

Sample discussions with A.I. regarding Christianity

Prompt: “What should I do to become a Christian?”

This very generic prompt produces a generalized answer that is specifically inclusive of the general representation of “Christian” religion rather than an exegetical answer from Scripture.

The prompt did not tell the AI where truth was to be found. It did not say, “Use Scripture alone,” “show me the conversion accounts in Acts,” or “separate biblical instruction from denominational tradition.” So the model searched the patterns it had learned from an enormous mixture of Christian writings and produced the safest, broadest, most widely acceptable answer it could. It was not determining which teaching was true. It was blending conflicting teachings into a response that sounded Christian to the largest number of people.

Response:

To become a Christian, the process typically involves a personal journey of faith and commitment to following Jesus Christ. Based on widely accepted Christian teachings, here are the key steps often emphasized across denominations:

1. **Understand the Gospel:** Learn about the core message of Christianity—that God loves you, humans are sinful and separated from God, Jesus Christ (God’s Son) died on the cross to pay for humanity’s sins, and rose again, offering salvation and eternal life to those who trust in Him.
2. **Acknowledge Your Need:** Recognize your own shortcomings or sins (actions, thoughts, or attitudes that go against God’s will) and your need for forgiveness and reconciliation with God.
3. **Repent:** Repentance means turning away from sin and choosing to live in alignment with God’s teachings. It’s a heartfelt decision to change direction and seek to follow God’s way.
4. **Believe in Jesus:** Place your faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord. This involves trusting that His death and resurrection provide forgiveness for your sins and a restored relationship with God.

5. **Pray to Accept Christ:** There's no strict formula, but many Christians suggest praying a sincere prayer to express your faith. An example might be: *"God, I admit I'm a sinner and need your forgiveness. I believe Jesus died for my sins and rose again. I turn from my sins and invite Jesus into my life as my Savior and Lord. Help me to follow You. Amen."*
6. **Connect with a Christian Community:** Join a local church or Christian group to grow in your faith, learn more about the Bible, and build relationships with other believers. Baptism, a public declaration of faith, is often a next step in many churches.
7. **Live Out Your Faith:** Christianity is a lifelong journey. Read the Bible (starting with the Gospels, like the Book of John), pray regularly, and seek to live according to Jesus' teachings, with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Each denomination (e.g., Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox) may emphasize additional practices, such as specific sacraments or traditions. If you're curious about a particular denomination, I can provide more details. You might also find it helpful to speak with a pastor or trusted Christian friend for guidance.

If you'd like, I can search for specific resources or connect you with information about local churches. Let me know what you're looking for!

AI does not automatically go to Scripture as the final authority merely because the question is religious. Unless we deliberately require a biblical foundation, and then personally verify its handling of that foundation, it may give us the average of religious opinion rather than the teaching of the Word of God.

It answered, "What do Christians commonly say?" rather than, "What does Scripture actually say?"

Now let's go a little overboard being absolutely specific in some very important ways. Telling AI to take on a "role" can help it exclude many unwanted patterns from its matching scheme. Being repetitively specific chips away at different assumptions AI might make on what to include.

Since I already started the conversation about becoming a Christian, I didn't restate the exact question. I targeted the clearly misrepresented topic of baptism being "often a next step" to see how it would change its answer.

Everything in the "Response" section is the AI response, even if you see a new question, it's how AI organized and sectioned off different parts of its answer.

Prompt:

Take on the role of a conservative Christian scholar who upholds the 66 books of the Bible as authoritative, as the inspired Word of God, delivered and preserved by the Holy Spirit, and rejecting traditions, creeds, and doctrines of men, especially when tied to a specific denominational entity that is not textually and logically found within Scripture itself.

Default to the NASB95 translation of the Bible for printing out text on the screen, or as a general guide for word searches, although pairing those words with the Greek or Hebrew counterpart and searching the Greek and Hebrew text is always preferred to avoid translation errors or minor variances.

Based on the parameters of upholding only Scripture as a source of authority, and appealing to the intended meaning of the Holy Spirit-inspired writers in the Hebrew and Greek languages... can you explain to me what the process of baptism is supposed to look like? Some people sprinkle a little water, some people pour, some people are fully immersed... some are babies, some are children, others are adults. What is the pattern as taught specifically within Scripture for baptism?

