God's Salvation

Our Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to help you understand God's plan of salvation and how you can enter into a personal relationship with Him through Jesus Christ.

The Problems We Face Today

The challenge many people face today is a sense of being disconnected from God, even though we may have a desire to know Him and are actively seeking Him.

The puzzle of life cannot be completed until we come into a right relationship with the God of all creation. We can only do that when we come to Him His way.

Even though God has shown us the way to come to Him and has given us the opportunity to spend eternity with Him, we have somehow missed it.

- We may be seeking God but are not sure what God expects of us or what He created us for.
- We cannot seem to find peace and contentment in our lives. Every time we get going in the right direction, we run into problems.
- We try to find self-worth in our job, our family, or our service to the community or the church, yet that is not where true self-worth lies.
- We may be frustrated, disappointed, discouraged, or guilt-ridden over our seeming inability to live the kind of life we think we should be living.
- We are still dominated by fear, doubt, worry, and stress, and would like to be free from them.

Reflection

Many people experience these struggles. As you consider the challenges described above, take a moment to reflect on which of them you may be experiencing in your own life.

Lesson Truth

God has provided a way for us to be restored to a right relationship with Him through His Son, Jesus Christ. Through repentance and faith in Jesus, we can receive forgiveness of our sins, the gift of eternal life, and a new life with God.

Lesson Goal

The goal of this lesson is for you to personally receive God's salvation through Jesus Christ so you can receive forgiveness of your sins and God's gift of eternal life.

Prayer for the Journey

Before beginning this lesson, pray for God's guidance and help. Ask Him to open your mind and heart to the truths presented in this lesson. Thank Him for His Word and for the opportunity He has provided for you to enter into a personal relationship with Him through Jesus Christ.

How Sin Came into the World

The Bible tells us God created the first man and woman and named them Adam and Eve. He created a paradise for them, where they lived in harmony with Him and enjoyed a wonderful relationship with Him.

Genesis 2:15–17 "The Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, 'You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree

of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.'" ESV

God told Adam and Eve they could enjoy the fruit from every tree in the garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He warned them not to eat from that tree or they would die.

One day Eve was in the garden, and the serpent convinced her to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He caused her to doubt what God had told them. She chose to disobey God and ate the fruit from the forbidden tree. Then she gave some to Adam, and he ate the fruit also, knowing full well it was from the forbidden tree. Sin had now entered the world. Adam and Eve's rebellion against God brought the curse of death upon them and all future generations.

Genesis 3:1–6 "Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God actually say, "You shall not eat of any tree in the garden"?' And the woman said to the serpent, 'We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, "You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die."' But the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate." ESV

The sin was not simply that Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit. Their sin was that they believed the serpent's lie, rejected what God had told them, and chose to go their own way rather than trust and obey God.

Sin is simply rebellion against God. It happens when we turn away from God to go our own way. Rebellion against God separates us from Him and leaves us at the mercy of our own wills.

When we sin against God, whether in outright rebellion or in ignorance, we place ourselves outside of God's intended way for our lives. We are not able to enjoy the loving relationship with the God of all creation that He intended for us, and we miss out on the blessings that would otherwise be ours.

The Consequences of Sin

The consequences of sin are evident throughout the world. Just look around you, or pick up a newspaper, and you will see the results of mankind's rebellion against God. Dishonesty, greed, hatred, selfishness, violence, broken relationships, and injustice are just some of the ways sin affects our lives and society. Pride is one of the greatest expressions of this rebellion. We want to be independent, make our own decisions, and live as though we have no need for God.

It does not matter how moral, upright, honest, or spiritual we may consider ourselves. Every one of us has sinned. Sin came into the world through Adam and Eve, and mankind has been enslaved by its power. We are born into a sinful condition and naturally inclined to go our own way rather than follow God's way.

Sin has consequences both in this life and for eternity.

