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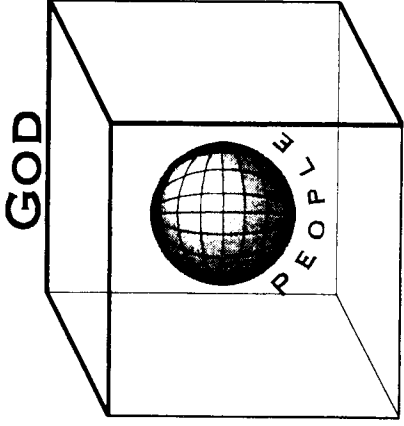
Thanks for your interest in learning more about the Bible. The purpose of this booklet is to introduce some of the main teachings of the Bible.

The Bible tells about the thoughts and character of the one and only God. It is completely accurate and applies to all people in all times. By studying the Bible, everyone can learn that the purpose of their existence is to have a personal relationship with God.

The Bible is arranged into 66 sections called books. The first 39 books are called the Old Testament, and the remaining 27 books are referred to as the New Testament. Each book is divided into chapters, which are subdivided into verses. For example, "John 3:16" refers to the book of John, chapter 3, and verse 16. There are references to Bible verses throughout this booklet so that you may read directly from the Bible about the topics.

Do not let the size of the Bible trouble you. If you read a little every day and then apply what you read, you will be amazed how God will change your life for the better. The book of John, located in the New Testament, is a great place to start reading because it explains how to begin a relationship with God.

The following outline is an introduction to the Bible, the Words of God.



GOD CREATED PEOPLE TO HAVE A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM.

"Know ye that the LORD He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves... For the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations."
Psalms 100:3,5

Who is God?

GOD...

- Is love (1 John 4:8)
- Cares about people and wants what is best for them (1 Peter 5:7, Romans 8:28)
- Is a Spirit who is perfect, just, and holy (John 4:24, Deuteronomy 32:4, Psalm 99:9)
- Defines what is right (Psalm 145:17)
- Has always existed and will continue to exist forever (Revelation 1:8)
- Is everywhere, all knowing, and all powerful (Proverbs 15:3, Psalm 147:5)
- Lives in Heaven (Ecclesiastes 5:2)
- Created everything (John 1:3)

Why did God create people?

GOD CREATED MAN AND WOMAN...

- To be close friends with Him (Jeremiah 9:23,24)
- To worship and honor Him (1 Chronicles 16:29, John 5:23)
- With the freedom to make choices for which they are responsible (Joshua 24:15, Galatians 6:7,8)
- With a soul that will exist forever (John 5:28,29)

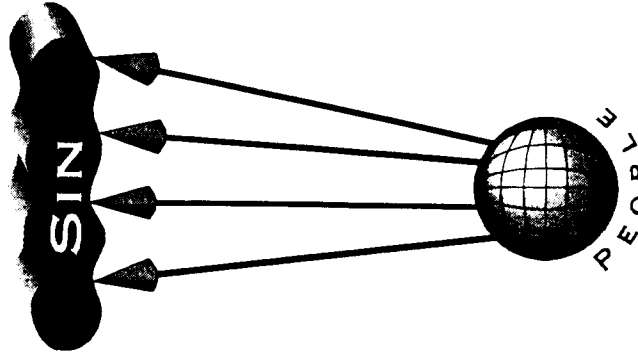
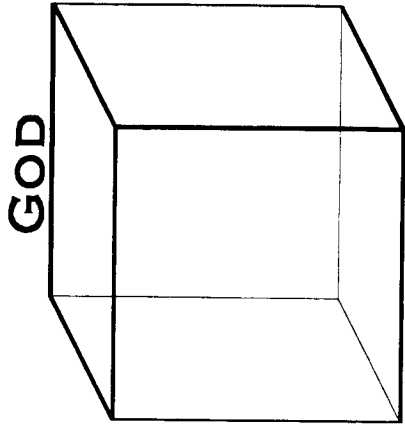
What is a close relationship with God?