Response:

As a conservative Christian scholar committed to the authority of the 66 books of the Bible alone—as the inspired, inerrant Word of God delivered and preserved by the Holy Spirit—I must approach this question by appealing solely to the text of Scripture, interpreted according to the intended meaning of its Holy Spirit-inspired writers. This means examining the original languages (Hebrew for the Old Testament and Greek for the New Testament) to discern the pattern of baptism, without reliance on post-biblical traditions, creeds, or denominational practices that

lack explicit textual support. Where variances in English translations arise (such as in the NASB95, which I will use as the default for quotations unless a deeper word study requires otherwise), I will prioritize the underlying Hebrew or Greek to avoid potential translation nuances.

The Bible does not provide a step-by-step "manual" for baptism as a ritual, but it does reveal a clear pattern through the meaning of the words used, the examples given, and the theological symbolism described. Baptism in the New Testament is not merely a symbolic act invented by the apostles; it is rooted in Old Testament concepts of ritual cleansing and immersion, but fulfilled in Christ as a sign of identification with His death, burial, and resurrection. Let us examine the mode (how it is performed) and the subjects (who is baptized) based strictly on Scripture.

The Mode of Baptism: What Does Scripture Teach?

The New Testament consistently uses the Greek verb baptizō (βαπτίζω) and its noun form baptismā (βάπτισμα) to describe baptism. To understand the intended meaning, we must look at the lexical sense of baptizō in Koine Greek, the language of the New Testament writers. This word fundamentally means "to immerse," "to dip," "to submerge," or "to plunge under." It does not primarily mean "to sprinkle" (which would be rhantizō, ῥαντίζω, used in passages like Hebrews 9:13, 19, 21 for sprinkling blood or water) or "to pour" (which could be ekcheō, ἐκχέω, or similar terms, as in Acts 2:17-18 for the pouring out of the Spirit). This is evident in classical Greek usage contemporary to the New Testament, where baptizō described sinking ships, submerging objects, or fully dipping something into liquid (e.g., dyeing cloth or pickling vegetables). In the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament used by New Testament writers), baptizō translates the Hebrew tābal (טָבַל), meaning "to dip" or "to immerse," as in 2 Kings 5:14 where Naaman "dipped himself" (ebaptisato in Greek) seven times in the Jordan River for cleansing—a full-body immersion, not a sprinkle or pour.

Old Testament ritual washings provide a backdrop, using Hebrew words like rāḥaṣ (רָחַץ) for "to wash" or "bathe" (e.g., Exodus 29:4; Leviticus 14:8-9), often implying full immersion in water for ceremonial purity. However, these are foreshadows; the New Testament fulfillment in Christian baptism emphasizes immersion as the pattern, seen in descriptive verses:

The baptism of Jesus: "After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water" (Matthew 3:16, NASB95). The phrase "came up from the water" (Greek anebē apo tou hydatos) implies He had gone down into it, consistent with immersion in the Jordan River.

The Ethiopian eunuch: "And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch, and he baptized him. When they came up out of the water..." (Acts 8:38-39, NASB95). Again, "went down into" (katebēsan... eis to hydōr) and "came up out of" (anebēsan ek tou hydatos) describe submersion.

Symbolic burial and resurrection: "Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4, NASB95; see also Colossians 2:12). The Greek syntaphentes ("buried with") evokes a full burial-like immersion, not a partial sprinkling or pouring. This symbolism of dying to sin (going under) and rising to new life (coming up) aligns perfectly with baptizō's meaning.

No New Testament verse describes or commands sprinkling (rhantizō) or pouring as the mode for Christian baptism. While some Old Testament prophecies use sprinkling imagery for spiritual cleansing (e.g., Ezekiel 36:25, "I will sprinkle clean water on you," Hebrew zāraq, זָרַק), this is metaphorical for the Holy Spirit's work, not a prescription for the physical act of baptism (compare Hebrews 10:22, which links "sprinkling" to the heart's cleansing but uses baptizō separately). The pattern in Scripture is immersion in water, symbolizing complete identification with Christ's death and resurrection.

The Subjects of Baptism: Who Should Be Baptized?

Scripture ties baptism explicitly to personal faith and repentance, indicating it is for those who can consciously respond to the gospel. There is no command, example, or implication of baptizing infants or young children incapable of belief. Instead, the pattern is "believer's baptism":

Repentance and faith precede baptism: "Peter said to them, 'Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'" (Acts 2:38, NASB95). Repentance (Greek metanoēō, μετανοέω, "change of mind") requires understanding sin and turning to Christ—something infants cannot do.

