have sinned and COME SHORT of the glory of God."
- James 3:2, 8-10 "For in many things WE ALL OFFEND. If any man offend not in word, he is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. But the tongue can no man tame, it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless God, the Father, and with it we curse men which are made in the likeness of God. Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so!"
- James 2:10 "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in ONE POINT, he is GUILTY OF ALL."
- Romans 3:10-12 "As it is written, 'There is NONE righteous, no not one: There is NO ONE who understands, there is NO ONE who seeks after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become worthless. There is NO ONE who does good, no not one.'
- Romans 10:2-4 "For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but NOT according to KNOWLEDGE. For they are ignorant of God's righteousness (His perfect standards), and seeking to establish THEIR OWN righteousness, have NOT submitted themselves to the righteousness of God."

2.) All our GOOD WORKS are TAINTED by SELFISH and IMPURE motives

- Isaiah 64:6 "But we are all as an UNCLEAN thing, and all our righteousnesses (good deeds) are as FILTHY RAGS; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities (sins), like the wind, have taken us away."
- with •James 2:4 "Have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges EVIL MOTIVES?"
- Matthew 6:1 "Beware that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be SEEN by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven."
- Lord •Proverbs 16:2 "All the ways of a man are CLEAN in his OWN SIGHT, but the weighs the MOTIVES."
- Proverbs 14:12 "There is a way that SEEMS RIGHT to a man, but the end results are the ways of death."
- Jeremiah 17:9 "The HEART is DECEITFUL above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?"

- James 4:8** "Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and **PURIFY your HEARTS**, you double-minded."
- Psalm 139:23-24** "**SEARCH ME, O GOD**, and know **my HEART; TEST ME**, and know **my MOTIVES**, and see if there is **any wicked way in me**, and lead me in the way everlasting."

3.) No amount of good works or good deeds can CANCEL OUT the sins we've committed (only GOD can DO IT FOR US).

- Titus 3:5** "**NOT by works of righteousness** which **WE HAVE DONE**, but according to His mercy He saved us; by the **washing** of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit."
- Ephesians 2:8-9** "For by grace are you saved by faith, and that **NOT** of yourselves, it is the gift of God: **NOT BY WORKS**, lest anyone should boast."
- Colossians 2:13-14** "And you, **BEING DEAD IN YOUR SINS**, has He made alive together with Him (Jesus), having forgiven you all your trespasses, **CANCELING OUT** the handwriting of ordinances (requirements) that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, **NAILING IT TO HIS CROSS**."
- Romans 8:3** "For what the law (keeping God's commandments) **COULD NOT DO**, in that it was weak through the flesh (our human nature), **GOD DID by SENDING HIS OWN SON** in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh."
- Psalm 51:1-2, 10** "Have **MERCY** on me, O God, according to Your loving kindness, according to the multitude of Your tender mercies **BLOT OUT** my transgressions; **WASH ME** thoroughly from my iniquity, and **CLEANSE ME from my sin**. **CREATE IN ME** a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit in me."

According to Colossians 2:13-14, we are "DEAD in our SINS", and the only way we get our sins "CANCELED OUT" is by Jesus "NAILING them to His CROSS." There will be no giant scale on Judgment Day that weighs out your good deeds against your bad. The only way your sins can be forgiven and canceled out is to believe in Jesus as your Savior, and to accept His death on the cross and shedding of His blood as the payment for your sins. God's word tells us in John 3:16 that "God so LOVED the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that **WHOEVER BELIEVES in HIM should not perish, but have EVERLASTING LIFE**." Because God loves you so much, He made a WAY for you to be **SAVED from your sins** so that you could have a relationship with Him. He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross and **TAKE the PUNISHMENT for YOUR SINS** so that you could be **REDEEMED** from sin, receive **NEW LIFE**, and spend eternity with Him. Jesus said, ".....**Unless a person is BORN AGAIN, he cannot see the kingdom of God**." (John 3:3). Salvation does **NOT** come by joining a church, following a certain religion, doing good deeds, or living a moral life. The Bible says there is only **ONE WAY** to become a child of God and to receive **SALVATION** and eternal life in heaven: **YOU MUST be BORN AGAIN by ACCEPTING JESUS CHRIST as YOUR LORD AND SAVIOR**. "But as many as received Him, to them He gave power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on His name" (John 1:12). If you have prayed **sincerely from your heart to receive Jesus Christ** as your personal Savior, then you are now a child of God. You have been **born again**, you have eternal life, and **you have been SAVED** from your sins (they are forgiven). God is now your Heavenly Father, and His Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, has come to live in you! (Romans 8:9) It is your **FAITH in the PERSON of Jesus Christ** that **SAVES you, NOT** any religious works or good deeds you may do.

