

# Beginning Your New Life in Christ

Hooray! You have trusted in Jesus Christ. Someone shared the good news of the gospel with you. You recognized your need, you wanted this good news for yourself, and you accepted it by faith in Christ. You began a new life, one based on a relationship with Jesus Christ and filled with treasure that is yours to know and experience. In this week's devotionals, you will delve into your spiritual riches and learn how to experience the kind of life your God has prepared for you. You can begin your new life in Christ with confidence and joy!

Prayer - I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. Ephesians 1:17-23

Monday, 14 September 2020 & Tuesday, 15 September 2020 – The Gospel

The Gospel is all that God has done, is doing, and will do through the perfect life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This “Good News” of Jesus is the power of God to eternally save people from the penalty of sin and to unite believers with Christ so that his resurrected life is lived out through them. This revolutionary truth centers a believer's life on the heart-transforming work of Jesus Christ both for now and eternity.

- God created us to enjoy a relationship with Godself.
- Our sin has separated us from a holy God and caused spiritual death in us.
- Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became human, lived a perfect life, died, and was resurrected to pay sin's penalty of death.
- Trusting in Christ eternally unites us with him and other believers.
- Our new relationship with Christ gives us his presence and purpose in life.

“I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So the life I now live in the body, I live because of the faithfulness of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20)

## *Your New Relationship with Christ -The Bible*

If you received a special letter or email from Jesus telling how much he loves you and giving guidance you need for your daily issues, would you read it? Of course, you would! That's what the Bible is — God's love letter to you! The Bible is God's words for you and to you. It is the source of truth about your new life in Christ. Like reading a love letter increases your love for the author, reading and studying the Bible will help you to know your God better. You will discover many treasures in your new relationship with Christ.

The Bible is one book containing a collection of 66 books combined together for our benefit. The Bible is divided into two main parts: The Old Testament and The New Testament. The Old Testament tells the story of the beginning of the world and God's promises given through the nation of Israel. It tells how the people of Israel obeyed and disobeyed God over many, many years. All the stories and messages in the Old Testament lead up to Jesus Christ's coming to the earth. The New Testament tells the story of Jesus Christ, the early Christians, and God's promises to all those who believe in Jesus. You can think of the Old Testament as “before Christ” and the New Testament as “after Christ.”

Each book of the Bible is divided into chapters and verses within those chapters to make it easier to study. Bible references include the book name, chapter number and verse number(s). For example, Ephesians 2:8 refers to the book of Ephesians, the 2nd chapter, and verse 8 within that 2nd chapter. Printed Bibles have a “Table of Contents” in the front to help you locate books by page number. Bible apps also have a contents list by book.

Throughout these lessons, you will use a Bible to answer questions as you discover treasure about your new life with Christ

Question: How can a person who trusted in Christ know with certainty that he or she will spend eternity with God?

You can know that you have a secure and personal relationship with God. The next section will highlight some Biblical truth to help ground you in this security in Christ. Read each Bible verse and think through the answers.

Confidence in Your New Relationship with Christ - You can be confident in your new relationship with Christ because you have been completely forgiven and accepted by God. Only Christ’s death on the cross is sufficient to provide this proper relationship with God.

Read Ephesians 2:8-9 - What is declared in these verses?

Three important words in these verses explain the basis of our acceptance before God:

**GRACE:** Unmerited favor, an undeserved gift

Question - What role did grace play in establishing your relationship with God?

Answer - You didn’t deserve this relationship nor did you earn it by any good works. Rather it is a free gift from God that you accepted when you received Christ through faith.

**SAVED:** Rescued, spared from disaster

Question - What do you think this verse means by saying you are saved? From what are you rescued?

Answer - Romans 6:23 says that the final result of sin is death. When you received Christ, you put your trust in Christ and his death for your sin. You have been rescued from death and eternal separation from God.

**FAITH:** Belief, trust, commitment of mind, attitude, action

Question - What does faith have to do with receiving Christ?

Answer - Simply put, faith is believing or trusting God and his Word. When you received Christ, you put your trust in Christ and his death for your sin. Instead of believing in your own ability to earn God’s favor, you must now trust that you have been reconciled to God through what Christ has done for you.

Question: Suppose you were standing before God and he asked you, “Why should I let you into my heaven?” What would you say?

Prayer - And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God. Philippians 1:9-11

Wednesday, 16 September 2020 - Discovering Truths about Your New Relationship with Christ

Many exciting things are true in your new relationship with Christ. Discovering these truths will help you build a firm foundation to your faith.

Christ forgave your sin. Read Colossians 1:13-14. When you trusted Christ for the forgiveness of your sin, all your sins were forgiven - past, present, and future. What difference does it make to you to know that your sin is forgiven?

Christ made you a child of God. Read John 1:12. When you received Christ, you began a loving relationship with God as his child. How important is that to you?

Christ came into your life and will never leave you. Read Hebrews 13:5. Under what circumstances might Christ leave you?