Belief is the prerequisite: "But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike" (Acts 8:12, NASB95). Similarly, "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16, NASB95). The Greek pisteuō (πιστεύω) means active trust in Christ.

Household baptisms assume believers: In Acts 16:31-34, the Philippian jailer is told, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." The whole household heard the word, believed, and was baptized. The text specifies they "believed in God with his whole household" (v. 34). Other households (e.g., Lydia in Acts 16:15; Crispus in Acts 18:8; Stephanas in 1 Corinthians 1:16) follow the same pattern: the gospel is proclaimed, belief occurs, and baptism follows. No mention of infants; the assumption is that all could hear and respond.

Arguments for infant baptism often appeal to covenant continuity with Old Testament circumcision (Genesis 17:10-14), suggesting baptism replaces it as a sign for covenant children. However, this is an inference from tradition, not explicit in Scripture. Circumcision was for male infants under the old covenant, but the new covenant emphasizes personal faith: "For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit" (Romans 2:28-29, NASB95). Baptism is never equated with circumcision in the text; Colossians 2:11-12 calls the "circumcision of Christ" a spiritual reality fulfilled in baptism, but only for those "buried with Him" through faith. Household baptisms do not prove infants were included, as the contexts emphasize belief. The Bible records no infant baptisms, and Jesus blessed children without baptizing them (Mark 10:13-16).

The scriptural pattern is for adults or those old enough to profess faith (e.g., the "men and women" in Acts 8:12), following repentance and belief. Children who can understand and confess Christ (Romans 10:9-10) may be baptized, but not babies.

The Process of Baptism According to Scripture

Putting it together, the biblical pattern for baptism is:

1. Proclamation of the gospel: The individual hears the word of Christ (Romans 10:17).
2. Personal response: Repentance and faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior (Acts 2:38; 16:31).
3. Immersion in water: Full submersion, symbolizing burial and resurrection with Christ (Romans 6:3-4), performed "in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19) or "in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 2:38; 10:48), emphasizing His authority.
4. Public witness: Often immediate and communal, as in the 3,000 baptized on Pentecost (Acts 2:41).

This is not a "work" earning salvation but an obedient response to faith, picturing union with Christ. Any deviation—such as sprinkling infants—stems from human traditions (e.g., post-apostolic developments), which Scripture warns against: "See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men... rather than according to Christ" (Colossians 2:8, NASB95). If your practice differs, I urge examination against the Word alone.

After getting a better explanation of baptism, I decided to target the “Pray to Accept Christ” step that it confidently gave me originally. My first two paragraphs in my last prompt I added as a default rule so I don’t type them every time, so you will see the AI model repeat those requirements back to me even though you don’t see it in my new prompt.

Follow-up Prompt:

Is there any basis found in Scripture alone that the practice of some of merely "asking Jesus into their heart" or reciting something commonly called "the sinner's prayer" is sufficient for moving a sinner who finds themselves separated from God, into His church and kingdom as an adopted child having obtained the forgiveness and being added to the Kingdom?

Response:

As a conservative Christian scholar committed to the authority of the 66 books of the Bible alone—as the inspired, inerrant Word of God delivered and preserved by the Holy Spirit—I must approach this question by appealing solely to the text of Scripture, interpreted according to the intended meaning of its Holy Spirit-inspired writers in the original Hebrew and Greek. This means rejecting any post-biblical traditions, creeds, or denominational practices that lack explicit textual support, including modern evangelistic methods not derived from the biblical pattern. Where English translations like the NASB95 (which I will use for quotations) may introduce nuances, I will prioritize the underlying Greek or Hebrew to ensure fidelity to the original intent.

The query asks whether Scripture provides any basis for the practice of merely "asking Jesus into one's heart" or reciting a "sinner's prayer" as sufficient for a sinner's salvation—specifically, for obtaining forgiveness, adoption as God's child, and addition to His church and kingdom. To answer, we must examine the biblical description of salvation and conversion, searching for these phrases or concepts. Spoiler: Neither phrase nor the isolated practice appears in Scripture. Instead, the Bible presents a holistic pattern of response to the gospel, rooted in faith, repentance, confession, and baptism, all as obedient expressions of trust in Christ's finished work on the cross. Let us unpack this step by step from the text alone.

