

**Arrival Series for the New Believer**

# First Steps

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Learning To Walk In  
Your New Life

Fellowship of Life Church

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## BEING BORN AGAIN ---

### Why Rebirth?

If something is not dead, it would not need to come back to life. That is an obvious statement. Jesus said in John 3:3, *"I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again"* (NIV), and in John 3:5, *"I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit"* (NIV). So the scriptures are saying that people who are not born again neither can see nor enter into the Kingdom of God. Religious works and attending church cannot bring somebody into God's Kingdom. Nobody has ever been good enough to accomplish that.

That which is dead in us is our spiritual ability to commune with God. Man is made up of spirit, soul and body. He becomes a complete tripartite human with interaction between the spirit, soul and the flesh. Each dimension has its particular function in our lives, and each is necessary for the complete purposes for which we were made.

When Adam sinned, he died. The Bible tells us that sin causes not just physical death, but a spiritual death or separation. As physical death is a separation of a person from life, spiritual death is a separation of a person from being connected spiritually with the Author of our spiritual life, God Himself. When we were born into this world, we came with sin from Adam and continued to sin until the time God brought new life to us.

When we are born again we are made alive; regenerated by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is our spirit which is now made alive again to God. Previously, we did not pay attention to God nor understand His ways, nor enter into His kingdom. We were able to receive things spiritually, but they were not from God. Rebirth, therefore, re-establishes our contact and communion with God, and we begin to partake of His divine nature.

## What Is Rebirth?

Rebirth is a process by which the Word of God, referred to in 1 Peter 1:23 as the incorruptible seed, functions like the human seed, which brings only natural life. The Holy Spirit gives power to the Word. Upon that Word impacting our spirit, we then begin to receive new life and are at that moment regenerated by the power of the Holy Spirit. Titus 3:5 says that we have received “regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit”. The agent is the Holy Spirit, and the method is the Word. Our spirit becomes the womb to receive the seed of life brought to us by the Holy Spirit.

What is beginning to take place is that God’s nature (in fact, His own Son, Jesus Christ) is being developed in us. Jesus, Who is referred to as the last Adam, now becomes our very life. So, rebirth is the beginning of a salvation process that will last the rest of our lives. Jesus, Who is our salvation, now begins to reside in us by His nature which is brought to us in rebirth. Our first birth was in Adam. This rebirth is in Jesus.

God’s nature needs to be in us because, prior to rebirth, we had an Adamic nature, which was a fallen nature. The Adamic nature was perverted, having taken on the influence and character of Satan who deceived Eve and brought the first couple into sin. From that time on, man was more inclined to follow the influence of evil than he ever was inclined to follow God. In fact, his “receiver” was actually broken, and he was unable to hear God until the Holy Spirit came to bring him rebirth.

The Bible says that “...*old things have passed away; behold all things have become new*” (2 Corinthians 5:17). It is with this understanding that rebirth becomes a process that will continue to bring us more and more of a life with Jesus. Remember, the purpose of natural birth is to bring someone to full maturity. The goal of rebirth is the same.

## What It Accomplishes

When we are born again, we begin both to see and to enter the Kingdom. The realm and rule in which we had previously lived was governed by satanic influences in the world and even Satan, himself. Now, we are being delivered out of darkness into the dominion of His Son, where there is light. His Kingdom is not so much seen as it is experienced and expressed spiritually. Our perception of life is now changing, and what had control over us no longer holds us in bondage. As we walk in God's Kingdom, we have the liberty of Christ to follow God. This becomes our heart's desire, and is not a difficult task. Life now takes on a new purpose and a new understanding. Our destiny and sense of value are re-established. Our whole sense of well-being and security is redefined by God's love for us. When Jesus died for us, He paid the penalty for the sins that had destroyed our nature and were literally killing us. Now, we are able to live for Him.

## What Rebirth Does Not Do

There is something rebirth does not do. It does not kill the "old man" who once ruled our lives. The "old man" was continually wicked in his ways. Although there was the appearance of good on the outside, he had personal profit on the inside. By this, we mean that God was never the center of our being and the purpose of our living. We had ourselves at the center of our being, and God was at the edge. All was done for self and, if possible, God would be called upon to make things better for us. Now, we begin to live for Him who died for us. However, the old nature is still there.

