

*The*  
**NEW**  
**YOU**

*A Guide to Your First  
90 Days as a Christian*



Thank you for your interest in *The New You: A Guide to Your First 90 Days as a Christian*. This chapter is provided as a free sample of the book.

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# Chapter 1

# THE NEW IN YOU

## ONE DAY AT A TIME

### Day One – Read 1 Peter 1:17-25

1. With what were you redeemed?
2. How have you purified your soul?

*Prayer Starter* – Thank God for giving us His word, the Bible.

### Day Two – Read 1 John 1:5-10

1. If we say that we have no sin, we \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
2. If we \_\_\_\_\_ our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.

*Prayer Starter* – Thank God for allowing you to have a relationship with Him. Pray that He will help you strengthen your relationship with Him and with His people.

### Day Three – Read 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

1. What is happening to the “outward man”? What is happening to the “inward man”?
2. What is the difference between the things which are seen and the things which are not seen?

*Prayer Starter* – Thank God for the hope of (the fact that we can be confident that we are going to) Heaven.

**Day Four – Read 2 Corinthians 5:6-11**

1. Who will appear before the judgment seat of Christ?
2. For what will each person give account?

*Prayer Starter* – Thank God for allowing us to have confidence (hope) that we will be with Him when our lives are over.

**Day Five – Read 2 Corinthians 5:12-17**

1. If anyone is in Christ, he is a \_\_\_\_\_ .
2. All things have become \_\_\_\_\_ .

*Prayer Starter* – Thank God for adding you into Christ's kingdom, the church.

**Day Six – Read Romans 8:35-39**

1. What can separate us from the love of God?
2. In all these things we are more than \_\_\_\_\_ through Him who loved us.

*Prayer Starter* – Thank God for victory over life's trials and difficulties. Pray for someone you know who is going through difficulties.

**Day Seven – Read 1 Corinthians 6:15-20**

1. To whom do we belong?
2. Since we were bought at a price, what are we to do?

*Prayer Starter* – Pray that God is pleased with your life. Ask Him to open doors through which you can glorify Him. (To "glorify God" means to honor Him in your actions.)

## WHAT'S NEW?

What's so new about "the new you"? This book is dedicated to answering that question. I want to begin, though, by pointing out that there *is* something new in you!

Paul realized the blessing of being new. Before he became a Christian, Paul (then known as Saul) was convinced that Christianity must be stopped. He was actively involved in murdering and persecuting Christians (Acts 7:54-8:1; 9:1-2). Paul's actions against Christians stemmed from the fact that he did not believe Jesus is the Lord. All of that changed when the Lord appeared to Saul while he was traveling to Damascus (Acts 9:3-9). Saul was taught the gospel by Ananias (who was commanded by the Lord to teach Saul), and he was baptized for the remission of his sins.

Later, Paul referred to his former way of living as the "old man of sin" (Rom. 6:6). He said he used to be "a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man [i.e., a violent opponent of Christianity]" (1 Tim. 1:13), but he obtained God's mercy and grace when he obeyed the gospel.

## BECOMING NEW

Some people were hesitant to believe Paul had really changed. They accused him of pretending to be a Christian so he could destroy Christianity from the inside. He addressed those accusations in 2 Corinthians 5. The Lord gave Paul a new life, and that newness was evidenced in three ways. We, too, will demonstrate our newness in these same three ways.

### **1. Paul emphasized the eternal.**

In 2 Corinthians 5:9-11, Paul said that this life is not going to last forever. Christians are looking forward to being with the Lord. "[W]e make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him" (2 Cor. 5:9). This requires a shift in our perspective. Just a few verses earlier, Paul put it this way:

While we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal (2 Cor. 4:18).

Life on Earth is important, but it is not most important. We should use this life to prepare for eternal life in Heaven (Eccl. 12:13)! That is how you emphasize the eternal.

## **2. Paul was controlled by Christ.**

Paul said he was controlled by the love of Christ (2 Cor. 5:14, ESV). “Control” in that verse literally means “to be held together.” In other words, Paul’s life was held together by Christ’s love. That’s what him motivated to live for Jesus.

[Jesus] died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again (2 Cor. 5:15).

In 1 Corinthians, Paul said, “you are not your own” (1 Cor. 6:19). He would go on to say, “For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Cor. 6:20). The price that was paid to purchase you was the blood of Jesus (1 Pet. 1:18-19).

Stop for a minute and think about that phrase: “you are not your own.” That’s new. When we were in sin, we basically served ourselves, conducting ourselves “in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind” (Eph. 2:3). Now we belong to Jesus.

This concept is further illustrated in 1 Corinthians 12, where Christians are referred to as individual “members” of Christ’s body (1 Cor. 12:27). This means that we are His arms, legs, feet, eyes, mouth, and so on. Jesus is called “the head of the body” (Col. 1:18). He controls His body, telling it what to do.

Being a “member” of the church is not like being a member of a country club. Rather, being a member of the church means

that I am an active agent of Jesus today. Christ's love for me motivates me to obey Him, and, by my obedience to His word, the Lord controls my life.

### 3. Paul recognized spiritual realities.

The way Paul looked at others had changed. Notice how he explained it in 2 Corinthians 5:16-17:

Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

To "regard [someone] according to the flesh" means to evaluate someone based on external features. Paul was more interested in a person's soul.

\* \* \* \* \*

How would Paul see you? *First*, he would see you as one who is "in Christ." Saying that someone is "in Christ" is the same as saying that someone is a Christian. Galatians 3:27 says, "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." When you were baptized, you were placed in Christ (Eph. 1:13).

