



Introduction

God's Personal Invitation

Plan of Salvation



Welcome. One of the greatest truths is “**God is love.**” The Bible tells us “God is love” (1 John 4:16). Though you cannot see God, He cares about you. *“Though the Lord is exalted, he looks kindly on the lowly; though lofty, he sees them from afar” (Psalm 138:6).*

Read this story about Jesus and a woman from Luke 7:36-50.

When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner.”

Jesus answered him, “Simon, I have something to tell you.”

“Tell me, teacher,” he said.

“Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?”

Simon replied, “I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven.”

“You have judged correctly,” Jesus said.

Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little.”

Then Jesus said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”

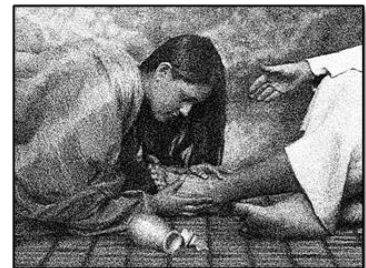
The other guests began to say among themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?”

Jesus said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

Why do you think the woman did these things to Jesus?

How would you describe the character of Jesus after reading this story?

How do you think the woman felt after hearing Jesus' words?



I. A PERSONAL INVITATION



God, the creator and ruler of the universe, knows you and loves you. The one who made the sun and sky, the mountains and sea, and every person, including you, knows you and loves you. God wants you to be close to Him. He is sad that you are not. Yes, God has a heart of love and compassion for you, and He wants you to know and to experience His amazing love.

God is inviting you to come home to Him—home where you belong, home where you were created to live. God's arms are open wide to receive and embrace you.

Does it seem strange to you that God loves you and wants to have a relationship with you? Read what the word of God says:

*When I consider your heavens,
the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars,
which you have set in place,
what is mankind that you are mindful of them,
human beings that you care for them? (Psalms 8:3-4).*

*Your love, Lord, reaches to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the skies.
Your righteousness is like the highest mountains,
your justice like the great deep.
You, Lord, preserve both people and animals.
How priceless is your unfailing love, O God!
People take refuge in the shadow of your wings.*

*They feast on the abundance of your house;
you give them drink from your river of delights.
For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light we see light. . . .
Continue your love to those who know you,
your righteousness to the upright in heart (Psalm 36:5-7, 10).*

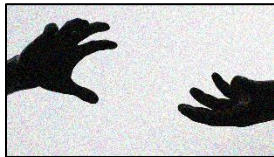
What do these words tell us about God?

What do these words tell us about the relationship between God and people?

Why do you think that you do not know and experience God's love? What keeps us from having the life God planned for us?



2. THE PROBLEM: WE ARE SEPARATED FROM GOD



God created you to have a personal relationship with Him, but He also gave us the freedom to choose His love and to live life the way we determine. Tragically, we have chosen to live our own way and to disobey God. This is called “**sin**” and it **separates us from God**. The Bible describes sin these ways:

Your iniquities [sins] have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear (Isaiah 59:2).

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).

There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death (Proverbs 12:2 NASB).

For the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23).

According to Isaiah 59:2, what has sin done to your relationship with God?

According to Romans 3:23, who has sinned?

When it says “all”, is anyone excluded? Does that include you?

What is the ultimate consequence of sin?



Separation means to be kept apart or divided from someone or something. It can be a barrier that prevents you from going where you want to go, or it can be a space that is too wide to cross. “Falling short” is a way of describing our separation from God because your sin has severed the relationship with God. Sin can be an act of deliberate rebellion against God or passive indifference to Him.

Another way to consider separation is the loss of someone you love. If someone who was very close to you died or abandoned you, you know the pain of this separation. Your separation from God is causing you suffering.

How can you end this separation with God and draw close to God's love? People try many different things.

What are some of the ways people try to do this? What are some of the ways people in Haiti try to close this separation?

What are some of the ways that you have tried to reach God and close this separation from sin?



People try many ways to reach God—good works, religious practices, human effort, and in Haiti, through sacrifices to the loas. But God's word teaches that all these efforts are hopeless and impossible. No amount of human goodness, human works, human morality, or religious activity can gain God's acceptance because God is perfect and righteousness and cannot have fellowship with anyone who does not have perfect righteousness:

Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law (Romans 3:20).

How then can we be saved? All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away. No one calls on your name or strives to lay hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us and have given us over to our sins (Isaiah 64:5-7).

Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrongdoing (Habakkuk 1:13).

No amount of human goodness is as good as God. We fall short; we remain separated. We stand before God helpless, naked, and hopeless. **So, what is the solution?**

3. GOD'S SOLUTION: THE CROSS



What is **impossible** for you and me is **possible** with God. What you cannot do for yourself, God does for you. God reaches down to you with His love and provides the solution to the problem of your sin—the **cross**. Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay the penalty for your sin. His sacrifice is for you and it unites the separation between you and God.

Read the following Scriptures to understand God's solution.

For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:6-8 NASB).

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him (John 3:16-17).

What is God's motivation to send His Son Jesus Christ to die for you?

What does Christ do for our sin?

What is God's promise to us when He sent His Son Jesus Christ?

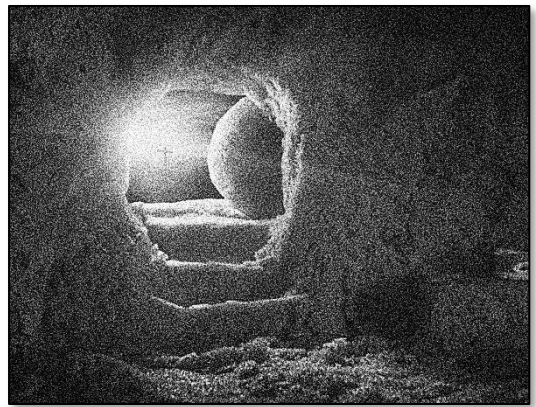
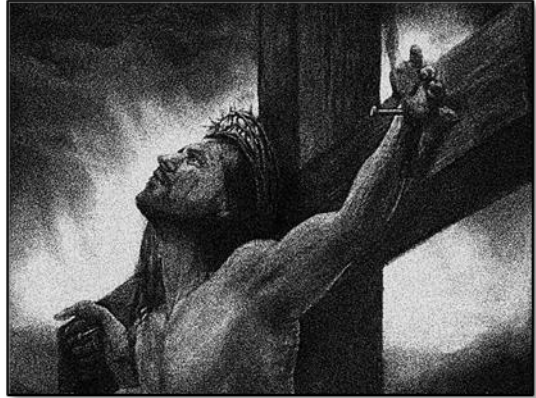
For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body (1 Peter 3:18).

God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. . . . God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:19, 21).

What did Jesus' death accomplish?

God shows you His love, not just with words, but with His action. He has provided the way for you to come and to experience His love and the life that He has prepared for you by giving His life in place of yours. Jesus became the sacrifice for your sin by dying in your place.

But Jesus' death upon the cross was not the end. He rose again and still lives. *Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).*



Jesus is the only way to God.

Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6).

For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 2:5).

God has provided the only way back to Him, but it is not enough just to know this truth.

You must act; you must make a choice.

4. YOUR RESPONSE: RECEIVE CHRIST



You must individually trust and receive Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord, then you can know God personally and experience His love.

To all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God (John 1:12).

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast (Ephesians 2:8-9).

If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved (Romans 10:9).

According to these Scriptures, what must you do to experience God's love?

Receiving Christ is a personal decision that you must make. It involves acknowledging your sinfulness and realizing that there is nothing you can do to earn God's love; you must totally rely on Jesus Christ alone and receive Him by faith. If you receive Christ, God promises to come into your life.

Would you like to receive Christ into your life?

God knows the attitude of your heart and your honesty. You can receive Christ right now by praying a simple prayer. This is a simple prayer that you can pray to receive Jesus into your life:



Lord Jesus, I want to know you and your love. I need you, and I am sorry for my sins. Thank you for dying on the cross for my sins. I trust you as my Savior and want to follow you as Lord, starting right now. I open my life to you and receive you as my Savior and Lord. Please come in. Make me the kind of person you want me to be. Guide my life and help me to do your will. I pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Did you pray this prayer?

If **YES**, where is God right now in your life?

We are excited that you have made a commitment to receive Jesus Christ as your Savior and to serve Him as your Lord. This is the most important day of your life! We are looking forward to seeing what God will do in your life.

If **NO**, do you have a question? Can we pray for you?

As you start this new life with God, we want to help you. Your new life with Christ is something that you will live every day, and God will be with you. We have written this study series to help you know Jesus better and to grow in His love. May God bless you.

