

HELPING PEOPLE TO *know God*

Discovering Christianity



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 02

Calvary Christian Church
Discovering Christianity

Part One 04

Understanding Salvation

Part Two 10

The Assurance of Salvation

Part Three 19

Relationship with God

Part Four 33

Holy Spirit Baptism

Part Five 43

Water Baptism

CALVARY CHRISTIAN CHURCH
DISCOVERING CHRISTIANITY

INTRODUCTION

The Calvary Discovering Christianity course is designed to help you in your journey of faith. The course is made up of four parts that will discuss 1) *Understanding Salvation*, 2) *The Assurance of Salvation*, 3) *Relationship with God*, 4) *Holy Spirit Baptism* and 5) *Water Baptism*.

PART ONE

Understanding Salvation

Three Common Misconceptions

MISCONCEPTION #1: Mankind is basically good and therefore has no need to be saved.

Basically good compared to who? Maybe if I'm up against Hitler, I look pretty good. However, against Mother Theresa? Not so much... Against Jesus? Not at all!

To be 'basically good' is hard to define because it's relative, and it doesn't give enough reason for us to believe that we don't need to be saved.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS:

Romans 3:10 as it is written:

"None is righteous, no, not one;"

Romans 3:23

"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"

When this scripture speaks about sin, it's talking about an inward spiritual attitude of rebellion toward God, which is expressed in outward acts of disobedience.

MISCONCEPTION #2: God will overlook all my faults.

Every person has an internal desire to see justice. Think about it, we say things like "I just keep beating myself up over what I've done..."

God is a good God, which means that He can't overlook my faults. There has to be justice.

Imagine a Supreme Court judge allowing his son to live in his house, while he was dealing drugs. To knowingly harbour a lawbreaker would mean that the character of the judge would be compromised.

For God not to bring justice means God would no longer be 'good'. How could a Holy, upright God entertain and accommodate law-breaking sinners?

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS:

Romans 6:23

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

What are the "wages" or the consequences of our sin?

Hebrews 9:27.

"And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment

What does the Bible say comes after death?"

MISCONCEPTION #3: I will go to heaven because I'm a good person.

I've met a lot of people who are good people yet don't believe in Jesus. The truth is, you cannot earn your way to heaven. When I was in primary school we had a point system in our classrooms. The better I behaved, the more points I receive. Once I gather enough points I can collect a prize.

Sometimes we treat our relationship with God the same way, if I can do enough 'good' things, then I can go to heaven. The issue with that is my faith in God and my standing in heaven is dependent on me (I can make myself righteous). When really the only way to God is completely dependent on Jesus and what He has done for us. It's His death on the cross that makes us righteous, not my 'good' works.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS:

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, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast."

What does it say about our good works?

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,"

THE PURPOSE OF JESUS' DEATH AND RESURRECTION

What are three things that 1 Corinthians 15: 3-4 says happened to Jesus?

1.

2.

3.

Why did Jesus die? (Verse 3)

The Bible makes it very clear that Jesus died for our sins. We deserved to die because of our sin but Jesus came and died in our place. He was the substitute on our behalf so that our sin can be forgiven and washed away.

- 1 Peter 2:24 *"He bore our sins ..."*
- 1 Peter 3:18 *"For Christ also died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit"*

NOW THROUGH JESUS, GOD CAN OFFER THREE GIFTS TO ALL PEOPLE:

1. REPENTANCE

To repent is to change your mind or purpose. Once I was living my life my own way and for my own purpose, but when I repent I live my life according to Gods will and His purpose. Repentance is a response to what Jesus has done. At a NRL game we applaud and cheer each time a team scores. If someone compliments us, we smile and say, "thank you". If someone cuts us off at a round-a-bout, we scream and shout! At least other people do... All of these are responses, and repentance is our response to Jesus.

Acts 3:19

"Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out,"

Repentance means to turn 180 i.e. to turn away from my sin and turn to God.

