

Dear Forest,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You wanted to know if a carnal man might ask Jesus to come into his heart.

To be carnally minded means to be fleshly minded or preoccupied with self and things of this world. Such a mind is in opposition to God since God would have us selflessly dwell on spiritual things. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." (Romans 8:7-8)

Can a carnally minded man ask Jesus to come into his heart? Yes, we believe he can if he recognizes that he is a sinner and is serious about changing his old sinful thought patterns. Such a step requires determination and effort. 2 Peter 1:5-8, tells us to "make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge, and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness; love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Although the Apostle lists eight virtues that are required of the Christian, the last seven are only of value as they are built upon the firm foundation of the first virtue, faith. Faith is defined for us in Hebrews 11:1 as "being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." As we become mature Christians, trusting our heavenly Father in all things, our faith deepens and motivates us to cultivate the elements of character that are pleasing to Him. However, cultivating Christian character is a life long process. It is a daily life work; a process of addition, adding virtue to virtue, grace upon grace, day-by-day and hour-by-hour.

Is it possible for an individual to possess all the characteristics of a Christian at the same time? Yes, it is possible to do so and that should be our goal. But, can we bare all the characteristics perfectly all of the time? No, we cannot because we ourselves are imperfect, sinful, and fall short of the mark. The Apostle Paul in Romans 7:21 said, "When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. In verse 24 he says, "What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?" He answers his question in the very next verse, Romans 7:25. "Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!" Realizing that even the Apostle Paul fell short and prayed to the Lord for strength encourages us to resist discouragement. "For though a righteous man falls seven times, he rises again." (Proverbs 24:16) The Lord sees our heart's intent and accepts it for the deed. We humbly come before Him asking forgiveness and He uplifts us through His word and His holy spirit. It is by His strength and His strength alone that we are able to overcome our sinful natures. "I can do everything through him who gives me strength." (Philippians 4:13) "For when I am weak, then I am strong." (2 Corinthians 12:10) By focusing on the Kingdom of God and His many precious promises and by asking for His help in every time of need, we can truly become "more than conquerors" (Romans 8:37).

When a person asks Jesus to come into his heart he sacrifices his old self will to do the will of God in all matters of life. "I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart." (Psalm 40:8) The Christian's role model is Jesus, God's dear Son, who did his Father's will perfectly, even unto death. "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." (Luke 22:42) The Apostle Paul explains what it means to surrender our wills. "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices (the slaughter of self-will), holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will." (Romans 12:1-2)

Is it possible for a carnal man to ask Jesus to come into his heart? Yes, it is, providing he is willing to turn his back on sin, follow the will of God and emulate the character of His son Jesus. We hope we have answered your question. Be sure to sign up for CQ Rewind at www.christianquestions.net. The service is free without obligation and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,

Christian Questions Radio