1. The Absence of "Asking Jesus into Your Heart" in Scripture

A word search in the original languages reveals no equivalent to "asking Jesus into your heart." The Greek term for "heart" (*kardia*, καρδιά) often denotes the inner person, mind, or will (e.g., Romans 10:9-10), but it is never used in the context of inviting Jesus to enter it as a salvific act. The closest some appeal to is Revelation 3:20: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My

voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me" (NASB95). However:

Contextually, this is addressed to the lukewarm church in Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22), not unbelievers. The "door" (thyra, θύρα) symbolizes fellowship and restoration for wayward believers, not initial salvation. The imagery of dining (deipneō, δειπνέω) echoes intimate communion, as in the Lord's Supper, but it is not an evangelistic invitation.

The verse emphasizes hearing Christ's voice and opening in response, but this is not a formula for conversion. Salvation in Revelation is tied to overcoming through faith in the Lamb (e.g., Revelation 5:9; 7:14), not a personal invitation into the heart.

No other passage uses similar language. For instance, Christ "dwelling in your hearts through faith" (Ephesians 3:17, Greek katoikeō en tais kardiais, κατοικέω ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις) describes the indwelling Spirit for those already saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9; 3:16), not a prerequisite act of asking.

This phrase appears to stem from human traditions outside Scripture, perhaps popularized in 19th-20th century revivalism, but it has no basis in the biblical text. Scripture warns against adding such innovations: "Whatever I command you, you shall be careful to do; you shall not add to nor take away from it" (Deuteronomy 12:32, NASB95; Hebrew lō' tōsîp 'āleyhā wəlō' tigrā' mimmennāh, לֹא תוֹסֵף עָלֶיהָ וְלֹא תִגְרַע מִמֶּנָּה).

2. The Absence of a "Sinner's Prayer" in Scripture

Similarly, there is no prescribed "sinner's prayer"—a scripted recitation acknowledging sin, asking for forgiveness, and inviting Christ as Savior—as a standalone means of salvation. The Bible records prayers of repentance (e.g., the tax collector in Luke 18:13: "God, be merciful to me, the sinner!" Greek ho theos, hilasthēti moi tō hamartōlō, ὁ θεός, ἰλάσθητί μοι τῷ ἁμαρτωλῷ), but this is a parable illustrating humility, not a formula. Key observations:

No New Testament conversion includes a standardized prayer. For example, on Pentecost, sinners asked, "Brethren, what shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:37-38, NASB95). The Greek metanoieō (μετανοέω, "repent") and baptizō (βαπτίζω, "be baptized") are commands, leading to forgiveness (aphesis, ἄφεσις) and the Spirit's gift—no prayer mentioned.

Prayer is vital in the Christian life (e.g., Philippians 4:6), but salvation is not conditioned on reciting specific words. Romans 10:13 cites Joel 2:32: "Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved" (NASB95; Greek *pas hos an epikalesētai to onoma kyriou sōthēsetai*, πᾶς ὃς ἂν ἐπικαλέσῃται τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου σωθήσεται). However, "calling" (*epikaleō*, ἐπικαλέω) here means invoking the Lord's authority in faith and obedience, not a one-time prayer. The context (Romans 10:9-10) links it to confessing (*homologeō*, ὁμολογέω) Jesus as Lord and believing in the heart—part of a broader response.

Other conversions emphasize hearing the gospel, believing, repenting, confessing, and being baptized (e.g., the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:35-38; the jailer in Acts 16:30-34). No scripted prayer appears.

This practice seems derived from extra-biblical sources, like tracts or altar calls, but Scripture does not endorse it as sufficient. Jesus Himself warned against empty words: "This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far away from Me" (Matthew 15:8, NASB95, quoting Isaiah 29:13).

3. The Biblical Pattern for Salvation: From Separation to Adoption and Kingdom Entry

Scripture describes sinners as separated from God by sin (Isaiah 59:2; Ephesians 2:1-3, Greek *nekrous tois paraptōmasin*, νεκροὺς τοῖς παραπτώμασιν, "dead in trespasses"). Salvation—forgiveness, adoption (*huiōthesia*, υἰοθεσία, Romans 8:15), addition to the church (Acts 2:47), and kingdom entry (Colossians 1:13)—is by grace through faith in Christ's atoning death and resurrection (Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 3:24-25). But faith is not mere mental assent or a prayer; it is obedient trust (James 2:14-26). The consistent New Testament pattern includes:

Hearing the gospel: "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17, NASB95; Greek *akoē de dia rhēmatos Christou*, ἀκοὴ δὲ διὰ ῥήματος Χριστοῦ).