A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD INCLUDES...

- A meaningful life of love, joy, and peace (Galatians 5:22)
- A life of hope and contentment (Titus 1:2, Philippians 4:11)
- Having God as a Heavenly Father (Matthew 5:44,45)
- Having God as a guide for life (Psalm 48:14)
- Trusting God in everything (Proverbs 3:5,6)
- Having no fear of death (Philippians 1:21)
- Having a purpose that is eternal (Romans 8:28)

The cube stands for God who is in Heaven. People who live on Earth are represented by the sphere. The sphere is in the center of the cube, symbolizing the close relationship people once enjoyed with God when the world was first created.

Today God would still like to have a close relationship with people.



Sin, which is represented by a cloud, entered into the world causing everyone to be separated from God. God's position never changes. However, because of people's sinfulness, they have fallen from the presence of God. The arrows pointing toward God represent different ways people try to find God.

Sin blocks all attempts to know God and have a close relationship with Him.

ALL PEOPLE ARE SEPARATED FROM GOD BECAUSE THEY HAVE SINNED.

"Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." Isaiah 59:1,2

What is sin?

SIN IS...

- Doing wrong according to God
- Not believing in God
- Disobedience to God
- Not doing something that God says to do

(1 John 5:17)
(Hebrews 3:12)
(Romans 5:19)
(James 4:17)

Why do people sin?

People sin because they obey their sinful nature, which is a tendency to do wrong. This sinful nature originated from and is encouraged by Satan.

SATAN IS...

- God's enemy
- Also called the Devil
- The author of sin
- Here on earth
- Deceiving many people
- Trying to destroy everyone

(Matthew 13:39)
(Revelation 12:9)
(1 John 3:8)
(Job 1:7)
(Revelation 12:9)
(1 Peter 5:8)

Have all people sinned?

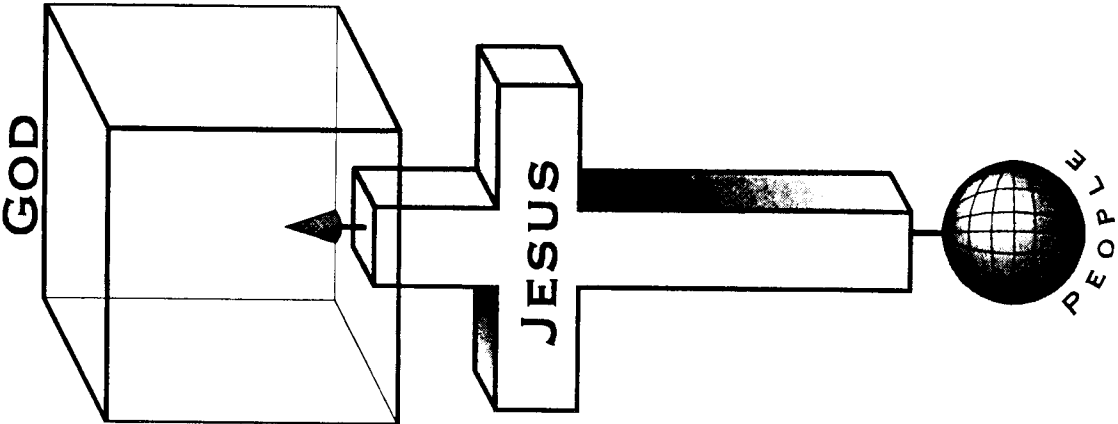
Yes. The first person God created chose to sin. All people since then have sinned. People are not able to overcome their sinful nature by themselves.

SIN...

- Is the evidence of people's bad thoughts and feelings
- Controls people
- Cannot enter into Heaven
- Has separated everyone from God

(Matthew 15:19)
(John 8:34)
(Revelation 21:27)
(Romans 3:23)

IS THERE A WAY FOR PEOPLE TO HAVE A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD?



