



Discovering New Life in Jesus Christ

by John Keable

AN EMMAUS BIBLE STUDY COURSE

This short course is a brief introduction to the Christian faith.
Here you will find the following lessons:

1. Does God exist?
2. In the Beginning...
3. What is wrong with the World?
4. Who is Jesus Christ?
5. How to become a Christian.
6. How can we be sure?

Whether you are doing these lessons from a Course Book or directly from the website, you can send in your answers to us using the **EXAM FORM** on the website menu.

ALIVE - Lesson 1 - Does God exist?

“Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.”

Hebrews ch 11 v 6

Looking for Proof

“If God really exists, why does He not prove it once and for all?” How many times have you heard people ask that question?

When we read the Bible, we find that God’s existence is assumed from the start: *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”* (Genesis ch. 1 v. 1).

The Bible does not set out to prove God’s existence; it simply declares it: *“[He] who comes to God must believe that He exists”* (Hebrews ch. 11 v. 6)

In one sense, we can say that if it could be proved, once and for all, that God does exist, then He is not God. We cannot detect God by means of scientific instruments. He does not show up on radar and we cannot contact Him by conventional means.

However, there are certain evidences we can look at which point us in the direction of God. I am sure there are many, but we will look at three in particular. Firstly, we will look at the evidence of creation; then we will examine the reasons for what is right and what is wrong; finally, we will be faced with the personal experience of those who claim to have met God personally.

The Evidence of Nature

“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands” (Psalm 19 v. 1)

Have you ever looked at the sky on a clear night? How many stars can you see? Every one is a sun like our sun; some may have planets orbiting them as our planet orbits its sun.

The Earth is 93,000,000 miles from the sun. If it was just a few miles closer, we would all roast alive; if it was a few miles further away on the other hand, we would all freeze to death. The fact is, this Earth was placed in the exact position for the life upon it to survive. Why is this? Was it just a lucky accident? Is it not far easier to believe that the world was placed in such a position for a purpose?

Then let’s look at the plants, the animals and at ourselves. Did this vast array of beauty all come about just by chance?

Albert Einstein had, in his office, a working model of the solar system, with the sun in the centre, and the known planets in orbit around it. A small electric motor caused the planets to revolve around their sun. A visitor to the great man’s home asked who had constructed the model. “Oh, nobody,” Mr. Einstein replied, “It just all came together by chance.” “But that’s ridiculous!” the visitor exclaimed. “Indeed”, was the reply, “And how much more ridiculous to believe that the actual universe came about by chance!”

All around us, there are evidences of great design. Look at a leaf under a microscope, or examine the wing of a bird. Look at the pictures of our own DNA. Do these things not cry out to us that behind it all is a Great Designer and a Great Creator.

Romans ch.1 v. 20 says:

“Since the creation of the world, God’s invisible qualities, His eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.”

Psalm 14 v. 1 and Psalm 53 v. 1 call out the same message;” *The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God.’”*

The Evidence of Conscience

How do we know what is right and what is wrong? How do I know it is wrong to kill, to steal or to harm another person? I have a conscience, which tells me these things are wrong. It also instructs me in the right way to go. But how? Where did it come from?

The Bible tells us about Adam and Eve and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Most of the laws upon which much of the world lives, are to be found in the Bible.

Why is it wrong to kill? If we are all here just by chance anyway, what does it matter if you live or die?

The fact is, you know that it does matter. You know, in your heart of hearts, that life is sacred. You know when you are doing wrong, even if you refuse to admit it to yourself.

God gave you your conscience, and it is another evidence of His existence.

The Evidence of Personal Encounters

For two thousand years, people have been discovering a New Life. Ever since the church was born, people have been finding that only in Jesus Christ are life’s answers explained. *“The Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved”* (Acts ch. 2 v. 47). It is still happening today.

You may say, “If God showed Himself to me, then I would believe.” But God does not work like that. You have to place your faith in Him first. Take another look at our verse in Hebrews ch. 11 v. 6: *“[God] rewards those who earnestly seek Him.”*

Assurance always follows faith. That is the way God works. Those who are willing to obey Him will find their faith is based in reality.

God is too big to be proven. As we have said, a god who could be proven would not be worth proving. When we are prepared to trust Him, we will receive the assurance that our faith is well founded.

