



CAN GOD

Meet *the*

Longing

of Your

Heart?



Our heart longs for a connection that makes sense of life, a place where we are loved and forgiven and have purpose and direction.

When we do not have a strong life foundation that provides these things, this creates the deepest longing of our life, a heart longing.

Sometimes our heart longing is awakened by the awe and wonder we feel when we see the glaciers of Alaska breaking off into the ocean, or a gorgeous multi-colored sunrise lighting up the beach, or when holding a newborn baby.




When a heart longing is awakened in us, what is that longing expressing? British author C. S. Lewis explained a heart longing this way:

It is sometimes felt as a longing for a far off country, but not a particular earthly land which we can identify....It may seem as a longing for a someone or even a something. But the majority of the people who experience it are not conscious of what or who the longed for objective may be. Indeed, the longing is of such profundity and intensity that the subject may immediately be only aware of the emotion itself and not cognizant that there is a something longed for.

[EXCERPT FROM *Pilgrims' Regress*]

How would you describe your heart longing? Do you picture anything in your mind? Does any particular place or person enter your thoughts?

Many people choose God to be their life foundation and meet their heart longing.



When I think of the value of knowing God it is this: that we can understand life, we can proceed with clarity, we can avoid pitfalls, we can be led by God, know truth, be given strength/hope/peace, and enjoy the most important relationship, the one who will be faithful to us and constantly love us. God, who created us, provides this as nothing else could. To go through this life with success and confidence, we must be connected to him, relying on him. Until we come to know him, we will always be searching, always be testing other possibilities, and find them lacking. But when we respond to God's offer to be in relationship with him, we are satisfied, complete. We now are equipped to live this life with a plan and with Someone who can lead us in it.

Anonymous

The famous French physicist Blaise Pascal said there is one solution that will meet a person's heart longing. Only one thing matches, facet for facet, everything we need to meet our heart longing and be our life foundation. Pascal explained:

There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of every person that can't be filled by any created thing, but only by God the Creator made known through Jesus Christ.



ONE PERSON'S SEARCH

I wanted to make a difference for good in the world and I also wanted to marry and have children. Originally, I concluded that a good education and a loving and trusted relationship were my best foundation for such a life.

While in college, I became an arbitrator during a period of student riots. Working with the students and the administration, I became very disillusioned. I saw deception, cheating, and manipulation on both sides. Ultimately only the police and army quieted the school. I realized that a top education wasn't the answer. It couldn't fill my longing for making a difference in the world.

I also thought I had found someone I could trust and love and who loved me. We even began a small business together. That relationship unraveled when he began to cheat others and started pursuing a relationship with one of my best friends. I realized I could not trust this person as my life foundation.

A friend told me that I could have a personal relationship with God, who loved me unconditionally and had a purpose for my life. She said that when we are out of touch with God—because of our lack of interest, or the hurtful things we have done to ourselves or others, or because we are upset with or disappointed in God—he still provides a way to know him. She said that God sent Jesus to provide the way to him. She explained that this

was not a religion of rules but an intimate relationship with God that would continue for the rest of my life and beyond.

I realized I wanted this relationship with God and I wanted him to be my life foundation. I said to God, “If you are real and Jesus can come into my life and forgive me for my indifference to you and all the hurtful things I have done, and make me the person I was created to be, then I accept what Jesus has done for me and I want him in my life.”

I began to know God and to experience the peace he gives, even in deeply challenging circumstances like the death of my 20-year-old brother and later the death of my parents. In my relationship with God I have found direction and meaning in life and a solid life foundation. He meets my longings in so many creative ways. The peace I had then has continued to be with me. God promises that He will never leave me or abandon me. This verse from the Bible encourages me: “I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of.” (John 10:10b)



God desires to meet your heart longing, to provide forgiveness, unconditional love and purpose. He desires to be your life foundation through a personal relationship. Knowing God is the strongest life foundation possible.

One of the barriers that prevents us from knowing God personally is our lack of knowledge of who God is and what He has done for us.

The following four points summarize what you read in the previous story. These points will help you discover more about who God is and what He has done for you. You will also learn how you can experience the forgiveness, peace and reality of knowing God personally as your life foundation and having him meet your heart longing.

1 **GOD LOVES YOU UNCONDITIONALLY AND CREATED YOU TO KNOW HIM PERSONALLY. HE WANTS TO MEET YOUR HEART LONGING AND BE YOUR LIFE FOUNDATION.**

GOD'S LOVE

*“For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)**

GOD'S PLAN

“And this is the way to have eternal life—to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, the one you sent to earth.” (John 17:3)

“I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” (John 10:10)

What prevents us from knowing God personally?

* References in this booklet relate to books of the Bible. The first word is the name of the book. The first number is the chapter of that book and the number after the colon is the verse. Unless indicated, verses are taken from the New International Version of the Bible.