2. REMISSION OF SIN

God is able to forgive me and cleanse me of my sin. When you are out with a group of friends for dinner it can be awkward sometimes when you come to the register to pay. Sometimes you are at the back of the line and you end up paying for everyone's forgotten drinks. Other times you get the pleasant surprise of receiving the receipt that says, "Paid in full" because the person in front generously paid for your meal. Jesus' resurrection is like the printed receipt that says, "Paid in full" because the debt has been paid, we are forgiven and cleansed of our sin.

1 John 1:9

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

3. SALVATION

The essence of salvation is God substituting himself in the place of man. Imagine being convicted of a crime that you committed. You find yourself standing in front of a judge in the court of law. Knowing that you committed the crime, you are ready to plead guilty. However, before you get the chance, the judge comes down from his platform and says, "I will take the punishment for you". Salvation is Jesus taking our rightful place, He died so we could live.

Acts 4:12

"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Thank you for joining us; we hope this gave you some insight into taking that next step in your Christian faith. Our next Discovering Christianity class will discuss The Assurance of Salvation.

PART TWO

The Assurance of Your Salvation

FOUR STEPS TO RECEIVING GOD'S FORGIVENESS

The Bible makes it very clear that Jesus died for our sins. We deserved to die because of our sin but Jesus came and died in our place. He was a substitute on our behalf so that our sin can be forgiven and washed away. How Can I Receive This Forgiveness?

There are four steps to receiving God's forgiveness.

Step 1. ACKNOWLEDGING our need for forgiveness and repentance

1 John 1:8-10

"⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us"

Step 2. BELIEVEING Jesus died for us.

John 3: 16

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

What happens when we believe in Jesus?

The world renowned tightrope walker, Charles Blondin, some years ago stretched a tight rope across the top of Niagara Falls and walked across it. The crowds were in awe of his incredible ability to balance on such a thin, tight rope above the foaming water and rocks below. They cheered and applauded his great skills and acclaimed him the greatest highwire artist of all time.

Encouraged by their applause, he then announced that he was going to wheel a person across the wire, in the wheelbarrow.

"Do you believe I can do this great feat?" he asked the crowd.

"Yes" they replied, "we believe you can do this, you can do anything".
"You really believe that I can do it?" he asked again.
"Then who will volunteer to sit in the barrow?"

There is a great difference between academically believing that Jesus died for our sins and actually trusting Him by committing our lives into His hands by faith. When the Bible speaks of believing in Jesus, it means to "hop in the wheelbarrow" so to speak and to trust Him with your life. When the Bible talks about believing in Jesus, it means more than simply acknowledging that He died for man's sin. It's more than just an understanding. It means accepting that He died for you personally. It involves trusting your life to Him and finding a personal relationship with Him, where Jesus becomes the most important person in your life.

Step 3. CONFESSING our sins to God

1 John 1:9

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

What does God do when we confess our sins to Him?

Step 4. MAKING Jesus the leader of your life

Romans 10:9

"If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

Why don't you make sure of your salvation by praying the simple prayer below, asking Jesus to come into your life?

"Thank you God, for loving me, a sinner, and for sending Your Son to pay the penalty for my sin. Right now I put my trust in His death and resurrection for my salvation and receive the eternal life that You offer me through Him. Thank you for hearing this prayer, cleansing me of all my sin through Christ's blood, and accepting me now as Your child. Teach me and direct me through Your word and Your Spirit to discover Your purpose and will for my life. Amen"

ASSURANCES OF SALVATION

When we make Jesus the Leader of our life, we have the following assurances:

1. Acceptance

John 6:37

"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will [a]by no means cast out."

It doesn't matter who you are, what you have done or where you have been, Jesus loves you. We will not be rejected, we will be accepted.

2. Friendship

John 15:15

"No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you."

A relationship with Jesus is the best friendship we can have. Why? Because Jesus can never fail us or let us down. The bible says that He is the same yesterday, today and forever. He will never change. He will always be faithful. As we open our hearts to Jesus, He promises to be our greatest friend.