ALIVE - Exam 1 - Does God exist?

Write the correct answer after each of the following questions:

1. Without what is it impossible to please God?

What are the three evidences for the existence of God mentioned in this lesson?

2.

3.

4.

5. Where in the Bible do we read: *'The fool says in his heart, "There is no God"'*? (2 refs)

Write 'True' or 'False' after each of the following statements.

6. The Bible assumes the existence of God

7. Albert Einstein believed the universe came about by chance.

8. Conscience tells us when things are wrong and instructs us in the right way to go.

9. God is too big to be proven.

10. Faith always follows assurance.

ALIVE - Lesson 2 - In the Beginning

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Genesis ch. 1 v. 1

There was a time when these words were accepted and believed without question. Nobody had any doubts about where we had come from, or why we were here.

In the last two hundred years or so, we have done our best to find an alternative to the biblical account of creation.

One of the most popular ideas is that of evolution, which, despite the fact that most scientists agree that it is just a theory, is taught in the majority of schools as fact.

The whole idea revolves around the theory that millions of years ago, simple life forms appeared by chance from non-living substances. Over millions of years, the theory goes, these simple forms of life gradually developed into the abundant variety of life that we see around us today, the highest form being human beings.

If this theory is correct, and we are here just by accident, then life on earth has no real purpose.

How likely is it that life did appear just by chance? If you were to sit a chimpanzee down with a typewriter, the chances of him creating the complete works of Shakespeare are higher than the chances of life as we know it appearing by pure chance.

Thus, when looked at logically, the theory of evolution is totally irrational.

Who Am I?

Let's go back to the Bible verse at the top of the page.

The author of the book of Genesis assumed belief in God. He does not argue, or attempt to prove His existence. The implication is: creation will give all the evidence needed to prove that God is.

In verse 31 of Genesis ch. 1, we are told that when God looked at His creation He declared it to be "very good." He was pleased with what He had done. Who would be happy, if it was all just

a cosmic accident?

In Psalm 8 vv. 6-8 we get another insight into God's creation, and another nail in the coffin of evolution. It is taught that man is no different to the animals; but in these verses we are told otherwise: God made man to be in charge of His creation, to care for it and look after it.

We must own up to the fact, that we have not done a very good job of looking after the world God gave us. But if it is all just an accident anyway, well, who cares?

Further evidence of how special we are is found in the book of Job ch.33 v. 4: *"The Spirit of God has made me, the breath of the Almighty gives me life."*

In the Genesis account of creation, God breathed into the man and he became a living being. Thus, as far as the Bible is concerned, mankind is special, for among all the creatures of the universe, only man received God's living essence. Human beings are the only creatures to be able to relate to God on a personal level.

Go back to the book of Psalms, and look up Psalm 139 vv. 13-16; you will find some wonderful things said about God and His relationship to each one of us. In fact, the writer of the psalm says that he believes God knew you BEFORE you were even born. How special is that?

Love is the Answer

The greatest proof that we are special is found in the concept of love. A New Testament writer called John wrote several letters, as well as one of the four Gospels. In his first letter (1 John) ch.4 v. 7 he tells us that: *"love comes from God."* In the very next verse, he goes further, *"God IS Love."*

Because of God's great love for us, He sent His Only Son into the world as a sacrifice for our sins (1 John ch.4 v. 10).

Back into the book of Psalms again! This time, in Psalm 63 v. 3 the writer says that God's love is better than life itself.

Life with a purpose

According to the Bible, God has a plan for every one of us. In John's Gospel ch. 10 v. 10, Jesus Christ, God's Son, says these words: *"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."*

The reason you were born was to know God and to enjoy His plan for your life.

The well-known evangelist, Billy Graham, once said: *"Just as every planet has its set course... so God has a purpose for your life. It would be extremely difficult for me to believe that the infinite God would set the course for each celestial body, each star, each planet and then leave His crowning creation, man, to grope in the darkness of a meaningless world."*

So, the question now is: do you want the life and purpose that God wants to give to you?

ALIVE - Exam 2 - In the Beginning

Write the correct answer after each of the following questions:

1. Who created the heavens and the earth?

2. What THEORY is now taught as FACT in most schools?
3. In which book do we read: “The Spirit of God has made me, the breath of the Almighty gives me life?”
4. God declared His creation to be
5. What does 1 John 4 v 8 tell us about God?

