

Understanding the New Covenant is critical to understanding Jesus' interview with a legalist. What happens when a person becomes a Christian?

**The new covenant is built upon a direct, intimate relationship with God where sins are not an issue nor is law nor is our flesh.** In terms of what happens when you become a Christian, let's memorize six elements using an acronym: FHIDLS. Based on 1 Cor. 11:25 and Lk. 22:20, Ezek. 36:25-27, Jer. 31:31-34, Heb. 7:18-22, 8:6-12, 2 Cor. 3:4-18 (read underlined):

**FORGIVENESS of sins - I will be merciful to your iniquities and remember your sins no more!** Forgiveness = to send away from, release. The price has been paid, Jesus' blood has been shed, our sins have been forgiven. Yes, it is undeserved, but it is done and complete. (It's tragic that some Christians still think & live as if God still holds their sins against them.) We accept ourselves as forgiven because this is what God Himself states! Why are sinners lost today? Not because of sins, but because they haven't by faith turned to the forgiving Jesus as Lord. (Heb. 8:12, Jer. 31:34, Ps. 32:1-5, Lk. 24:47, Acts 2:38, 5:31, 13:38-39, 26:18, Eph. 1:7, Col. 1:14, Heb. 10:17-18, 1 Jn. 1:9, 2:12)

**HEART made new - I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you.** A heart/spirit transplant! A new identity! God dealt with who we were IN Adam and made us His new creation IN Christ. We are now saints (holy ones) by nature. We are no longer who we used to be (sinners by nature). (Ezek. 36:26, Ezek. 11:19, Rom. 5:11-6:23, 2 Cor. 5:17, Eph. 2:10)

**INTIMATE relationship with God - I will be your personal, intimate God, and you shall be My people.** This has always been God's plan, that we know Him as Father and He knows us as part of His family. As our Father, He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. He chose us. He predestined us to adoption as sons. We have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" We are His children and heirs. (Heb. 8:10, Jer. 31:33, Lk. 11:2, Jn. 17:3, 20:17, Rom. 8:15-17, Eph. 1:3-5)

**DIRECT access to God - You won't need a priest or teacher to get to know Me. You will have direct access to Me and knowledge of Me.** You won't need to go to a temple or offer a certain sacrifice. Jesus is the permanent high priest. We go directly to Him. (Heb. 8:11, Jer. 31:34, Mk. 15:38, Rom. 8:26-28)

**LAWS of God - My laws will be on your mind and heart, not on tablets of stone.** He gives His own children new hearts that long to obey. We delight to do His will. We don't follow His laws because we 'have to' but because we 'want to'! It's not external motivation but internal. We're not under the written Law anymore. We've been freed from that so we can serve in newness of the Spirit. (Heb. 8:10, Jer. 31:33, Rom. 7:4-6, 8:2-4, Gal. 5:18)

**SPIRIT of God - I will place My Spirit within you.** The Holy Spirit, taking up permanent residence in our physical bodies, to live the Christian life through you! (Ezek. 36:27, Jn. 14:16-17, Rom. 8:11, 1 Cor. 6:19, Eph. 3:16)

In **John 3:1-4:54** Jesus deals with 3 individuals: a Jewish religious leader, a Samaritan woman, and a royal official. As each is introduced to Jesus, he/she has the opportunity to believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and thus experience life in His name. **Read 2:23-3:21.**

"Nicodemus (whoever), you must be born again, by God (1:13), by receiving

and believing in Jesus, the Word, the always-shining Light. Jesus is the Jewish Messiah and the Son of God who came to offer life to all (20:30-31). He is God's Lamb who takes away the sin of the world. By faith come to know and follow Him! And, you must become someone you aren't by nature or heredity! You can't change yourself by laws or your own efforts. A faith based on laws or signs is insufficient and leaves the inner core of a person's life untouched."

