

8. How does the story of Nicodemus demonstrate that good, sincere, and religious people will not go to heaven? What was missing in his life? How does this story affect you? (3:7)

9. How do we experience the new birth? (3:12)

10. Can you share a time when you were born again, or is this still a spiritual need in your life? If so, are you ready to accept Christ?

Summary: Good people, sincere people, religious people - don't go to heaven, but only those who have been *born again*. The New Birth is the *work of the Holy Spirit*. It takes place when a person accepts & trusts Jesus as their Savior. The New Birth results in *forgiveness*, a *changed heart & life*, and a *personal relationship* with God as His child.

Suggested Prayer: "Dear God, I believe Jesus died on the cross for me and rose from the dead. I **apologize** for my sins. Please forgive me and make me clean on the inside. I **accept** and **trust** Jesus as my Savior. Heal the broken places in my life. Help me to recover and pursue your design for my life. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen"

Sharing & Praying Together Memorize - John 3:3

Date: _____

Conversation #2 - Assurance—Can I Know for Sure?

1 John 5:11-13 NLT ¹¹ *And this is what God has testified: He has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.* ¹² *Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have God's Son does not have life.* ¹³ *I have written this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know you have eternal life.*"

1. Have you ever had a close call with death? If so, when? What did you think afterward? Do you think it is possible to know for sure they are going to heaven, or can they only hope so?
2. What do you think is meant by eternal life? Where is eternal life located? What does this mean? (5:11)
3. What promise does God make to those who have Christ in their heart & life? (5:12) Can God's promises be trusted? If so, why?
4. What is the consequence of rejecting or neglecting Christ? (5:12)
5. To whom did John write this letter? Why did he write it? (5:13)
6. Based on verses 5:12-13, a formula for the assurance of salvation could be **AC + CP = Assurance**. That is, **AC** (accept Christ) + **CP** (claim the promise of 5:12) = **Assurance**. Has there been a specific time when you accepted Christ as your Savior? If so, share your story.
7. Many people have accepted Christ (AC) but have neglected to claim the promise (CP) of 1 John 5:12. This is why so many

Christians lack assurance. Have you been claiming the promise (CP), or is that something you need to do?

8. In your own words, how can you be confident that you have eternal life based on 1 John 5:12-13?
9. Take a moment and tell God in prayer—you accept His Son & claim His promise of eternal life.

Summary: God wants you to have the *assurance* of your salvation. You can know for sure that you have eternal life when you *accept* Christ as your Savior (AC) & *claim* God's promise of eternal life (CP).

Sharing & Praying Together Memorize - 1 John 5:13

Date: _____

Conversation #3 - Good Works—What Good are Good Works - Salvation or Service?

Ephesians 2:8-10 NLT ⁸ *God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God.* ⁹ *Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.* ¹⁰ *For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago."*

1. What are some of the most memorable gifts you have received?
2. What is the difference between a wage and a gift? What does verse 8 mean by salvation is a gift from God? (2:8)
3. "Grace" means "God's undeserved & unearned favor." How is this similar to a "gift"? What does verse 8 mean by God's salvation is by "his grace"? (2:8)
4. If you hear a news report that people were saved from a burning building, what does the word "saved" mean to you? What does verse 8 mean by God saving people? From what do you think God saves people spiritually? (2:8)
5. In verse 8, the Greek word often translated "faith" or "believe" is best understood as "trust." What role does faith, or a trusting belief, have in the process of salvation? Is salvation the result of head faith or heart faith, and what is the difference? (2:8)
6. What does "salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done" mean? (2:9). How do people try to earn salvation?
7. Why do you think God created a plan of salvation that eliminated human-boasting in one's accomplishments? (2:9)
8. Good works come AFTER salvation, not as a way to earn salvation. Good works are for **service** (2:10), not **salvation** (2:8-9). How does verse 10 describe saved people? What does this mean to you? Why did God save and change you? (2:10)

9. When did God make plans for you to serve Him (compare Ephesians 1:4)? What can you do to serve God? (2:10)

Summary: Good works will *not* save us, but they allow us to serve & glorify God and to be a blessing to others.

Sharing & Praying Together Memorize - Ephesians 2:8

Date: _____

Conversation #4 - The Christ Controlled Life—What Are the Three Kinds of People Spiritually?

1. The NATURAL Person/Non-Christian



This refers to people who have **not received Christ** as their Savior. Christ is **outside** their heart & life. They do not enjoy any of the benefits of being in Christ. **Self** is in **control** of the direction of their life.

1 Corinthians 2:14 NLT *"But people who aren't spiritual [natural man - NASV] can't receive these truths from God's Spirit. It all sounds foolish to them and they can't understand it, for only those who are spiritual can understand what the Spirit means."*

1. How would you describe the illustration for the "Natural" person? Where is "The Cross" located? Where is "Self"?
2. Who controls the direction of the "Natural" person's life?
3. How does the "Natural" person typically respond to the Bible and Christianity? (2:14)

2. The Worldly/Fleshly/CARNAL Christian



This refers to people who **have received Christ** as their Savior but have **pushed Him to the back seat**. The individual's "Self" or "Fleshly desires" are behind the steering wheel, determining the direction of this person's life.

