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## Do You Know Where You Stand With God?

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If you have never made Jesus the Lord of your life, then you are separated from God by sin. You are the reason God sent Jesus to the cross. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." God loved you so much that He gave His only begotten Son for you.

Second Corinthians 5:21 says that God made Jesus, Who knew no sin, to be sin for us. Jesus was the spotless Son of God. He knew no sin, but God made Him to be sin for us. Sin was the reason Jesus came to earth. He died on the Cross and went to hell for one reason: to pay the price for sin. Once that price was paid, Jesus was raised from the dead, triumphant over Satan; and the sin problem was taken care of.

God does not hold your sin against you. The only thing keeping you from becoming a child of God is failure to turn from your present world and your present god, which is Satan, and make Jesus the Lord over your life.

When Jesus paid the sin price for you, He was your substitute. Heaven has it recorded that you have been set free. It is as if you yourself died on that Cross 2,000 years ago. But that doesn't mean you will automatically go to heaven. Even though God sent Jesus to pay for your sin - even though He holds nothing against you - you can still go straight to hell.

You can still go to hell because you have not made the choice to receive Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior, to accept His sacrifice as yours. You have a free will. You have the right to choose your own destiny. God will not force you to receive salvation. The choice is yours. You can go straight to hell and God will not lift a finger to stop you. He did all He is going to do when He sent Jesus into the world.

### **Your choice is set before you.**

If you do choose to make Jesus your Lord, God will receive you as His very own child. You will become a part of God's family. He will be your Father and you will be His child. This is not just a theological idea; this is a fact. It actually happens.

Jesus actually walked the earth as a man. He actually went to the Cross, died there, was raised from the dead, and is alive today, seated at the right hand of God in heaven.

When you become a Christian - when you become born again - you take on the nature of God, your heavenly Father. The nature of sin and Satan is death; the nature of God is life. Jesus spoke to the people of His day and said, "Ye are of your father the devil" (John 8:44). To accept Jesus as your Lord causes you to turn your back on your father the devil, or on "the god of this world" as Satan is called (2 Corinthians 4:4). You take on a new Father, a heavenly Father; and you are born again - not physically, but spiritually. Your spirit is reborn in the likeness of God.

You see, you are a threefold being: You are a spirit, you have a soul (mind, will, emotions), and you live in a body. Jesus referred to this in a conversation with Nicodemus (John 3:3-7).

Jesus said to him, "You must be born again."

Nicodemus replied, "What do you mean? Do I have to go back again into my mother's womb?"

Jesus answered, "No. What is born of the flesh is flesh. What is born of the Spirit is spirit."

Being born again is a spiritual rebirth. You are born of the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit was sent into the earth to carry out the new birth. When you make Jesus the Lord of your life, the Holy Spirit comes to indwell you and causes your own spirit to be recreated.

According to 2 Corinthians 5:17, when you accept Jesus as your Lord, you become a new creature, or new creation; old things pass away and all things become new. As far as God is concerned, at that moment, you stand before Him as a brand new person. You are reborn from sin and death to righteousness and new life. That is a fact.

1 John 5:1-4 says, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God...For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

I want you to realize what happens the moment a person makes Jesus Christ the Lord of his life. In the eyes of God, he becomes a world overcomer. Sin no longer reigns over his life. Sin is no longer his lord. Jesus is his Lord and he can live above the satanic forces in the world.

After Jesus was raised from the dead, He stood before His disciples and said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18). Then He delegated that power to His people. He said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

What is the gospel? The good news that God is no longer holding your sins and trespasses against you.

The Bible gives some specific instructions that you are to follow in order to become a Christian, or in order to be born again. Look at Romans 10:8-11:

"... The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."

Jesus said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). No matter what kind of sinner you are, no matter what you have done, you can go to Jesus and He will accept you.

Once you go to Him, then He will cause you to be born again. He will recreate you, and that sin which has been plaguing you will be a thing of the past. It will be gone. You will be accepted before God as if you had never sinned!

To be born again, you use your mouth and you use your heart. First, you believe in your heart that God's Word is true; then you confess it with your mouth because you believe it.

I want you to realize one very important fact: You don't confess you are saved because you feel saved. Feelings have absolutely nothing to do with salvation. Let me give you an example:

Suppose someone says to you, "I went to the bank this morning and deposited \$1,000 in your account." How do you know they actually did what they said? You don't believe they did it because you feel \$1,000 richer, and you don't doubt them just because you don't feel any different. Your feelings really have nothing to do with it. If that person's word is good, you will believe him. If his word is bad, you won't.

When your salvation is involved, you are relying on God's Word - and God doesn't lie. He means what He says. If He said it, then you can believe it. He has said that if you believe in your heart and confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, you will be saved. You don't base your salvation on the way you feel. You base it on the pure, unadulterated Word of Almighty God.

God's Word is the only evidence you have that you are saved, but that is all the evidence you need!

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Several days or weeks from now, you may not feel very saved. You may begin to wonder if you were ever really saved to start with. You will have doubts - Satan will see to that! When those thoughts and feelings come, just go back to the Word of God. You will see that it still says the same thing. God never changes and His Word never changes. It is still just as true today as when it was first spoken.

People may try to convince you that it didn't work. Temptations may come to convince you that it didn't work. Doubts will come to your mind. But all those things do not alter the fact that God's Word is true.

Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). The moment you make Jesus the Lord of your life will be the moment you have a desire to live, instead of a desire to die.

I can testify to that fact in my own life. Before I accepted Jesus as my Lord, I was headed straight for hell. Everything I liked to do was bad for me. The habits I had formed for 25 years were destructive to my body and my mind.

When I made Jesus the Lord of my life, all those desires were changed. I suddenly had a desire to get rid of my filthy habits. I had a desire to get rid of tobacco, alcohol, immoral thoughts and behavior, profanity, etc.

My desires had changed because I was changed. The real me, my spirit, was reborn. The change in my spirit brought changes to my mind and body.

These changes are available to you, too. God is right there, ready to accept you, ready to change you. You don't have to live in sin any longer. You don't have to live a defeated life any longer. You don't have to be anything except God's child. You can walk the road of life victoriously with Jesus as your Lord and Savior. You won't have to take a back seat to Satan again. You can be the head and not the tail!

I want you to join me now in praying this prayer for salvation, Don't just read it; make a conscious effort to speak these words from the very depths of your being. When you finish this prayer, you will be born again:

Heavenly Father, in the Name of Jesus, I present myself to You.

I pray and ask Jesus to be Lord over my life. I believe it in my heart, so I say it with my mouth: "Jesus has been raised from the dead." This moment, I make Him the Lord over my life.

Jesus, come into my heart. I believe this moment that I am saved. I say it now: "I am reborn. I am a Christian. I am a child of Almighty God."

Now, thank God for making you His child. Colossians 1:12 says, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." You have just been made a partaker of an inheritance from God. You have just inherited the kingdom of God!

Speaking of God, the next verse says, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

You don't have to wait until you die to receive your inheritance. You are a child of God right at this very moment, and you can receive all that belongs to you right now! First John 3:2 says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." You have been delivered from darkness into the kingdom of God.

Jesus said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32).

I welcome you into the family of God!

Gregory Dickow