3. Authority

John 1:12

"as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name."

If my father was the CEO of Telstra and I was to call head office asking for 'Dad' I would probably be put straight through. However, if I had no relation or friendship with the Telstra CEO and called through to speak to him, most likely I would be redirected somewhere else.

The fact is, we now have the right to become children of God and gain the authority that comes with that position.

4. New Birth

John 3:3

"Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

What does the Bible say about being "born again" or born of God?

2 Corinthians 5:17

"If any person is in Christ, they are a new creation (born again); the old has gone and the new has come"

5. Eternal Life

Romans 6:23 says

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus"

1 John 5:11- 13

"And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God."

6. Victory

Salvation gives us the power to overcome the world and the devil. Now with Jesus living in us, we can stand to live a victorious life.

1 John 5:4-5 says:

"For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—[a]our faith. ⁵ Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? We share in the victory of Jesus' death and resurrection."

A boxer legend by the name of Evander Holyfield made over \$500 million during his career. He was victorious and a conqueror. Each time that he finished his fights, his wife would join him in the ring to celebrate. After the formalities Evander's wife would take the cheque he had won and would bank it. Evander's wife shared in the same victory without ever

having to step inside the ring. She was more than a conqueror. The bible describes us as being more than conqueror's because we share in Jesus victory without ever having to step inside the ring.

1 John 4:4

"You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Write out in 3 parts how you became a Christian.

I. _____

II. _____

III. _____

a) What was your life like before becoming a Christian?

b) How did you commit your life to Jesus?

c) What is the evidence of God's work in your life since salvation?

Thank you for joining us today. We look forward to seeing you in our next Discovering Christianity class.

PART THREE

Relationship With God

INTRODUCTION

People will often ask why we make a distinction between being religious and being a Christian. Perhaps the best way to answer this question is to look at the similarity between being a Christian and being in a romantic relationship. Real Christianity is like being in love. When you're in love all you want to do is spend time with that special person. You can talk without noticing the hours fly by. As the relationship grows commitment deepens and you come to know your partner and appreciate them more. The energy and commitment of building that relationship brings about incredible rewards.

On the other hand, being religious is just hard work! Like relationship, religion requires commitment but it doesn't have any real benefits. Religion demands that you do things out of obligation, hoping that all your effort will make you acceptable to God. Real Christianity starts by understanding that God loves you and accepts you as you are. He just wants you to love Him! He wants to spend time with you and He wants you to get to know Him more. That's why prayer is such an important part of being a Christian. Not so we can get the ritual right but so we can talk to the One who made us and loves us more than anyone. When you live this kind of Christianity the commitment is unbelievably rewarding and life is anything but religious! Our relationship with God is like other relationships; consistent and open communication is crucial to maintain its health and vibrancy.

THREE IMPORTANT ASPECTS TO OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

There are three important aspects to our relationship with God

1. Prayer

Talking to God is called prayer. Just in the same way you dialogue with the person you love, so God wants you to tell Him what kind of day you've had, the fears that you are facing and the desires of your heart. Prayer is not meant to be complicated. We can't impress God with the words we use, it's what our heart is saying that matters to Him, so just share out loud from your heart the things you feel. You might feel a little silly at first because you can't see God with your eyes but you need to know that God is spirit and that He is there, waiting to hear from you.

Prayer is as crucial to the Christian as water is to the human body. Without it, the relationship becomes dry and eventually it will die. The first thing to disappear in a failed marriage is communication. With the breakdown in communication it isn't long before other people capture our heart and love. Then the relationship becomes superficial and we lose the benefits of marriage or even the marriage itself.

The same happens with our relationship with God. Unless you continually make the time to spend in intimacy with God, you will find yourself becoming religious, and even turning your back on Him.