Write ‘True’ or ‘False’ after each of the following statements.

6. Life on earth has no real purpose.
7. The theory of evolution is totally irrational.
8. God made man to be in charge of His creation.
9. Human beings are not able to relate to God on a personal level.
10. God has a purpose for each of our lives.

ALIVE - Lesson 3 - What is Wrong with the World?

“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”
Romans ch. 3 v. 23

As we saw in chapter one, God made the world, and it was perfect. Look at the night sky on a clear night, or a beautiful sunset. Look at a well-kept garden, or the mountains of the Lake District. It does not take much to agree that God did a really good job.

But hang on! Did we say perfect? What about the bad things in the world? Things like disease, famine, crime and suffering? Why are they around? What has gone wrong with God’s “perfect world”?

The Bible gives the answer to these questions in just one word: Sin.

When God made people, He gave them free will; that is, they were able to choose the direction they went. God made it clear, that in order to maintain His perfect world, people needed to do things His way. Instead, we chose to please ourselves and go against God. We have been going our own way ever since.

What is Sin?

Simply put, sin is the tendency we have to do wrong. Even when we know what we should do, there is something inside dragging us in the opposite direction.

Romans chapter 7 verses 18-19, written by Paul, says that there is no good in him. He goes on to describe the struggle that exists inside him, that when he wants to do the right thing, he cannot. Instead, he finds himself doing the wrong things he really hates.

The verse at the beginning of the chapter tells us that everybody has this problem. “ALL have

sinned.” That includes me, and it includes you.

About five hundred years before Christ was born, a prophet called Isaiah also grappled with the problem of sin: *“We all, like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way”* (Isaiah ch. 53 v. 6).

This is what sin is all about: a person goes his own way instead of God’s way. The trouble is, it always leads to trouble in the end. Imagine a car with faulty steering. You turn the steering wheel in one direction, but the car goes in a different direction. Unless you get the problem sorted out, you are going to hurt yourself, and most likely, someone else as well!

It is not just about doing things that are not right though. It works the other way as well. In James ch. 4 v. 17, we have these words: *“Anyone who knows the good he ought to do and doesn’t do it, sins.”*

Have you ever had the feeling that you should help somebody, but have never gotten around to it? According to James, that is sin too.

When we break the law of the land, it is called a crime, but when we break God’s laws, we sin. Things like laziness, greed and lust are not crimes against the state, but they are sins, because they go against God’s law. In fact, in 1 John ch. 3 v. 4 we are told, *“Sin is lawlessness.”*

Crimes are about what we do, but sin has to do with what we do, what we say and even what we think!

Why is Sin so Serious?

If you were asked what the most important commandment was, as in the Ten Commandments, what do you think it would be?

In Mark’s Gospel ch. 12 v. 30, Jesus gives His opinion: *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength.”* In other words, He was saying we should love God with everything we have and with everything we are! He went on to describe the second most important in v. 31: *“Love your neighbour as yourself.”*

Do you know anyone who has managed to keep these commandments? Neither do I! Have YOU been able to keep them? Nor have I!

The reason sin is so serious is that we soon become enslaved to it. In John’s Gospel ch. 8 v. 34, Jesus said, *“Everyone who sins is a slave to sin.”*

If you put a frog into a pan of hot water, it will soon jump out. However, if you put the same frog into a pan of cold water and slowly heat it, the frog will not notice the change in temperature and will be boiled alive. It sounds very cruel doesn’t it? But that is the way sin works; it does not leap, it creeps.

The biggest problem with sin is that it separates us from the God who made us. Isaiah ch.59 v.2 says that our sins hide God’s face from us; in other words, our sins are like a dark cloud that blots out the sunshine of God’s love.

It is not just a problem for now though. In Revelation ch. 20 vv.11-15, we are told that a day is coming when we must all stand before God’s judgement seat. And in Romans ch. 6 v. 23 he tells us that: *“the wages of sin is death.”*

We are not just talking about bodily death. We are talking about an eternal death that separates us from God forever. That is what the Bible calls Hell.