The Bible, in Galatians 5:17, tells us that the spirit and the flesh lust against each other. This is literally a war. It means that the Spirit that now resides in us—the Holy Spirit who takes up residence within us—is continually encouraging us to be delivered from the destructiveness of the deception of the old man. We are told to put off the old man in order to put on Christ (Ephesians 4:22), and that the old man is deceitful and corrupt. Therefore, we do not easily detect his interest, but we can always see the end result, which would

be destructive. The Holy Spirit is now going to enable us to begin seeing the darkness that once prevailed, and through the power of the Bible, the new nature of Christ working in us, the Holy Spirit, and God's experiences, we will begin to put off the old man, so that more and more of Jesus lives in us.

**Welcome to the beginning of the rest of your life!**

## WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT

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The Holy Spirit is not a mysterious individual too difficult to know, nor is He simply a power. He is a real person and the third person of the Godhead. He is referred to as another Comforter whom Jesus said He would send in His place (John 14:16). Therefore, He continues the work that Jesus began when He was on the earth. The same joy that the disciples had in daily conversing, learning and watching the display of God's power in Jesus is now to be enjoyed in the person of the Holy Spirit.

### He's The Down Payment

According to God's great plan of salvation, the Holy Spirit has become the down payment and the guarantee that there is more to come (Ephesians 1:13-14). Just like the down payment is the initial deposit towards the full purchase of a home or car, so is the Holy Spirit in our salvation. He shows us there is more to come by daily revealing God, His love and blessings.

### Agent In Rebirth

The Holy Spirit is the Agent in our rebirth—the One who brings to us life in God by renewing us according to His power (Titus 3:5). Before we were born again, He was at work convicting us of sin, of righteousness and of judgment (John 16:8). Without Him speaking these things to us, we would never have received the faith, because faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God (Romans 10:17). The Holy Spirit made God's Word alive to us. We know, further, that Holy Spirit is the One who brings us this rebirth as Jesus confirmed in the Gospel of John, when He said, "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6). You have become "spiritual" and are no longer just a natural man.

## **The Baptism With**

The Holy Spirit is not simply content to dwell alongside us but, as Jesus promised, wishes to be not only with us but in us (John 14:17). He can produce the Spirit of Christ in us which is the nature of Jesus. Not only does He want to produce the Lord's nature, but He also wishes to dwell within us. On the day of Pentecost He was received into the lives of the believers who were told to wait for the promise in order that they would receive power and become witnesses of the Lord Jesus (Acts 1:8).

When the Holy Spirit comes into us, He brings Himself and His supernatural powers. There is an immediate supernatural expression of being able to manifest speaking in an unlearned language, called "new tongues". This manifestation is available to all believers who receive the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the One who enables us and we are the doers. As He enables us, all we need to do is begin to praise God in our new language. The purpose of the language is to build us up (Jude 20), to pray and to intercede when we do not know how (Romans 8:26-27). It enables us to speak mysteries to God and to be edified (1 Corinthians 14:4). In addition, the Holy Spirit brings nine other supernatural gifts: Word of Wisdom, Word of Knowledge, Gift of Faith, Gift of Healing, Working of Miracles, Prophecy, Discerning of spirits, Gift of Tongues and Interpretation of Tongues (1 Corinthians 12:1-27).

These additional giftings of the Holy Spirit are for the blessing and building up of the whole body of Christ. Each of us will function in one or more of these gifts as the Holy Spirit distributes them in and through us. One of these gifts includes tongues with interpretation which is for the benefit of the hearers and not only the benefit of the speaker.

## **You Can Receive Him**

Jesus promised that the Father would send the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-8). He never reneges on His promises. All of the disciples received the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4) and began speaking in new tongues as the Holy Spirit enabled them,



just as Jesus promised. He will come into you—now. Just ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit into you right now. Open your heart to the Comforter. Let Him fill your being. Then begin to praise and thank God. You cannot learn your new language first. You must simply begin saying the new language...the Holy Spirit is enabling you. If you learned a language first or knew what to say first, it wouldn't be supernatural. Since it is supernatural, all you have to do is begin to speak. Enjoy the Holy Spirit and your spiritual language.

