

Are You Living “the New Life”?

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Introduction: Taking Stock of Our Christian Lives.

- A. Every Christian should be living “the new life,” yet some have unwittingly returned to the old one!
- B. Baptism is much more than receiving the forgiveness of sins, it is the beginning of something very special and wonderful – *A new life in Christ!*
- C. By reviewing our baptism and the life we now live today, we put ourselves to an extremely important test! (**2 Cor. 13:5**)

I. “The New Life” Begins at Baptism!

- A. There is a “*spiritual* connection” to Christ at baptism.
 - 1. Baptism is a *real* spiritual connection to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ! (**Rom. 6:4; cf. Col. 2:12**).

Note: Baptism, from BAPTIZO, means “immersion” (Thayer’s Greek Lexicon); no wonder it represents being “buried” with Jesus!

- 2. Baptism is a serious act for people who *can* and *will* take it seriously!
 - a. Baptism is for penitent believers *only* (e.g., **Acts 2:38; 8:36-38**).
 - 3. Baptism is for people who understand that this is the *only* way to enter into a union with Christ and receive the blessings found in Him (**Gal 3:27; cf. Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21; Eph. 1:3**).
- B. Baptism is not *just* about being saved, but about the start of a “new life”!
 - 1. Christians need reminders of the spiritual significance of the baptism they once received: “*Or do you not know...?*” (**Rom. 6:3-4**).
 - 2. Our baptism into Christ is not an event merely to be affectionately remembered for salvation, but an event that altered our future *for life!*
 - 3. *No one* can begin the new life in Christ *until* he/ she has been baptized (**Rm 6:4**): Baptism is necessary “*in order that*” we may live a new life!

II. “The New Life” Means a Changed Life!

- A. A discontinuation of sin (**Rom. 6:1-2**)
 - 1. Grace in Christ is *not* a “license to sin” (**Jude 4**), but a powerful motivator to live a *new* and *better* life for the Lord! (**Titus 2:11-12**)
 - 2. To practice sin is a sharp *contradiction* to our “death to sin” (**Rom 6:2**).
 - 3. Baptism enters us into a *union* with the death of Jesus! (**Rom. 6:3**)
 - 4. “*The old man*” (“old self”) is crucified (destroyed, not weakened) when we identify ourselves with Christ at baptism (**Rom. 6:5-6; cf. Gal. 2:20**).
- B. Following in the footsteps of Jesus
 - 1. We who have been raised with Christ (after being baptized) are to imitate His resurrected life (**Rom. 6:5, 8, 11**).
 - a. Being united with Christ means living a new life that *will reflect His!* (**1 John 2:6; cf. 1 Pet. 2:21; Eph 5:1-2; Phil 2:5**).
- C. Freedom from the slavery of sin
 - 1. A new life means no longer being a slave of sin, for people “*dead to sin*” having been “*crucified with Christ*” are freed from sin (**Rom 6:6-7**).
 - 2. Jesus gives us our freedom from the bondage of sin (**John 8:31-36**).
 - 3. His blood achieved our redemption or freedom (**Eph. 1:7**).

4. We are no longer to be slaves of sin, but of righteousness (**Rm 6:17-18**).

III. Are You Living “the New Life”?

A. Are you living the new life as a *disciple* of Jesus?

1. To become a Christian is to also become a *disciple* (**Acts 11:26b**).
2. A disciple is “*a learner... one who follows one’s teaching*” (Vine’s Expository Dictionary) (**Mat. 10:24**).
3. Are you committed to learning *all* that you can from your Master and Teacher? (e.g., **Mat. 5:1ff; John 18:37b; Mat. 11:29-30; 2 Tim. 2:15**).
4. Disciples are learners *and* doers of Jesus’ teaching (**Jn 8:31; Col 3:17**).
5. Disciples are also “*imitators of their teacher*” (Vine’s Expository Dict.).
6. To be like Jesus, we must answer His call of self-denial (**Luke 9:23**) and follow in His steps (**1 Pet. 2:21; e.g., John 15:12-13; Mat. 5:48; 9:13, 36; Mat. 23; John 2:13-17; Mark 3:5; 1:35; cf. Gal. 2:20**).

B. How have you *changed* since you began the new life?

1. What is the difference between your *former* life and the *new* life you now have in Christ? (**Eph 4:21-22, 23-24; Col 3:9-10**)
 - a. What do you see when you look into the “mirror” of God’s word? *Do you see Christ in you?* (**James 1:22-25; 2 Cor. 13:5**)
 - b. Have the people who have known you over the years seen *positive* changes in your life? (**Mat. 5:16**).
 - c. Has *God* seen positive changes in you? (**Ps. 139:1ff**.)
2. We must strive for spiritual excellence and *increase* in faith, love, and good deeds (**1 Thes 4:1; 2 Thes 1:3; Phil 1:9; 1 Thes 3:12; 1 Cor 15:58**).
3. Each Christian is either growing in Christ or he is digressing and getting weaker spiritually, *there is no middle ground!* (**2 Pet. 1:8-9**).

C. What “new things” have come into your life? (**2 Cor 5:17**)

1. The old things are meant to pass away – the sins, the bad habits, the selfishness, the love and affection for sinful pleasures, etc.
2. As a “new creation,” what *new* things have come into your life?
 - a. A new way of thinking (**Rom. 12:2; Phil. 4:8**).
 - b. New values and priorities (**Mat. 6:19-21; Mat. 6:33**)
 - c. A new purpose in life (**Eph 2:10; Eccl 12:13**).
 - d. A new lifestyle (e.g., **1 Cor. 6:9-11**)
 - e. A new perspective on marriage & family (**Mt 19:1-12; Eph 6:4**)
 - f. New friends (**2 Cor. 6:14-17; c.f. 1 Cor. 15:33; 1 Pet. 4:4**)
 - g. A new goal (**Phil. 3:3-14**)

D. Is the aim of your new life to “seek the things which are above”? (**Col. 3:1-4**)

1. If you were raised with Him (cf. **Col. 2:12**), your *number one goal* is to go to Heaven. Therefore, thoughts of Heaven are not rare, but common!
2. The new life changes our *whole* perspective, knowing that this world is not our home and thus our mind is not set upon the earth (**Heb 11:13-16**).
3. We set our mind on things above; we direct our lives each day according to what matters *most*: *Going to Heaven to be with God* (**Phil. 3:13-14; Phil. 1:23; John 14:1-3; 1 Thes. 4:17; Rev. 22:1-5**).

Conclusion: The New Life is the Best Life There is, Leading Us to Eternal Life!