Romans 3:22–23 "...the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God..." ESV

Each of us has lived in rebellion against God because we have sinned. We continue to go our own way and therefore cannot fulfill God's desire and purpose for our lives. We are self-sufficient and, most of the time, feel we have no need for God in our lives.

Sin keeps us from living the lives God intended for us and separates us from Him. Unless something is done about our sin, that separation will continue for all eternity.

Ephesians 2:1–3 "And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind." ESV

Sin brings death. Not only physical death, which comes to all mankind, but also spiritual death—separation from God. We are spiritually dead in our trespasses and sins.

Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." ESV

God Provides a Solution

Whenever someone breaks the law, there are consequences. A debt may have to be paid, or a sentence may have to be served. The person who broke the law cannot simply expect the consequences to be ignored.

It is similar with sin. We have all sinned against God, and our sin has consequences. The Bible tells us that the payment for sin is death. This means more than physical death, which comes to everyone. It also means spiritual death, separation from God forever.

Because the Bible teaches us that God is a God of love, many people have difficulty believing that He would condemn anyone.

1 John 4:8 ESV "Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love." ESV

1 John 4:16 "So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him." ESV

The Bible also teaches us that God is just. He always does what is right, and He cannot simply overlook our sin.

Psalm 11:7 "For the LORD is righteous; he loves righteous deeds; the upright shall behold his face." ESV

Psalm 36:6 "Your righteousness is like the mountains of God; your judgments are like the great deep; man and beast you save, O LORD." ESV

Psalm 45:6 "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever. The scepter of your kingdom is a scepter of uprightness." ESV

Think about a judge in our judicial system. If a judge allowed someone to go free simply because he felt sorry for them, without considering what justice required, he would not be doing his job. A good judge must uphold the law and do what is right.

God is perfectly just. He cannot treat our sin as though it does not matter. So how can God forgive us and still remain just? God loves us and wants to forgive our sins and reconcile us to Himself. Through Jesus Christ, He has provided redemption from sin and the way for us to be restored to a right relationship with Him. We can receive eternal life and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Without God's provision for salvation, we would have no hope. God's solution is Jesus Christ.

God Sends His Son

John 3:16–18 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God." ESV

God's solution to man's sin problem was to send a Savior. God sent His only Son into the world to give His life and pay the penalty for our sins, saving us from the judgment and wrath of God. It is amazing enough that someone might give his life for another good person. But God demonstrated an even greater love by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to give His life for a world full of rebellious sinners.

Romans 5:8 "But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."ESV

Through this one amazing act, we can begin to truly understand the depth of God's love for us. He sacrificed the life of His only Son so that we could be forgiven, reconciled to Him, and restored to a right relationship with Him. But Jesus did not remain in the grave. God raised Him from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures foretold. His resurrection demonstrated His victory over sin and death and is essential to the good news of salvation.

1 Corinthians 15:3–4 "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, [4] that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures," ESV

In this passage, Paul reminds us of the central truths of the gospel: Christ died for our sins, was buried, and was raised on the third day, according to the Scriptures. Jesus Christ is referred to as the second Adam. Through Adam's rebellion and disobedience to God, sin and death entered the world. Through Jesus Christ's obedience, His death on the cross, and His resurrection, God provided the way for us to be forgiven, delivered from God's judgment, and reconciled to Him.

Romans 5:17 "For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ." ESV

A life was required in payment for sin, and God provided the sacrifice—His only Son, Jesus Christ.

Who Is This Jesus?

Not much is known about the early life of Jesus. When He began His ministry around the age of thirty, He did many good deeds and taught many truths about the kingdom of God. Most people remember Jesus for these things, but His coming to earth had a much greater purpose. It was foretold in the Scriptures that God would send a Savior into the world to save His people from their sins. The Bible also foretold that this Savior would be born of a virgin.

Matthew 1:21–23 ESV"She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall

conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel."

In the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, we read about the life of Jesus Christ and His ministry. He healed the sick, cast out demons, raised the dead, and preached the good news to the poor. Yet the reason Jesus came to earth was for the specific purpose of giving His life as a ransom, which simply means He paid the price to secure our release.