You may feel like a fairly good person, but if you sin just three times a day, that adds up to 21 sins a week. That is over one thousand sins a year, more than 70,000 in a lifetime!

Imagine going to court with 70,000 previous convictions!!

Happily, God has a way of dealing with the problem of sin.

ALIVE - Exam 3 - What is Wrong with the World?

Write the correct answer after each of the following questions:

1. Who has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God?
2. What does the Bible say is the cause of the wrong things in the world?
3. Who said: "We all like sheep have gone astray."?
4. 1 John 3 v 4 tells us that sin is
5. What is the biggest problem with sin?

.

Write 'True' or 'False' after each of the following statements.

6. When God made people He gave them free will.
7. Sin is only doing things we should not do.
8. Lots of people have kept the Ten Commandments.
9. Eternal death separates us from God forever.
10. God has a way of dealing with the problem of sin.

ALIVE - Lesson 4 - Who is Jesus Christ?

"God so loved the world, that He gave His One and Only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

John ch. 3 v. 16

Jesus asked His disciples, "Who do people say I am?" (Matthew ch.16 v. 13).

*"Some say He was an outlaw, that He wandered through the land,
With a band of unskilled ruffians, and a few old fishermen.
No one knew quite where He came from, or exactly what He'd done,
But they said it must be something bad, because it kept Him on the run.*

*"Some say He was a poet, that He'd stand upon the hill;
His voice could calm an angry crowd, or make the waves stand still.
He spoke in many parables, that few could understand,
But the people sat for hours, just to listen to this Man.*

"Some say He was a sorcerer, a man of mystery;

*He could walk upon the water; He could make a blind man see.
He conjured wine at weddings, and did tricks with fish and bread,
He spoke of being born again, and raised people from the dead.*

*“Some say a politician, who spoke of being free;
He was followed by the masses, along the shores of Galilee.
He spoke out against corruption, and He bowed to no decree,
They feared His strength and power, so they nailed Him to a tree.*

*“Some say He was the Son of God, a Man above all men,
That He came to be a servant, and to save us all from sin.
Down through all the ages, His voice speaks clear and plain:
‘If you want to see God’s Kingdom, you must be born again.’”*

(“The Outlaw” by Larry Norman, 1973)

Jesus then asked His disciples, “But what about you? Who do you say I am?” (Matthew ch. 16 v. 15).

He was born in Palestine about two thousand years ago. He was the son of a peasant girl. At the age of thirty, He began an amazing ministry of teaching and preaching. He healed those who were sick, gave sight back to the blind and even raised dead people to life again!

This went on for about three years. The religious leaders of the day had Him arrested and executed by the Romans.

His influence, however, continues to grow. Christians believe that Jesus came back to life, and that He is still alive today.

A scholar called Phillips Brooks has said: “I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, all the navies that were ever built, all the parliaments that ever sat and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon Earth as powerfully as that one solitary life.”

Who Is Jesus?

So, who is Jesus Christ? Many books have been written about Him, but the most comprehensive information comes from the Bible.

Four people wrote stories about the life of Jesus. Matthew and John were there with Jesus; Mark and Luke wrote from information they gathered. All four stories are included in the Bible; we call them the Gospels.

Luke gives us an insight into the events leading up to the birth of Jesus. In ch. 1 v. 35, an angel announces that the child Mary was to bear would be called “the Son of God.”

Later in Luke’s gospel we read an account of Jesus’ baptism (ch. 3 vv. 21-22). On that occasion there was a voice from Heaven, which declared: “You are My Son, whom I love, with You I am well pleased.”

In Luke ch. 4 v. 41, even the demons recognised that Jesus was the Son of God!

Christians believe that Jesus has always been the Son of God. Before He was born into a human family, He lived with His Father in the glory of Heaven.

The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Colossians, says a lot about who Jesus is; in ch. 1 v. 16 we

read that Jesus created all things and that all things were made by Him and for Him. And in v. 19 of the same chapter, we are told that the whole glory of God Himself can be seen in Him.

Then we have what Jesus said about Himself; in John ch. 14 v. 9 He told His followers: “Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father.”

