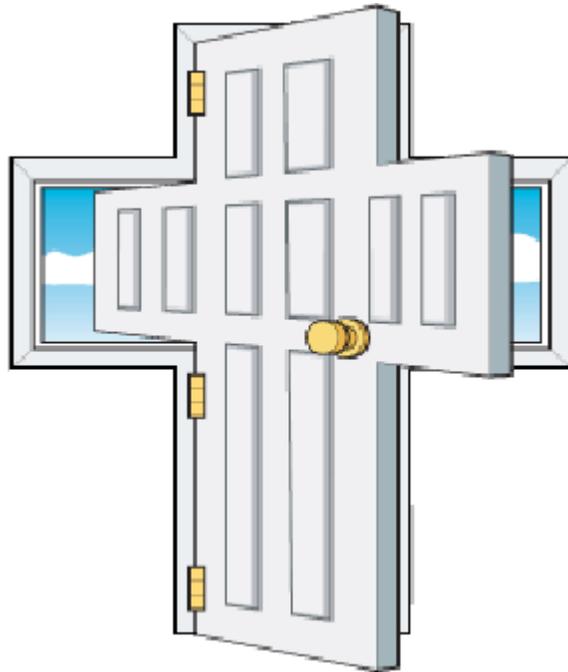


FIRM FOUNDATION CLASS



How to Begin Your Christian Life Lesson 1

I. REALIZE WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO YOU

A. You Have Been Regenerated - *Titus 3:5*

Wesley defines regeneration as "the communication of life by the Spirit to a soul dead in trespasses and sins."

1. The Analogy of the New Birth - *John 3:1-16*

a. The new birth gives life to our soul's capacities:

1. Taste - Oh taste, and see that the Lord is good, i.e., we have now experienced the reality of God's love and goodness. - *Psalms 34:8*
2. Smell - We have an aroma unto life. - *II Corinthians 2:14-17*
3. Seeing - The eyes of our heart are enlightened. - *Ephesians 1:18*
4. Touch - We are no longer past feeling, but we sense God's presence in our lives. - *Ephesians 4:19*
5. Hearing - We now hear with our spiritual ears; we did not even listen before. - *Revelation 2:7, 11*

b. The new birth gives us characteristics like our Father

1. A Righteous Life - *I John 2:29*
2. Victory Over Sin - *I John 3:9*
3. Brotherly Love - *I John 3:14*
4. Love for All - *I John 4:7*
5. Victory Over the World - *I John 5:4*
6. An Assurance of Acceptance - *I John 5:10*

2. The Analogy of Creation

- a. God who created light puts light in our souls! - *II Corinthians 4:6*
- b. New Creatures in Christ - *II Corinthians 5:17*
- c. Created Unto Good Works - *Ephesians 2:10*

3. The Analogy of Resurrection

- a. *Ephesians 2:1*
- b. *Colossians 2:13*

B. You Have Been Adopted Into God's Family

By adoption we mean that God has received us into His family and has given us all the privileges of being His children.

Scriptures relating to adoption:

1. We now have a sense of acceptance whereby we call God "our Father." - *Romans 8:15*
2. The Israelites were an example of how God adopted a nation. - *Romans 9:4*
(See *Exodus 4:22 - my son*)
3. We might receive adoption of sons - *Galatians 4:5*
4. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself . . ." *(Ephesians 1:5)*.

Keep in mind that all adopted children are wanted children. We are now a child of the King and all he has is ours!

C. You Have Been Justified

Justification means that God accepts me "just-if-ied" never sinned. It is a legal term showing God as a Judge and we, the sinners, before Him; however, Christ pays our penalty and we are pardoned, justified. We can be pardoned because the claims of justice have been met by Christ on the Cross.

The results of justification are:

1. Peace with God - *Romans 5: 1*
2. Good Works Before God - *James 2:21-26*

D. You Have Been Forgiven - See *Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 1:14*

What does God do with our sins?

1. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.
- *Psalm 103:12*
2. Makes our scarlet sins white as snow. - *Isaiah 1:18*
3. Puts them behind His back. - *Isaiah 38:17*
4. Abundantly pardons. - *Isaiah 55:7*
5. Casts them into the depths of the sea. – *Micah 7:19*
6. I will remember their sins no more. – *Hebrews 8:12*

II. REALIZE HOW YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED

A. We are saved by Christ's work on the cross.

Christianity is different than religion. Religions are based upon what man does to make himself acceptable to God. However, true Christianity is about what Jesus has done to make us acceptable to God. Religion is spelled "do," it is based upon what man does. But true Christianity is spelled "done." It is based upon the fact that God accepts us because of the sinless Son of God and His substitution and punishment for our sins.
Ephesians 2:8-9

B. We are saved because we have met God's conditions to be forgiven.

1. Repentance: We have expressed to God that we are "sorry" for our past sins and we want to change.
Acts 3:19
2. Faith: We have "trusted" that Jesus Christ is indeed the only risen savior of all mankind. *John 14:6*

C. We are kept from falling back into a life of sin through God's power. 1 Peter 1:5

God took the initiative to draw us to himself and He will impart to us the "power" to live new lives now that the Holy Spirit has come into our hearts because of what Jesus has done. The same thing that brought us salvation will keep us – the person and work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

III. REALIZE WHAT YOU MUST DO TO "GROW" IN CHRIST

A. We are now spiritual babies who need to "eat spiritual food" lest we become weak and ill.

B. God loves you and wants to complete what He has started and does not wish to see you give up and fall back into your old lifestyle. *Philippians 1:6; Jude 24*

**C. There are several things the Bible says we can do to grow in our knowledge and relationship with God:
*1 Peter 3:18***

1. Church Attendance – *Hebrews 10:25*
2. Bible Reading – *1 Timothy 2:15*
3. Prayer – *Luke 18:1; 1 Timothy 2:1*
4. Tell Others – *Matthew 28:18-20; Titus 2:15*
5. Look forward to your Baptism – *Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38*

CONCLUSION

You are babes in Christ. God loves you as a mother would love her newborn child - and more! Remember, He has plans for you! He dreams of your future just as good parents have dreams and plans for their children. Let nothing hinder you from growing. Be determined to be a child that will make your Heavenly Father proud, and God will be with you each step of the way!