**3:1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.** A Pharisee was a separatist by his 'rules'. To these Jewish religious leaders, God's laws were the most sacred things in the world. The Pharisees were not only trying to 'live' by the OT laws, but they had also added the Mishnah (categorized laws) and the Talmud (a commentary on the Mishnah). In fact, the Mishnah and the Talmud were often more honored than the OT. They wanted to regulate "every possible incident and moment and individual."

For example, the 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment concerning the Sabbath (Ex. 20:8-11, Dt. 5:12-15) had 24 chapters in the Mishnah and 156 pages in the Talmud. What constituted work? Could a child be lifted? How far could one could walk?

It was the scribes who worked out these regulations; it was the Pharisees who dedicated their lives to keeping them. The Pharisees numbered around 6000 during Jesus' ministry. They 'knew' the OT and the Mishnah and the Talmud. They wanted behavior modification without a changed heart. Impossible!

Nicodemus was a member of the Jewish ruling council. One of the Sanhedrin's duties was to examine anyone suspected of being a false prophet or Christ. Remember the ruling council's investigation of John the Baptist in 1:19-27.

**:2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs (attesting miracles) that You do unless God is with him."** **:3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again (or from above) he cannot see the kingdom of God."**

**:2** He/They knew that Jesus was a man from God(!), a teacher, a worker of miracles (he knew Jesus' miracles were from God). "God is with You." His opening words express the kind of belief of those just described in 2:23-25.

**:3** What did Jesus' response have to do with what Nicodemus had just stated? Nothing! Jesus goes to what this man really needed: he needed to be born again or from above. Jesus goes from the mention of His teachings and signs to how to see the kingdom of God and become part of it. "I tell you the truth; what I'm about to say is very important. Unless one is born again (or born from above), you can't see God's kingdom!" It's humanly impossible. A new birth is essential to enter the kingdom. It's not a matter of having and practicing the right laws but of regeneration. You must be born again!

Jesus is turning this man's legalistic world upside down. One can't even 'see' God's kingdom without a spiritual rebirth. The new birth is the act of God that causes a believer in the Person and work of Jesus to be born again (Titus 3:5, 2 Cor. 5:17, 1 Pet. 1:3, 1 Jn. 2:29, 3:9, 4:7, 5:1,4,18). To belong to God's kingdom, one must be born into it. The Pharisees thought physical lineage and keeping the 'rules' qualified them for God's kingdom.

**:4 Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?”** Nicodemus, thinking about Jesus’ statement, responds by the flesh, the earthly. “One can’t get back into his/her mother’s womb, and be born again, can he?” Nicodemus wasn’t thinking of the inner man but the outer man. The natural man does not understand or accept the things of God (see **1 Cor. 2:6-16**).

**:5-6 Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. :6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.** Jesus again addresses the real issue: the inner man/spirit/heart/nature. Again, “I tell you the truth: you must be born of water and the Spirit to enter God’s kingdom.” Jesus is removing even the possibility of getting into God’s kingdom by keeping the law or having the right rules. It has to be an act of God. It’s not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God (**1:13**).

Several ideas for the water: the Word of God (15:3, Eph. 5:26, 1 Pet. 1:23). Baptism, perhaps tying together what Jesus experienced at His baptism: the water and the Spirit (**1:29-34**). What did the original writer intend his original readers to know and understand? How would Nicodemus have understood this? Probably he would have thought of the cleansing talked about in Ezek. 36:24-27 (read). “A new heart I will give you...and My Spirit I will put within you.” This is part of the new covenant. The Spirit must take out the old heart and give you a new heart, life from above, making you God’s new creation. The new birth is from God through the Spirit.

“Nicodemus, you’re thinking of only what the flesh can do.” Even if a physical rebirth was possible, it would produce only flesh. Flesh seeks to explain and handle everything in its own power apart from the presence and power of God. God does what no flesh can do; He imparts His own life through the Spirit. Remember **Eph. 2:1-10**: God made us alive with Christ!