So, Jesus Christ is the Eternal God in human form. As God, He was able to heal the sick, cast out demons, bring peace to a stormy sea, forgive sins and speak words of wisdom that left His hearers baffled. As Man, He knew what it was to be hungry, thirsty and tired. He laughed and He cried. He was the same as us, in every way — except one...

In Hebrews ch. 4 v. 15 we are told that Jesus was tempted in all the same ways that we are, but He was different in that He never did anything wrong. In fact, the words are “He was without sin.” He was completely holy; there was nothing in Him to cause Him to sin. He was Man as God intended Man to be. In short, He was perfect.

Why Did Jesus Have To Die?

In spite of the fact that He was perfect, Jesus died the death of a common criminal. Many people think this was a horrible mistake, but the Bible says otherwise. Talking to a crowd of people on the day of Pentecost, Peter says that the death of Jesus was “by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge” (Acts ch. 2 v. 23).

In other words, not only did God know it was going to happen; He actually arranged it!

Jesus, Himself, also knew what was going to happen. In Mark ch. 8 v. 31 He even told his disciples exactly how He was going to die. When His friend Peter tried to talk Him out of it, he was told that this was what God had in mind all along.

Not only did Jesus know He was going to die. He also made clear that He was doing it by choice. In John ch. 10 vv. 17-18 Jesus said, “I lay down My life... of My own accord.”

Okay, but why? The answer is: Jesus died the death that each of us deserves.

Peter, in his first letter ch. 2 v. 24, informs us that when Jesus was on the cross He bore our sins: “By His wounds you have been healed.”

It was as if when Jesus was on the cross, He was saying, “It is all My fault!” All of God’s anger and hatred of sin was poured out on Jesus. He was punished for the sin of the whole world, past, present and future. In Matthew ch. 27 v. 46, Jesus cried out, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”

The sight of sin, your sin and mine, was so awful that God turned His back on His own Son.

Take a moment to think about that. Jesus took the punishment you and I deserved; He was separated from God so that you and I might be brought back to Him. He went through hell, so you and I would never have to go there!

2 Corinthians ch. 5 v. 21 says, “God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us.”

And Romans ch. 5 v. 8 says, “God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

All this happened because God loves us! The death of Jesus has made it possible for God to forgive us our sins, and to give us a brand new life. God wants to make you and me like Jesus!

Jesus Lives!

Three days after Jesus was executed, His followers discovered that His grave was empty. At first it was thought that someone had stolen His body. But the truth was soon revealed, and was so amazing that it has changed the world!

The apostle Paul, writing to the Corinthians, talks about what happened, *“Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, He was buried and was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures”* (1 Corinthians ch.15 vv. 3-4). Later, he tells us that over five hundred witnesses saw Jesus alive! (v. 6). And in Acts ch. 1 v. 3 we are told that Jesus gave many convincing proofs that He was alive again.

Former Lord Chief Justice Darling, speaking about the evidence for Jesus’ resurrection said: *“On that greatest point we are not merely asked to have faith. In its favour as a living truth there exists such overwhelming evidence... that no intelligent jury in the world could fail to bring a verdict that the resurrection story is true.”*

Acts ch. 2 vv. 32-33 tells us that Jesus is now exalted at the right hand of God.

Today, the Lord Jesus Christ is offering a new start, a new life and a wonderful future to all who will believe on Him and obey Him.

“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone. The new has come” (2 Corinthians ch. 5 v. 17).

God is not interested in patching up your old life. He is not interested in your turning over a new leaf. He is not even interested in making you religious! Through Jesus, He wants to give you a brand new life, to make you a new person.

Whoever you are, whatever you have done with your life so far. God wants to re-make it the way He planned; putting His own life and power into you.

John ch. 3 v. 7: *“You must be born again.”*

ALIVE - Exam 4 - Who is Jesus Christ?

Write the correct answer after each of the following questions:

1. What did the angel say Mary’s child would be called?
2. Who did demons recognise Jesus to be?
3. Who “arranged” that Jesus should die?
4. How many witnesses saw Jesus alive?
5. Where in the Bible do we read, “You must be born again.”?

Write ‘True’ or ‘False’ after each of the following statements.

6. Jesus Christ is the Eternal God in human form.
7. Jesus’ death was a horrible mistake.

8. Jesus said, "I lay down My life . . . of my own accord."
9. God wants you to turn over a new leaf.
10. God wants to put His own life and power into you.