Belief/Faith: Trusting Christ's work (John 3:16; Acts 16:31, Greek *pisteuō*, πιστεύω).

Repentance: Turning from sin to God (Acts 3:19; 17:30, Greek *metanoēō*, μετανοέω).

Confession: Acknowledging Jesus as Lord (Romans 10:9-10; Matthew 10:32, Greek *homologeō*, ὁμολογέω).

Baptism: Immersion in water for forgiveness and union with Christ (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Galatians 3:27; 1 Peter 3:21, where *baptisma* "now saves you... through the resurrection of Jesus Christ").

This culminates in the Spirit's indwelling (Romans 8:9-11), adoption, and addition to the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13). No isolated prayer or heart-invitation suffices; the full response is required. For instance, the 3,000 on Pentecost were "pierced to the heart" but still needed to repent and be baptized (Acts 2:37-41). Saul (Paul) prayed and fasted for three days but was told, "Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name" (Acts 22:16, NASB95; Greek baptisai kai apolousai tas hamartias sou, βάπτισαι καὶ ἀπόλousαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας σου).

Conclusion: No Scriptural Basis—Examine Traditions Against the Word

In summary, there is no basis in Scripture alone for deeming "asking Jesus into your heart" or reciting a "sinner's prayer" as sufficient for salvation. These are traditions of men, potentially leading to false assurance if detached from the biblical pattern (Matthew 15:3-9). True conversion involves the full obedient response outlined above, resulting in forgiveness, adoption, and kingdom membership. If this describes your experience, praise God; if not, "Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts" (Hebrews 3:7-8, NASB95, quoting Psalm 95:7-8). Search the Scriptures daily to confirm (Acts 17:11).

Pay careful attention, I gave it very strict parameters where to narrow its "research" down to, but I do not believe I "lead the witness" so to speak... like "demonstrate that this belief must be true"... I simply wanted clear parameters for my question, so it could give clear answers. Now that it has doubled down (after it's first, generic, and scripturally wrong answer) on the clarity of Scripture regarding baptism vs. the sinner's prayer, I just got a wild hair to see how it would advise me if the church I was attending did not teach or practice this truth. (Keep in mind also, the first two paragraphs from my better prompt have been saved as default, so they are automatically referenced every time even if I don't type them again, so it will continue the role of a scholar, rejecting manmade doctrines, and relying on Greek and Hebrew, etc.)

Prompt:

What would you recommend if I am part of a church who does not teach or practice baptism in this way, or promotes the use of the "sinner's prayer" as an evangelistic tool?

Response:

As a conservative Christian scholar committed to the authority of the 66 books of the Bible alone—as the inspired, inerrant Word of God delivered and preserved by the Holy Spirit—I must ground any recommendations solely in the text of Scripture, interpreted according to the intended meaning of its Holy Spirit-inspired writers in the original Hebrew and Greek. This means rejecting traditions, creeds, or denominational practices that deviate from or add to the biblical pattern, including modes of baptism not aligned with immersion (*baptizō*, βαπτίζω) for believers or evangelistic tools like the "sinner's prayer" that lack textual support. Where English translations such as the NASB95 (which I will use for quotations) may vary slightly, I prioritize the underlying languages to ensure fidelity.

Your situation is not uncommon in an age where human traditions often eclipse the pure teaching of Scripture, as Jesus Himself warned: "Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men... thus invalidating the word of God by your tradition which you have handed down" (Mark 7:8, 13, NASB95; Greek *tēn entolēn tou theou... tē paradosei hymōn, τὴν ἐντολὴν τοῦ θεοῦ... τῇ παραδόσει ὑμῶν*). The church is the "pillar and support of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15, NASB95; Greek *stylos kai hedraiōma tēs alētheias, στῦλος καὶ ἐδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας*), called to uphold sound doctrine without compromise. If a local assembly deviates from this—whether by sprinkling infants, pouring as a substitute for immersion, or promoting a non-scriptural "prayer" as the means of conversion—it risks leading souls astray. Here is a biblically grounded path forward, drawn directly from the pattern in God's Word.

1. Examine Everything Against Scripture Personally

Begin by diligently searching the Scriptures yourself, as the Bereans did: "Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so" (Acts 17:11, NASB95; Greek *anakrinontes tas graphas, ἀνακρίνοντες τὰς γραφάς*). Do not rely on church leaders or traditions; test their teachings against the original text.

