

# Becoming A Child Of God

How does God view us before we come to Jesus Christ to seek God's pardon for our sins?

**Ephesians 2:1-3** [King James] *“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”*

Children of Satan are subject to God's wrath, because of the rejection of Jesus Christ.

*“The prince of the power of the air” –*

**Ezekiel 28:14-17** [NIV] *“You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, O guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones. Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendour. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings.”*

Satan who was once Lucifer the covering angel at the very throne of God is now limited to the blanket of air that covers the earth.

**John 8:42-45** [NIV] *“Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me. Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me!”*

Those who reject or do not yet have a relationship with Jesus Christ are under the influence of Satan.

**1 John 5:19-20** [NIV] *“We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.”*

**There is no middle ground, we are either children of God or children of Satan.**

The deciding factor is who is guiding our lives.

**Romans 6:16-18** [NIV] *“Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey, whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.”*

Before we submitted our lives to Jesus Christ, we were subject to Satan, mostly without knowing or realising what was happening.

## How can we become a child of God?

**John 1:10-13** [NIV] *“He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognise him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. **Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.**”*

If we believe that Jesus is our Saviour, [“*Jesus*” is a transliteration of “*Joshua*” meaning saviour], we are given the right by God to become one of His created children.

This is the starting point as a newly-born baby of God, but every baby has to grow and mature to become a child.

**John 3:5-8** [NIV] *“Jesus answered, **‘I tell you the truth, no-one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.’**”*

This new birth is the influence and work of the Holy Spirit in our life.

## There are many wrong ideas of how we become a Christian

### **We are not physically born a Christian.**

Some people think that they are Christians because their parents are Christians.

Our parents can pass on physical life but never can they pass on spiritual life, and becoming a Christian is a spiritual act.

Until we trust in what Jesus has done for us and ask for His forgiveness and cleansing we remain spiritually dead and a child of Satan.

### **Not by human effort.**

No other person can set us free from being a slave in Satan’s kingdom.

A minister or priest **cannot** make you a Christian by christening, confirming or baptism.

**John 1:12-13** [NIV] *“Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, **children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.**”*

It is **not** by our will or decision that we become Christians, created children of God.

**Ephesians 2:8-9** [NIV] *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no-one can boast.”*

We cannot earn our way into the Kingdom of God.

Our own efforts to change or reform our lives will **not** make us a created child of God.

**Salvation from the kingdom of Satan and being brought into the Kingdom of God is a free gift that only God can give us.**

We receive this gift when we come to God in the way He requires.

### **Not what we believe.**

Even knowing all the Christian doctrines and creeds will **not** get us into the Kingdom of God, make us a created child of God.

It is important that we know God's Word, the truth as found in the Handbook For Life, the Christian Bible.

But head knowledge by itself will **not** make us a child of God.

**James 2:19** [NIV] *“You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that, and shudder.”*

The demons believe there is a God and tremble with fear because of that knowledge but this doesn't make them children of God.

## **There is only one way to become a created child of God**

**John 3:5-9** [NIV] *“Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no-one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. **So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.**” “How can this be?” Nicodemus asked.”*

To enter into the created family [kingdom] of God we have to be “born again” this time “by the Spirit”.

Let us seek to answer the question that Nicodemus asked, “how can this be?”

**John 3:10-15** [NIV] *“You are Israel's teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things? I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? No-one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven, the Son of Man. **Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.**”*

Jesus pointed Nicodemus to the scriptures that he knew as a teacher of the Old Testament.

Scriptures that pointed to Jesus and His coming as the Messiah [Saviour].

Jesus pointed specifically to the Son of Man being “lifted up”, this referred directly to His crucifixion.

When a person was crucified, they were nailed to a cross that was flat on the ground, then the cross with them nailed to it was “lifted up” and the upright part dropped into a hole in the ground, that ensured that the cross remained upright.

**For us to benefit from the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross God asks three things of us.**

Three simple steps, **A**, **B** and **C**.