2 WHEN PEOPLE ARE INDIFFERENT TO GOD AND SEPARATED FROM HIM, THEY CANNOT KNOW HIM PERSONALLY AND EXPERIENCE HIS LOVE.

PEOPLE'S INDIFFERENCE TO GOD IS AN EVIDENCE OF SIN

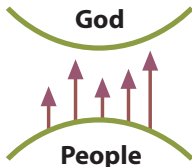
“For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard.” (Romans 3:23)

We were created to experience God’s love and have Him meet our heart longing; but, because of our stubborn self-will, we chose to go our own independent way and fellowship with God was broken. This self-will, characterized by a heart attitude of active rebellion or passive indifference, is an evidence of what the Bible calls sin. The specific actions we often think of as sin, such as lying, stealing or murder, are an evidence of this heart attitude.

PEOPLE ARE SEPARATED

*“For the wages of sin is death...
[separation from God].”*

(Romans 6:23)



This diagram illustrates there is a great separation between us and God because we are imperfect and God is holy and perfect.

The arrows illustrate that when we try to reach God to meet our heart longing by our own efforts, we inevitably fail.



*The third point explains the
only way to bridge the separation
between us and God...*



3

GOD SENT JESUS CHRIST AS THE ONLY PROVISION FOR OUR SIN AND INDIFFERENCE TO HIM. THROUGH HIM ALONE YOU CAN KNOW GOD AND EXPERIENCE HIS LOVE.

HE DIED IN OUR PLACE

“God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8)

HE ROSE FROM THE DEAD

“Christ died for our sins...He was buried...He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures...He appeared to Peter, then to the twelve. After that He appeared to more than five hundred....” (1 Corinthians 15:3–6)

HE LOVED AND GAVE

“God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.” (1 John 4:9-10, NLT)

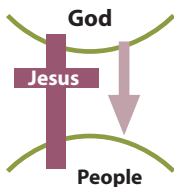
HE DID NOT COME TO CONDEMN, BUT TO SAVE

“For God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.” (John 3:17)

Suppose you were walking across a bridge over a roaring river and you slipped and fell into the rushing river. Jesus wouldn't stand on the bridge yelling to you, "Why did you do such an irresponsible thing like that and fall into the river? Don't you know better?" No. Jesus would quickly jump into the river to save you because he loves you so much. Most people don't realize that they are in the roaring river and Jesus has jumped in to save them. Will we fight him off or will we let him put his arms of love around us and save us?

HE IS THE ONLY WAY TO GOD

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.'" (John 14:6)



This diagram illustrates that God bridged the separation between Himself and us by sending His Son, Jesus Christ to die on the cross in our place to pay the penalty for our sins.

It is not enough just to know these truths...



4

WE MUST INDIVIDUALLY ACCEPT JESUS CHRIST AS SAVIOR* AND LORD. THEN WE CAN KNOW GOD AND EXPERIENCE HIS LOVE. HE BECOMES OUR LIFE FOUNDATION AND MEETS OUR HEART LONGING.

WE MUST ACCEPT CHRIST

“As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.” (John 1:12)

WE ACCEPT CHRIST THROUGH FAITH

“By grace you have been saved through faith*; and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God; not as a result of works that no one should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8, 9)*

* Grace is something unearned. Faith is placing your trust in something or someone. Savior is what Jesus is called because He saved us from the penalty of our sin.

WHEN WE ACCEPT CHRIST, WE EXPERIENCE A NEW BIRTH

(John 3:1-8, Jesus telling a religious leader about the new birth)

WE ACCEPT CHRIST BY PERSONAL INVITATION

[Christ is speaking] *“Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him.” (Revelation 3:20)*

Receiving or accepting Christ involves turning to God from self and trusting Christ to come into your life to forgive your sins and help you become all He created you to be. Just to agree intellectually that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that He died on the cross for your sins is not enough. Nor is it enough to have an emotional experience. You accept Jesus Christ by faith, as an act of your will.

These two circles represent two kinds of lives:

Self-Directed Life

S – Self is on the throne.

† – Christ is outside the life.

- – Interests are directed by self often resulting in discord and frustration.



Christ-Directed Life

† – Christ is in the life and on the throne.

S – Self is yielding to Christ.

- – Interests are directed by Christ resulting in harmony with God's plan.



Which circle best represents your life?

Which circle would you like to have represent your life?

The following explains how you can accept Christ...

YOU CAN ACCEPT CHRIST RIGHT NOW BY FAITH THROUGH PRAYER

(Prayer is talking with God)

God knows your heart and is not so concerned with your words as He is with the attitude of your heart.

The following is a suggested prayer:

*Lord Jesus, I want to know You personally.
Thank You for dying on the cross for my sins.
I open the door of my life and accept You
as my Savior and Lord. Thank You for forgiving
my sins and giving me eternal life. Take control
of the throne of my life. Make me the person
You created and designed me to be.*

Does this prayer express the desire of your heart?

If it does, you can pray this prayer right now and Jesus Christ will come into your life as He promised.

