

1

## God loves you

Do you know that God loves you unconditionally? He longs for a personal relationship with you but He won't barge into your life if you don't want it. He is knocking at the door of your life and waits to see if you will freely invite Him in. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16). This means that God so loved you that He sent his son Jesus to die in your place so that if you will freely believe in Jesus, which means to trust in, cling to or rely on Him, then you can experience today a quality of abundant life, that He promises will last forever.



2

## What went wrong?



Sin is a radical relationship of deliberate independence from God, introduced by Adam's choice against God. We are all born into this heredity of sin. Frank Sinatra's song "I did it my way" typifies our human condition. St. Patrick's confession starts with "I am Patrick, a sinner." Scripture says: "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Rom 3:23-24) "If we claim we have not sinned, we make God out to be a liar." (1 Jn 1:10) Our sins prevent us from experiencing the love of God. We all need a saviour!

3

## Jesus died for you

On the cross, Jesus took our sins upon himself so that we might be forgiven. This means that he took the punishment that we deserved upon himself. He truly is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. "If we walk in the light, God himself being the light, we also experience a shared life with one another, as the sacrificed blood of Jesus, God's Son, purges all our sin." (1 John 1:7). You can be set free from the bondage of guilt and sin in your life today. The good news is that you can make a new start.



4

## Make a new start

The fact that Jesus died for your sins has no impact at all on you unless you repent of your sins and put your trust in Jesus. To repent means to acknowledge the wrong things you have done in your life, tell the Lord you are sorry and ask him to forgive you. Then thank him for dying on the cross for you. Sometimes you might need to go back to someone you have offended and apologise to them.

Isn't it amazing to realise that if you were the only person that ever lived Jesus would have died for you? He wants to have a personal relationship with you. Is Jesus knocking at the door of your life? "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me" Revelation 3:20. Listen and respond.

5

## Receive the Holy Spirit

Scripture exhorts us to "Be filled with the Spirit" (Eph 5:18). Without the Spirit we can do nothing effective, but when the Lord and Giver of Life is active within us, we can live effective lives that make a difference to others. To receive the Holy Spirit, we simply need to ask with expectant faith, relying on Jesus' promise: "If you... know how



to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke 11:13). Ask and you shall receive.

6

## Enter into Christian community



When you accept Jesus into your life and are filled with his Holy Spirit you will need to find a group who will support you in your new life of faith e.g. a Prayer Group, Parish Cell or Sharing Group that meets regularly for prayer and scripture reading. We all need the encouragement of Christian community.

The first believers "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer... And the Lord added to their community daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:42, 47).

## What to do now

If you would like to encounter Jesus and begin to develop your personal relationship with God, here is a very simple prayer which you may like to use in taking that step:

*“Lord Jesus Christ, I am sorry for the things I have done wrong in my life. (Pause to ask His forgiveness for anything that is on your conscience). Please forgive me. I now turn from everything which I know is wrong. Thank you that you died on the cross for me so that I could be forgiven and set free. Thank you that you offer me forgiveness and the gift of your Spirit. I now receive that gift. Please come into my life by your Holy Spirit to be with me forever as Saviour and Lord of my life. Thank you, Lord Jesus. Amen.”*

## What Next?

### 1 Read the Bible Daily

Use a Bible reading aid like Bible Alive or Scripture Union’s Daily Reading notes.

### 2 Spend time each day in Prayer

Talk to God about your concerns and listen to his inspirations - e.g. through the scriptures.

### 3 Attend a Scripture-based course

Participate in an Alpha course, Life in the Spirit Seminar, Cursillo weekend, a Philip Retreat or CAFÉ Course.

### 4 Find a Prayer/Bible Study Group

Courses come to an end but there is continuity in Parish groups, where you can meet other Christians who know and love Jesus.



### 5 Read some inspiring Christian material

Read Christian classics, magazines, testimonies of men and women eg. Life Change – testimonies of 15 men who experienced a transformation in their lives, or Nicky Gumbel’s excellent book: Alpha: Questions of Life. (Available in Veritas or Footprints Dublin.)

## Why do Alpha?

Alpha is a basic introduction to Christianity involving over 29 million people to date. Some 66,000 courses are run in 113 languages in 169 countries worldwide, leading large numbers of people to a living faith in Jesus. Over 1,100 Alpha Courses have been run in Ireland, (some in prisons) involving over 23,400 participants. This includes 439 Alpha Youth Courses run with over 9,600 participants.



Alpha is endorsed by many Christian Church leaders including:

Catholic Archbishop Diarmuid Martin: *“Our cities and towns, indeed our culture and especially our young people need to know Jesus Christ. I commend the Alpha Course as one pathway whereby people can come to a knowledge and understanding of Jesus Christ today. Being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with a person [Jesus Christ]... We have to know the scriptures, to love the scriptures, to understand the scriptures, to prayerfully read the scriptures.”*

Church of Ireland Archbishop Michael Jackson: *“Young people today experience life at a very fast pace. Information, in every form of media, bombards them with choices and options. Alpha provides a friendly and accessible framework within which they can ask questions in a trusting environment and meet God in the encounter.”*

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**Contact: info@evancat.org**  
**www.evancat.org**  
(a companion leaflet to What is the Kerygma?)

**How you  
can get to  
know  
Jesus**