

HOW CAN I KNOW GOD?

(Lesson #1)

The Bible does teach there is a way a person can be certain that he can know God and go to heaven when he dies. The Bible is God's Word and therefore is the final authority on the subject of salvation (going to heaven). Jesus said in Matthew 24:35, "Heaven and earth shall pass away but my words shall not pass away." He also stated in John 12:48, "...the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." Jesus' words are the basis for the New Testament and the authority of His statements have remained constant for two thousand years and will remain so for eternity. Truth must be based on God's Word. The prophet Isaiah said, "The grass withers, the flowers fades, but the Word of our God shall stand forever." (Isaiah 40:8)

THE EVIDENCE THAT SALVATION CAN BE POSSESSED BEFORE DEATH

1. Jesus taught that you could have eternal life before death. Read John 3:36, 5:24, and 6:47. In each of these verses, what does a person gain by his faith?

Please note that each of these verse is in the present tense. Jesus could have used the future tense but used the present tense to show that you can have eternal life right now.

2. What was one of the reasons 1 John (toward the end of the New Testament) was written? 1 John 5:13
3. Consider the testimony of Paul. (Philippians 1:23-25)
 - a. How does Paul describe death?
 - b. What two paths lay before Paul?
 - c. With whom does Paul say he will be at his departure?
 - d. Does Paul have any doubts?
 - e. Once Paul leaves his earthly body at earth, where will he be? (2 Corinthians 5:8)

What was the man crucified next to Christ assured of before his death? see Luke 23:43

- a. What kind of a man was he? (Luke 23:33)

- b. Do you think he deserved paradise at death?

Why?

(These have been a few illustrations from the Bible of those who knew they possessed eternal life before death.)

WHAT IS SIN?

(The first step to knowing you have eternal life is an understanding of sin.)

1. How is sin described in the following verses?
 - a. Romans 14:23

 - b. James 4:17

 - c. 1 John 3:4

2. In James 1:13-15, who cannot be blamed for our sin?
 - a. What is the source for our sin?

 - b. What is the penalty for sin?

3. According to Jesus, how many people in his day kept the law of Moses? John 7:19

4. How often would a person have to break the law in order to be guilty? James 2:10

5. According to Jesus, when does a sinful act take place? Matthew 5:28

6. What did Jesus say men would have to give an account of in the day of judgment? Matthew 12:36-37

WHO IS GUILTY OF SIN?

1. What question does Proverbs 20:9 ask?
2. How many people have sinned? (Romans 3:23)
3. How many innocent people does Paul say exist? (Romans 3:10-12)
4. What does one earn because of his sin? (Romans 6:23)
5. Who will one day stand guilty before God? (Romans 3:19)

Because of the previous statements how many people do you think stand righteous before God?

OUR HOPE OVER SIN

If you honestly think through the previous verses about sin, it could be discouraging, yet the first step to knowing you have eternal life is seeing yourself guilty before a very righteous God. Why is this the first step?

1. Whom did Jesus come to call? (Mark 2:17)

(Note: The term righteous (just) here pictures those who *think* they are.) What truth did we learn from Romans 3:10?

2. Read the story of the two men who went to the Temple to pray in Luke 18:9-14.
 - a. Describe the first man in your own words.
 - b. Describe the second man.
 - c. Whose prayer did God hear?

Romans 5:6 says, "...Christ died for the ungodly (or sinners)." Many people miss the salvation God provided for them because they never see themselves as ungodly.

Thank you for completing this study. The next lesson will help clarify how a sinner is made right with God.