Matthew 20:28 "Even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." ESV

Jesus left His place in heaven and willingly went to the cross to give His life for us.

1 Peter 1:18–19 "Knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot." ESV

Through His death and resurrection, Jesus has provided us the opportunity to be delivered from the empty life we experience apart from God and to enter a new life, freed from the dominion of sin and filled with the joy and peace that come from knowing Him.

Ephesians 2:13"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ." ESV

Jesus Christ is the door through which we enter this new life. Through faith in Jesus Christ, we can be forgiven, reconciled to God, restored to a right relationship with Him, and receive eternal life.

You Must Be Born Again

God's salvation is more than simply knowing about Him or believing certain things about Him. We need more than our physical life; we need new spiritual life. God gives us this new life through His Holy Spirit when we are born again.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus had a conversation with Nicodemus, one of the religious leaders of His time. Jesus told him that unless he was "born again," he could not enter the kingdom of God.

John 3:3–8 Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Jesus explained that just as we receive physical life through physical birth, we must receive spiritual life through the Spirit of God. This is what it means to be born again.

When we put our faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, God gives us that new spiritual life through His Spirit. The Holy Spirit comes to live in us, marking us as belonging to God. Being born again is not something we can do for ourselves. It is something God does in us, and it is necessary for us to receive the new life He offers.

What Must I Do to Be Saved?

God has provided a tremendous gift for all mankind through Jesus Christ. He has given us the gift of eternal life and forgiveness of

sins. Salvation is not something that is automatically conferred on us. We can only be saved by turning to God and receiving His free gift of salvation. We are saved through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

Salvation is not something we can earn by trying to live a good moral life. It is a gift that must be received. God promises that anyone who calls upon Him in faith can be saved.

Romans 10:13 "...For 'everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'" ESV

Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." ESV

The gift of salvation is solely by God's grace. The only way we can receive this gift is by coming to Him on His terms.

Ephesians 2:4–5 "But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—" ESV

If we are not willing to receive His free gift, we cannot be saved. God is patient and gives us the opportunity to receive His salvation. But when we understand the truth, we should not put off receiving His gift.

John 3:18 ESV "Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God." ESV

Acts 4:12 "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." ESV

We are saved by grace. Grace is God's undeserved favor toward us, given because of His love and mercy. It is not something we can earn or deserve.

Ephesians 2:8–9 "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." ESV

Anyone can receive God's salvation through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. To be saved, we must clearly understand what it means to repent and have faith in Jesus Christ.

Repentance

Repentance in the Bible involves a change of mind and heart concerning sin and God. It means recognizing that we have been going our own way, turning away from sin, and turning toward God.

Romans 2:4 "Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?" ESV

Mark 1:15 "...and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.'" ESV

For repentance to take place, we must first recognize our need to repent. We must realize that we have sinned and gone our own way, ignoring God's purpose for our lives.

Acts 2:38 "And Peter said to them, 'Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'" ESV

Repentance means being sorry for living our lives contrary to God, even when we have sinned in ignorance. But being sorry is not

enough. We must be willing to turn away from our sin, surrender our will to God, and submit to His authority over our lives. We must accept Jesus not only as our Savior but also as the Lord of our lives, choosing to follow Him rather than continue living our own way.

Acts 3:19–20 "Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus." ESV

Acts 17:30 "The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent," ESV

If we think we have nothing to repent of, we need to ask God to show us our need to repent. Everyone must repent because all have sinned. Through repentance, we receive forgiveness for all our sins. God clears our account, and our sins are no longer held against us. We are forgiven and set free from the guilt and penalty of our sins.

This does not mean we will never sin again. It means that sin no longer has dominion over our lives. Although we will still struggle with temptation and may stumble, God gives us the power to resist sin and live according to His will. Apart from repentance and receiving forgiveness for our sins, there is no salvation, and we will die in our sins.