**:7-8 Do not be amazed (astonished, marvel, wonder) that I said to you, ‘You must be born again (from above).’ :8 The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.**”

Nicodemus can only think of ‘born again’, a new start, in his own strength.

The wind and the Spirit (the Greek word is the same for both). The effects of both can be detected. Although we can’t control the wind, we can certainly tell when it’s blowing. And, where the Spirit blows, there is undeniable and unmistakable evidence. What a lesson for this legalist, thinking he could save himself by obedience to the law of Moses and human regulations! Legalism does not deal with the essential issues: identity and causes of the change.

**:9 Nicodemus said to Him, “How can these things be?”** Either he’s bewildered or he’s asking a serious question. Nothing he knew in the OT or the Mishnah or Talmud dealt with Jesus’ statements. He hadn’t caught the significance of the new covenant. Remember, this covenant is built upon a direct, intimate relationship with God where sins are not an issue nor is law nor is our flesh. The new covenant is based on **1 Cor. 11:25, Lk. 22:20**,

**Ezek. 36:25-27, Jer. 31:31-34, Heb. 7:18-22, 8:6-12, 10:16-17, 2 Cor. 3:4-18.** These are things only God can do, but He has! The covenant He makes with us includes forgiveness of all sins, new hearts, an intimate relationship with Him as Father, direct access to Him, His laws written on our minds and hearts, His Spirit taking up permanent residence in our physical bodies! The argument for Christianity is new covenant people! All this is absolutely impossible apart from God our Father, Jesus our Lord, and the Holy Spirit our Helper.

**:10 Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things?** Even one of the greatest of Jewish leaders did not recognize this teaching on spiritual cleansing and transformation based clearly in the OT. He was too caught up with ‘laws’ and his own performance. In **:11-12**, Jesus tells Nicodemus his problem: Accept and believe.

**:11 Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and testify of what we have seen, and you [plural] do not accept (same as receive in 1:12) our testimony.** These realities can’t be known except by listening to the testimony of those who have actually received the new birth from above. “We know and testify of what we’ve seen” (see **3:31-36, 5:31-47, 8:12-19**). When Jesus uses ‘we’, He’s probably referring to Himself and the Baptist and the Scriptures. “Nicodemus, your problem is not with intellect (it wasn’t a lack of divine revelation) but with accepting (receiving). You ‘all’ don’t accept our testimony.” The Jewish leaders had refused to admit the Baptist was right when he testified concerning Jesus, and, they had refused Jesus’ testimony and the OT’s testimony. There are 5 witnesses to Jesus in **chapter 5**: Jesus, John the Baptist, the works of Jesus, the Father, the Scriptures.

**:12 If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?** Believe in used 7 times in **:12-18**. If such earthly matters like birth & wind & water are hard to accept and believe, you’ll find heavenly truths even harder. Revelation, not discovery, is the basis for faith. No sense giving more truth until the previous truth is believed and acted upon.

**:13 No one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man.** Only the One who has always existed and has been there can talk knowledgeably about heaven. Jesus is the Son of Man (**1:51**) and Son of God (**1:34**) come down from heaven (**Eph. 4:9-10**). Only He can reveal to us spiritual facts. He’s been with the Father and shares His Father’s truth and wisdom.

We don’t know Nicodemus’s immediate response but later Nicodemus defended Jesus (**7:50-51**) & helped prepare Jesus’ body for burial (**19:38-40**).

Let’s learn: religious rituals and where you do them, good works, and self-reformation (behavior modification) can’t solve the problem of spiritual death.

“If you truly want life, you must be born from above. We can’t change our hearts any more than we can change our skin. But what is impossible for us is possible with God.” Life begins with coming to know and follow Jesus. Our life in God must come from and continue from above. Nothing we ‘do’ will give us life. Flesh begets flesh, Spirit begets spirit. “No one who meets Jesus ever stays the same!”

