

## Things That People Think Will Automatically Get Them To Heaven

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by Chuck Bartlett

Many of the things listed in this article are necessary to be a faithful Christian. After all, those who practice lawlessness will not inherit the kingdom of God (Gal. 5:21). Though we **need** to do most of the things listed, many people incorrectly believe that doing these things will be enough to ensure their salvation. Here is a list to consider:

1. **Always going to church.** Attending a church does not mean one is going to heaven. Even in the Bible, Christians were rebuked even though they kept “going to church” (Rev. 2-3).
2. **Believing in God.** People can believe in God and Jesus without being faithful to them. If someone believes in Satan, are they automatically a follower of Satan? Of course not! Some believe and are not faithful (James 2:19; John 12:42-43).
3. **Praying always.** It would be wrong to conclude that all prayers offered to God are acceptable (Matt. 6:5-7). The fact that ungodly behavior can hinder prayers does not stop these people from praying anyway (1 Pet. 3:7).
4. **Believing the Bible is God’s word.** There are plenty of criminals in this world who know the law was but do not follow it. Accepting the Bible as God’s word is meaningless if we do not read and obey it (James 1:22; 2 Tim. 2:15).
5. **Going along with what the church does.** Being devoted to the church is not the same as being devoted to Christ. We are to be converted to Christ (Rom. 6:3-4). The church is not the head – Christ is (Col. 1:18).
6. **Having a strong desire to go to heaven.** Desiring heaven does not mean a person is going to heaven. On the last day, many will be shocked to find out they are lost (Matt. 7:21-23).
7. **Avoiding evil deeds.** Not doing evil deeds is important, but we must also be born again (1 Pet. 1:23). One is not a truly new person until they bury the old man (Rom. 6:3-7).
8. **Being a “basically” good person.** We cannot assume that heaven will be our home just because we feel we are not as bad as the “truly” wicked. This mindset forgets that all have sinned and need God’s mercy and grace (Rom. 3:23; Eph. 2:8).
9. **Believing that God loves them.** There is no question that God loves everyone (John 3:16). This love will not overlook sin though. Heaven will not be their home (2 Cor. 5:9-11).
10. **Being a very religious person.** Talking often about spiritual things does not guarantee heaven. Many religious people walk in darkness (Matt. 15:7-9). Dying for what you believe in is meaningless if you do not follow He who died for mankind (John 8:24).
11. **I tell people to follow the Lord.** Telling others to do the right thing does not mean you are also doing right. Many teachers are guilty of hypocrisy (Phil. 1:16; Rom. 2:21-23).
12. **My grandfather was a member of this church.** Having faithful family members does automatically save the whole family. Timothy’s mother and grandmother were faithful, but Timothy needed his own faith (2 Tim. 1:5).