Philippians 4:6-7

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

What are we told not to do? (Verse 6)

But instead, what are we told to do? (Verse 6)

What should we pray about? (Verse 6)

What is the result? (Verse 7)

Luke 18:1

"Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart,"

How often does Jesus say we should pray?

1 Peter 3:12

"For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

How does God react to our prayers?

1 John 5:14-15

"Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. ¹⁵ And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him."

What attitude can we have if we know God hears us? (Verse 14)

How should we pray for God to hear and answer our prayer? (Verse 14)

What do we know God will do when He hears us? (Verse 15)

Jesus calls Himself the "Good Shepherd" and calls us "His sheep".

John 10:27.

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

What does He say His sheep will hear?"

2. Read the Bible

In any relationship that you have, it is important to get to know about the person you love. In the same way we need to get to know about God and His character. The best way to do this is to spend time reading your Bible.

The Bible is the inspired word of God. It is like a road map of life. It is filled from cover to cover with principles of successful living and shows you how to live with purpose and meaning in a confused and misguided world.

Reading your Bible can be compared to eating food. If you don't eat, you don't grow. And if you don't take in God's spiritual "food" (the Bible) you won't grow either. Start from the New Testament and read through the Gospels (ie. the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) and find out about this Jesus you are following. Who is He? What is He like? And what lessons about life did He share with His disciples that you can learn from? What is His attitude to people like you? Don't just read it like a novel, but think about the implications of what you are reading. God wants to speak to us through His Word, the Bible. It is the most valuable asset you have and you can develop no better habit than to read it every day.

2 Timothy 3:15-17

"from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

¹⁶ All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for [a]instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

The Word "Scripture" in this verse means the Bible.

What does this verse tell us about the Bible? (Verse 16)

What four things does this verse say the Bible is useful for? (Verse16)

What is the end result of studying the Bible? (Verse 17)

Psalm 119:9-18

*"How can a young man cleanse his way?
By taking heed according to Your word.
¹⁰ With my whole heart I have sought You;
Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!
¹¹ Your word I have hidden in my heart,
That I might not sin against You.
¹² Blessed are You, O Lord!
Teach me Your statutes.
¹³ With my lips I have declared
All the judgments of Your mouth.
¹⁴ I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies,
As much as in all riches.
¹⁵ I will meditate on Your precepts,
And [a]contemplate Your ways.
¹⁶ I will delight myself in Your statutes;
I will not forget Your word.
¹⁷ Deal bountifully with Your servant,
That I may live and keep Your word.
¹⁸ Open my eyes, that I may see
Wondrous things from Your law."*

How can you live a pure life? (Verse 9)

What did the writer of this Psalm do with Gods word? (Verse 11)

Why was it important for the writer to obey God's Word? (Verse 11)

How valuable was the Word of God to the writer? (Verse 14)

What promise did the writer make about God's Word? (Verse 16)

What prayer did the writer pray about God's word? (Verse 18)

Psalm 119:105

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet
And a light to my path."*

How did the writer describe the Word of God?

3. Fellowship

Our relationship with God will also be enhanced greatly if we spend time getting to know others who are part of the family of God. In all relationships, the 'in-laws' or other family members are important to help make your relationship work. The first thing that you do when you are serious about someone is to introduce him or her to your family. Your parents and other family members want to get to know this new person in your life too. It is often said that when you marry someone, you are marrying the whole family. The same can be said about being a Christian. The Bible makes it clear that when we accepted Jesus into our lives, we became part of God's family. We are now related to each other. We are brothers and sisters together in Christ. You now have an extended family that you will spend eternity with, and it is important that you get to know them by spending time with them.

Families encourage and uplift one another. They stand together in times of crisis. They support one another and that is what the family of God is all about. Without the support of other Christians, you will find yourself

isolated and feeling all alone. As a consequence, your relationship with God will also suffer, leaving you feeling discouraged and uncertain. Being in regular fellowship with other Christians in a church setting is crucial to your relationship with God, because it is by spending time with more mature Christians that you learn things that you would never learn by yourself. Fellowship helps you to grow.

