

LESSON 10 — BEGINNING A NEW LIFE WITH CHRIST

Big Question

If I have come to Christ, how do I begin—and continue—living a new life with Him?

Purpose of This Study

Over the past nine studies, we have followed the gospel story:

Who Jesus is.

Why Jesus came.

Why we need Him.

What He asks of us.

What it means to believe.

What it means to repent.

What it means to confess Him.

What baptism means.

How salvation fits together.

Now we reach the end of the study. But the end of the study is actually the **beginning of a new life**. Becoming a Christian is not the finish line.

It is the beginning of:

- A new relationship with God.
- A new identity.
- A new way of living.
- A new relationship with other Christians.
- A new purpose.
- A new hope.

And one of the most important things a new Christian needs to understand is this:

Following Jesus is not about becoming perfect overnight. It is about learning to **walk with Jesus faithfully**.

When we stumble, we return to Him.

When we grow, we serve Him.

When we struggle, we depend upon Him.

When we succeed, we give Him the glory.

DISCUSSION STARTER — “STARTING SOMETHING NEW”

Everyone of us has had a moment where we had to start something new. Maybe it was moving to a new neighborhood and having to go to a new school. Maybe it was losing a job and having to start a new job. Maybe it was going to court for the 1st time, getting married, making a new friend, having a baby. Briefly, have everyone name a new moment that still weighs on your mind, even if it happened years ago or maybe just today. This is not intended to be a therapy session, only a reflection on the depth of struggle new things and moments bring on all our lives.

Discuss:

1. What makes starting something new exciting?
2. What makes it difficult?
3. Why does a person need help when beginning something new?
4. What happens if someone expects to understand everything immediately?
5. What does a new Christian need to learn after becoming a Christian?

Transition

Jesus never intended Christianity to be merely an event. He calls us into a **relationship**. Baptism is not the end of the journey. It is the beginning of walking with Christ.

1. BAPTISM LEADS TO A NEW LIFE**Romans 6:3–14**

We studied part of this passage in Lesson 8.

Let's read it again now with a different question: **What happens after baptism?**

Paul says: "We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead ... we too may live a new life."

Questions

1. What does baptism represent?
2. What happened to the old life?
3. What kind of life is supposed to follow?
4. What does Paul mean by "new life"?
5. Does becoming a Christian mean simply receiving forgiveness?
6. What does forgiveness make possible?
7. What does Paul say about continuing in sin?

Key Thought: We are not baptized simply so that our sins can be forgiven. We are baptized **into a new life with Christ**.

The Picture Death → Burial → Resurrection → New Life

The old life is no longer the master.
Jesus is Lord.

2. THE CHRISTIAN HAS A NEW IDENTITY

2 Corinthians 5:17 Paul writes: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"

Questions

1. What does Paul call someone who is "in Christ"?

2. What has happened to the old?
3. What has begun?
4. Does becoming a Christian simply mean becoming a slightly improved version of the old person?
5. What does “new creation” suggest?
6. How should knowing that God sees us as a new creation affect the way we live?

Key Thought

Christianity is not simply: **“I am trying harder to be a better person.”**

It is: **“God is making me new in Christ.”** That changes the way we think about ourselves.

3. THE NEW LIFE BEGINS WITH JESUS

Colossians 2:6–7 Paul says: “So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him.”

Notice the words: **“Continue to live your lives in him.”**

Paul describes the Christian as:

- Rooted in Christ.
- Built up in Christ.
- Strengthened in faith.
- Overflowing with thankfulness.

Questions

1. What does Paul mean by “received Christ Jesus as Lord”?
2. What does he say should happen after receiving Christ?
3. What does being “rooted” suggest?
4. What happens to a tree whose roots are weak?
5. What helps a Christian become spiritually strong?
6. Why is growth a process?

Illustration — THE TREE

A tree does not become strong because someone stands beside it and says: **“Grow!”**

It grows by being:

- Rooted.
- Watered.
- Nourished.
- Exposed to light.
- Protected.
- Given time.

Christian growth works similarly. We need:

God's Word.

Prayer.

Fellowship.

Worship.
Service.
Time.
Perseverance.

4. THE NEW CHRISTIAN NEEDS GOD'S WORD

Acts 2:42 After the people were baptized at Pentecost, Luke says: “They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”

Notice what happened **after** baptism. They continued learning.

Questions

1. What did the new Christians devote themselves to?
2. Why would teaching be important for new Christians?
3. Why does a Christian need continued instruction?
4. What happens if a person stops learning?
5. Why should Christianity be a lifelong process of learning?

1 Peter 2:2 Peter writes: “Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation.”

Questions

1. Why does Peter compare Christians to newborn babies?
2. What does a baby need in order to grow?
3. What does the Christian need?
4. What does this teach us about spiritual maturity?