HOW TO KNOW THAT CHRIST IS IN YOUR LIFE AND THAT GOD IS NOW YOUR LIFE FOUNDATION

Did you invite Christ into your life? According to His promise in Revelation 3:20 (see page 14), where is Christ right now in relation to you? Christ said that He would come into your life. Would He mislead you? On what authority do you know that God has answered your prayer? (The trustworthiness of God Himself and His Word, as found in the Bible.)

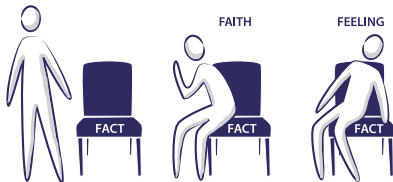
THE BIBLE PROMISES ETERNAL LIFE TO ALL WHO RECEIVE CHRIST

“The witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life.” (1 John 5:11–13)

Thank God often that Christ is in your life and that He will never leave you (Hebrews 13:5). You can know on the basis of His promise that Christ lives in you and that you have eternal life from the very moment you invite Him in. He will not deceive you.

DO NOT DEPEND ON FEELINGS

You might have expectations about how you should feel after placing your trust in Christ. While feelings are important they are unreliable indicators of your sincerity or the trustworthiness of God's promise. Our feelings change easily, but God's Word and His character remain constant. This illustration shows the relationship between fact (God and his Word), faith (our trust in God and his Word) and our feelings.



FACT | This chair is strong enough to support you.

FAITH | You believe this chair will support you, so you sit in it.

FEELING | No matter how you feel about sitting in the chair, it will continue to support you.

The promise of God's Word, the Bible, not our feelings is our authority. As a Christian (follower of Christ) you can now live by faith/trust in the trustworthiness of God Himself and His Word.

NOW THAT YOU HAVE BEGUN A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST AND HAVE GOD AS YOUR LIFE FOUNDATION

The moment you received Christ by faith, as an act of your will, many things happened, including the following:

1. Christ came into your life. (Rev. 3:20 and Col. 1:27)
2. Your sins were forgiven. (Colossians 1:14).
3. You became a child of God. (John 1:12)
4. You received eternal life. (John 5:24)
5. You began the great adventure for which God created you. (John 10:10; 2 Cor. 5:17; and 1 Thess. 5:18)
6. You now have God as your solid life foundation on which to base your life design, direction and decisions.

Can you think of anything more wonderful that could happen to you than entering into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ? Would you like to thank God in prayer right now for what He has done for you? Prayer is talking with God. By thanking God, you demonstrate your faith.

To enjoy your new relationship with God...

SUGGESTIONS FOR ENJOYING GOD AND GROWING IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM

Spiritual enjoyment and growth results from trusting Jesus Christ. “The righteous man shall live by faith” (Gal. 3:11). A life of faith will enable you to know God better and trust Him more with every detail of your life.

- You will know God better as you talk to him daily about what is on your heart. (This is called prayer.)

(John 15:7)

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:6-7)

- You will learn more about God and how you can follow him by reading God’s Word as much as you can. (Daily is most helpful.) (Acts 17:11) Begin with the Gospel of John.

- You can know God better and follow Him as you do what He asks you to do.

“He loves you and has your best in mind.” (John 14:21 LB)


- You will know God better by letting others see Christ by your life and words so they also can experience His great love for them. (Matthew 4:19; John 15:8)
- You will know God better as you trust Him for every detail of your life. *“Give all your worries and cares to God for he cares about what happens to you.”* (1 Peter 5:7)
- You will have the power to know God better as you allow the Holy Spirit to control and empower your daily life. He will empower every aspect of your life. (Gal. 5:16, 17; Acts 1:8)



FELLOWSHIP IN A GOOD CHURCH

God's Word encourages us, *"Let's see how inventive we can be in encouraging love and helping out, not avoiding worshipping together...."* (Hebrews 10:25 THE MESSAGE)

Several logs burn brightly together, but put one aside and its fire goes out. So it is with your relationship with other Christians. To not be alone in following Christ, you will want to go to a church. A church is where followers of Christ (Christians) get together to learn about Christ, to honor Him and to spend time with other followers.

If you do not belong to a church, take the initiative. Call the pastor of a nearby church where Christ is honored and God's Word is preached. Start this week and make plans to attend regularly. 

Special Resources are Available for Christian Growth

If you have come to know Christ personally or would like further help in getting to know Christ better visit:
www.startingwithGod.com | www.growinginChrist.com

If you have further questions visit:
www.whoisJesus-really.com

To download ***Jesus*** (a DVD about the life of Jesus) or ***Magdalena*** (a DVD that shows how Jesus helped women) on your computer, or as a free app on your phone, visit: www.jesusfilmmedia.org

Also to know more about Christ, see the life-coaching resources ***SOARING*** and ***SOARING ADVENTURE*** at www.SoaringLifebyDesign.com

To know more about growing as a Christian, see the life-coaching courses, ***The Significant Woman*** at www.thesignificantwoman.com and ***The Significant Man*** at www.thesignificantman.com

To order more of these booklets or other Christian resources visit: www.crustore.org

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