One caution, however, is that you should not expect your new family to be perfect. As in any family, none of the members do all the right things all of the time. Family members can also irritate each other. God has placed us in this environment and will even allow irritation to take place because if handled the right way, it causes growth and patience in our lives. Sand in the eye causes irritation, yet sand in an oyster produces a pearl. Allow family life to produce pearls in your life rather than irritation and you will find yourself growing in your relationship with God.

Make fellowship with other Christians a priority in your week. Set aside Sunday as a day of meeting together with Christians to worship God. Also make plans to attend a Connect group during the week. The extra fellowship and the intimacy of a small group will bless and encourage you at a time when you most need it (right in the middle of a hectic week).

Acts 2:40-47

⁴⁰ And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this [a] perverse generation." ⁴¹ Then those who [b] gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. ⁴² And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' [c] doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. ⁴³ Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, ⁴⁵ and [d] sold their possessions and goods, and divided [e] them among all, as anyone had need.

⁴⁶ So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added [f] to the church daily those who were being saved."

This passage shows some of the things the early Christians did regularly.

List four things they did regularly from verse 42

I.

II.

III.

IV.

List two things they did regularly from verse 46

I.

II.

How often did they meet together for fellowship? (Verse 46)

Hebrews 10:25

"not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching"

What does this verse encourage us not to forsake?

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Set aside 5 minutes everyday to read your Bible. Do not just read anywhere. Start at the first chapter of John and read it a section at a time, until you have finished reading the whole book. Then start at Matthew and do the same.
2. Get an exercise book and conclude your reading by writing down in your own words, what the passage of Scripture is saying. Then write down what it is saying to you and how you can apply it to your life.
3. Jesus showed us how to pray when he quoted what is often called "The Lord's Prayer"; recorded in Matthew 6:9-13. As you follow the six points of this prayer it will greatly enhance your ability to communicate to God effectively.

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name"

Spend 2-3 minutes thanking God for all the good things, both large and small, He has done for you.

"Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on Earth as it is in heaven"

Spend 2-3 minutes asking God to save your unsaved friends and relatives. Pray for Australia and ask God to make our nation a Godly one. Pray for your Pastor and your church leaders. Don't forget to ask God to bring His Kingdom into your own life.

"Give us this day our daily bread"

Spend 2-3 minutes telling God how you feel (out loud). Tell Him if you feel lousy. Tell Him what's bothering you. Share your feelings with Him, both good and bad. Spend 2-3 minutes asking Him for the things you need, be specific and tenacious.

"Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors"

Spend a short period of time asking Him to forgive you of anything you have done wrong in the last 24 hours. Mention it specifically if you can remember. Forgive others you feel have wronged you.

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one"

Spend 2-3 minutes asking God to protect you from the things that tempt you, ask Him to give you strength to do things God's way. Ask God to protect you from the things Satan might do to tempt you to sin.

"For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever"

Finish your prayer time by thanking God for 2-3 minutes that He has heard your prayer and that He will answer you.

4. Plan to attend church on Sunday

5. Get involved in a Connect group. Talk to one of the leaders at church or contact the office for more details.

Thank you for joining us, we can't wait to see you next week.

PART F O U R

Holy Spirit *Baptism*

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Holy Spirit Promised

Jesus promised that when He returned to heaven He would not leave the disciples on their own. He would send His Spirit to live in them and to empower them to live the Christian life.

John 14:16-17

"¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever - the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. "

Acts 1:4-5 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: *"Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."*

Jesus promises to give us the Holy Spirit as a gift. Can you imagine coming to your birthday party with all the gifts people have brought but you try to pay them back for the gift? You would never do that, because it is a gift given out of the generosity of your friends.

The Holy Spirit is a gift given to us by God to use for His purposes, we cannot earn the Holy Spirit, nor can we buy the Holy Spirit, because He is a gift that has been given to us.