Key Thought

A new Christian should never feel embarrassed about being new. Babies are supposed to be babies. But babies are supposed to **grow**.

5. THE NEW CHRISTIAN NEEDS OTHER CHRISTIANS

Acts 2:42–47

Look again at the early Christians. They were together. They shared. They ate together. They prayed together. They worshiped together. They encouraged one another.

Questions

1. How often were these Christians together?
2. Why do you think fellowship was important?
3. What happens when a Christian tries to live completely alone?
4. What can other Christians provide that we cannot provide for ourselves?
5. Why is the church more than a building?
6. What does Christian fellowship mean?

Hebrews 10:24–25

The writer says: “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together...”

Questions

1. What are Christians supposed to encourage one another toward?
2. Why is meeting together important?
3. What happens to faith when we isolate ourselves?
4. How can Christians encourage one another?

Key Thought

God never intended Christianity to be a solo project. **We follow Jesus together.**

6. THE NEW CHRISTIAN NEEDS PRAYER

Acts 2:42 The early Christians devoted themselves to: “prayer.”

Prayer is not merely a religious duty. It is relationship with God.

Philippians 4:6–7 Paul teaches Christians to bring their concerns to God through prayer.

Questions

1. What kinds of things can Christians bring to God?
2. Why does prayer matter?
3. Does prayer mean God promises to give us everything we request?
4. What does prayer do to our relationship with God?
5. Why should a new Christian develop the habit of talking with God?

Illustration — A RELATIONSHIP

Imagine two people who claim to be close friends but never talk. They never call. They never listen. They never spend time together. Eventually the relationship becomes distant. Prayer is part of how we cultivate our relationship with God.

Key Thought: Prayer is not informing God about something He doesn't know. It is drawing near to the God who already knows us completely.

7. THE NEW CHRISTIAN NEEDS TO LEARN TO SAY “NO” TO SIN

Becoming a Christian does not mean temptation disappears.

Romans 6:12–14 Paul says: “Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.”

Questions

1. Does Paul assume Christians will still face temptation?
2. What does he tell Christians not to allow?

3. Who is supposed to reign?
4. What does it mean to offer ourselves to God?
5. What changes when we understand that sin is no longer our master?

Galatians 5:16–25

Paul contrasts: **the flesh** with: **the Spirit**. He then describes the fruit of the Spirit:

- Love.
- Joy.
- Peace.
- Patience.
- Kindness.
- Goodness.
- Faithfulness.
- Gentleness.
- Self-control.

Questions

1. What is the Christian's struggle?
2. What does walking by the Spirit mean?
3. Which qualities should increasingly appear in a Christian's life?
4. Why does Christian growth take time?
5. How does the Spirit help shape our character?

Key Thought

The Christian life is not merely about avoiding bad things. It is about becoming more like Jesus.

8. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHRISTIAN FAILS?

This is an extremely important question. A new Christian may assume: “**Now that I'm a Christian, I can never sin again.**” But what happens when they do?

Do they lose all hope? Should they hide? Should they give up?

1 John 1:5–2:2 John says: “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.”

But then: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

And then John says: “My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.”

Questions

1. Does John expect Christians to be tempted?

2. Does John say Christians will never sin?
3. What should we do when we sin?
4. What does God promise?
5. Who is our advocate?
6. Why is this good news for a new Christian?

Key Thought

The Christian life is not: **“I will never fail.”**

It is: **“When I fail, I will return to Jesus.”**

This is why grace remains essential after conversion.

9. CONFESSION CONTINUES AFTER BAPTISM

We studied confession in Lesson 7. But confession doesn't stop when we become Christians.

1 John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins.”

Questions

1. What does confession mean here?
2. Why should Christians admit sin rather than hide it?
3. What happens when we try to hide our failures?
4. Why is honesty with God important?
5. What does God's willingness to forgive teach us about His character?

Key Thought

A Christian doesn't have to pretend to be perfect. **We are people who belong to the Perfect One.**

10. CHRISTIANITY MEANS FOLLOWING JESUS EVERY DAY

Luke 9:23 Jesus says: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.”

Notice one word: **Daily.**

Questions

1. What does Jesus ask His followers to do?
2. Why does He say “daily”?
3. What does self-denial mean?
4. What does taking up our cross mean?
5. Why is Christianity a daily decision rather than a one-time event?

Key Thought

The Christian life is not merely: **“I was baptized.”**

It is: **“I am following Jesus.”**

11. JESUS BECOMES THE CENTER OF OUR LIFE

Galatians 2:20 Paul says: “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.”

Questions

1. What does Paul mean by “I have been crucified with Christ”?
2. What happened to his old way of living?
3. Who now lives in him?
4. How would this change someone's priorities?
5. What would it mean for Jesus to be at the center of our life?

Think About Everyday Life.

