

Methods used to try to set a standard for God's acceptance that is lower than sinlessness

- Good outweighs bad - If we do more good than bad in life, then God will send us to heaven.
- Decide to accept Christ - We don't need to live a perfect life to enter heaven, but only need to decide for or commit ourselves to following Christ. This is portrayed as a small insignificant act and not worthy of merit. (Luther stated that those who set a high standard for the works necessary for salvation err less shamefully than those who say that is by a very small work or almost nothing that God is satisfied).
- Commit your life to follow Christ - Sometimes this is portrayed as not deserving merit before God, but it is a much more difficult and meritorious act than choosing a worthy occupation, deciding whom to marry, or deciding to help someone in trouble.
- Improvement - God does not expect perfection, but he is satisfied as long as we are improving and sinning less as we proceed through life.
- Sinless perfectionism - God only counts as sin what is done willfully. Sins that just flow out of our sinful nature without our knowledge don't count. (There are still those who believe this today.)
- Make God or Jesus number one - God is satisfied as long as serving Jesus is our highest priority.
- Personal relationship with Christ - God is satisfied as long as, with the help of the Holy Spirit, we live a Christian life.
- Be a Christian - God is satisfied as long as, with the help of the Holy Spirit, we live a Christian life.

Much of what is described above is not sinful in and of itself, only if it is used as a basis for assurance of salvation. God has only one standard: sinlessness. Christ provided that for us.

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