

## CAN CHRISTIANS GET TATTOOS?

Tattoos are a widely debated topic among Christian culture. However, a study of scripture will settle this issue for us.

1. *Will I go to hell for having a tattoo?*
2. *Can I have tattoos and still be a Christian?*

### Three questions to ask yourself.

1. *Why would I get a tattoo?*
2. *Who will my tattoo glorify?*
3. *What would my tattoo say about me?*

Although these questions may seem silly, they are going to play an important role in your view on tattoos in reference to God's word. Why? Because the answers to those questions may just be the answers you've been looking for.

### My Thoughts

While we strongly believe God yearns for us to take care of our mortal bodies, we also believe the motive of our hearts are more important to him in the end. In **Leviticus 19:28**, you can see what most people say is a pretty clear-cut answer as to what God thinks about tattoos.

#### **Leviticus 19:28 (NASB)**

***28 You shall not make any cuts in your body for the dead nor make any tattoo marks on yourselves: I am the LORD.***

But as clear as this text may seem, without context and background this text can be taken out of context in many ways. In fact, it usually is. Additionally no theology should be formed based on a single passage. And when determining meaning of a passage one must discern the intention of the author. In order to understand God's intention as He spoke through the prophet we must examine the background of this text.

This text is directed towards a group of pagans who would violently cut and mark their bodies as a sign of worship to their gods. The tattoos or markings one would find on their body would resemble the god or gods whom they were worshipping. This of

course if much different than most of the tattoos we see today. Would a mothers tattoo of the names of her children fall under the authors intended warning and command in this passage?

Any tattoo obtained to worship something other than God is sinful, It would appear that 95% of the tattoos we see in today's culture are not due to idol worship, but instead creative expression or artistic value. It's not the actual tattoo or marking that is sinful, but the motives in which each tattoo or marking is obtained. Who are you worshipping? Additionally, even those who receive tattoos to worship "other gods" are completely forgiven of their "sin" the moment they confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. The sign of their past life remains, but their sin does not. Or did Jesus not pay enough for the sin of tattoos to false gods? Try to make that case biblically.

Don't get me wrong. Tattoos are not for everyone! My only hope is that you realize the motives of your heart mean more to God than the ink on your skin. I don't see anything biblically wrong with Christians having tattoos if we base our beliefs on scripture alone.

Your body is a temple of God. Treat your body with respect. Whether you are debating getting your first tattoo or your fiftieth, I pray you will seek God for wisdom, guidance, and evaluate the motives of your heart.

*Sources - Jarrid Wilson and New American Standard Bible*