ALIVE - Lesson 5 - How to Become a Christian

"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone. The new has come!"
2 Corinthians ch. 5 v.17

So, where have we got to? God has made a wonderful world, and has given life to all of us. The trouble is, sin has entered the world, spoiling it and our lives.

God sent His Only Son, Jesus, into the world to die and rise again in order to deal with the problem of sin. Through Jesus, it is possible to have our sins forgiven, to have a brand new life and a fantastic future.

It is a common belief today that there are many ways to reach God. "It does not matter what you believe, you will be saved in the end." It sounds very good, and very convenient; the problem is, it is wrong!

According to the Bible, there is only one way to God. "*Jesus said, 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me'*" (John ch.14 v.6).

This is backed up by the words of Peter spoken to the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem: "*Salvation is found in no-one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved*" (Acts ch.4 v.12).

To those who think they can get to God on their own merit, by leading good lives or giving to charity, Paul has these sombre words: "*It is by grace you have been saved, through faith; and this not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not by works, so that no-one can boast*" (Ephesians ch.2 vv.8-9).

There are two things we must do if we really want to know new life in the Lord Jesus. At the very beginning of His public ministry, Jesus began by telling His hearers that they must "*Repent and believe the Gospel*" (Mark ch.1 v.15). The same message goes out today.

Paul had very much the same message to preach in Acts ch. 20 v. 21: "*I have declared... that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.*"

So, if you want to be forgiven and to know peace with God, these two things are vital.

But what does it mean to 'repent'? It simply means you must acknowledge your sin and turn away from it.

There needs to be a change of mind about the way you have been living. You must admit that you have been living in the wrong way and for the wrong reasons. You have been living in a way that leads you away from God.

There also has to be a change of heart. Many people are prepared to admit that they are sinners, but very few feel any real guilt about their sins. They do not see sin as God sees it. They do not realise that their sins caused the death of God's Only Son.

It is not good enough to say "Sorry" to God; you must really mean it. That is what repentance is.

We are given a wonderful promise in 1 John ch. 1 v. 9: *“If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”*

There must also be a change in direction; you must be willing, with God’s help, to turn from everything you know to be wrong; this may include a habit, a friendship or a hobby. It may mean giving up a place, a book or magazine. It may mean giving up on a feeling for somebody or something you know to be dishonest.

True repentance will result in a change in our behaviour. In Matthew ch. 3 v. 8, John the Baptist warns those who heard him to *“Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.”*

In Acts ch. 17 v. 30 Paul warns that *“[God] commands all people everywhere to repent.”*

The second step in receiving new life is to believe in Jesus. This means more than simply believing who Jesus is; James tells us that the demons believe who Jesus is (James ch. 2 v. 19). The belief the demons have will not save them; it has no effect upon the way they live.

A man was once crossing a tight rope with a wheelbarrow. Backwards and forwards he went, across a waterfall. In time several people stopped to watch the man, amazed at his ability and sense of balance. After completing a journey, he turned to the crowd. *“Who believes I can take the barrow across one more time?”* A large number of hands were raised. *“Right!”* the man said, *“who wants to ride in the barrow?”*

This little story illustrates the idea of real faith. You couldn’t say you really believed in the tightrope walker until you were prepared to sit in the wheelbarrow. In the same way, you can’t say you really believe in Jesus, until you are prepared to commit your heart and life to Him.

It means allowing Jesus to take charge of every area of your life: Your time, your money, your friendships, your family and your future.

The Christian life is not easy; you may have all sorts of problems. Not everybody you speak to will be pleased with your decision to follow Jesus. However, Jesus promises that He will be with you always (Matthew ch. 28 v. 20); He makes it all worthwhile.

And in John ch. 6 v. 47, Jesus promises that all who believe in Him will receive everlasting life! That means God’s life in you! Without this, it is impossible to live the Christian life. With God, everything is possible!!

ALIVE - Exam 5 - How to Become a Christian

Write the correct answer after each of the following questions:

1. Who said, “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.”?
2. What caused the death of God’s only Son?
3. What does God command all people everywhere to do?
4. What does true repentance result in?
5. What does Jesus promise that all who believe in Him will receive?

Write ‘True’ or ‘False’ after each of the following statements.