JESUS CHRIST DIED AND CAME BACK TO LIFE TO GIVE PEOPLE THE ABILITY TO HAVE A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man **CHRIST JESUS**"
1 Timothy 2:5

Who is JESUS CHRIST?

JESUS CHRIST ...

- Is the only Son of God (1 John 4:9)
- Is God in a human form (John 1:1,14)
- Came as a man from Heaven to Earth (John 6:33, Philippians 2:7)
- Is more than a great teacher or prophet (Matthew 16:13-17)
- Is the only way to God (John 14:6)
- Was tested with all sins, yet lived His life without sin (Hebrews 4:15)
- Has the power to forgive sins (Matthew 9:6)

Why did Jesus die?

The penalty of sin, which is total separation from God, has to be paid. A life has to be given as payment for people's sin. Jesus died and gave His own life as the payment to give all people the ability to have a relationship with God.

JESUS CHRIST...

- Died on a cross as a final payment for sin (Philippians 2:8, Hebrews 10:10,12)
- Gave His blood to make payment for sins (Ephesians 1:7)
- Took the sins of people upon Himself (1 Peter 2:24)

God sent Jesus, represented by a cross, to take away the separation caused by people's sin. Jesus, who has overcome sin, has provided the only connection between people and God.

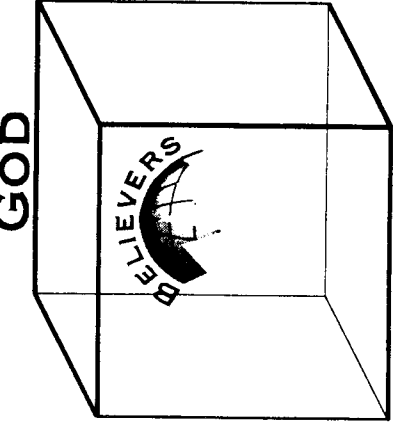
Only through Jesus may people on Earth have a close relationship with God.

What happened after Jesus died?

JESUS CHRIST...

- Came back to life to win victory over death (1 Corinthians 15:56,57, Matthew 28:6)
- Lived on the Earth 40 days more (Acts 1:3)
- Has gone to Heaven (Luke 24:51)
- Will return to Earth (1 Thessalonians 4:16)

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER PEOPLE DIE OR JESUS RETURNS?



AFTER LIFE ON EARTH IS OVER, BELIEVERS GO TO LIVE WITH GOD FOREVER IN HEAVEN WHILE ALL OTHERS GO TO ETERNAL PUNISHMENT IN HELL.

"...the LORD JESUS shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our LORD JESUS CHRIST: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the LORD, and from the glory of his power" 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9

What happens when life on Earth is over?

A PERSON'S SOUL WILL...

- Continue to exist forever (John 5:28,29)
- Recognize that JESUS is LORD of all (Philippians 2:10,11)
- Be held responsible to GOD for his or her life on Earth (Romans 14:12)
- Live eternally with GOD in Heaven or die eternally in Hell (Revelation 21:7,8)

What is it like to live with God In Heaven?

IN HEAVEN...

- There is no pain, sadness, or death (Revelation 21:4)
- No sin exists (Revelation 21:27)
- Believers will see God (Revelation 22:3,4)
- Everyone will worship God (Revelation 19:5-7)
- Eternal joy exists (Psalm 16:11)

What is eternal punishment?

Eternal punishment for sin is everlasting separation from God in Hell.

HELL IS...

- A place where God is not present (2 Thessalonians 1:9)
- Described as a lake of fire (Revelation 20:15)
- An actual place of everlasting torment (Revelation 20:10)
- Where Satan is doomed to eternal punishment (Matthew 25:41)
- Where Satan wants everyone to go (1 Peter 5:8)

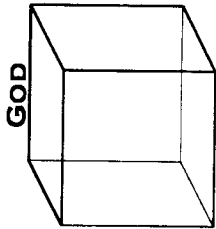


After life on Earth is over, Believers are divided from the Nonbelievers as shown by the broken sphere. Believers are those who have a close relationship with God because their sins have been forgiven by Jesus. Nonbelievers are those who have rejected Jesus and His forgiveness for sin. Therefore they do not have a relationship with God.