If Jesus is Lord:

How I use my time changes.

How I treat people changes.

How I handle money changes.

How I respond to temptation changes.

How I handle conflict changes.

How I think about success changes.

How I think about suffering changes.

How I use my abilities changes.

The question becomes: **“What would Jesus want me to do?”**

12. THE NEW LIFE CHANGES HOW WE TREAT OTHER PEOPLE

Colossians 3:12–17 Paul tells Christians to clothe themselves with:

- Compassion.
- Kindness.
- Humility.
- Gentleness.
- Patience.
- Forgiveness.
- Love.

Questions

1. Which of these characteristics are easiest for people to practice?
2. Which are most difficult?
3. Why does Paul describe them as something we “put on”?
4. What does forgiveness have to do with Christian living?
5. Why is love described as the quality that binds everything together?
6. How should our relationship with Christ change our relationships with others?

Key Thought

If Jesus changes our relationship with God, He should eventually change our relationships with people.

13. THE NEW LIFE HAS A PURPOSE

Christianity is not simply: “**Jesus saved me, so now I can go to heaven.**” Jesus saves us **for a purpose.**

Matthew 5:13–16 Jesus calls His followers: **salt of the earth** and **light of the world.**

He says: “Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Questions

1. What does salt do?
2. What does light do?
3. Why would Jesus use these pictures?
4. What does Jesus want others to see?
5. Who should receive the glory?
6. How can a new Christian begin serving others immediately?

Key Thought

We do not simply receive salvation. **We receive a mission.** We become people who point others toward Jesus.

14. THE NEW CHRISTIAN SHOULD TELL OTHERS

Mark 5:18–20 After Jesus heals the demon-possessed man, the man wants to follow Jesus physically.

Jesus tells him: “Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you.”

Questions

1. What did this man want to do?
2. What did Jesus tell him instead?
3. What was he supposed to tell others?
4. Did Jesus require him to have a seminary degree first?
5. What could this man tell people about?
6. What can a new Christian tell others?

Key Thought

You may not know every answer yet. But you can tell people: “**This is what Jesus has done for me.**” A new Christian can share the gospel while continuing to learn the gospel.

15. CHRISTIANS ARE CALLED TO PERSEVERE

Revelation 2:10

Jesus says: “Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor's crown.”

Questions

1. Does Jesus promise that following Him will always be easy?
2. What does “be faithful” mean?
3. Why is perseverance important?
4. What hope does Jesus give?
5. How should eternal hope affect our present struggles?

Hebrews 12:1–3

The writer tells Christians to: “run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus.”

Questions

1. What does the Christian life resemble?
2. What does perseverance imply?
3. Where are we supposed to fix our eyes?
4. Why is Jesus the key to perseverance?
5. What happens when we become focused only on our problems?

Key Thought

Don't just start with Jesus. Keep your eyes on Jesus.

16. THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS A JOURNEY OF GROWTH

Christian maturity doesn't happen overnight.

2 Peter 3:18

Peter concludes:

“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

Questions

1. What are Christians commanded to do?
2. What does it mean to grow in grace?
3. What does it mean to grow in knowledge?
4. Why are both important?
5. How can someone measure spiritual growth?

Consider the Progression

A new Christian may begin by asking:

“What must I do?”

As we grow, the question increasingly becomes:

“How can I become more like Jesus?”

Then:

“How can I serve Jesus?”

Then:

“How can I help someone else know Jesus?”

That is spiritual maturity.

17. WHAT DOES THE CHRISTIAN LIFE LOOK LIKE?

Let's put the practical pieces together.

While Psalms is Old Testament notice what it says regarding God's Word: Psalm 119:105 (In all ages and times, God has always spoken to his people and His people listen attentively.)

A Christian READS GOD'S Word: 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:16-17, Romans 10:17

A Christian PRAYS. 1 Thessalonians 5:17

A Christian WORSHIPS. Hebrews 10:25

A Christian FELLOWSHIPS with other Christians. Acts 2:42

A Christian SERVES. Galatians 5:13

A Christian FORGIVES. Colossians 3:13

A Christian RESISTS SIN. Romans 6:12–14

A Christian LOVES. John 13:34–35

A Christian SHARES JESUS. Matthew 28:19–20

A Christian PERSEVERES. Revelation 2:10

A Christian GROWS. 2 Peter 3:18

But remember: These are not items on a checklist by which we earn God's favor.

They are characteristics of a life that has been changed by Jesus.

18. WHAT IF I DON'T FEEL DIFFERENT?

This is another question a new Christian may eventually ask. **“I have obeyed the gospel, but I don't feel dramatically different.”**

Feelings are real, but feelings are not the foundation of our salvation.