### **Don't Quench Him**

The Holy Spirit is as much your companion as any person will ever be. He is there when you sleep, when you work, and when you rise. He is as close as your breath and as conscious as your thoughts. We need only to turn within to witness Him and His love, and learn from Him as He seeks to guide us throughout our lives. Do not quench Him in any possible way. He can be grieved. So, learn to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit. He will guide you in righteous living, in the truth of God's Word, and in the joy of simply knowing God. Even when we sin, disobey or resist, He still will not depart from us. We will have merely denied ourselves God's manifested presence like one would ignore a best friend or a spouse. It would be like living in the same house and yet remaining strangers. Always reconcile quickly with God. He is always ready.

## **PUTTING OFF THE OLD MAN**

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Ephesians4:22 (NAS)

“That you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lust”

### **Man’s Peace Has Been Lost**

When man fell in the Garden of Eden, he lost his peace and sense of well-being. They were replaced with an agitated spirit, constantly seeking, but never enjoying, rest. This is essentially the nature of the unregenerate. Mankind is filled with envy, jealousy, pride and anger. These prominent emotions guide him through life and cause many battles and wars among, often resulting in less peace and more agitation. God, however, provides a way for man to regain his lost peace and sense of well-being.

Salvation is the beginning of a new and wonderful freedom for the believer. However, this freedom can find conflict with our old nature. That nature has deceitful and destructive lust which can be referred to as treasures of the heart, and they must be replaced. These treasures (Matthew 6:19-21) must be identified in order to be replaced and put off. They are so much a part of us that they often control much of our lives.

### **What It Takes To Free Our Hearts From Our Old Treasures**

In all honesty, the treasures of our own heart have produced limited happiness. Rather than give us true peace, they have kept us in a continual pursuit. This pursuit now brings us into conflict with Christ’s purposes for us. We are often confused about His will because of these treasures. We ask in prayer that He would bless and honor the desires of our hearts without ever knowing His real will for our lives or submitting ourselves to His gentle and loving yoke. We have been about the business of satisfying ourselves according to

our own treasures. What will it take on your part to receive the needed freedom? The answer is true humility and an attitude of honesty and openness. There may be some pain in recognizing things about ourselves. The pain is only the fleshly nature of mankind being exposed in order for the beautiful nature of Jesus to be brought forth.

The following are categories of what we refer to as treasures of the heart. You may find yourself having one dominant category or a mixture of several. Do not be alarmed as you read through this with an open heart, but be grateful that God is finally giving you answers that will quell the envy, jealousy, pride, anger, and all the other emotions that have dominated you.

## **Recognize There Are Treasures**

**Treasures of the heart. "He who finds his life must lose it." - Matthew 10:39**

### **1. Self-Centeredness — Motivated by your needs, wants, pleasures.**

You can become easily addicted to sex, drugs, and alcohol. In a changing and uncertain world, you are self-conscious, always threatened by events; seemingly powerless or fearful. You can be moody and easily depressed, worry much, and see yourself as the source of strength. You have little effective interaction with others because people are like things to be used. Appearances and popularity are important. The need for acceptance, fear of rejection, covetousness, envy, and pride reign in your life. Often you are performance-oriented. You seek new thrills, excitement and recreation. (Philippians 1:16 & James 3:16)

### **2. Money/Possessions — Motivated by accumulation of both.**

They provide security, strength, worth, and give you status. All your decisions are profit-oriented. Work is not valuable unless it is making you more money. You seek to be with others who have what you have. You judge people by what they have. Success has a wrong definition. Your decisions are money based. You live to accumulate and are temporarily happy. Boredom often sets in as things lose their luster. You chase technology, new inventions, and money making schemes. (Luke 12:13-21)

### 3. Work/Ministry — Motivated by what you do.

You define yourself in terms of your work, your profession, or your ministry. Your life is your work or ministry. You are hardly ever satisfied. You are an overachiever; constantly pressing and restless. Many in the same field become your competitors and not companions. You are happiest when working. Many gratifying experiences are missed because you view life through your distorted lens. In today's changing work place and church life, you feel very threatened. Every man's work is going to be tried. (Eccl. 12:14; 1Cor. 3:12, 15; 1Cor. 4:5)