Faith

In addition to repentance, we must believe the good news of what Jesus has done to save us. We must put our faith in Jesus Christ and His work on the cross.

Ephesians 2:8–9 "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." ESV

We are saved by God's grace through faith. We can never be good enough to earn God's salvation. We put our faith in what Jesus has done for us to save us.

Faith means we choose to trust Jesus Christ for our salvation. We stop depending on our own goodness and rely on Him and His work on the cross. When we put our faith in Him, our lives now belong to Him. He purchased us back by paying the debt for our sin.

Romans 3:22–24 ESV "…the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

It does not matter how bad your life is. It does not matter what your current situation is or what you have done. If you repent, ask for forgiveness, and put your faith in Jesus Christ, you will be saved and receive forgiveness of your sins.

If for some reason you believe you cannot be saved, you're wrong. We must believe what God says. It is by faith in what God has said and what God has done that saves us.

Romans 1:16–17 ESV "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, 'The righteous shall live by faith.'"

When you choose to put your faith in Jesus Christ, you make a decision to stop trusting in your own goodness and trust in Jesus alone for your salvation.

Romans 5:1–2 "Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with

God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God." ESV

Rejecting God's Salvation

If, after hearing the message of salvation, you are not willing to receive His salvation, you will be eternally lost. Jesus Christ is the only way to God.

Acts 4:12 "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." ESV

You are at great risk eternally if you reject God's offer of salvation. Don't wait for a better or more convenient time. You should not try to get things in your life right first. You do not know what tomorrow might bring, and if you wait you may die in your sins. After you are saved, Jesus will give you the power to begin living according to God's will.

2 Corinthians 6:2 "For he says, 'In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you.' Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation." ESV

Also, you cannot receive God's gift of salvation with the intent to continue living in rebellion and sin.

John 3:18–20 "Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed." ESV

Rejecting Jesus Christ is rejecting God's salvation and receiving His judgment and wrath instead. The consequence is separation from God for all eternity.

He Saves Us for Himself

When God saves us, He provides a way for us to enter into a loving relationship with Him. When we turn to God through faith in Jesus Christ, we become His sons and daughters, and He cares for us as His own children. We find peace, joy, meaning, purpose, and contentment through our relationship with Him. Most importantly, we come to know Him personally.

When we repent and put our faith in Jesus Christ, God gives us the Holy Spirit to live within us. The Holy Spirit is God Himself dwelling in us. We are born again and become new creations, with a new nature and a new desire to live for God.

The Holy Spirit empowers us to live a life of righteousness and holiness as we submit to Him and surrender our lives in obedience. The Holy Spirit also assures us that we belong to God. We will discuss the purpose and work of the Holy Spirit in the next lesson.

1 Corinthians 6:19–2 "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body."

When God saves us, we become His. We are no longer our own. We surrender our lives to Him and submit to His authority as our Lord. Our lives are now to be lived for Him and according to His will.

As we trust Him, surrender to Him, and walk in obedience, He transforms our lives. This process of becoming more like Jesus is called sanctification. It takes time because God

works in us to change our wrong thinking, beliefs, attitudes, desires, and behavior. Through the Holy Spirit, He enables us to live the new life He has given us.

How to Be Saved

We must recognize that we are sinners, that we are separated from God by our sin, and that we need His salvation.

We must believe that we are spiritually dead in our sins and that Jesus Christ, through His death on the cross and resurrection, is the only way we can receive forgiveness and be set free from the dominion of sin.

We must repent and receive Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord.

He is our Savior because He paid the penalty for our sins through His death on the cross, making forgiveness and eternal life possible for us.

He is our Lord because we surrender control of our lives to Him. We submit to His authority and choose to live according to His Word, His will, and His plan for our lives.

In the next section, you will have the opportunity to respond to God's invitation and receive His gift of salvation.

One Step for Living This Truth

The goal of this lesson is for you to receive God's salvation through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as you choose to receive Him as your Savior and Lord.