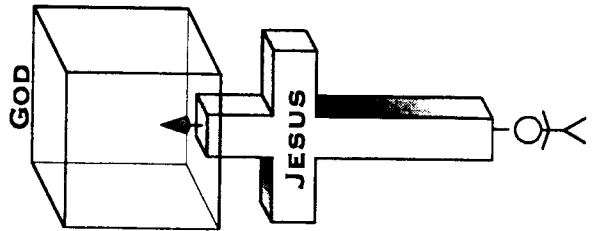
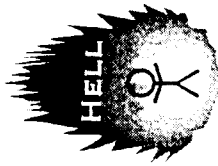
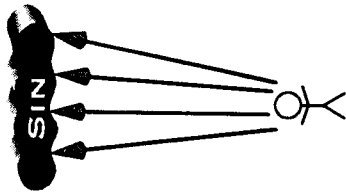
Everlasting joy and life with God in Heaven is the reward for Believers while others go to eternal torment in Hell, represented by fire.

HOW CAN YOU BECOME A BELIEVER?

Which picture best illustrates your life today?



Is your life separated from God because of sin... leading to eternal destruction?



Is your life focused on knowing God through Jesus... leading to eternal life?



THROUGH REPENTANCE AND FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST, YOU CAN HAVE A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" Acts 3:19

What is repentance?

REPENTANCE IS...

- Recognizing and admitting your sinfulness to God (Psalm 32:5)
- Being sincerely sorry for your sins (2 Corinthians 7:9,10)
- Realizing your need for God (John 15:5)
- Being willing to give your whole life to God (Luke 14:33)
- Turning from sinful beliefs and behaviors (Acts 26:18-20)

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." I John 1:9

What is faith in Jesus Christ?

FAITH...

- Is believing that God sent his only Son, Jesus, to this world to die for your sins and that He came back to life (1 Corinthians 15:2-4, John 3:16,17)
- Includes trusting Jesus with all of your life (Proverbs 3:5,6)
- Results in an obedient life to Jesus (1 John 2:3)

"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." Romans 10:9

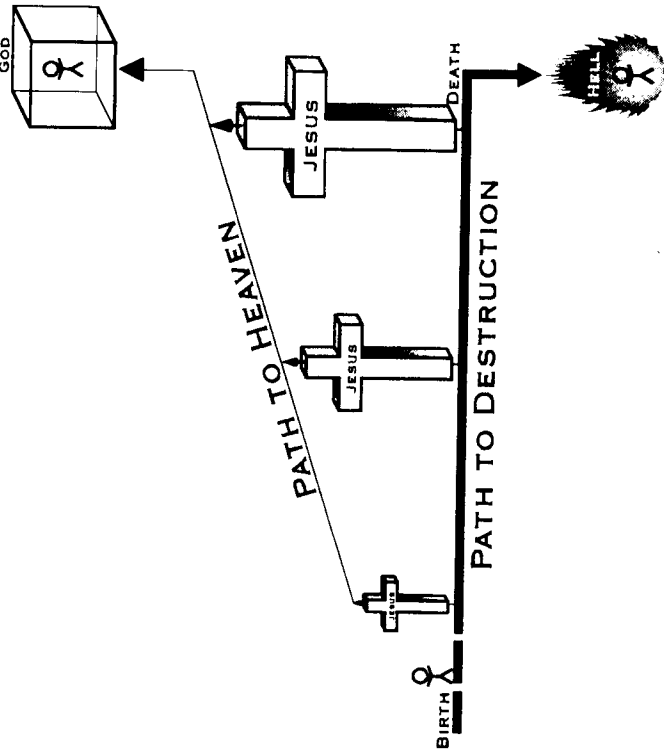
Do you want to have a close relationship with God?