## Keys to Discipleship #2

Understanding How to Become a Christian and How to Share God's Good News with Others

**When and how did you become a Christian? Write your story.** Here is how any person can become a follower of Jesus (use **Gal. 2:16, Rom. 3:21-28, 10:9-15, 2 Cor. 5:17-21**). Write subject and verses in front of your Bible).

Use **Rom. 10:9-15** or **2 Cor. 5:17-21** + 4 SYMBOLS: ♥ X † ? =  
God's love, our sin and nature, Jesus' death, your decision.

## The Bible's Message of Salvation through Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ

If you were to die tonight and stand before God in heaven, and He would ask you "Why should I let you into my heaven?", how would you answer?

♥ The story of the Bible is that God loves each of us; Jesus' death on the cross proves it. His love is a historical fact! **Jn. 3:16, Rom. 5:8.**

X The cross was necessary because of our sin. **Rom. 1:18-3:23.** All are sinners by nature, by heredity, the practice of sins, and sin in the flesh.

What is sin? Sin literally means to miss the mark. It is anything other than authentic Christianity, which is (1) Walking in line with God's Word, (2) by the power of God's Spirit, (3) for the purpose of God's glory.

The Good News is that on the cross, Jesus dealt with all the sin issues. Now it's a **Son** issue. However, if one refuses the Son, it's still a sin issue.

† Jesus died for our sins, was buried, was raised from the dead, and appeared to many. He's a living Savior, a triumphant Lord! **1 Cor. 15:3-5a.**

? What have you done with Jesus, who loves you, who died for you and your sins, and who wants to reign in your life as Lord? **Rom. 10:9-15.**

If you would like to recognize Jesus as Lord of your life, pray a prayer similar to this: "God, I realize that I'm a sinner—in many ways. But Your Son Jesus died on the cross to deal with: my sins so I could be forgiven, my sinful nature so I could become a holy one by nature, sin in the flesh so I could walk pleasing to You by the Spirit, and my sinful representative Adam so I could become part of Your family. Thank You, Jesus, for doing that for me! By faith in You and Your work, I choose to turn my life over to You, to follow You wherever You lead, to let You be in control of my life. Thank You for being willing to be my living Savior and Lord. I confess You as Lord with my mouth and believe in my heart that God the Father raised You from the dead. Thank You for the changes You'll make in me. You are a wonderful God. Amen."

## Keys to Discipleship #3

Understanding What Happens When a Person Becomes a Christian (FHIDLS)

**The new covenant is built upon a direct, intimate relationship with God where sins are not an issue nor is law nor is our flesh.** Review "New Covenant Ministry" sheet from our first time together. In terms of what happens when you become a Christian, let's memorize six elements using an acronym: FHIDLS. Based on **1 Cor. 11:25, Lk. 22:20, Ezek. 36:25-27, Jer. 31:31-34, Heb. 7:18-22, 8:6-12, 2 Cor. 3:4-18** (read these passages):

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Understanding the New Covenant is critical to understanding Jesus' interview with a legalist. What happens when a person becomes a Christian?

**The new covenant is built upon a direct, intimate relationship with God where sins are not an issue nor is law nor is our flesh.** In terms of what happens when you become a Christian, let's memorize six elements using an acronym: FHIDLS. Based on 1 Cor. 11:25 and Lk. 22:20, Ezek. 36:25-27, Jer. 31:31-34, Heb. 7:18-22, 8:6-12, 2 Cor. 3:4-18 (read underlined):

**FORGIVENESS of sins - I will be merciful to your iniquities and remember your sins no more!** Forgiveness = to send away from, release. The price has been paid, Jesus' blood has been shed, our sins have been forgiven. Yes, it is undeserved, but it is done and complete. (It's tragic that some Christians still think & live as if God still holds their sins against them.) We accept ourselves as forgiven because this is what God Himself states! Why are sinners lost today? Not because of sins, but because they haven't by faith turned to the forgiving Jesus as Lord. (Heb. 8:12, Jer. 31:34, Ps. 32:1-5, Lk. 24:47, Acts 2:38, 5:31, 13:38-39, 26:18, Eph. 1:7, Col. 1:14, Heb. 10:17-18, 1 Jn. 1:9, 2:12)