### 4. Family — Motivated by acceptance within the family unit or with your spouse.

All plans and expectations are family based. Your moods rise and fall according to your plans. Your decisions are based on other members. If you live for and through your children, all of life's activities center around them. Either you control them or they control you. Often manipulation and suppression of others are at work. Corresponding resentment flares up. You are vulnerable to your spouse and/or children. Your energies flow into these people and you can be abused and taken for granted because of it. Bondage can result. You would tend to show displeasure with those who do not respond as you would like. Divorce, abandonment, and separation can result (Mk. 10:29; Matt. 19:5; Matt. 10:36-37; Matt. 12:50; Eph. 5:25,28).

### 5. Friends — Motivated by your friends, their ideas, opinions of you and of others.

You consult them in your decisions. Your security is in their agreement with you and vice versa. Social activities bring you pleasure. You are always in a pack. However, fickleness reigns in these groups, and today's friend can be tomorrow's enemy. Many decisions based on what friends think or do have cost you dearly as your real convictions have been altered.

If enemies arise or a friend becomes your enemy, you develop a defensive and reactionary character. Actually, a warlike attitude develops (Jn. 15:13-15; Prov. 19:6). Our praise is not from men, but from God (Rom. 2:29).

#### 6. Competitiveness/Loser — Motivated in life by a spirit of competition.

This is a conquering mentality that sees relationships and activities of all types as competitive endeavors. Winning is everything; losing is nothing. All strategy and decision making are based on winning. When failure occurs, self-esteem is bruised or destroyed. People are categorized as either winners or losers. Pride grows and true humility, service and grace are victims. Denying self is seen as self-defeat. You have little respect for those you consider losers.

The opposite of this is the individual who sees life from constant defeat, always being the loser in society, and never winning. This person gives up and hopelessness abounds. A victim mentality can result because the person is easily abused. The individual who wants only to win can become abusive. Often, this winning-focused attitude is carried over into scripture, where it perverts the life of a believer and he interprets scripture and life incorrectly (Matt. 10:38-39; 1 Cor. 9:19-23).

#### **Depend On God's Power To Free You And Work Out Your New Nature In Jesus**

Above all, we need to pray and keep the subject open before God (Lk. 9:23-24). Here are some considerations for you in understanding how God will help you completely put off this old man. First, God is in you working His own good pleasure through you (Phil. 2:12-13). Second, clothe yourself in humility (1 Pet. 5:5) in order to maintain the proper spirit and attitude. Third, stay in the Word of God (Heb. 4:12) which becomes the eyes of God to help you know things about yourself, the enemy, and the changes God may bring into your life. Fourth, recognize that life's experiences are designed to parallel all the experiences of our Lord in order that you will be conformed to His image (Matt. 10:24-25). Fifth, know that all the people in your life, including your friends, your church family, and even your enemies, are there to affect you in these areas (Prov. 27:6). Finally, realize that you live in the communion of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:13). He will bring to your understanding all you need to know about your life and how God is working things out with you, and through you, as you give yourself to Him.

Now, let's pray. Get before God and, if possible, with the help of a loving brother or sister, confess what the Holy Spirit has shown you in your initial pass through this section of the booklet.

Renounce those treasures that are competing and interfering with God's will for you. Take them and yourself to the cross of Christ and ask for His power to bring death to your old nature and its treasure. Lastly, expect to go through the six steps mentioned above until Christ's cross has done its work and Jesus has replaced that old treasure in you with His life, gifts, and callings.

## **WATER BAPTISM**

### **An Illustration**

In Acts 8:26 an angel of the Lord instructed Philip to go through the desert towards Gaza. Along the way he met a eunuch who had gone to Jerusalem to worship. He was sitting in his chariot reading Isaiah the prophet. Philip joined the eunuch and began to share Jesus with him. As they approached a body of water, the eunuch asked Philip what prevented him from being water baptized. Philip replied, "If you believe with all your heart that Jesus is Lord, you may be baptized". After the eunuch confessed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, they both went down into the water where Philip baptized him.

