

3. DEALING WITH DOUBTS IN YOUR NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST

Even though feelings are important, your relationship with Christ is based on facts, not on feelings that can change daily.

Doubts, questions and varying emotions are common parts of everyone's life, but they are very unreliable gauges of anyone's relationship with Christ. The Christian lives by faith in the trustworthiness of God and His Word.

This train diagram illustrates the relationship between fact (God and His Word), faith (your trust in God and His Word), and feeling.



The train will run with or without the caboose. However, it would be useless to attempt to pull the train by the caboose. In the same way, Christians do not depend on feelings. Place your faith in the trustworthiness of God and His Word. The more you learn of His Word, the more you will be able to answer any doubts with solid facts. Your feelings will begin to respond to the truth of God's Word and not your circumstances.

4. GROWING IN YOUR NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST

Since you have...

- ... trusted in Christ's payment for your sin,
 - ... understood the basis of your new relationship with God,
 - ... looked at five truths about your new relationship with God,
- you can be confident in your new relationship with Christ.

Throughout this week, begin to review these truths and make them part of your life as you grow in Christ:

1. You are forgiven: Colossians 1:13,14; 2:13
2. You are a child of God: John 1:12, Romans 8:15, 1 John 3:1
3. You are indwelt by Christ: Revelation 3:20, Galatians 2:20
4. You have a new life: 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:4,5
5. You have eternal life: 1 John 5:11-13, John 5:24; 10:27-29

Take one truth each day and reflect on it. Read the verses listed by each truth. Thank God that this is now true of you. Knowing these essential truths are critical to our growth in Christ.

- Q What happens when we struggle and fall short in our efforts to live the Christian life?
- A Discover these truths through the next study entitled Your New Life In God's Love.

Understanding Your New Life in Christ



The Gospel

The Gospel is all that God has done, is doing, and will do through the perfect life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This "Good News" of Jesus is the power of God to eternally save people from the penalty of sin and to unite believers with Christ so that His resurrected life is lived out through them. This revolutionary truth centers a believer's life on the heart-transforming work of Jesus Christ both for now and eternity.

The Gospel Defined

- God created us to enjoy relationship with Himself.
- Our sin has separated us from a holy God and caused spiritual death in us.
- Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became human, lived a perfect life, died, and was resurrected to pay sin's penalty of death.
- Repentance and trusting Christ eternally unites us with Him and other believers.
- Our new relationship with Christ gives us His presence and purpose in life.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Romans 1:16

Key Question: How can a person who received Christ know with certainty that he will spend eternity with God?

You can know that you have a secure and personal relationship with God. The next three pages will highlight some Biblical truth to help ground you in this security in Christ. Take time to read each Scripture and think through the answers.

1. CONFIDENCE IN YOUR NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST

You can be confident in your new relationship with Christ because you have been completely forgiven and accepted by God. Only Christ's death on the cross is sufficient to provide this proper relationship with God.

READ Ephesians 2:8,9. Three important words in these verses explain the basis of our acceptance before God:

GRACE: Unmerited favor, an undeserved gift

- Q What role did grace play in establishing your relationship with God?
- A You didn't deserve this relationship nor did you earn it by any good works. Rather it is a free gift from God that you accepted when you received Christ through faith.

SAVED: Rescued, spared from disaster

- Q What do you think this verse means by saying you are saved? From what are you rescued?
- A *Romans 6:23 says that the final result of sin is death. When you received Christ, you put your trust in Christ and His death for your sin. Instead of believing in your own ability to earn God's favor, you now trust that you have been reconciled to God through what Christ has done for you.*

FAITH: Belief, trust, commitment of mind, attitude, action

- Q What does faith have to do with receiving Christ?
- A *Simply put, faith is believing or trusting God and His Word. When you received Christ, you put your trust in Christ and His death for your sin. Instead of believing in your own ability to earn God's favor, you must now trust that you have been reconciled to God through what Christ has done for you.*

Key Question: Suppose you were standing before God and He asked you, "Why should I let you into My heaven?" What would you say?

2. UNDERSTANDING TRUTHS ABOUT YOUR NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST

There are many exciting things that are true in your new relationship with Christ. Understanding these truths will help you build a firm foundation on which to grow.

Christ forgave your sin.

Read Colossians 1:13,14. When you trusted Christ for the forgiveness of your sin, all your sins were forgiven...past, present, and future. *What difference do you think it makes to know your sin is forgiven?*

Christ made you a child of God.

Read John 1:12. When you received Christ, you began a loving relationship with God.

Christ came into your life and will never leave you.

Read Hebrews 13:5. *Under what circumstances might Christ leave you?*

According to these last two verses, how many times is it necessary to receive Christ?

Christ gave you new life.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. When you trusted Christ to be your Savior and Lord, you began a new spiritual life. God will increasingly produce many new qualities in you as you grow in Him.

Christ gave you eternal life.

Read 1 John 5:11-13. *On what is eternal life based?*

When does a person's eternal life begin? When will it end?

Key Question: If you were to die tonight, how sure are you that you would spend eternity with God? 0—25—50—75—100%

These wonderful benefits are based on Jesus Christ. None of them can be earned. You received them the moment you placed your faith in Christ.

Are any of these truths especially meaningful to you right now? If so, why?