Holy Spirit Baptism is for everyone

Acts 2:38-39

"And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off-for all whom the Lord our God will call."

So, the promise is to every generation, including us today.

Holy Spirit is the HELPER

We all need help from those around us in life. By ourselves we can be very limited in strength, thoughts and capacity. So those around us help us in what ever area we lack.

John 14:16-17

"And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever -- ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you."

So the Holy Spirit helps us to live this life for Christ.

God has even provided all the help you need to live for him, He has not left you alone.

Help to Witness

Acts 1:8

*"But you shall receive **power** when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." NKJV*

The word power in the original Greek is word dunamis which means an explosive force or power. This is the same word we get dynamite from.

Our task is to share the good news of Jesus with our world. The task is so important that God promised to empower us for the job.

Matthew 10:20

"for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. "

The Holy Spirit is the one who will help us to say what we need to say.

Help to Access God's Presence

Ephesians 2:18

"For through him (Jesus) we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. "

We have access to God through Jesus and the Holy Spirit is the one who reveals God to us. Now that we have access to God we need the Holy Spirit to help us come into God's presence.

Galatians 4:6-7

" Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." ⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir. "

Sons and heirs have total access to what is their Father's. The Holy Spirit is the one who helps us have access to all that is now ours in Christ.

Help to Pray

Romans 8:26-27

"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. ²⁷ And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will." NIV

1 John 5:14

"This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us." NIV

I'm not sure if you have ever experienced an awkward first date but if you have, you know that it is indeed VERY awkward! Because sometimes when you are getting to know that person you can run out of things to say.

Sometimes when we pray, we run out of things to say and are not sure what else to talk to God about.

You may not know what or how to pray, but we have received the Holy Spirit who helps us to pray according to God's will for our life.

1 Corinthians 14:2

"For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit." NIV

1 Corinthians 14:14

"For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful." NIV

So the Holy Spirit prays for us and through us to God the Father on our behalf and according to our biggest need.

Speaking in tongues EDIFIES you

Our whole life needs building up (edifying). God knows that we haven't been able to do that on our own so He has given us a prayer language to help edify us (build us up)

1 Corinthians 14:4 *"He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself,..."* NKJV

We need to speak in tongues as much as possible as it edifies (builds us up). You gain strength and get built up each time you use your prayer language.

Holy Spirit Baptism is evidenced by speaking in tongues

You can't try to speak in tongues and English at the same time.

1 Corinthians 14:2

"For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries" NKJV

Acts 2:4

"All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them." NIV

Acts 10:45

"The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. ⁴⁶ For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God." NIV

In the bible everyone baptized by the Holy Spirit was evidenced (initially) by speaking in tongues. We simply need to speak it out and you won't understand it with your mind, but God will understand it completely.

Holy Spirit Baptism comes out of your spirit not your head

It is a language of man and of angels that you don't know.

So you won't understand what you are saying but you are saying it by faith.

1 Corinthians 13:1

"If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels..." NIV

This is a spiritual transaction that takes place in your spirit and not your head.

You don't know all the languages of men and angels so don't try to understand it.

Let it come out of your spirit, for that is where it flows from. It doesn't happen in your intellect, but your spirit.

So don't try and speak as you would in English but let it flow out of your spirit. Your head won't help you here.

Holy Spirit Baptism comes from faith and boldness

Because it is a spiritual transaction you need to step out in boldness and faith.

When you gave your heart to Jesus you stepped out with faith and boldness, and speaking in tongues is the same.

You didn't understand everything at first, but a transaction took place in your spirit when you got saved and you knew it. It is the same when you are baptized by the Holy Spirit; it is a faith issue.

You may not understand everything, but step out in faith and boldness and you will receive. Everything in God is obtained by boldness, faith and obedience.

Start to speak out what is coming up out of your spirit and don't worry about how it sounds - just be bold.

HOW TO RECEIVE HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM

1. Ask

Acts 2:38-39

"Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.³⁹ For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

NKJV

2. Receive

Baptism is given as soon as you ask, so you receive the Holy Spirit straight away as well. Like everything we receive, we get it and use it then and there.

