

You can have a *New Life!*

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Your guide to a *new life* in Christ

“I have come that you might have life, and that you might have it more abundantly.” –Jesus Christ

Is something wrong?

Have you ever wished for a second chance? Do you get sick and tired of being sick and tired? Do you ever feel like there is a vacuum inside that needs to be filled? Have you done your best only to end up hurt, confused, burned, bitter, enslaved, empty and alone? Are you looking for a way out? Are you looking for true peace and joy? Do you wonder why you are on this planet? Are you looking for meaning in life? Does anyone care? There is an answer to these questions!

God loves you and has a plan for your life!

Yes it is true! God created you, He loves you, and He has a special plan for your life. There is a God-shaped vacuum inside each of us that only God and knowing His purpose can fill. God wants us to know His love and plan. So, why have we not *experienced* His love or *known* His plan for our lives? The Word of God is clear: *there is a barrier between us and God.*

Dead in Trespasses and Sins

In the beginning God made Adam and Eve perfect and without sin (Sin is anything that falls short of God's perfect nature and standard). God had a wonderful plan for their lives. Unfortunately the devil also had a plan for their lives---a plan of slavery and destruction. Through the devil's deception and a choice of their will, Adam and Eve disobeyed God. Although they died physically many years later, on the day they disobeyed they *died* spiritually. In other words, sin had effectively destroyed their relationship with God. No matter how well they lived thereafter, their spiritual status before God could never be reversed. They would be eternally separated from God including everything good that God represented. Every human being since then has inherited this terminal disease of sin. We are not sinners because we sin, but we sin because we are sinners. It is a part of our fallen nature. As sinners we are alive to sin and dead to God: *“And you...who were dead in trespasses and sins.”* (Ephesians 2:1 NKJV)

Sin has consequences

Yes, God loves us dearly, but sin has terrible consequences.

Romans 6:23 states, *“For the wages of sin is death.”* God is the Judge of the Universe and He must do what is right. He cannot be a respecter of persons or ignore sin. Imagine the pain in the heart of God when He thinks of the possibility of sentencing to eternal death and separation from Him those whom He loves so dearly! Our choice to sin has created quite a dilemma.

God had a plan

Because of His love, God continued to maintain relationship with man through blood sacrifices to cover their sin, but this was only a temporary solution with a limited level of relationship. In His wisdom God sent Jesus, the perfect Lamb of God, to die on the cross for our sins in order to satisfy His eternal justice. Jesus was then raised from the dead thereby destroying the power of death.

Good News!

Jesus came to this earth with good news to tell: *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”* (John 3:16 NKJV) The good news is that we do not have to perish in our sins! We can be *saved* and receive everlasting *life*. Jesus stated again, *“The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they might have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”* (John 10:10) This *life* that Jesus talks about is more than life after death. It is more than a *quantity* of time; it is a *quality* of life. Eternal life is *life as God lives it* and *life as God means for it to be*. Our new life can begin right now. How do we receive this new life?

You must be “born again”

In John 3:1-8 Jesus explained to a very religious man that being religious was not good enough to get into heaven. Religion is our best efforts to imitate something we do not really possess. Because we are all spiritually dead unto God, Jesus stated that the only way to enter into the kingdom of heaven is to be “born again” of the Spirit. *“That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”* (John 3:6 NKJV). Once we are “born again” our old nature dies and a new life in Christ begins: *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”* (2 Corinthians 5:17) There you have it---a new life in Christ! What does the Bible tell us to do that we may become “born again”?

1. Humble yourself

Pride is the hardest thing for us to overcome in order to be saved. It is natural to want to deny or hide our sin. Adam and Eve tried this. It is natural to want to lay the blame for our sin on others. Adam did the same. But if we want to receive from God, He requires that we lay aside our pride for *“God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”* (James 4:6 NKJV)

2. Agree with God

We must agree with God that we are sinners and that we cannot save ourselves. It's not enough to say we have a problem or that we made a mistake. No matter how good we may try to be, we must admit what God has declared about us in Romans 3:10, *“There is none righteous, no, not one”* and in Romans 3:23, *“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”*

