

Christian Discipleship Guide



“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, ‘All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.’” (Matthew 28:18-20)

2. Salvation

What happened when we got saved, and what is our new relationship with God?

Your decision to trust Jesus Christ as your personal Savior is the greatest decision you could ever make. It is very important that you understand the true significance of what has happened in your life so you can be an effective member of God's family.

There are only two spiritual families in the world: The Devil's Family and God's Family. Regarding the devil's family, the Bible speaks of a group of people who are of their father the devil (*John 8:38, 44*). We entered this family by birth through our physical father, who is ultimately a descendant of Adam. *Genesis 5:3* shows that the descendants of Adam are born in Adam's image and likeness, which is that of a fallen sinner. We inherited our sin nature from our earthly father Adam (*Romans 5:12*). As a result of our sin, we were sentenced to die both physically and spiritually (*Romans 5:12; Romans 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:22*).

But the good news is that we can choose to leave the Devil's family and join God's family. We do this by trusting in Jesus Christ as our Savior. *John 1:12-13* says, "But as many as received him (Jesus), to them gave he power to become sons of God (our entrance into God's family), even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man (it is not a physical birth), but of God." It is a spiritual birth. This new birth puts us into God's family in exactly the same way our physical birth put us into our human father's family. We are now a son of God *by spiritual birth*. As a result of our new birth, we have inherited God's divine nature, and we now have eternal life (*John 3:36, John 6:47, and 1 John 5:12*).

When we trust in Jesus Christ as our Savior (*Romans 10:13*), we acknowledge that the blood He shed for us on Calvary paid the price for our sins (*Romans 5:8*). If Jesus had never paid the price for our sins, there is no way we could ever earn eternal life on our own merits (*Romans 3:23*). Christ's blood covers our sins just as the blood of the Passover Lamb's blood covered the Mercy Seat (the lid on the Ark of the Covenant), so that when God looks down on us from heaven, He no longer sees our sin because it is covered by the blood of Jesus (*Exodus 25:17-22, Exodus 26:34, Exodus 30:10, Exodus 40:20, Leviticus 16:14-15, John 1:29*). (Note: The Ark of the Covenant contained the stone tablets upon which the Ten Commandments were inscribed. The Ten Commandments were God's Law for men. When we sin, we break God's Law. When Jesus shed His blood for us, He covered our sins from the sight of God with His own blood. Christ's blood protects us from God's judgment and provides us with God's mercy.)

Our body is now the temple of the Holy Spirit, that is, God's Holy Spirit lives inside us (*1 Corinthians 6:19*). We are now new creatures reconciled to God. As such, God commands the believer to maintain a difference between himself and the unsaved (*2 Corinthians 6:14-18*), to turn away from the sinful lifestyle, to be separate from worldly things, and to follow Jesus. Our new life is perfectly summarized in *2 Corinthians 5:17-18*, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ..."

We have a new relationship with God. He is our heavenly Father, and we are his child (*1 John 2:1*). Now that we are saved, God no longer deals with us as a sinner. He deals with us as His son or daughter.

This relationship is pictured by the earthly relationship between a father and his son:

- A good father loves and cares for his son (*1 Peter 5:7*).
- A good father protects his son (*Matthew 18:6*).
- A good father provides for his son (*Philippians 4:19*).
- A good father guides and teaches his son (*John 14:26*).
- A good father helps his son (*Psalms 46:1*).

- A good father encourages his son (*Philippians 4:13*).
- A good father disciplines his son (*Hebrews 12:5-11*).
- A good father feeds his son (*Matthew 4:4*).
- A good father has a plan for his son (*Romans 8:28-29*).

The good father will never do anything to purposely hurt his son. He will only do those things that will help his son grow and mature into the man he wants him to be. Our heavenly Father operates in the same way, only His ways are perfect. Unlike earthly fathers who sometimes make mistakes, God never makes a mistake in His dealings with His sons (*Matthew 7:11*).

We need to remember that we do not lose our physical nature at the time of our spiritual birth. This is obvious because we are still physically alive. But we now have two natures: the old physical and sinful nature in Adam's image, and the new spiritual and perfect nature in God's image. Both natures are present constantly, and the one that controls us is the one we feed the most (*Colossians 3:5-10*;

2 Corinthians 4:14-18; Ephesians 4:22-32; Romans 6). So, even after we are saved, we will continue to sin because we still have our old sin nature (*Romans 7:25*). But God does not kick us out of His family when we sin, instead He disciplines us as a son (*Hebrews 12:5-11*). And when we sin, we need to confess our sin and trust the blood of Jesus Christ to cleanse us (*1 John 1:6-10; Proverbs 28:13*).

Questions:

1. How does a person enter God's family? (See *John 1:12* and *John 3:3*)

2. What does God promise in *John 3:36*, *John 6:47*, and *1 John 5:12*?

3. When a Christian chooses to continue in a particular sin, what can he expect from God? (See *Hebrews 12:5-11*.)

4. According to *1 John 1:9*, when we confess our sins to God, then He will _____ us and _____ us from all unrighteousness.

Additional Scripture Verses:

Matthew 7:11; John 3; 5:24; 10:28-31; Romans 3:19-28; 5:1-21; 2 Corinthians 6:14.