According to these last two verses, how many times is it necessary to receive Christ?

Christ began a new life in you. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. When you trusted Christ to be your Savior and Lord, you began a new spiritual life. God will increasingly produce many new qualities in you as you respond to him. Are you grateful that God has made all things new for you? Christ gave you eternal life. Read 1 John 5:11-13. On what is eternal life based? When does a person's eternal life begin? When will it end?

Question: If you were to die tonight, how sure are you that you would spend eternity with God? Circle your answer: 0—25—50—75—100%

These wonderful benefits are based on what Jesus Christ has done for you. None of them can be earned. You received them the moment you placed your faith in Christ. Are any of these truths especially meaningful to you right now? If so, why?

Prayer - Sovereign Lord, this life is a wonderful opportunity to experience Your love and enjoy You forever. Do not allow me to become complacent but let me have an insatiable desire to grow in Your love and grace. Fill my life with the joy of Your Spirit and let me grow tall and strong in You, through Christ, my Lord. Amen.

Thursday, 17 September 2020 & Friday, 18 September 2020 - PERSONAL DISCOVERY GUIDE

The Personal Discovery Guide is for you to work on by yourself. It is divided into "days" to help you build a new habit of focusing on Jesus daily as you learn to enjoy your relationship with him. Read the verses and record any reflections and responses you may have to what you read. You have trusted in Christ's payment for your sin. In our first day devotional, you have been introduced to the basis of your new relationship with God—faith in Jesus Christ. You have also looked at five truths about your new life in Christ. So, you can now have confidence in your new life with him.

Renewing Your Mind with Truth - To help you as you are becoming confident, memorize **1** Bible verse during each week. Memorizing Bible verses is not just something "to do." You are planting God's words to you in your mind. The Bible calls it "renewing your mind" with truth about who God is and who you are.

The Bible has been translated into English many times through the past 500 years. The verses printed for United Methodism are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). If your Bible is a different translation, you may choose to memorize the verse below from your Bible. The point is to begin a habit of memorizing Scripture. Work on it a little bit every day. You will be surprised at how soon it just flows from your mind.

Memory Verse - *"For by grace you are saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God; it is not from works, so that no one can boast."* (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Discovery – Review "Beginning Your New Life in Christ"

Review these five truths. Make them part of your life as you grow in Christ. Find and read the verses listed beside each truth. Write observations of what you see and how you feel about the truth in the space given. Thank God that this is now true of you. Knowing these essential truths are critical to our growth in Christ.

- You are forgiven: Colossians 1:13-14; 2:13
- You are a child of God: John 1:12; Romans 8:15; 1 John 3:1
- You are indwelt by Christ: Galatians 2:20; Colossians 1:27.
- You have a new life: 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:4-5
- You have eternal life: 1 John 5:11-13; John 5:24; 10:27-29

Prayer - Lord of All, life is a journey full of stumbling blocks and challenges. With each hurdle, there is growth. With each setback, a valuable lesson. Lord, I ask that You give me the wisdom and presence of mind to learn from my mistakes and pitfalls. Help me to approach these things with maturity, so that I can be closer to You. Amen.

Saturday, 19 September 2020 - Getting to Know Christ

In this section, you will focus on the life of Jesus as told in the gospel of Mark. Spend a few minutes each day reading the verses and reflecting on Jesus—his life, his relationships, and his teaching. As you do so, you will get to know and understand him better—this One who loves you dearly. Tell him what you are thinking.

- Discover Jesus
- Read: Mark 1:1-13. Reflect on what you read—
  
- Discover Jesus
- Read: Mark 1:14-28. Reflect on what you read—
  
- Discover Jesus
- Read: Mark 1:29-39. Reflect on what you read—
  
- Discover Jesus
- Read: Mark 2:1-17. Reflect on what you read—

Spend time reviewing what you have learned this week about your new life in Christ. Share them with a fellow Christian or Pastor Clarissa so they will know how to help you grow.

- What discoveries have you made?
  
- What questions do you have?

Prayer - Jesus, my Savior, You have taught us through Your Apostle Paul that we should leave childish things behind us, and move forward to a greater understanding of spiritual matters. Part of maturity is learning when to do this, and having the motivation to press forward. Help me to recognize when it is time to grow up. Allow me to take on new spiritual challenges, that I may be refined through service to You and my neighbor. In Your precious name. Amen.

### **PASTORAL PRAYER –**

People of God, as we continue to journey through our isolation, loneliness, and fears, we look to the hills which comes all our help and call upon the Lord of Power. As we feel weak and crushed, trying to run a race with sprained ankles, we do not know how we can go on like this. Healing God, make haste to bring strength to our fatigued legs so that despite the pain of this life, we can keep moving forward. Give us your reassuring and promised hope and faith; keeping our eyes on the prize and looking forward to eternal life in Your heavenly kingdom. Amen.

Grace and Peace,

**PASTOR CLARISSA**