3. Repent of your sin

A new life in God requires that we repent for the actions of our old life. Repentance is more than saying we are sorry. It involves recognizing that our past choices in sin are inconsistent with a new life in God. It involves changing our mind and attitude toward our sin. We must ask God to forgive us of our past sins and then make a conscious commitment to never intentionally sin again: *“Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.”* (Acts 3:19 NKJV)

4. Believe in your heart

Many people will miss heaven by 18 inches---the distance between the head and the heart. Although we can know things intellectually, faith is spiritual and is God's required means through which the miracle takes place in your heart: *“For by grace you have been saved through faith.”* (Ephesians 2:8). *“That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”* (Romans 10:9).

5. Receive salvation as a gift

“But the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 6:23) Salvation is a gift—it is His grace. We cannot earn it, work for it, or be worthy of it. We must simply stretch out our faith and receive this free gift that God so lovingly wants to give us. It is His invitation to come home in full forgiveness and restoration.

6. Confess Jesus before others

“For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” (Romans 10:10) The new birth is activated when we confess with our mouth before witnesses that Jesus Christ is Lord of our lives. Our confession before men seals the decision of our heart. That's why 1 Timothy 6:12, *“Lay hold on eternal life, to which you were called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.”* Jesus said, *“Whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.”* (Matthew 10:32-33)

Prayer for Salvation

Based on the above principles, when mixed with faith, praying the following prayer can activate the new birth in your life.

“Dear God, I humble myself and confess that I am a sinner. I acknowledge that I have sinned against You. I repent of my sins and evil ways and call upon Your mercy to save me. I believe in my heart that Jesus died on the cross for me, was buried, and rose again. I ask and receive Your forgiveness right now by faith. I confess that Jesus Christ is Lord and accept Him

into my life as my personal Lord and Savior. From this moment on I belong to You. Take my life and use me as a vessel for Your glory. Thank You Lord for saving me. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen."

Assurance of Salvation

Congratulations, if you prayed the above prayer from your heart, your new life has just begun as a brand new creation in Christ! Remember that you are saved by faith, not by feeling. *"For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."* (Romans 10:13) What about your sin? Psalm 103:12 says, *"As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us."* God removes our sins from us and gives to us His righteousness: *"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."* (2 Corinthians 5:21) You are now clean in His sight! *"Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool."* (Isaiah 1:18) You can now approach God with the assurance that you are His child.

Taking Your First Steps

Like a newborn baby, once you are born again it will take time for you to mature in Christ. The first steps in your new life in Christ should include:

1. **Commit your life totally to Jesus**
Your new life will be different when you fall in love with Jesus. Just as when you break up with an old lover, you give them all of their stuff back, do the same with the devil--- give him all of his stuff back. Get rid of the devil's stuff that had you bound and don't go around the places where you lived your life in sin. Stop hanging out with friends who want you to live in sin.
2. **Follow the Lord in water baptism by immersion**
(Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3-4)
3. **Receive the Baptism with the Holy Spirit**
The baptism with the Holy Spirit is the mantle of Jesus for a victorious life and power in ministry. (Luke 11:13; Mark 16:15-20; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1-4, 38-39; Acts 8:14-17; Acts 9:17; Acts 10:44-47; Acts 19:1-7)
4. **Read the Word of God daily**
Begin by reading the four gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—and a chapter out of Psalms and Proverbs each day.
5. **Begin a daily life of prayer**
(Luke 11:1-4; Matthew 26:41; I Thessalonians 5:17)
6. **Put on the full armor of God**
(Ephesians 6:10-18; I Peter 5:8)
7. **Flee temptation** (I Corinthians 10:13)
8. **Find a good church home and attend it faithfully**
 - a. Does the pastor teach and preach the Bible?
 - b. Are the people alive and growing spiritually?
 - c. Are there ways to get involved weekly?
9. **Get involved in a home cell group**
Some churches have home cell groups. Home cell groups are small groups of believers who meet in homes for the purpose of caring, bonding, discipleship, and mentoring new leaders.
10. **Tell others about Jesus**
We are all called to be witnesses for Jesus. A witness' only qualification is that he can tell others what God has done for him. Others need Jesus too!

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