WHEN YOU REPENT AND HAVE FAITH...

- You begin your relationship with God (2 Corinthians 6:16-18)
- You become a Believer and a child of God (John 1:12)
- Jesus forgives your sins (Acts 10:43)
- God gives you eternal life (John 5:24)

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life..." Deuteronomy 30:19

WHAT IS IT LIKE TO BE A BELIEVER?



A person is either on the Path to Destruction or the Path to Heaven. Because of an inherited sinful nature, a person is born heading toward the Path to Destruction. The Path to Destruction is thick showing that it is traveled by the majority of people. It is also smooth and level illustrating that it is the easiest path to take. However, because of sin it leads to Hell.

A person who realizes that he or she is on the Path to Destruction may choose to repent and have faith in Jesus. At this time the person becomes a Believer and is given salvation. Salvation is the gift of eternal life with God and cannot be earned by doing good things. It is shown on the graph by the arrows going up through Jesus to the Path to Heaven.

The three arrows going through Jesus show that people can get off the Path to Destruction during any part of their lives because Jesus is always ready to forgive. The longer people remain on the Path to Destruction the easier sin may control them and the less likely they are to get off. This is illustrated by the increasing distance between the two paths over time.

The Path to Heaven is shown as a thin line indicating that few people choose to travel it. It is steep because it is not easy, but the HOLY SPIRIT gives joy to the Believer while traveling the Path to Heaven. In time the Believer is growing closer to God and further away from the sinfulness of the Path to Destruction.

WHILE ON THE PATH TO HEAVEN, BELIEVERS HAVE NEW GOALS AND A CHANGED LIFE BECAUSE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

"Therefore if any man be in CHRIST, he is a new creature: old things are passed way; behold, all things are become new." 2 Corinthians 5:17

Who Is the HOLY SPIRIT?

THE HOLY SPIRIT...

- Is the Spirit of God (Ephesians 4:30)
- Is also referred to as the HOLY GHOST (John 7:39)
- Lives in the body of all Believers (Romans 8:11)
- Gives the Believer strength to overcome sin (Ephesians 3:16)
- Comforts, guides, brings God's Word to mind, shows right from wrong, and brings sin to a person's attention (John 14:26, John 16:8,13)
- Produces love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control in the life of a Believer (Galatians 5:22,23)

What are the goals of a Believer?

THE BELIEVERS' GOALS ARE TO...

- Know God (1 John 5:20)
- Honor and worship God (John 5:23, 1 Chronicles 16:29)
- Love God with all their life (Mark 12:30)
- Love others as they do themselves (Mark 12:31)
- Share the good news of JESUS CHRIST with others (Matthew 28:19,20)
- Serve God by helping others (Matthew 25:40, Galatians 5:13)

How is a Believer's life changed?

THE CHANGE INCLUDES...

- Having a hatred for sin (Romans 12:9)
- No longer living to please oneself (Luke 9:23)
- Forgiving others (Colossians 3:13)
- Seeking to live at peace with others (Hebrews 12:14)
- Having an attitude of holiness (Ephesians 4:23,24)
- Being obedient to the Bible (1 John 2:3,4)

HOW CAN A BELIEVER HAVE A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD?

READING THE BIBLE, PRAYING, AND BEING ACTIVE IN CHURCH ARE WAYS TO GROW CLOSER TO GOD.

"Let the word of CHRIST dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another... And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the LORD JESUS, giving thanks to God and the FATHER by him." Colossians 3:16,17

What is the Bible?

THE BIBLE IS...

- God's message to all people (Matthew 28:19,20)
- The words and thoughts of God written down by men (2 Peter 1:21) (John 17:17)
- Truth (Ephesians 6:13,17)
- Used by a Believer to resist Satan (2 Timothy 3:16)
- The final authority given to guide, teach, and correct people (Joshua 1:8)
- Most effective when studied daily

What is Prayer?