This is a beautiful illustration of a person seeking to outwardly affirm the inward change produced by the repentance of his sins. The eunuch understood that he needed to be obedient to the scriptures and be baptized. Through baptism, he experienced the great joy of knowing that his old life was buried (gone forever), and that he was raised up with Christ in newness of life.

### **Old Testament Type**

In the Old Testament the concept of water baptism has at its roots our forefathers, the Israelites, who came out of the land of Egypt. Before they left Egypt, they were requested to celebrate the Passover meal with the placing of blood upon the lintels of the doors, preparing them for their journey out of Egypt and into the promised land. As the Angel of Death passed over the land of Egypt and destroyed the firstborn among the Egyptians, the blood (representing a type of the blood of Christ) protected the Israelites so that the first born among them were kept alive.

According to 1 Cor. 10:1-2, the passing of the Israelites through the waters of the Red Sea was a form of baptism. It signified their stepping out into the new life ahead, both in the wilderness and ultimately into the promised land. After the Israelites came across the dry land and stood on the opposite shore, they

saw that the waters had risen and closed in around the Egyptians, finally separating the Israelites from their life in Egypt. Similarly, our water baptism is significant in that we, too, see a separation of our new life as we are raised up with Christ.

### **Baptism—Its Meaning**

The Greek word, *baptizo*, means literally to “sink under”, or “to dip”, or “to completely immerse”. Therefore, it is the practice of the New Testament church to completely immerse the participant under the water during baptism. Sprinkling or any other fashion of baptism wouldn’t be complete baptism according to the definition. Therefore, we baptize by total immersion.

### **Baptism In The Name Of Jesus Christ**

The New Testament clearly indicates that on every occasion baptism occurred, it was done in the name of Jesus Christ and not in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Only on one occasion do we find the use of the language “baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:19). A more literal understanding of this reference is that Jesus was saying “go baptize in the authority given to you by the Trinity which is composed of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit”. The implication is that those who repent should be baptized in the authority given to the believer by the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Further, on every occasion that baptism is mentioned in the book of Acts (2:38, 8:16, 10:48 and 19:5), it is referred to as being done “in the name of Jesus Christ”, or “in the name of the Lord, Jesus”, or “in the name of the Lord”. We find no occasion where the disciples baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

### **Baptism Of Believers Only**

In Acts 2, we can find a guideline for determining when baptism should occur in someone’s life. In verse 37, Peter’s teaching had pricked the hearts of those



who heard his message on the day of Pentecost. The hearers expressed their desire to believe on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and to turn from their ways as an act of their will. Without this important act of the will (repentance), there would not be an honest turning away from the wicked way and toward the path of righteousness. We must first hear the Gospel and recognize that we are sinners. Then we must repent, and finally, be baptized. Baptism before repentance would simply be a meaningless, religious ceremony. It is therefore impossible to correctly baptize anyone who is not a believer or has not yet repented of his sin.

### **Baptism—Burial Of Old Man, Raising Of New**

Water baptism does not remit sins. *Nothing except the blood of Jesus Christ can remit sins.* According to Col. 2:12, water baptism is an act of faith that signifies that you are “buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead”. Water baptism, therefore, is an outward expression of our faith that the Holy Spirit raised Jesus from the dead. Our old man is crucified with Christ so that the body of sin would be destroyed and no longer serve sin (Rom. 6:6). If we believe we are dead with Christ, we believe we live with Him.

Our water baptism is also symbolic of the fulfillment “right standing” that we have with our Father in heaven through our Lord Jesus. Rom. 6:4-6 helps us to understand that in our union with Christ, if we are united in the likeness of His death, we “also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection”.

Note what our Lord Jesus Christ did when He was baptized by John the Baptist and what He said in Matt. 3:15 “Permit it to be so now, for this it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness”. Referring to His own baptism, Jesus said it was an act of righteousness. Every believer should want to fulfill, as an act of his right standing with the Father, water baptism in the name of our Lord Jesus.

