

Welcome to Life!⁽¹⁾

Welcome to the new life. If you are wondering what we mean by that, it is simple. The moment that you placed your faith in Jesus and trusted Him as your personal savior your new life began. Whether this just happened or you have been a believer for a long time, you have a new life – an eternal life, where God accepts you as His own. You are now a child of His. This is a great change considering that we used to be enemies of God.

Romans 5:10

For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Reconciled: to be brought back into fellowship with.

- What were we when we were reconciled to God? _____
- How were we reconciled to God? _____
- What does this verse say that we are saved by? _____

When we were still enemies of God we had no peace with Him. However, through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus we now have peace with God.

The peace Jesus gives us

What we were		What we are now	
Enemies of God	→	Friends	John 15:15
Strangers	→	Family	Rom 8:15
Judged	→	Justified	Rom 5:1
Lost	→	Found	Luke 19:10

Romans 5:1

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ

We see from this verse that it is through faith in Jesus that we have _____ with God.

Perhaps the idea of *needing* peace with God is a strange concept, but the Bible tells us that our sin created a **barrier** between us and God that only Jesus could bring down by His death and resurrection.

Ephesians 2:14

For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall

Jesus broke down the _____ that kept us from eternal life with the Father. Ephesians shows us that Jesus not only gives us peace, but He is our peace! We do not have to worry that God is out to get us or that we might be punished for some wrong doing. We have eternal peace through Jesus Christ.

Not only do we have peace with God, but Scripture tells us that we are justified before God by our faith in Jesus. So what does being justified mean for us?

Romans 5:9

Much more then, having now been justified by His (Jesus) blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.

- What are we justified by? _____
- What are we saved from? _____

Justified:
Just-as-if I had never sinned.
Justification is the declaration of God that we are no longer guilty of sin.

This faith that we place in Christ brings us into His family, and justifies us before God our Father. Being justified in God's eyes provides us a new relationship with Him. He no longer sees us as sinners, but as His children. This new relationship is the foundation for the new life we have in Jesus.

John 1:12-13

12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

- What does God call those who have received Jesus and believed in Him? _____
- Verse 13 states that we were **NOT** born into God's family from what three things?
...of _____, will of the _____, will of _____ .

We were brought (born) into the family of God by His will. God was not tricked into receiving you, nor is He "stuck" with you. He willingly desired you to be one of His children.

One question that often comes up concerning this new life is, “can I lose it?” Is it possible to lose your position in God’s family? The overwhelming answer to this is **NO!** You cannot be “unborn” from the family of God. To help understand this point let’s look at what Jesus Himself had to say about us.

Jesus taught His followers about their relationship with God by using illustrations. He often called them sheep, and referred to Himself as the shepherd. This helped His followers to understand that He is the guardian and protector of their souls.

John 10:27-29

27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; 28 and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand."

- Whose hand is holding you? (vs. 29) _____
- Can anybody take you out of the Father's hand? Yes___ No___
- From these verses, is it possible for you to force open God’s hand and jump away?
Yes___ No___

Often people feel that their sins are too terrible for God to love them. Some Christians have come to the false conclusion that the barrier that once separated them from God might return.

Romans 8:38-39

38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- What can separate you from the love of God?

- Can your sin separate you from the love of God?
Yes _____ No _____

The fact of the matter is this: God has caused us to be born into His kingdom and family. He is the author, beginner, sustainer and finisher of our salvation. Scripture even tells us that He protects us. In all this, it is certain that God is not going to lose even one of His children.

1 Peter 1:3-5

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who

Certainty For Today:
There is absolutely NO WAY a child of God can possibly lose their salvation or their relationship with God.

according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to obtain an inheritance which is

imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

- Your inheritance will not _____ away (vs. 4), and you are protected by the _____ of _____. (vs. 5)

Our relationship with God is not something that can be lost or taken away from us due to the nature of Jesus who saved us! God loves us unconditionally. No matter how bad we have been, or might be in the future, His love for us will always accept and forgive us.