PRAYER...

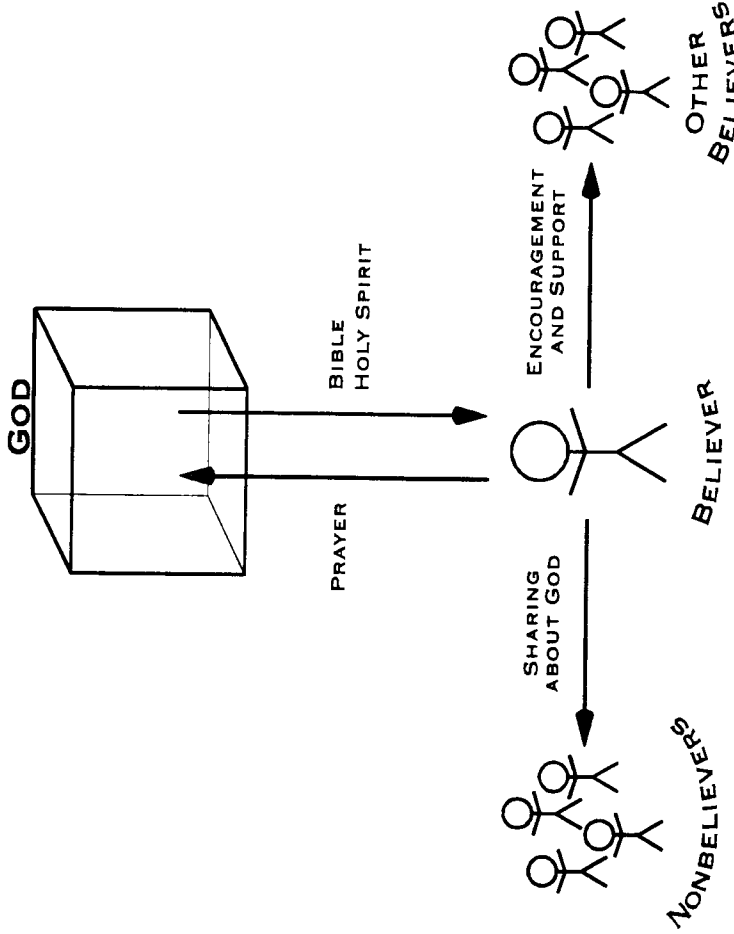
- Is a way to talk to GOD (Psalm 6:9)
- Can be expressed by words, thoughts, and songs (Ephesians 5:19)
- Is a time for a person to praise and thank GOD, confess sins to Him, and request help for himself and others (Matthew 6:9-13, Philippians 4:6)
- Helps keep Believers from temptation (Matthew 26:41)
- May not be answered if the person has selfish motives, unconfessed sin, or no willingness to obey GOD (James 4:3, Psalm 66:18)
- May only be answered if the person believes that GOD will respond (James 1:6,7)
- Is always answered if the person is sincere and has good motives (Matthew 7:7,8)
- Is an essential aspect of a Believer's life (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

Who is a Church?

A CHURCH...

- Is a group of Believers who regularly worship GOD together (Acts 2:46,47)
- Recognizes JESUS CHRIST as the leader (Ephesians 5:23)
- Teaches that the Bible is the true words of GOD (2 Timothy 4:2-4)
- Tells others about JESUS CHRIST (Mark 16:15)
- Gives support, encouragement, and instruction to each individual Believer (Hebrews 10:25, 2 Timothy 4:2)
- Is a part of the universal group of Believers of JESUS CHRIST (Romans 12:5)
- Is watching for JESUS to return (Matthew 24:42)

ARE YOU GROWING CLOSER TO GOD?