Ephesians 2:8-9 "For by GRACE you are **SAVED** through **FAITH**, and that **NOT** of yourselves, it is the **GIFT of GOD - NOT of WORKS**, lest any man should boast."

Questions About Salvation

- 1. Why should I get saved?**

ANSWER: Christians will say you should get saved because the Bible says it is necessary to be "saved" in order to go to heaven when you die. You may say, "But I don't believe the Bible, so why should that make a difference to me?" You may say, "I believe we will all go to heaven if we live a good life, or do the best we can" or "I don't believe in any life after death - this life is all there is!" **If you are RIGHT** in your beliefs, and the Christians are wrong, then you have nothing to lose, and the Christian has nothing to lose, because the Christian will have lived a good life and will either go to heaven or not, depending on whether you believe there is a heaven. However, **if the Christians who believe the Bible are right and YOU are WRONG, you have everything to lose**, and you will end up in hell! Maybe you should examine the teachings of the Bible, so that you do not make a fatal and eternally wrong choice!

•**Hebrews 2:3** "How shall we escape **if we NEGLECT so great a SALVATION**, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him?"

2. **How do I get saved?**

ANSWER: GOD wants to have a relationship with YOU —Both now, and for all eternity! Jesus said, "I am THE WAY, THE TRUTH, and THE LIFE; NO ONE can come to the Father, except BY ME." John 14:6 If you want to KNOW GOD and have real meaning in your life; if you are unsure of what will happen to you when you die, or are afraid you will not spend eternity in Heaven, there's **GOOD NEWS** for you! The Bible, God's word, tells us in John 3:16 that "**God so LOVED the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that WHOEVER BELIEVES in HIM should not perish, but have EVERLASTING LIFE.**" Because **God loves you so much**, He made a WAY for you to be **SAVED from your sins** so that you could have a relationship with Him. He sent **His Son, Jesus Christ**, to die on the cross and **TAKE the PUNISHMENT for YOUR SINS** so that you could be **REDEEMED** from sin, receive **NEW LIFE**, and spend eternity with Him. Jesus said, "**.....Unless a person is BORN AGAIN, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**" (John 3:3). Salvation does **NOT** come by joining a church, following a certain religion, doing good deeds, or living a moral life. The Bible says there is only **ONE WAY** to become a child of God and **to receive SALVATION** and eternal life in heaven: **YOU MUST be BORN AGAIN by ACCEPTING JESUS CHRIST as YOUR LORD AND SAVIOR.** "But as many as received Him, to them He gave power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on His name." John 1:12

Pray this prayer, and **receive Jesus Christ** as your personal Savior today!

Almighty God, I come to You in the Name of Jesus, recognizing that I am a sinner. You said in Your word, "If you shall confess with your mouth that Jesus is LORD, and shall believe in your HEART that God has raised Him from the dead, YOU SHALL BE SAVED" (Romans 10:9)

I believe in my heart that JESUS is the CHRIST, THE SON of the LIVING GOD. I believe that JESUS, the sinless Son of God, PAID the PENALTY on the CROSS for MY SINS, and that HE WAS RAISED from the DEAD.

I REPENT of my sins and RECEIVE Him as my Lord and SAVIOR.

Lord Jesus, come into my heart and take control of my life!

If you have prayed this prayer **sincerely from your heart**, then the Bible says you are now a child of God! You have been **born again**, you have eternal life, and **you have been SAVED** from your sins (they are forgiven). God is now your Heavenly Father, and His Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, has come to live in you! (Romans 8:9) It is your **FAITH in the PERSON of Jesus Christ** that **SAVES you, NOT** any religious works or good deeds you may do. **Ephesians 2:8-9** "For by **GRACE** you are **SAVED** through **FAITH**, and that **NOT** of yourselves, it is the **GIFT of GOD - NOT of WORKS**, lest any man should boast."