### **Some Final Comments**

As an operation of faith, water baptism can have more than an outward expression of an inward meaning. It can be a significant point of demarcation of

the old life being cut off from you, so that you may more meaningfully recognize the death of the old man and the life of the new one in Christ.

We caution the reader not to draw any unnecessary conclusions or make water baptism more than what it is. Rather, understand that true water baptism, understood with the right attitude, is significant in helping a person walk in the newness of life in which Christ has called us to walk. It provides the believer with a touch stone point and reminds him that “death” occurred, and new life came. We are saying, finally, that no act that the Lord has commanded us to do can be taken lightly and without significance. Surely, our heavenly Father has ordained these things for our good and well-being. Therefore, both the measure of faith that we apply to them, and the attitude that we have about any command from God, are essential to maintaining the blessing that these significant acts provide.

**Praise God!**

## JUDGEMENTS

A wise man once observed that people tend to judge themselves on the basis of their motives, and judge others on the basis of their actions. This, of course, creates a double-standard that can lead to serious misunderstandings along with divisions between friends, family members or co-workers.

Have you ever heard of people who have not spoken to each other in years? Perhaps this has happened to you. Maybe you tried to help someone and they thought you were interfering.

When we are under the judgement of others, it can feel just like a prison. We may try to make things right with the other person but may run into an unseen wall that prevents both true reconciliation and freedom.

Jesus had a lot to say about judgements. He told us that the way we judge others is that we will be judged by others, including God (Matt. 7:1-2).

Every one of us has had a critical eye towards someone. It could be because of mistreatment. It could be because of jealousy....yours or theirs. There are many reasons for judging people and holding them in contempt. Think about your life. Do you hold judgements against others?

### Definition

A judgement is an opinion concerning right and wrong; meaning you are pre-siding over someone, like a court judge, having power even to “*cast into jail*”. Some people feel like they are behind bars as far as the relationship with one another goes. Actually, you are establishing an unrighteous standard by which you, yourself, will be judged. Furthermore, when we hold these judgements against others, we can bring harm to ourselves, both physically and spiritually. By letting these judgements continue, they become the birthplace of self-righteousness and bitter resentment, affecting our mental and physical health. Pride is closely related to self-righteousness and prevents the grace of God in our lives (Jam. 4:6).

## Mercy

Mercy triumphs over judgement. To those who judge without mercy, no mercy will be shown to them (Jam. 2:13). To be forgiven is to have mercy extended. When we were forgiven by God because of our faith in Jesus, we received mercy instead of judgement. Now, we who follow Jesus are to do the same. This act of mercy (extending forgiveness) is a decision to be righteous and loving. The world thinks only what is right and legal. However, we are not like the world. We are like Jesus.

## Repentance

Whenever we become aware of a sin in our life, repentance should be our immediate response. To repent means to change our way of thinking and acting by turning away from the thing that caused the sin. We must seek God's forgiveness through the work of the cross. We, who believe in Jesus, have been crucified with Him, buried, and raised in newness of life. The old man and his nature are dead (Rom. 6:1-9). Now we trust in His mercy and allow our inner character to be transformed into the image of Jesus.

Repentance is a decision. You will make this kind of decision many times in your Christian walk as God shows you areas of your life where judgements have held you, and others, in bondage. Repentance, or the ability to repent, is present because of Christ's nature being developed in us (2 Peter 1:4).

You may want to pray in this manner. *Father, I forgive everyone who has hurt me or offended me in any way. I release each of them completely from every judgement I have towards them. I want to yield to You, Lord Jesus, the remembered pain and anguish of the offenses, recognizing that You bore these for me on Your cross. Now Lord, I ask You to forgive me for the sins of judgement and self-righteousness. Please transform me by the power of Your Holy Spirit to be more like Jesus. I ask it in Jesus' Name. Amen.*

## HEALING

### Every Sick Person Has His Doubts

If you have ever had a serious illness, you have had to fight off doubts about being healed in the midst of that illness. Your mind becomes a battleground with many questions beginning with “What if”? From that point on, scenes flash through your mind of worsening conditions. The reports of friends who have had similar diseases, or your own knowledge of that type of illness, threatens you beyond reason.