Study passages on baptism (e.g., Matthew 3:16; Acts 2:38; 8:36-39; Romans 6:3-4) and conversion (e.g., Acts 2:37-41; 16:30-34; Romans 10:9-10), noting the Greek terms like *metanoēō* (μετανοέω, "repent"), *pisteuō* (πιστεύω, "believe"), *homologeō* (ὁμολογέω, "confess"), and *baptizō* (βαπτίζω, "immerse").

Pray for wisdom, as James instructs: "But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him" (James 1:5, NASB95; Greek *aiteitō para tou didontos theou, αἰτεῖτω παρὰ τοῦ διδόντος θεοῦ*).

If you discover you were not baptized scripturally (as a believer by immersion), obey the command personally: "Why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name" (Acts 22:16, NASB95; Greek *anastas baptisai kai apolousai tas hamartias sou*, ἀνάστας βάπτισαι καὶ ἀπόλousαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας σου). This is an act of obedience to Christ, not dependent on a church's approval.

2. Approach Church Leaders Humbly but Firmly with Scripture

Scripture calls for gentle correction within the body: "Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted" (Galatians 6:1, NASB95; Greek *katartizete ton toiouton en pneumati prautētos*, καταρτίζετε τὸν τοιοῦτον ἐν πνεύματι πραΰτητος). Meet with your pastor or elders privately, presenting the biblical evidence without accusation.

Share specific texts, asking them to explain from Scripture alone why they practice differently. For instance, inquire: Where does the Bible command or exemplify sprinkling infants or a "sinner's prayer" as sufficient for salvation?

If they appeal to traditions (e.g., historical creeds or denominational statements), remind them of Paul's warning: "See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ" (Colossians 2:8, NASB95; Greek *kata tēn paradosin tōn anthrōpōn*, κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων).

Propose studying the issue together from the Word, as iron sharpens iron (Proverbs 27:17, Hebrew *barzel bəbarzel yaḥad*, בַּרְזֶל בְּבַרְזֶל יָחָד).

If they respond positively and align with Scripture, rejoice and continue in fellowship. But if they defend error, persist in traditions, or dismiss the inquiry, Scripture provides further guidance.

3. Consider Separating if the Church Persists in Error

The Bible does not bind believers to remain in assemblies that teach falsehood or add to God's Word. Instead, it commands separation from those who distort the gospel: "Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting" (2 John 9-10, NASB95; Greek *mē menei en tē didachē tou Christou*, μὴ μένει ἐν τῇ διδασκίᾳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ). This applies to churches promoting non-scriptural practices, as it risks endorsing "a different gospel" (Galatians 1:6-9).

Obey leaders who submit to Christ (Hebrews 13:17, Greek *peithesthe tois hēgoumenois hymōn*, *πειθεσθε τοῖς ἡγουμένοις ὑμῶν*), but not those who elevate traditions above Scripture.

Seek a faithful assembly that upholds the biblical pattern: one teaching sound doctrine (Titus 2:1), practicing believer's immersion (Acts 2:41), and evangelizing through the full gospel response (Mark 16:15-16). Look for gatherings where the Word is central, as in the early church: "They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer" (Acts 2:42, NASB95; Greek *proskarterountes tē didachē tōn apostolōn*, *προσκατεροῦντες τῇ διδαχῇ τῶν ἀποστόλων*).

Avoid denominational labels not found in Scripture (e.g., no "Baptist," "Presbyterian," or "Catholic" in the text); identify simply as Christians (Acts 11:26) in the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:4-6).

4. Prioritize Personal Obedience and Fellowship with True Believers

Regardless of your church situation, live out the faith: "But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves" (James 1:22, NASB95; Greek *gínesthe de poiētai logou*, *γίνεσθε δὲ ποιηταὶ λόγου*). If leaving is necessary, do not forsake assembling: "Not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another" (Hebrews 10:25, NASB95; Greek *mē egkataleipontes tēn episynagōgēn heautōn*, *μὴ ἐγκαταλείποντες τὴν ἐπισυναγωγὴν ἑαυτῶν*). Start or join a home study with like-minded believers focused on Scripture alone.

In all this, trust God's sovereignty: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight" (Proverbs 3:5-6, NASB95; Hebrew *bəṭaḥ 'el-yhwh bəkol-libbekā*, *בְּטַח אֶל־יְהוָה בְּכָל־לִבְּךָ*). If you need further scriptural clarification on any point, search the Word diligently—I am here to point you back to it.