2 Corinthians 5:7 “For we live by faith, not by sight.”

Questions

1. What does Paul say Christians live by?
2. Why shouldn't feelings be the foundation of our faith?
3. What should our confidence rest upon?
4. What happens when feelings change?
5. How does Scripture provide stability?

Key Thought

Our confidence is not: **“I feel saved today.”**

Our confidence is: **“I trust the promises of God.”**

19. WHAT IF I STRUGGLE?

A new Christian may experience:

- Temptation.

- Doubt.
- Discouragement.
- Old habits.
- Failure.
- Fear.
- Questions.

None of these automatically means: **“Christianity isn't working.”**

Galatians 6:1–2 Paul tells Christians to restore someone caught in sin gently and to: “Carry each other's burdens.”

Questions

1. What should Christians do when someone struggles?
2. What does “gently” teach us?
3. Why should Christians help rather than simply criticize?
4. What does carrying burdens look like?
5. How should we want to be treated when we struggle?

Key Thought: The church should be a place where people learn:

-How to follow Jesus.

-How to grow.

-How to repent.

-How to forgive.

-How to get back up when they fall.

20. THE WHOLE JOURNEY

Let's go back to where this study began.

LESSON 1 — WHO IS JESUS? He is the Son of God.

LESSON 2 — WHY DID JESUS COME? He came to seek and save the lost.

LESSON 3 — WHY DO I NEED JESUS? Because sin separates me from God.

LESSON 4 — WHAT DOES JESUS ASK OF ME? He asks me to follow Him.

LESSON 5 — WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BELIEVE? To trust Jesus in a way that responds to His Word.

LESSON 6 — WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO REPENT? To turn away from sin and toward God.

LESSON 7 — WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO CONFESS JESUS? To acknowledge Him as Christ, Son of God, and Lord.

LESSON 8 — WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT BAPTISM? To respond to the gospel in obedient faith, being baptized into Christ.

LESSON 9 — HOW DOES A PERSON RECEIVE SALVATION? God saves by grace through Christ, and genuine faith responds to that grace.

LESSON 10 — WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? I BEGIN A NEW LIFE WITH CHRIST.

THE COMPLETE PICTURE

GOD'S LOVE



JESUS



THE CROSS



THE RESURRECTION



THE GOSPEL



HEAR



BELIEVE



REPENT



CONFESS



BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST



FORGIVENESS



NEW LIFE



GROW



SERVE



SHARE



PERSEVERE



ETERNAL LIFE

And notice where the whole journey begins and ends: **JESUS**.

He is not merely the subject of Lesson 1. He is the center of every lesson.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

These questions can be discussed individually or used as a final conversation.

1. What have you learned about Jesus through these studies?
2. What has surprised you most?
3. How has your understanding of salvation changed?
4. What does grace mean to you?

5. What does genuine faith look like?
 6. Why is repentance necessary?
 7. What does it mean to confess Jesus as Lord?
 8. What have you learned about baptism?
 9. How do grace and obedience fit together?
 10. What does it mean to be “in Christ”?
 11. What does a new life with Christ look like?
 12. Why is the church important to a new Christian?
 13. What should a Christian do when he or she sins?
 14. What helps a Christian grow?
 15. What does it mean to follow Jesus daily?
 16. What would you most like to learn next?
 17. What questions about Jesus or salvation remain unanswered for you?
 18. Having studied all ten lessons, what do you believe Jesus is asking you to do?
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THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION

After ten lessons, we have covered a lot of Scripture. But Christianity ultimately comes down to a relationship with a person. **Jesus.**

So perhaps the most important question is not: **“Did I understand every lesson perfectly?”** It is: **“What will I do with Jesus?”**

If He is the Son of God... If He died for my sins... If He was raised from the dead... If He is Lord... If He offers forgiveness... If He calls me to follow Him... **What will I do with Him?**

FINAL THOUGHT — “THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING”

Imagine someone receiving a brand-new Bible. They open it. They read it. They study it. They underline it. They learn what it says. But eventually someone asks: **“Now what are you going to do with it?”** The purpose of Scripture is not simply to fill our heads with information. It is to bring us into relationship with God through Jesus Christ and teach us how to live. That is why Jesus said: “Come, follow me.” He did not say: **“Come, attend one lesson.”** He did not say: **“Come, learn a list.”** He said: **“Follow me.”** And that is what Christianity is. A lifelong journey of following Jesus. There will be days of great joy. There will be days of struggle. There will be times when faith feels strong. There will be times when questions come. There will be victories. There will be failures. But through all of it: **Jesus remains faithful.**

So don't think of this study as the end. Think of it as a beginning. **You have met Jesus. You have heard His gospel. You have considered His call. Now the journey is to walk with Him.** And the promise of Jesus remains: **“And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”** — Matthew 28:20

Interested in going further in your studies? Ask your study leader about the next 10 lesson companion study in this discipleship series.