In the midst of this is the question of whether or not God would heal you. I am sure you know the stories of Jesus healing people. “But that was then”, you say, “and this is now. Things have changed; we are living in a different era”. Maybe you think that God is not concerned with healing people today. So, the question remains, “Can you be healed”?

### Jesus Is God’s Proof

The Bible says in Acts 10:38, “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, and He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil for God was with Him”. This scripture verse is absolute proof positive that God was with Jesus in all of the healings. Jesus Christ is still alive, seated at the right hand of God and releasing His healing power in the world today in many forms.

The Bible says that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb. 13:8). This means that if He has not changed, then His ideas about healing have not changed. Furthermore, Jesus said, “If you have seen Me you have seen the Father” (Jn. 14:9) and “I and the Father are One” (Jn. 10:30). He declared often that He came to do the works that the Father sent Him to do, and He did nothing else but those works. God’s will is the same as it always has been—He is the healer.

## **But You Don't Know The Kind Of Life I've Lived**

Everybody can say that. In fact, you might be saying right now, "You don't know the kind of life that I'm living". If it was your life-style that needed to be changed in order for God to heal you, then none of us would ever receive healing. We're not capable of changing on our own to become good enough to get God to do anything for us. So healing would be out of the question. It is not your goodness that draws God's healing power, but His compassion.

Jesus' compassion was expressed in Matt. 14:14, where it says, "He saw a large crowd and had compassion on them and healed their sick". God is merciful and kind, and frequently demonstrates the power of His love and His kingdom by healing people of every imaginable disease.

## **More On Why God Heals**

God's provision for your disobedience is part of the reason He heals today. When Jesus went to the cross, He paid the price for your sin. This price satisfied God the Father. God does not look at the sin of man as much as He does the solution. Focusing on the finished work of Jesus at the cross, God continues His compassionate heart towards mankind. His heart has always seen Jesus at the cross because the plan of salvation existed from the time of the fall in the garden. It was not an after-thought that God dreamed up at a later time in history.

## **God Heals Those Who Don't Know Him**

In many places around the world, God is healing people through His evangelists, teachers, prophets, apostles, pastors, and other members of the body of Christ. Many of them had little or no knowledge of Jesus Christ before they were healed. However, to draw men unto Him, God often heals people before they come to Him for salvation and cleansing from sin. We are told in Mark 16 that many signs, including healing, will follow those who believe in Him and who minister in His name. These "signs" can precede preaching and teaching.

## How Will God Heal Me?

Nobody has a bedside manner like God, our Father. Not only does He diagnose the exact nature of your disease and ailments, but He prescribes a healing method suitable to you and the affliction that you are enduring.

God heals in many different ways. At times, people were healed by the spoken Word such as in Matt. 8:3 where Jesus simply spoke to a leper who was then cleansed. Sometimes He rebuked a disease directly, as in Luke 4:39. Often He rebuked evil spirits and drove them out (Luke 4:41). Other times, He laid hands upon sick people and they were healed (Luke 4:40). The list of possibilities is almost inexhaustive. God, through the Holy Spirit, can use words of knowledge (something, a condition, or information that can release healing power), words of wisdom (spiritual wisdom and guidance opening the door for healing), supernatural gifts of healing for certain diseases, or supernatural gifts of faith and miracles as expressed in 1 Cor. 12:4-11.

God has a way to heal even you. He is not without resources, and He is not stumped by you, a disease you might have, a malady that is affecting you, or a problem that is troubling you. No demon, no power, natural or supernatural, is strong enough to prevail against God and His love for you. He can heal you through the prayer of elders (James 5), the prayer of believing saints, or your own prayer.

Here are some closing thoughts. It is not how God heals but that He heals which is important. It is not if He will heal but when. He has healed some instantly, some in time, some in obedience, and some as they went their way. He still has a way to heal you. Put your faith in Him and nothing else. It might be that He uses a doctor, a medication, or a type of surgery. It is all going to come from Him. Look to Him, believe in Him, trust Him, and praise Him.

