

Lesson 1

“SAVED”

You made a great decision! You may have attended a church service where you responded to a call to come to the altar and receive Christ, or you may have attended a Fellowship Group and had a friend pray with you to receive Christ there. However you came to this decision, it was the right one! The decision to follow Christ starts you on a journey that lasts a lifetime. But you have just taken the first step, and from this point on, you are entering a new way of living and a new way of looking at things. You are leaving the past behind, and you're moving toward a future bright with hope and promise.

First things first: what does it mean to be saved?

Good question! We often see people performing religious duties with the hope of gaining God's approval and acceptance. The truth is, you could never do enough good things please God because of your inherit sin problem.

In fact, the word “saved” is the biblical word for having received “salvation”. Salvation is the act deliverance from the guilt and pollution of sin brought to us by the work of Jesus Christ. The work of salvation is carried out by the Holy Spirit in our lives through the regenerating process Jesus called the “New Birth”. It is a gift we receive and not a privilege we can earn.

*Acts 4:12 “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name given under heaven by which we must be **saved**.”*

*Ephesians 2:8 “For it is by grace you have been **saved**, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God”*

*Romans 10:10 “For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are **saved**.”*

Understanding the work of Salvation:

- 1) You were a sinner!
 - a) Being a sinner means that you had failed to do what God required of you in order to be in right relationship with Him. In other words, you had failed to fulfill God's law, just like all of us: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23).

- b) Your sin included everything you did in your former life that was not acceptable to God. Your actions as well as your attitudes, and your natural tendencies to walk in disobedience to God.
- 2) As a sinner, you could not please God.
- a) *"As it is written: 'There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away; they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not one' "* (Romans. 3:10-12).
- b) Most of us live our lives without ever considering what God might expect from us. But you probably discovered that even when you tried to live right and please God, you couldn't. That's because without Christ it is impossible.
- 3) You were dead in your sin! (Colossians 2:13 *"when you were dead in your sins..."*)
- a) Even though God loved you, you were separated from Him. Because God is totally good and perfect, He cannot allow sin in His presence. So until you met Christ, you were not able to enter into God's presence. But now, because of His shed blood, Christ has become your passage to the Father.
- b) Ephesians 2:2 says that you formerly *"followed the ways of this world."* In the past, you lived for the world and its attractions—under the direct influence of Satan. The spirit of rebellion controlled your life through strong desires of lust and greed. This spirit cannot and will not ever gain God's approval. So every person under this influence must come to Christ. That's where you were, until you met Christ!
- 4) You responded in faith to God's love!
- a) Because God loves you so much He began to deal with your heart through the influence of the Holy Spirit. It was His love working in your life that caused you to become aware of your desperate need for God and it was His Spirit who began to draw you to Himself (Romans 5:8).
- b) If you had refused to accept God's love and offer of eternal life through Jesus Christ, then you would have remained in your sin and continued to be separated from God. If you had died separated from God, you would have been condemned to an eternity without God in a place the Bible calls "hell."
- c) When you said, "yes" to God in faith, you repented of your life of sin, you were forgiven, and you received the life of God. When this happened, you were "born again".

Understanding the New Birth:

1) Jesus said you must be born again.

(John 3:3) Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born again".

2) To be *born again* means to receive the transforming life of Christ in the deepest part of your being, that is, your spirit (2Corinthians 5:17; Romans 8:9-11; John 3:3-8).

a) Spiritual death is remedied by eternal life (Eph 2:1-5)

b) Physical death is remedied by the resurrection of the dead (John 11:25)

3) To be *born again* means to be restored to fellowship with God.

a) Whereas sin caused you to lose intimacy with God, the new birth allows you to become fully reconciled with God.

b) In fact, being *born again* is being born into God's family enabling you to know him as your true father.

4) To be *born again* means you are now able to receive the full range of God's blessings originally designed for His children.

a) In place of sickness, pain, and infirmity, healing is available to you (Psalm 103:3; James 5:14-16).

b) In place of sorrow, depression, fear, and other emotional bondages, you will find that emotional and mental healing is available to you Christ. (James 4:7; Philippians 4:13).

c) In place of poverty, limitations, and financial lack, prosperity is now available to you through your faith in God's word (3 John 3; Philippians 4:19).

One more thing: have you been water baptized yet?

1) Jesus was baptized and commanded his followers to baptized new believers.

a) *Matthew 3:16-17* As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. ¹⁷And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.

b) *Mark 16:15-16* "He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. ¹⁶Whoever **believes** and is **baptized** will be **saved**, but whoever does not believe will be condemned"

2) Baptism is like a burial of your old life

- a) This "going down" into the water symbolizes that your old life has ended and the new has begun.
- b) *Romans 6:3-4 " ... don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We were therefore **buried** with him through **baptism** into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."*

Discuss getting water baptized with your New Life Coach!