¹ *Dear brothers and sisters, when I was with you I couldn't talk to you as I would to spiritual people. I had to talk as though you belonged to this world or as though you were infants in Christ.* ² *I had to feed you with milk, not with solid food, because you weren't ready for anything stronger. And you still aren't ready,* ³ *for you are still controlled by your sinful nature. You are jealous of one another and quarrel with each other. Doesn't that prove you are controlled by your sinful nature? Aren't you living like people of the world?"* 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 NLT

4. How would you describe the illustration for the "Carnal" Christian? Where is "The Cross" located? Where is "Self" located?
5. How did Paul describe the "Carnal" Christian's level of spiritual maturity and appetite for the Bible? (3:1)

Conversations About Following Christ

Date: _____

Conversation #1 - The New Birth—Will Good People Go to Heaven?

John 3:1-7, 10; 1:12-13 NLT *“1 There was a man named Nicodemus, a Jewish religious leader who was a Pharisee. 2 After dark one evening, he came to speak with Jesus. ‘Rabbi,’ he said, ‘we all know that God has sent you to teach us. Your miraculous signs are evidence that God is with you.’ 3 Jesus replied, ‘I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God.’ 4 ‘What do you mean?’ exclaimed Nicodemus. ‘How can an old man go back into his mother’s womb and be born again?’ 5 Jesus replied, ‘I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. 6 Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life. 7 So don’t be surprised when I say, ‘You must be born again.’”*

“10 Jesus replied, ‘You are a respected Jewish teacher, and yet you don’t understand these things?’”

“12 But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. 13 They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God.”

1. What religious background do you have, if any?
2. What can we learn about Nicodemus—how do we know he was religious? (3:1) What responsibility did he have? (3:10) Most Pharisees hated Jesus; why do you think Nicodemus came to him at night? How was Nicodemus different than the others? (3:2)
3. Why did Nicodemus believe Jesus was from God? (3:2) Why should we believe that Jesus is from God?
4. How did Jesus respond to Nicodemus? (3:3)
5. What spiritual misunderstanding did Nicodemus have? (3:4)
6. Being “born of water” referred to physical birth, as the context of verses 6 & 13 indicated. What two types of birth does everyone need to enter the kingdom of God (heaven)? (3:5-6)
7. How is the Holy Spirit involved in the new birth? (3:6)

3. The Christ-CONTROLLED Christian



This refers to people who **have received Christ** as their Savior & **made Him** their Lord. They give Christ the **steering wheel of their life**. “Self” is in the back seat. They enjoy the **full benefits** of being in Christ (Gal. 5:16-17, 22-23).

“6 And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. 7 Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.” Colossians 2:6-7 NLT

6. How would you describe the illustration for the “Christ-controlled” Christian? What should we do after we accept Christ as our Savior? (2:6-7)
7. What are some benefits of Christ controlling your life? (2:7)
8. Who is in control of your life - Christ or self? Start each day by praying, “Jesus, I give you the steering wheel of my heart today. Control and direct me!”

Summary: Life is a journey; the best trip is when Christ is in the driver’s seat of your heart.

Sharing & Praying Together **Memorize - Colossians 2:6**

Date: _____

Conversation #5 - Discipleship - What Does it Mean to Follow Jesus as His Disciple?

What is a disciple? Our definition is—a **growing, fully devoted, spiritually reproducing follower of Jesus Christ.**

1. When was there a time when you were “all in” for a cause?

“Growing”

2 Peter 3:18 NLT *“Rather, you must grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”* 1 Timothy 4:7 NLT *“...train yourself to be godly [like God or like Jesus].”*

2. What do you think it means to grow spiritually?

“Fully Devoted”

Jesus Christ wants us to be 100% devoted to him. He gave his **all** for us on the cross. He is asking his followers to give their all to him.

Luke 9:23-26 NLT *“23 Then he said to the crowd, ‘If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me. 24 If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, [Mark 8:35: “...and for the sake of the Good News”], you will save it. 25 And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but are yourself lost or destroyed? 26 If anyone is ashamed of me and my message, the Son of Man will be ashamed of that person when he returns in his glory and in the glory of the Father and the holy angels.”*

3. What are the conditions for being a disciple? (Luke 9:23)
4. If the cross represented crucifixion, what do you think Jesus meant by taking up your cross daily? (Luke 9:23)
5. What is the consequence of living a self-centered life? What is the benefit of living as a servant to others? (Luke 9:24-25)
6. What did Jesus say about being ashamed of him and the gospel? (Luke 9:26) Why are some people ashamed of Him?
7. To what degree (1-10) is your heart devoted to Jesus Christ?

“Spiritually Reproducing Follower of Jesus Christ”

Matthew 4:18-20 NLT *“18 One day as Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers—Simon, also called Peter, and Andrew—throwing a net into the water, for they fished for a living. 19 Jesus called out to them, ‘Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!’ 20 And they left their nets at once and followed him.”*

8. Who did Jesus see as he was walking? What were they doing? (Matt. 4:18)
9. What exactly did Jesus say to them? What did it mean to “fish for people”? What does this mean for you today? (Matt. 4:19)
10. What was their response, and how long did it take? (Matt. 4:20)

2 Timothy 2:2 NLT *“You [Timothy] have heard me [Paul] teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.”*

11. What did Paul urge Timothy to do with what he had been taught? What type of person was he to disciple? Why do you think this quality is important?

Notice the **progression** for **multiplying** disciples: (1) **Paul** taught ⇒ (2) **Timothy** who should teach ⇒ (3) **“trustworthy people”** who will be equipped and qualified to ⇒ (4) teach & train **“others.”**

12. Who is someone you might be able to meet with for spiritual conversations and discipleship?

Summary: Becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ requires setting aside one’s personal desires & being radically devoted to him.

Sharing & Praying Together **Memorize - Luke 9:23 NLT**

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