### **A**dmitt

**1 John 1:9-10** [NIV] *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and*

*purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.”*

We have to confess to God our sins.

Confess we have rebelled against Him by turning our back on Him and **not** listening to His words and obeying them.

Confess we have locked God out of our lives and gone our own way.

Confess that we are helpless as far as making the needed changes in our lives.

Confess we need Jesus to save us from our own selves and the rebellious sins that have a tight grip on us.

Tell God we are sorry, and ask for His pardon and forgiveness.

This is what it means to “repent”.

## **B**elieve

**Acts 4:12** [NIV] *“Salvation is found in [Jesus Christ] **no-one else**, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”*

The next step is to believe that Jesus Christ is the **only** way to be saved.

**John 14:6** [NIV] *“Jesus answered, **“I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me.”***

Jesus is the only “way” to receive eternal life as a child of God in His created kingdom [family].

**Romans 10:9-10** [NIV] *“**That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.”***

We have to confess with our mouth as well as believing in our heart that Jesus is our Saviour.

**John 1:12** [NIV] *“Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God”*

Only Jesus Christ has the authority to make us a child of God.

## **C**ommit

**1 Corinthians 6:19-20** [NIV] *“**Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body.”***

The Greek word translated “body” is “sōma” that means the whole instrument of life, body, mind and spirit.

When we accept the death of Jesus as a substitute for our own death, we have been purchased by Jesus and belong to Him as a bond slave.

We do **not** now own our life, it is committed to our Lord and Master Jesus Christ.

**Philippians 2:9-11** [NIV] *“Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*

Eventually every human being will have to submit to Jesus Christ, or die eternally.

We **cannot** ask Jesus Christ to free us from the influence of Satan’s kingdom and continue to please ourselves.

**Luke 11:23** [NIV] *“He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me, scatters.”*

There is **no** middle ground, we are either a servant of Satan, who at this time rules the society in which we live; or we are servants committed to our Saviour Jesus Christ.

**Romans 6:16-18** [NIV] *“Don’t you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey, whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.”*

We have changed masters.

## When does this happen?

**Romans 6:3-14** [NIV] *“Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin, because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.”*

This is the process of death and a re-birth.

## God will not try to reform our old sinful nature.

We have to crucify our human nature with Christ so that we can be resurrected with Him to a new life dedicated to serving God, **not** our fleshly desires.

Crucifixion is a long, lingering and painful death.

Crucifying our old nature will **not** happen overnight.

Nor can we make this new birth by our own strength, the influence of the Holy Spirit is needed.

**John 16:5-14** [NIV] *“Now I am going to him who sent me [Jesus speaking], yet none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief. But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. **Unless I go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.** When he comes, he will **convict** the world of guilt in regard to sin and **righteousness** and **judgment**: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. “I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he **will guide you into all truth.** He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.”*

In these verses are listed the work of the Holy Spirit as He brings human beings into the Kingdom of God.

- a) Convict us of sin
- b) Show us what is true righteousness
- c) Remind us of the end of life judgement
- d) Guide us into all truth

**John 3:5-7** [NIV] *“Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, **no-one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.** Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’”*

**To enter the Kingdom of God, to become a created child of God we have to have two births, a** fleshly birth as a human being, who has a “*human*” spirit within us that gives us intellect.

Then a spiritual birth by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

**John 14:15-18** [NIV] *“If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask **the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you for ever, the Spirit of truth.** The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for **he lives with you and will be in you.** I will not leave you as orphans; **I will come to you.**”*

The Holy Spirit **works with us** to bring us to repentance, then when we commit ourselves to Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit **will dwell in us.**

Jesus Christ will live His life again on earth through us.

This is how we become children of God, Christians [meaning “*little Christs*”].

**Memory Verse:**

**John 1:12** [NIV] *“Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God”*

In the next study we will consider what has to happen to us after taking our first steps with Jesus.