ACTION STEP

First, make sure you understand the good news of God's salvation for mankind. Spend twenty minutes each day reviewing this lesson until you understand why you need God's salvation, what He has done through Jesus Christ to provide it, how you can receive it, and what it means to reject His offer of salvation.

When you understand God's plan of salvation, recognize that you have sinned and need His forgiveness, and truly desire to repent and receive His salvation, you are ready to respond to Him.

If you do not believe that you have sinned or are not willing to repent and turn to God, continue seeking Him until you recognize your need for His salvation and forgiveness. Ask Him to help you understand your need and to grant you repentance.

You must recognize that you have sinned, that you need God's salvation, and that you are willing to turn from your sin and surrender your life to Him. Then you can place your faith in Jesus Christ and receive Him as your Savior and Lord.

If you are not sure what it means to repent and put your faith in Jesus Christ, go back and review those topics until you understand them.

Next, pray the following prayer, sincerely expressing your repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. Trust God's promise to forgive you and give you eternal life as you surrender your life to Him and begin following Him.

Prayer

Lord, I know I have sinned, and because of my sin I am under the penalty of eternal separation from You. I believe with all my heart that You loved me enough to send Your Son to die on the cross for me and pay the debt for my sin so that I can belong to You and receive the gift of eternal life.

Right now, I receive Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord. As my Savior, I put my complete faith and trust in Jesus Christ and in what You have done for me through Him. I trust You completely with my salvation. As my Lord, I surrender my life completely to You and commit myself to following You and living according to Your will and purpose for my life.

I repent of my sins and turn to You. I receive Your forgiveness and thank You for saving me. I thank You for giving me Your Holy Spirit to dwell within me, teach me, guide me, and help me to live for You. From this moment on, I commit my life to You. I surrender every area of my life to Your Lordship forever.

Amen.

Your New Life in Christ

If you have sincerely repented of your sins and placed your faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord, you have received God's salvation. Welcome to God's family! You are now a new creation in Christ. God has forgiven your sins, and He has given you new life through His Holy Spirit.

You may or may not experience an immediate emotional response when you receive Christ. Some people experience relief, peace, or joy. Others may not feel anything particularly different at first. Your feelings are not the measure of your salvation. Your salvation rests on God's promise and what Jesus Christ has done for you.

However, receiving Christ is more than saying a prayer or making a decision to secure your eternal destiny. When you genuinely receive Christ, something supernatural happens within you. The Holy Spirit comes to dwell in you, and your heart is changed. The inner mainspring of your life has changed. You have surrendered yourself to a new Master, and your desire is now to belong to God and live for Him.

But this doesn't mean that everything about the way you think and live will change overnight. You bring many of your old beliefs, attitudes, habits, and ways of thinking with you. We all do. Your mind must now be renewed and brought into agreement with God's truth. This is the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in your life.

As you learn God's Word, the Holy Spirit will help you recognize beliefs and ways of thinking that are not consistent with His truth. He will develop new convictions within you about sin, righteousness, and how God wants you to live. Things you previously accepted or gave little thought to may begin troubling your conscience. You may find yourself thinking differently about your choices, relationships, priorities, and the way you treat others.

You will also begin developing new desires. You will increasingly want to know God, understand His Word, please Him, and live according to His will. You will begin to recognize that you don't want to continue living simply to satisfy yourself. You want your life to please the One who saved you.

This doesn't mean you will immediately overcome every sinful habit or struggle. You will still need to learn, grow, and mature in your faith. But your relationship with sin should begin changing. Rather than simply accepting or excusing sin, you will increasingly recognize it for what it is and desire to turn away from it. When you stumble, the Holy Spirit will convict you and draw you back to God.

This is the journey of becoming more like Jesus. As you learn God's truth, believe it, and put it into practice, the Holy Spirit will

continue transforming your thinking, your desires, and the way you live.

One truth at a time. One step at a time.

Begin Each Day Surrendering to God

A good way to begin living your new life in Christ is to surrender yourself to God each morning. Romans 12:1–2 teaches us to present ourselves to God as living sacrifices and allow Him to transform us through the renewing of our minds.

