

Lesson 1: Christ and You: Now and Forever

Christianity is not a religion. It is a RELATIONSHIP. Jesus did not come to this world to begin a new religion. He came to open a new relationship between you and God. Religion does not get a person to heaven. Salvation becomes ours because of the new relationship we have with God through faith in our Savior Jesus.

Before the world or anything existed, there was God--Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three equal person together making one God. There was nothing but God. Then God decided to create the universe and a beautiful planet called EARTH. He filled this planet with all kinds of living things, and gave these life forms the ability to sustain themselves and reproduce themselves, so life on this paradise which God had created could continue forever. Then God made a man and a woman, the glorious crown of His creation. He made them perfect in every way.

These two people shared a perfect relationship with God, their heavenly Father. They loved Him completely and trusted Him for everything. With all their hearts they wanted to serve their creator and reflect His perfection with every detail of their lives. They perfectly loved and wanted to serve each other. God made His temple in their hearts and filled them with His love. The life of the eternal God flowed through them.

Then these two people decided they did not want to follow God. They decided to be their own gods and take control of their own lives. They rebelled against their Creator and His perfect will for their lives. God was expelled from his temple in their hearts. They chose to live separately or independently from God. With this act of rebellion they lost their relationship with God. They no longer trusted Him but instead trusted in themselves. They lost the life of God that had flowed through them. They chose the road that leads to death and separation from God. They became spiritually dead, dooming themselves to physical death and eternal death.

All people are born like Adam and Eve after they rebelled against their Creator. This brings us to you. You were born into this world without spiritual life, without any relationship with God, not knowing God, not loving God, not wanting to serve God. But God still wants a relationship with you. He wants to live in a close relationship with you. This lesson will present four important reasons why God is concerned for you, now and forever.

Psalm 100:3

Why are we important to God? _____

What does God want our relationship to be like with Him? _____

What are some things a shepherd does for his sheep? _____

Psalm 139:1

What proof do we have here that we are important to God? _____

List three ways that God knows you according to Psalm 139:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Matthew 10:29

How well does God know you? _____

Does God know you better than you know yourself? _____

God not only created you and know you, He loves you. He loves you completely and unconditionally. He loves you above everything, even more than the life of Christ.

1 John 4:9

What was God's greatest act of love for you? _____

What name should we write on the bridge between God and man?

1 Peter 2:24,25

For all sinners who have gone astray, what does the death of Christ open to them? _____

THE EXCHANGED LIFE: Our new life in Christ is an exchanged life. Something from us was put on Christ and something from Christ was put on us.

What did Christ receive from us? _____

What did we receive from Christ? _____

Summary: As our substitute Christ did two things for us:

1. Christ kept the law perfectly, the law which we should have kept. He took our lawlessness from us and gave us His holiness in exchange.
2. Christ suffered our punishment and gave us eternal life and salvation in exchange.

How do we get this salvation won by Christ? _____

1 John 3:1

What is our relationship like with God now that we have come to faith in Christ and trust Him for our salvation? _____

God has made you part of His family. What is another name for the family of God? _____

John 10:27

Jesus here uses the example of the relationship between the _____ and

His _____ to describe our new life.

From the passage you just read, list six ways that your life in Christ is a living relationship, and not a dead religion.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

HOMEWORK:

Make a list of at least 30 things for which you can thank God.

- | | |
|-----|-----|
| 1. | 16. |
| 2. | 17. |
| 3. | 18. |
| 4. | 19. |
| 5. | 20. |
| 6. | 21. |
| 7. | 22. |
| 8. | 23. |
| 9. | 24. |
| 10. | 25. |
| 11. | 26. |
| 12. | 27. |
| 13. | 28. |
| 14. | 29. |
| 15. | 30. |

Part of our new life in Christ is thanking God every day for His many blessings. Write a prayer of thanks. Praise God for His life that comes to you every day.