Exercise Faith

Exercise Boldness

3. Speak

Speak out what you have received and enjoy using your prayer language straight away.

Everyone receives according to their hunger

God says in His word that we are to hunger and thirst after the things of God.

If I had something for you that I could give you today, that would make your life more successful and fulfilling than what you are experiencing today, you would want to receive it from me straight away.

The Holy Spirit baptism is the very thing that will help to empower you for this life.

Acts 1:8

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Thank you for joining us today, we will see you in the next lesson.

PART FIVE

Water Baptism

INTRODUCTION

In **Matthew 28v19** Jesus commanded His disciples to: *“Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you.”*

Jesus said that every disciple should be baptized.

The word baptize literally means **to dip or submerge**. When a person is baptized they are dipped or submerged under water and then brought back up again.

Acts 2v37-38, 41

“When the people heard this they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles: Men, what shall we do?” Then Peter said to them: “Repent and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ ... then those who gladly received his word were baptized and that day about 3000 souls were added to them.”

How soon were people baptized after becoming Christians?

Baptism Signifies a Death and a Burial

THIS IS WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

Romans 6:3-4

“Do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore, we were buried with Him through baptism into death ...”

When I go under the water it symbolizes the *death and burial* of my old life. My old way of living is forever dispensed with. I declare it finished in the strongest possible terms – it’s dead and buried!

My old life isn't dead and buried because of my will power but because when Jesus died on the cross he destroyed the power of sin, the power that had dominated my old life

But when we baptize you we don't keep you under the water! Thankfully, we bring you back up because there's a second thing that baptism signifies ...

BAPTISM SIGNIFIES A RESURRECTION TO NEW LIFE

Romans 6:4

"... that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father; even so we also should walk in newness of life."

Christ was buried in a tomb but three days later emerged in resurrection power. When I am baptized it signifies my old life is dead and the power of sin is broken. Then I come up out of the water signifying that the NEW LIFE I now live, is lived in the power of God.

Galatians 2:20 describes this miracle: *"It's no longer I who lives, but Christ who lives in me."*

BAPTISM IS A PUBLIC DECLARATION OF MY COMMITMENT TO CHRIST

This is a public declaration before your friends and family, as well as before every spiritual force, that you have chosen to surrender your life to Jesus Christ.

This is incredibly powerful and should not be underestimated.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS:

Matthew 10:32

"Whoever confesses Me before me, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven but whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven."

Notice that being baptized is a public declaration of a commitment you have already made. Baptism doesn't make you a Christian. You became a Christian the moment you expressed faith in Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins. Baptism is an outward expression of what has already happened in your heart.

BAPTISM IS A PUBLIC COMMITMENT TO THE CHURCH

We have saved the most important meaning of baptism for last. Baptism is a public commitment to the church. As soon as we believe we should be baptized, because believing means belonging and baptism signifies that we now belong to the Body of Christ.

We have already learned that when we are baptized we are identifying with the Body of Christ. The Bible says that the church is the Body of Christ on the earth.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS:

1 Corinthians 12:13 says: *"For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body... and have all been made to drink the same Spirit."*

Ephesians 1:22-23 teaches us that the church is the Body of Christ.

So when we are baptized, we identify with Christ's body, the church, and enter into fellowship with believers everywhere! Other believers become our brothers and our sisters. We have all shared in the same Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:13 says: *"Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit."*

That's why Acts 2:37-38 says that the people were baptized and then v41 carries on to say that they were "added to the church".

What About Infant Baptism?

Jesus said to baptize disciples ... people who have made a conscious choice to follow Christ. A baby or small child is not capable of making an informed decision to follow Jesus, so we don't baptize infants.

We do, however, believe it is important to dedicate children to the Lord ... just as Jesus' parents dedicated Him at the temple soon after His birth (Luke 2:22).