## MEANINGS

### Introduction

Coming into Christianity is much like migrating to a foreign land — the language is different. The words you hear and the words you read in the Bible may be strange. Yet, they have profound meaning for you and need to be understood. The section seeks to deal with some basic words that affect your life in very important ways. Knowing what they mean will strengthen your understanding of your great salvation, encourage your faith, and draw you closer to God.

### Atonement

*Atonement* is the bringing together of people through the satisfaction of an offended member. God has been offended by man's sin, and atonement was made for use. Leviticus 17:11 tells us that the blood of Christ makes atonement by reason of its life. The shedding of Jesus' blood draws you to oneness with God, the Father.

### Imputation

The act of *imputation* is whereby our sin is accounted, considered, reckoned and woven into Jesus, Who bore away our sin at the cross. The positive aspect of imputation is that Jesus' righteousness is imputed to us. Because we are born of Adam's seed, we all sin and sin needs to come off of us. This can only be done through the transfer of our sin to Jesus (Isaiah 53:11). In the Old Testament, the High Priest laid his hands upon a sin substitute (an animal to be sacrificed) and confessed the sins upon that animal. Jesus took the place of that sacrificial animal and had our sins put upon Him. The same is true with His righteousness which is imputed to us through our faith in what Christ did (Romans 4:22). As He now is sinless and we are in Him, our lives are reckoned as sinless. His sinlessness is imputed to us.



## Justification—Righteousness

This word is translated “*justification*” in some places and “*righteousness*” in others. It’s a word that reflects the judicial sentence or verdict that declares us to be just in the sight of God and righteous before Him (Romans 3:24 & 5:17). It is a gift that comes to us and declares from the high court of God that we are forgiven, acquitted, and freed from all acts and charges against us. Our sins are remitted and sent away from our lives. You and I today stand just, having been acquitted by the “*High Court*”, and made righteous in the sight of God, appearing before God without sin.

## Propitiation

Here, the emphasis of the word is upon the satisfaction which is accomplished through the death of Jesus Christ and the shedding of His blood, which was ultimately used to cleanse the mercy seat (Heb. 9:5). This mercy seat in the Old Testament was described as a place where God met sinful man’s representative, the High Priest. The High Priest would sprinkle blood upon the mercy seat to provide satisfaction to God. The emphasis on atonement is to reconcile and draw us together through forgiveness. The emphasis on propitiation is to satisfy the offended party and deliver one from the anger that would normally be projected.

## Reconciliation

2 Corinthians 5:17-20 speaks to us of our position with God. We are reconciled as if we were two enemies having now been made the best of friends. As God has reconciled us, it has now become our life’s ministry to reconcile the world to God through Jesus Christ.

## Redemption

We are told that we are sold under sin. Romans 7:14 says, “*That the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin*”. Therefore, the control of our lives

was under the dominion of sin and Satan. To be redeemed means to be brought back. Jesus paid the price. 1 Peter 1:18 & 19 says, “*We were purchased not with silver and gold which do corrupt but with the precious blood of the Lamb*”. In other words, it is His life for our life. It is like a ransom; it releases people who have been in slavery. We were in slavery under the curse of the law and purchased out from underneath that curse (Gal. 3:13).

## Regeneration

This word in the original Greek is made up of two words: **Palin** meaning *again* and **Genesis** meaning *birth; begetting*. Thus, we are born again or experience the new birth. This is the result of the Holy Spirit producing a spiritual change in the spirit of man. Man becomes alive to God again. He is born of the Spirit, becomes spiritual in nature, and is able to commune with God. This new birth deposits the seed of God’s nature into our life and is the beginning of a maturing process that does on throughout our lives (John 3:1-8; 1 Peter 1:23).

## Salvation

This is one of the deepest words in the Greek language having to do with what God does to people who believe in Him through Jesus Christ and His work. Romans 10:10 says that when we express what we believe in our hearts about Jesus, we experience salvation.

Basically, salvation can be divided into three parts. First, salvation is deliverance from the consequences of sin, and deliverance from sin itself. Second, salvation is becoming whole, restoring peace and health, and renewing one in spirit, soul and body. Third, salvation is safety, protection, preservation, and deliverance, and ultimately, even deliverance from the wrath of God which would fall upon all who remain outside of His blessed plan.

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