6. There is only one way to God.
7. It does not matter what you believe, you will be saved in the end.

8. Real faith means allowing Jesus to take charge of every part of your life.
9. The Christian life is easy.
10. With God, everything is possible.

ALIVE - Lesson 6 - How can we be Sure?

“I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him for that day.” 2 Timothy ch. 1 v.12

Many people hope that their sins are forgiven. They hope that they will go to heaven one day. But, they are not really sure; even Christians who have been believers for many years can get doubts about the reality of it all.

Can we be really, really sure?

God’s Promise

The Apostle John wrote in the first century because back then, people had the same doubts as they do today.

Look at 1 John ch. 5 vv. 11 & 12. Here we find four very definite statements:

God has given us eternal life.

This life is found in Jesus Christ, God’s Son.

Anyone who “has” the Son has eternal life.

Anyone who does not “have” the Son does not have eternal life.

So the question is, how do I know if I “have” the Son of God?

Do you remember a time when you definitely gave your heart and life to the Lord Jesus? You may not be able to remember an exact date or time, but if you know that there was a time when you made a commitment to Him, then, in Bible terms, you “have” the Son of God. You have eternal life!

Look at John’s Gospel ch. 6 v. 37: Jesus makes a special promise; anyone who comes to Him will never be turned away.

If Jesus is God, He will always keep His promises. If you have trusted in Him, He has given His word that you will be accepted.

Now look at John ch. 1 v. 12. Here is a wonderful thing. Those who receive Jesus have been given the right to become children of God. When you believed in Jesus, you became a member of God’s family!

There are thousands of promises in the Bible that relate to those who trust in Jesus. Let’s just look at one more in John ch. 6 v. 47; once again, Jesus promises that those who believe in Him have eternal life.

Eternal Life

To many people, the idea of eternal life means going to Heaven when we die. It does mean that, but there is so much more to it. In fact, eternal life is not so much about how much there is, but about how good it is! It is a new kind of life with meaning and purpose. It all begins the moment you give your heart and life to the Lord Jesus. It is really God’s life flowing through you making everything new.

Somebody has said: Eternal life is not “pie in the sky when you die”, instead it is “steak on a plate while you wait”.

2 Corinthians ch. 5 v. 17 says: *“If anyone is in Christ Jesus, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come.”*

You may not feel any different, but think about the changes that have happened. You might find one or more of the following: an inner peace, a new love for God, and a new sense of sin. You may find you actually want to pray; you might experience a new happiness that was not there before. Perhaps you find you have victory over sin, a desire to read the Bible, a feeling that you are forgiven.

The Holy Spirit

On top of the promises of God, and the experience of eternal life, God has also given a very special helper for us. He is the Holy Spirit. Not an influence or a power source, but a real Person, Just like God the Father and God the Son. God the Holy Spirit has come to live in each person who has believed in Jesus.

Look at Romans ch. 8 vv. 15-16; there we find that it is the Holy Spirit who assures us that we are God’s children. Through Him, we can call God our Father. The Bible uses the word “Abba” which is a term of close endearment. Coming to Jesus brings you into contact with the best Father in the universe!!

As you give your heart and your life to the Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit will plant deep within you the assurance that you are one of God’s children, a member of God’s family!

God’s offer of salvation is open to everyone. One of the best known verses in the Bible is John ch3 v16; *‘For God so loved the world that He gave His One and Only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.’*

The Bible also says, *‘Now is the accepted time ... now is the day of salvation’.* 2 Corinthians 6.2

ALIVE - Exam 6 - How can we be Sure?

Write the correct answer after each of the following questions:

1. Can we be sure that our sins are forgiven?
2. What right has been given to those who receive Jesus?
3. Where in the Bible do we read, “if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.”?
4. What special helper does God give to those who believe in Jesus?
5. When is a good time to ask Jesus to be your Saviour?

Write ‘True’ or ‘False’ after each of the following statements:

6. Anyone who does **not** ‘have’ the Son does **not** have eternal life.
7. If Jesus is God, He will always keep His promises.

8. Eternal life begins the moment you give your heart and life to the Lord Jesus.
9. Eternal life is God's life flowing through you making everything new.
10. God's offer of salvation is open to everybody.