In order for a relationship with God to grow, communication must exist. God reveals His perfect plan for a person's life through the Bible and the Holy Spirit, as shown by the arrow pointing down. The arrow pointing up shows that a Believer expresses his or her thoughts and desires to God through prayer. This two-way communication is part of a Believer's purpose to know God.

A Believer's relationship with the rest of the church of JESUS CHRIST is also very important. A Believer should encourage other Believers by supporting and praying for them, as shown by the arrow pointing right.

God has chosen Believers to be the way that Nonbelievers learn about Him. Because faith comes by hearing God's Word, Believers are responsible to tell others about JESUS CHRIST, as seen by the arrow pointing left. In this way others can become Believers and also have a relationship with God.

SUMMARY

GOD created people to have a close relationship with Him.

Why do people not have a close relationship with GOD today?

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All people are separated from GOD because they have sinned.

Is there a way for people to have a close relationship with GOD?

• • •

JESUS CHRIST died and came back to life to give people the ability to have a close relationship with GOD.

What happens after people die or JESUS returns?

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After life on Earth is over, Believers go to live with GOD forever in Heaven while all others go to eternal punishment in Hell.

How can you become a Believer?

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Through repentance and faith in JESUS CHRIST, you can have a close relationship with GOD.

What is it like to be a Believer?

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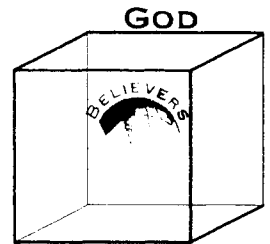
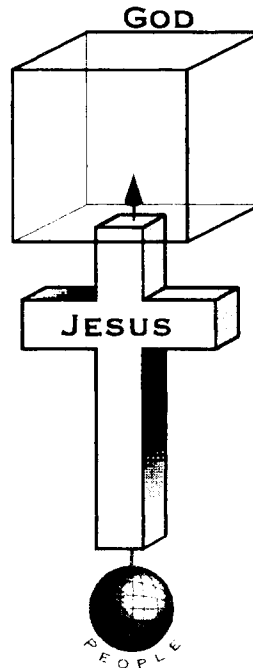
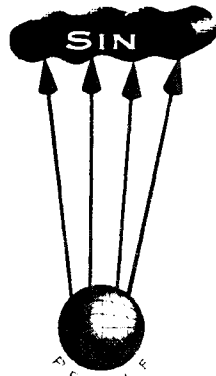
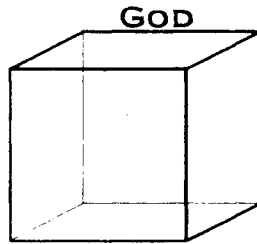
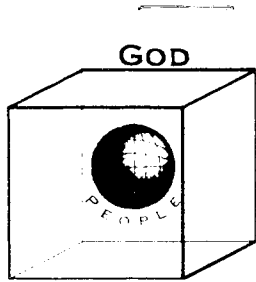
While on the path to Heaven, Believers have new goals and a changed life because of the HOLY SPIRIT.

How can a Believer have a closer relationship with GOD?

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Reading the Bible, praying, and being active in church are ways to grow closer to GOD.

Are you growing closer to GOD?



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Sin blocks all attempts to know God and have a close relationship with Him.

God sent Jesus, represented by a cross, to take away the separation caused by people's sin. Jesus, who has overcome sin, has provided the only connection between people and God.

Only through Jesus may people on Earth have a close relationship with God.

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Everlasting joy and life with God in Heaven is the reward for Believers while others go to eternal torment in Hell, represented by fire.

ILLUSTRATION NOTE: God was chosen to be represented by a cube based on the shape of the Holy of Holies (1 Kings 6:20) and the new Heaven (Revelation 21:16). People are shown as a sphere because of the shape of Earth. Sin is a barrier, and therefore it is a cloud. Hell is illustrated as fire based upon Revelation 20:15.

- Our mission is to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ in order to bring salvation to all nations, kindreds, people, and tongues •
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