Each morning, offer yourself to God. Surrender your plans, decisions, desires, and will to Him. Ask the Holy Spirit to renew your mind, reveal any beliefs or attitudes that don't agree with God's truth, and help you replace them with His truth. Ask Him to show you how to put that truth into practice throughout the day.

As you trust God and surrender your will to His, He will direct your steps and teach you how to live according to His purpose for your life. Take time throughout your day to pray and listen to Him. When you fail Him, confess your sin, receive His forgiveness, and continue following Him.

Now that you belong to God, you can trust Him to care for you, guide you, and provide what you need as you learn to walk by faith. The Holy Spirit will teach you how to live for Him and help you overcome the challenges you encounter.

One of the most important ways the Holy Spirit renews your mind is through God's Word. As you read and study Scripture, He helps you understand God's truth and recognize where your beliefs, attitudes, and ways of thinking need to change. You will learn to see things from God's perspective rather than relying on your own understanding. As you learn to believe His truth and put it into practice, your mind is renewed and your life is transformed.

Begin by reading one chapter in the Gospels every day. This will help you become familiar with the teachings, character, and example of Jesus, your Master. As you read, ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand what you are reading, believe what God says, and show you how to live out His truth in your everyday life.

Romans 10:17 "So then faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ." ESV

As you begin this new life with Christ, the One Step Disciples lessons can help you learn how to follow Jesus and live according to His teachings. They will help you learn God's truth, believe His truth, and put it into practice in your everyday life.

Remember, becoming more like Jesus is a lifelong journey.

One truth at a time. One step at a time.

Illustration for Living the Truth

Julie worked in a hospital where she was constantly confronted with sickness and, often, death. Although she enjoyed helping people by making them comfortable and easing their pain, deep inside she struggled to understand why there was so much suffering and pain in the world.

She believed in God, but she didn't really know Him. At times she would think about God, but often she felt she wasn't worthy of His attention. After all, she wasn't a saint, and her life, though not evil, wasn't something she thought would be pleasing to God. She was living with a man she wasn't married to. On Friday nights, she enjoyed the typical party scene and would often get drunk. She also had

a quick temper and could become verbally abusive when angry. She knew these things weren't pleasing to God, but she also knew many others did the same things, which made her feel somewhat better about her own behavior.

One day, while making her rounds in the hospital, Julie began talking with one of her patients. She noticed something different about this woman. The patient had terminal cancer, and the doctors had given her less than six months to live. Yet she continually displayed a remarkable peace and joy. She encouraged the other patients and rarely focused on her own condition.

When Julie asked how she could have so much peace and joy knowing she was going to die, the woman told her about Jesus Christ and the difference He had made in her life. Through their conversation, Julie came to understand her need for a Savior and placed her faith in Jesus Christ, receiving Him as her Savior and Lord. She surrendered her life to Him, trusting Him not only for her salvation but also to lead her life. She now desired to know Him, follow Him, and live according to His truth.

From that moment on, something changed in Julie's life. She now had a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ, and she desired to live a life pleasing to Him. She ended the relationship in which she had been living outside of marriage and found other, more rewarding activities to enjoy on Friday nights. These changes weren't what earned her salvation; they were the result of the new life she had received through Christ.

She began experiencing the peace and joy that come from a right relationship with God. She also found new meaning and purpose in her work at the hospital. Rather than simply helping patients through their physical suffering, she became thankful that God could use her to encourage others and touch their lives with His love.

Scriptures on Salvation

Romans 10:9–13 "Because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame." For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

John 1:12–13 "But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."

John 14:6 " Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Ephesians 2:8–9 "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." ESV

Titus 3:3–7 "For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life." ESV

John 3:3, 5–7 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'" ESV

Ephesians 1:13–14 "In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory."

Acts 2:38–39 "And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself."

Romans 6:22–23 "But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 8:1–2 "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death."