This brings us to an interesting point. Even though we believe in Jesus and are a member of God's family, we have a tendency to sometimes live without Him. Every day we make poor choices and sin. How does that affect our relationship with God? When we fail Him, does God become angry? Will He listen to us? Will He punish us? How will God react?

The Bible explains how God reacts to our sins, and what we can do to live a life that is pleasing to Him.

Ephesians 2:4-5

4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

- God is rich in what? vs. 4 _____
- What state were we in our transgressions? vs. 5 _____
- At the end of verse 5 it says that we have been saved by what? _____

Definitions:

Mercy: Not getting the punishment that we rightly deserve for our wrong actions.



Grace: Getting the blessings of God that we have not, and cannot, earn or deserve.

Let's be perfectly truthful; God hates sin, despises it, won't allow it near Him, and punishes it as it deserves. The reason that we are allowed into His family and do not feel the wrath of God upon us is because God withheld the punishment that we so rightly deserved (This is called **MERCY**). God placed His full wrath on Jesus while He was on the cross. This should make us even more grateful for what Jesus did for us.

As much as God did not punish us as we deserved, He gave blessings to us that we don't deserve (This is called **GRACE**). Some of these blessings include the fact that no matter what, He will always listen to us and be there for us. He will always love us no matter what we do.

Ephesians 1:7

In Him (Jesus) we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace

- God is not only rich in mercy, but He is also rich in _____
- God shows us great mercy and grace because of what _____ did on the cross.

Understand this, as much as God loves you now, He will always love you. As much favor as God has given you, he will always give to you. Wherever you fall, the burden of your relationship with God always falls on what Jesus did for you on the cross.

A problem arises when believers in Jesus realize that God will always love them and is always there for them. Some may take advantage of this love.

Romans 6:1-2

1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? 2 May it never be!

- What does it mean to continue in sin? _____

It is wrong to take advantage of God's grace. With how much He loves us, and with all He sacrificed in our place, how can we turn and try to use that grace, which He freely gives, as an opportunity to sin? God's grace is a wonderful gift to a shackle-free life, not a license to sin.

Though we can never lose our relationship with God, we can lose fellowship. When we are sinning and attempting to hide the fact from God, how can He fellowship with us? Imagine a time when you had an argument or was angry with someone. Was it easy to talk to them or be close when those feelings existed? It is similar with our relationship with God. He still loves us the same even when we place this barrier up; He wants to draw near to us, but we, on our end, won't let him when we continue in sin. However, when we realize we have done wrong, His grace is magnificent.

1 John 1:9

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

- What one thing must we do to be forgiven of our sins? _____
- Who is the one who forgives our sins? Man ___ or God ___
- Who do we need to confess our sins too? Man ___ or God ___
- God promises to forgive our sins and to _____ us.

Please understand, confessing our sin is more than merely listing them. It involves consciously turning away from them. God will never bring them up again, that's His promise to you. You can immediately let them go and experience God's grace and goodness! This is what it means to be free in the love of Christ: it all rests on His strong shoulders. With faith in that, His peace and reassurance will grow in you.

Acknowledging that what you are doing is wrong, and actively turning away from those behaviors is called **REPENTANCE**.

Once we ask for forgiveness, He freely and openly gives it. Remember, you never lose your salvation, but our sins can keep us from experiencing the new life God has for us.

Discussion Questions

- 1. What are the benefits of you having peace with God?*
- 2. How does the fact that God willing desired you to be part of His family influence the way you think about yourself?*
- 3. We discussed the fact that we can never lose our salvation. Why do you think God wanted us to be so sure of this fact?*
- 4. What is the difference between grace and mercy? How were they applied to you?*
- 5. What is the difference between forgiveness and repentance? What needs to take place for real repentance to occur?*
- 6. What do the following terms mean?*

Reconciled:

Justified:

Mercy:

Grace:

Repentance: