

# What Does God Ask Of Us?

One fact we must accept as the basis of our relationship with our Creator God is that God will **never** force us to do anything.

**Deuteronomy 30:19-20** [NIV] *“This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that **I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the LORD is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.**”*

God gives us options, His will or desire is that we may choose to obey, that we may live eternally.

**Genesis 2:8-9, 15-17** [NIV] *“Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground — trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” ... “The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And **the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.**”*

This was a command from God, but the choice to obey or not, began with the very first human beings, and has continued throughout the history of humanity and our relationship with our Creator God.

**John 3:16-19** [NIV] *“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. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but **whoever does not believe stands condemned already** because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.”*

It is because our Creator God loves us that He has this type of relationship with human beings.

**1 John 4:7-13** [NIV] *“Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. **Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.** This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, **since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.** No-one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.”*

Note certain things that this passage of scripture tells us.

**God is love** – this love is a very special type of love, the Greek word used for love is “*agapé*” – a spontaneous love, irrespective of the rights or response of the person receiving that love.

Because this is the nature of our Creator God, He will **only** give eternal life to those who have this type of love.

Why?

God is our Creator and life-giver so He has all the rights to control our future.

If God allowed any humans to enter the Kingdom of God and receive eternal life, who did **not** have the love that is the basis of His lifestyle, such people would cause those in the kingdom pain and sadness.

Also such people would **not** themselves be happy to be among people whose lives are driven by this love.

Peace and harmony would **not** reign in such a gathering of humans.

**We have to be “born of God” – what does this mean?**

**John 3:5-6** [NIV] *“Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, **no-one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.** Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.”*

**The realm we are to enter if we receive eternal life, is the spirit realm.**

**1 Corinthians 15:50-53** [NIV] *“I declare to you, brothers, that **flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.** Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. **For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.**”*

Flesh and blood human beings **cannot** enter into a spirit realm.

**Acts 2:37-38** [NIV] *“When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” Peter replied, “**Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**”*

We receive the gift of the Holy Spirit in our lives only after repentance and baptism.

**Acts 5:32** [NIV] *“We are witnesses of these things, and so is the **Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.**”*

The Holy Spirit will remain with us **if** we continue to obey the words of Jesus Christ and the words of those writers in the Christian Bible who were inspired by God.

**2 Peter 1:20-21** [NIV] *“Above all, you must understand that **no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation.** For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, **but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.**”*

These writers were directed by the Holy Spirit.

**John 16:8** [NIV] *“When he [the Holy Spirit] comes, **he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:**”*

The Holy Spirit brings us to the point of repentance, by convicting us of our sins, but we have to choose to respond to this conviction and repent.

**John 16:13** [NIV] *“But when he, the **Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth.** He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.”*

**The Holy Spirit will lead us into all truth, but we have to choose to follow that lead.**

**John 14:26** [NIV] *“But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and **will remind you of everything I have said to you.**”*

The Holy Spirit will bring the scriptures to remembrance, but we have to choose to spend time reading and meditating on them, for Him to be able to do this.

**John 14:17** [NIV] *“the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, **for he lives with you and will be in you.**”*

Notice two levels of influence in our relationship with the Holy Spirit.

“Lives with you” – the Holy Spirit will constantly be seeking to influence our lives by His presence.

“Will be in you” – **if** we let the Holy Spirit become the very driving force in our lives.

**John 17:3** [NIV] *“Now this is eternal life: that they may **know** you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.”*

The Greek word translated “know” is “gnōskō” indicating a very close intimate relationship, as it is used for the relationship between a husband and wife [same word used in **Luke 1:34**].

**1 John 5:11** [NIV] *“And this is the testimony: **God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.**”*

We can experience eternal life now!

How is this?

By allowing the Holy Spirit to enter into us, unite with our human spirit in an intimate relationship, that causes us to be “born again” into a child of God.

**Having received the Holy Spirit, what is our part to retain Him in our lives?**

**Ephesians 4:30** [NIV] *“And do **not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.**”*

Do **not** grieve the Holy Spirit. The Greek word translated “grieve” is “lupēō” meaning to cause distress.

**How do we cause the Holy Spirit distress?**

**Ephesians 4:31-32** [NIV] *“**Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.**”*

All of these attitudes are those we choose to have in our life.

The first list are those that distress the Holy Spirit because a God of love **cannot** relate to people filled with bitterness, etc.

The second list are again attitudes we can choose and these will please the Holy Spirit.

**Ephesians 5:1-2** [NIV] *“**Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.**”*

We have the recorded life of Jesus Christ to follow as our example, that will include self-sacrifice.

**Ephesians 5:3-7** [NIV] *“**But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person, such a man is an idolater, has any inheritance***

*in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no-one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. Therefore **do not be partners with them.***"

If we live such a life as described in these verses or have such people as our companions, do **not** expect to be part of the Kingdom of God.

The Holy Spirit will leave us and the eternal life we experience now will be taken from us with His departure.

**1 Thessalonians 5:19** [NIV] *"Do not put out the **Spirit's fire**;"*

How can we put out the "Spirit's fire" ?

**John 7:37-39** [NIV] *"On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. **Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.**" By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified."*

The Holy Spirit **cannot** be stagnant, He has to flow through us.

What is meant by this?

**We need to look at the ultimate goal of every Christian.**

**Revelation 19:7-8** [NIV] *"Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and **his bride has made herself ready.** Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (**Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.**)"*

To prepare to be part of the very bride of Jesus Christ.

This preparation involves acts of righteousness, that is acts motivated by love, the very sacrificial love of God, "agapé" love, given irrespective of the response of the person receiving it.

**Galatians 5:22-25** [NIV] *"But **the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.** Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. **Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.**"*

This love is a fruit of our intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit as He works in us and through us.

I do **not** think that the following is pushing this analogy of the Holy Spirit's fire in us, beyond what is intended.

**A burning fire within us will make us thirsty!**

**Matthew 5:6** [NIV] *"Blessed are those who **hunger and thirst** for righteousness, for they will be filled."*

This is what will satisfy this thirst, righteousness as found described in God's Word, the Christian Bible.

We choose to do this or not.

**A burning fire within us will make us a light for others to see and be guided by.**

**Matthew 5:14-16** [NIV] *"**You are the light of the world.** A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to*

*everyone in the house. In the same way, **let your light shine before men**, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”*

Again this is something we choose to be.

We have seen in all the above study of God’s Word, the Christian Bible, we have to choose to follow a lifestyle that God tells us will lead to our being accepted into the Kingdom of God, God’s created family.

**With this choice we also choose eternal life or eternal death, oblivion, as if we had never existed.**