*Second*, Paul would say that you are "a new creation." When you came up out of the waters of baptism, you rose to "walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). The "old you" was "crucified with [Jesus], that the body of sin might be done away with, that [you] should no longer be [a slave] of sin" (Rom. 6:6). That's why Paul said, "old things have passed away" (2 Cor. 5:17). The meaning is that the old has, once and for all, ceased to exist. Now "all things have become new." It means the new has come to stay! So, when you read that anyone who is in Christ is "a new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17), you know that it applies to you!

The new in you began when you were forgiven of your

past sins through baptism (Acts 2:38; 22:16). This “newness,” however, extends past the baptistry, affecting your entire life.

## A CLOSER LOOK

Having thought about how Paul would look at you, now let’s consider how you look at other people. Paul said he did not want to think of anyone “according to the flesh” (2 Cor. 5:16). You should work to think that way, too. The idea is that you are to change the way you think about *everything* – to the point of reconsidering how you view others. You should strive to see people through the eyes of Jesus.

Would Jesus show partiality to people because of their gender, their race, or their income? We know that He wouldn’t because He didn’t while He was on Earth. Instead, He spoke with a Samaritan woman (the Jewish culture hated the Samaritans, John 4:9), and visited Zacchaeus in his home (Zacchaeus, a chief tax collector, was likewise hated by the Jewish culture of Jesus’ day, Luke 19:7). These are two of many examples that illustrate Jesus’ heart. He said, “[T]he Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). That’s how Jesus viewed people: saved or lost, right with God or away from God. And Jesus came to help them all.

A Christian’s standards for interacting with someone are not rooted in what brand of clothes they wear, the color of their skin, the neighborhood in which they reside, or whether they have a “blue collar” or a “white collar” job. We see people for what they are – the focus of God’s love (John 3:16), and, therefore, worthy of our time in providing them a positive influence for Jesus (compare Matthew 22:39).

## BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

Not all of the effects of the new in you are visible to the physical eye. Only a spiritual perspective can appreciate what Jesus has done *for* you in saving your soul and what He can do *through* you



in blessing the lives of others. To see things from a spiritual point of view does not take a graduate degree in theology. All it takes is a willingness to allow Heaven and eternity to shape your view of our physical existence.

Imagine you are standing in front of a full-length mirror. The mirror is old and heavy, encased by an ornate golden frame. It looks like a treasure you would find in your grandmother's attic. You can't resist walking up to it and taking a look. As you examine the image in the reflection, you quickly notice that this mirror is unlike any other you have ever seen. The mirror doesn't show a *physical* reflection, but a *spiritual* one. Just like an X-ray shows you a picture of the inside, so this spiritual mirror exposes the infirmities of the soul.

Realizing the special nature of the mirror, you jump back, closing your eyes and looking away in fear of what you might see. Then, slowly, you sneak a quick glimpse – only opening one eye at first, then the other.

This is not the first time you have stood before this mirror. The last time you were here was not a pleasant experience. It was when you were first learning the gospel. You were horrified to see the sin that covered your soul, staining it red like crimson (Isa. 1:18). The more you learned about the gospel, the more you noticed your heart was being touched – even pierced – with its convicting power (Heb. 4:12; Rom. 1:16). It was a wakeup call for your life. The image, though difficult to view, was exactly what you needed to see in order to fully appreciate that the blood of Jesus could heal you.

Today, you find yourself before the mirror once again. This is a regular spot for Christians who are mindful of 2 Corinthians 13:5: "Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith." You hesitantly approach. Like a patient waiting for the doctor to reveal the results of a test, you are both excited and scared to death to see the reflection in the mirror. You finally work up the courage to look, and you are shocked by what you see.

"All of the stains – they're ... *gone!*" you exclaim.

Tears stream down your cheek as the joy of your salvation floods your soul. You erupt in praise to God as you fall to your knees in reverent prayer.

What Jesus has done to cleanse your soul from the stains of your sins cannot be overstated. At the same time, it cannot be adequately described (Paul calls it God's "indefinable gift," 2 Cor. 9:15). The cleansing is *real*. The change is *real*. The newness is *real*! You are different now. You are *the new you*.

### ACTION ITEMS

1. *Recognize spiritual realities.* Make a list of people you know who are not Christians.
2. *Think eternally.* Make congregational Bible study and worship a priority – this week and every week.

## QUESTIONS

1. Why is it so hard to emphasize the eternal in our daily lives?
2. What does it mean to be controlled by the love of Christ?
3. What motivated Paul's radical change from persecuting Christians to pleasing Christ?
4. Describe how Jesus viewed other people. Why must you work to see other people like He did?
5. What place does Jesus occupy in your life? Do you elevate other relationships above your relationship with Him?

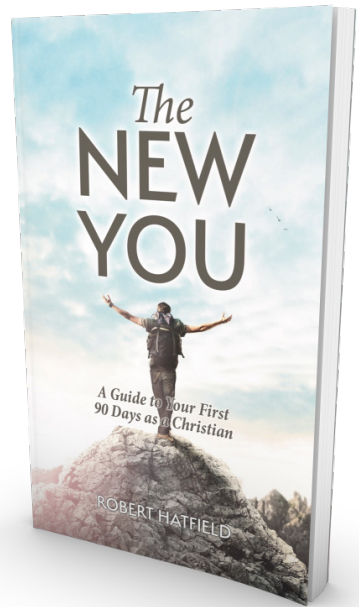
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