



BEGIN TO BELIEVE

God has created you and has a plan for your life

The fact that God has created you means that there is a special plan and reason why you exist, right here and right now.

The Bible clearly specifies that God is altogether good and that there is no darkness in Him (James chapter 1, verse 17). Therefore, you can be assured that His plan for your life is good and positive and that you never have to be afraid of coming to Him.

"I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly," Jesus says in the Gospel of John chapter 10, verse 10.

This "life" means so much more than just existing as a living being here on earth for a few years and then disappearing.

So what does Jesus mean when He says He wants to give us "life"?

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (The Gospel of John chapter 3, verse 16).

"And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" (The Gospel of John chapter 17, verse 3).

"Life" is to know God personally. It is to live together with Him during our time here on earth and then for eternity in heaven when life on this earth is over.

You can compare it with a light bulb, which has been made – or "created" – with a specific purpose: to shine. The light bulb no doubt exists even before it comes into contact with electricity, but it is not

until then, it can begin to do what it was created to do. It is not until then, it can sense true satisfaction (that is, if it is even possible for a light bulb to sense satisfaction).

It is the same thing with you and God. When you come back to Him, you will find the true purpose of your life!

But what does that mean, "to come back"? Have we lost one another?

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Man is separated from God because of sin

"... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans chapter 3, verse 23).

God created you, me and everyone else so that He could have a close, personal fellowship with us.

But man chose to go his own way and try to make himself independent of God. The result was that the fellowship between God and man was broken, and man began to show active resistance and passive indifference towards God.

This is what the Bible calls "sin" – a wall that has been raised, hindering the fellowship between God and man.

"But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear" (Isaiah chapter 59, verse 2).

Turn back the clock a few years, decades or centuries, and you will see that the history of man looks the same. We try and we try and we try to build a fair world, but we fail every time. Why is there still injustice? Shouldn't we have learnt by now? Why are things such as

war, murder, violence, drug abuse and social injustice becoming more common rather than uncommon in our modern and "enlightened" society?

It is because we turned our backs on Him who is Love. It was right there, in that instance, that all evil, all injustice and all darkness entered the world.

Since then there has always been an invisible, spiritual chain that the Bible describes as "sin" surrounding every human being. A chain that we can't get rid of and that pulls us – individually as well as the whole human race – away from God.

"For the wages of sin is death..." (Romans chapter 6, verse 23).

Just as "life" means fellowship with God, "death" means separation from God. But, praise God, the story doesn't end there!

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Jesus came to open the way back to God

God didn't just sit passively in heaven watching man walk away from Him. He loved us too much for that! However, He didn't want to force us to come back – love always requires that you are free to choose – so He chose to open a way back to Him. A way that everyone and anyone can use – regardless of race, sex, social status or level of proficiency.

That way was opened when God sent His own son, Jesus Christ, to the world. By walking around doing good and performing miracles and supernatural wonders, Jesus showed that He really was the Son of God and that God, His own Father, was entirely good.

You can read about many of the miracles Jesus performed, for example in the Gospel of Mark chapters five, six, seven and eight.

But of all the wonderful things Jesus did, one thing was more important than anything else. And it was exactly this that saved you, me and everyone else here on earth.

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Jesus died on a cross

Jesus died, not because He had done something wrong, but for your sake and mine. He died to lift the chain of sin, separating us from God, off our shoulders. He died in our place.

“But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray: we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 53, verses 5 and 6).

There and then, the way that had been closed was opened. There and then, an opportunity was created for us to be forgiven and freed from the darkness on the inside.

None of us could have done it ourselves, neither through good deeds nor pious prayers or an honourable life. So God did it Himself, for our sake.

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You need to say your “yes”

“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (The Gospel of John chapter 14, verse 6).

Three days later Jesus rose again from the dead. He showed, once and for all, that He is stronger than all sin and all darkness – yes, even stronger than death!

And now He is waiting for your decision. Because even though everything has already been done, even though the prison door is wide open, even though the chain doesn't need to bind you anymore, it is still up to you to decide about your own life. You decide whether

you want to say “yes” or “no” to what God has done for you.

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me” (Revelation chapter 3, verse 20).

Jesus will never come closer than that – unless you want Him to. Yes, He loves you. Yes, He has even died for you. But He still respects your own decision.

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Saying “yes” is easier than you can imagine

Saying “yes” doesn't require a church or a pastor. It doesn't require a whole load of good deeds or impressive promises.

You only need to pray a simple prayer, right where you are, because God is with you and He is listening to you.

“For whoever who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Romans chapter 10, verse 13).

“Whoever.” That means the same promise applies to everyone, regardless of what they have or haven't done. Regardless of whether your life has been pretty good up until now or it has been one big mess. Regardless of whether you have done things that make you feel unworthy.

When you come to Jesus and ask Him to come to you, everything will be made new and the old things will disappear in His eyes. Never to be seen again.

If you want to take this step and come to Jesus right now, right where you are, then pray this prayer out loud. The words aren't magic, but if you pray and mean what you say, then Jesus will listen, and something brand new can begin in your life.

Jesus, I need You. I have walked my own way and sinned against You. But I thank You that you died on the cross and rose again, just for my sake. Forgive me my sins.

Now I open the door to my heart and receive You and all that You have done for me. Jesus, I ask that

You be my Lord and that You take over the wheel of my life, from this moment on.

Thank You for receiving me now. Amen.

If you prayed this prayer, and meant what you said, something completely new has begun. You have received everything Jesus has done for you, and you have become a child of God!

What took place when you just prayed isn't about feelings or emotions. God has promised that if we pray, He will hear us and receive us. So if you just prayed, He heard you and has given you what you prayed for. That's for sure!

The step you take when you for the first time invite Jesus into your life is the most important decision in your whole life. But it is only the first step on a long and exciting journey!

Now your life can begin to be what God has planned for it to be, and now you can start to get to know God personally!

The most important tool you have to help you build your own relationship with God is the Bible. In the Bible you can see who God is and how He is. Try to read something, maybe a chapter or two, in this book every day.

In addition to the Bible, we have been given a wonderful opportunity to talk to God and know that He listens. This is what is called prayer – your own conversation with God. You can pray anywhere and anytime, and it is good if you make it a habit to pray a little while every day.

When you chose to come to Jesus, you also became part of the world's largest family – the one that meets in different churches so that the family members get to know God and one another even better.

Try to find a church in your vicinity that believes in and speaks about Jesus, and tell someone that you have just taken the step to invite Jesus into your life. They will help you onward.

Welcome into the family – and God bless you!