

I. If there is a creator, then I must be a creation.

If you continue in this line of thinking, it wouldn't be long until you begin asking yourself the next logical question:

II. If there is a creator, and if I'm a creation, then: "Why did the creator create me?"

As I began to look into the major religions of the world I began to discover that most of them answer the question in a similar way.

The creator created me to develop a relationship with the Creator.

Now some focused on the wrath of the Creator, but even that was the Creator's attempt to reconcile us. We've all heard of Racial Reconciliation; well, this is reconciliation between the Creator and the Creation.

III. The next logical question is, "How can I have a relationship with the Creator?"

I began to look at what many of the religions of the world had to say about answering that question. Even though there are major differences in their answers as to how one can have relationship with the Creator, I began to notice one sweeping similarity about their answers. They fell into 2 categories.

1st - There is no way one can "know for sure" that you can have a relationship with the Creator, but you need to try to do these things.

2nd - Do "these things" (the list will vary greatly, but you are the one responsible to do something), and at some point you may obtain relationship with the Creator.

Humanity - must strive to reach the Creator and position himself to be at a level to have relationship with the Creator.

I examined the practice of many Christians, and I found the same thing. I have questioned 100's & 100's of students and found the same thing. I'd say most practicing Christians are trying to do something themselves to position themselves to find relationship with God.

IV. May I ask you a Question?

Question #1- Have you come to the place in your Spiritual life that you know for certain that if you died today you would go to Heaven?

That's interesting. May I ask you another Question? This one may take a little more thought.

Question #2- Suppose you were to die today and stand before God and He said to you, "Why should I let you into Heaven?," What would you say?

So let's see... You'd say ... (at this point you say back to them what they would say to God. Quoting them in first person. ie. "I'm a good person. The good I do outweighs the bad I do.")

Three more ways to get an answer to the second question:

1. What do you think you might say? I know you don't have some theological dissertation developed on the subject, but what do you think you might say?
2. What would you say are the entrance requirements for anyone to get into heaven.
3. You know, you just don't know do you?

V. Then I made a discovery that revolutionized my life.

Discovery testimony.

I looked beyond the practice of Christians and into the Bible of Christians and found some remarkable things about all the creation stuff.

1. First of all we were created for God's pleasure. We were pleasing to God. He liked us. He spent time walking in the garden with His creation, Adam and Eve. Since we were created in His image, He was proud of us.

2. Secondly, God knew from the beginning that man would sin and be removed from the garden, that God would send His Son Jesus to die and rise again for us, and that that would be the greatest act of love known to man.

VI. Evangelism Explosion

I found that:

A. Heaven is a free gift. It cannot be earned or deserved.

Rom 6:23 "... the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."(NIV)

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

Illustration- Birthday gift

It's like your birthday. What did you do to get born? Nothing right? But what about your mom? She went through labor to deliver you and you did nothing. Yet on your birthday who gets the presents? You do. You didn't earn them, and probably don't deserve them, but you get them. It's free.

B. Man is a sinner and cannot save himself.

Rom 3:23 "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," (NIV)

Prov. 14:12 "There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death."

Illustration - You and an Olympic swimmer trying to swim to Hawaii

This is like you and an Olympic swimmer being on the beach in LA and deciding to swim to Hawaii. Which one of you would make it? That's right neither of you. He would probably go further, but both of you would drown in your best efforts. You would not be able to save yourself. You would need someone to be your lifeguard and come to save you. That's the way it is with us and the Creator. There is nothing we could ever do to be good enough to get back into right relationship with such a Holy God.

C. God is merciful, but He is also just.

I Jn 4:8 "... God is love." (NIV)

Exod. 34:7 God ... "does not leave the guilty unpunished;"(NIV)

Illustration - Bank robbery.

Let's say you robbed a bank and 17 people witnessed it, the security video cameras recorded it, and the police captured you in the act. When you stood before the judge following all this evidence of your guilt, even if you begged the judge to "just let you off," do you think a just judge would just dismiss your case? Even if it were your first offence, a just judge would send you to jail.

The same Bible that shows us that God is merciful also teaches us that God is equally just and will not leave the guilty unpunished. In other words, He's not going to "just let you in."

Illustration of the problem using your finger. Man and God cannot get together.

So you see, the dilemma is we've got God on one side, and He's not going to "just let you in," and we've got us on the other side, and we cannot save ourselves. But God solved this dilemma through the person of His son, Jesus Christ.

D. Jesus bridged the gap. John 3:16

As I said earlier, God knew from the beginning that man would sin and be removed from the garden, that God would send His Son Jesus to die and rise again for us, and that that would be the greatest act of love known to man.

The discovery.

E. Faith

1. What it is not-

a. Not mere intellectual ascent. Not just believing.

James 2:19 "Even the demons believe that-- and shudder." (NIV)

b. Not temporal Faith.

It's not a faith "of this age."

Illustration: Exams

We've all expressed temporal Faith. You know, it's when you get to class on the day of a big exam, and you look up and say, "Oh, God, You've got to help me get through this exam." Maybe you even trust that He will help you to some degree, but the point is that you don't need that faith once you get the results of the exam back. That faith is temporal. Faith for physical healing, as great as it is, is also temporal.

2. What it is-

Transferring my trust from myself to Jesus Christ.

I simply stopped trusting in what I could do to have a relationship with the Creator, and transferred my trust from myself to Jesus Christ and what He did 2000 years ago on the cross for me. You see, I'm not trusting in the fact that I may be a good person or do good things from time to time. I'm trusting in the plan that the Creator envisioned from the beginning of time. I chose to trust in His plan, not mine or any other.

Does this make sense to you?

Do you remember what you said when I asked you the 2nd Question? You said... Who were you referring to in that sentence? (They will admit that they were referring to themselves, at which I would be quick to say, "Me too.") Me too. I was just like that myself, and all I did was pray a simple prayer to transfer my trust from myself to Jesus Christ.

Does this sound like something you would like to do?

Well, before we pray I wouldn't be honest with you if I didn't explain something to you about all of this. It has to do with Jesus being both my Savior and my Lord (or Boss).

Illustration- Jesus as Lifeguard- both Savior and Lord.

You remember when I was talking about swimming to Hawaii? Well, If Jesus was the lifeguard on the beach in Hawaii, and He came and saved you from drowning, He would be your Savior. But we know that any lifeguard who is any good at all always places rules on the wall for you to abide by if you are going to swim on that beach. Well, Jesus has rules also, they are found in the Bible. At the point that the lifeguard posts rules, he becomes your Lord or Boss. Jesus also wants to be the Boss of your life.

Are you willing to allow Jesus to be your Boss as well as your Savior?

Would you like to repeat this prayer with me and transfer your trust to Christ?