**HEART made new - I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you.** A heart/spirit transplant! A new identity! God dealt with who we were IN Adam and made us His new creation IN Christ. We are now saints (holy ones) by nature. We are no longer who we used to be (sinners by nature). (Ezek. 36:26, Ezek. 11:19, Rom. 5:11-6:23, 2 Cor. 5:17, Eph. 2:10)

**INTIMATE relationship with God - I will be your personal, intimate God, and you shall be My people.** This has always been God's plan, that we know Him as Father and He knows us as part of His family. As our Father, He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. He chose us. He predestined us to adoption as sons. We have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" We are His children and heirs. (Heb. 8:10, Jer. 31:33, Lk. 11:2, Jn. 17:3, 20:17, Rom. 8:15-17, Eph. 1:3-5)

**DIRECT access to God - You won't need a priest or teacher to get to know Me. You will have direct access to Me and knowledge of Me.** You won't need to go to a temple or offer a certain sacrifice. Jesus is the permanent high priest. We go directly to Him. (Heb. 8:11, Jer. 31:34, Mk. 15:38, Rom. 8:26-28)

**LAWS of God - My laws will be on your mind and heart, not on tablets of stone.** He gives His own children new hearts that long to obey. We delight to do His will. We don't follow His laws because we 'have to' but because we 'want to'! It's not external motivation but internal. We're not under the written Law anymore. We've been freed from that so we can serve in newness of the Spirit. (Heb. 8:10, Jer. 31:33, Rom. 7:4-6, 8:2-4, Gal. 5:18)

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In **John 3:1-4:54** Jesus deals with 3 individuals: a Jewish religious leader, a Samaritan woman, and a royal official. As each is introduced to Jesus, he/she has the opportunity to believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and thus experience life in His name. **Read 2:23-3:21.**

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**3:1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.** A Pharisee was a separatist by his 'rules'. To these Jewish religious leaders, God's laws were the most sacred things in the world. The Pharisees were not only trying to 'live' by the OT laws, but they had also added the Mishnah (categorized laws) and the Talmud (a commentary on the Mishnah). In fact, the Mishnah and the Talmud were often more honored than the OT. They wanted to regulate "every possible incident and moment and individual."

For example, the 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment concerning the Sabbath (Ex. 20:8-11, Dt. 5:12-15) had 24 chapters in the Mishnah and 156 pages in the Talmud. What constituted work? Could a child be lifted? How far could one could walk?

It was the scribes who worked out these regulations; it was the Pharisees who dedicated their lives to keeping them. The Pharisees numbered around 6000 during Jesus' ministry. They 'knew' the OT and the Mishnah and the Talmud. They wanted behavior modification without a changed heart. Impossible!

Nicodemus was a member of the Jewish ruling council. One of the Sanhēdrin's duties was to examine anyone suspected of being a false prophet or Christ. Remember the ruling council's investigation of John the Baptist in 1:19-27.

**:2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs (attesting miracles) that You do unless God is with him."** **:3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again (or from above) he cannot see the kingdom of God."**

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**:3** What did Jesus' response have to do with what Nicodemus had just stated? Nothing! Jesus goes to what this man really needed: he needed to be born again or from above. Jesus goes from the mention of His teachings and signs to how to see the kingdom of God and become part of it. "I tell you the truth; what I'm about to say is very important. Unless one is born again (or born from above), you can't see God's kingdom!" It's humanly impossible. A new birth is essential to enter the kingdom. It's not a matter of having and practicing the right laws but of regeneration. You must be born again!

Jesus is turning this man's legalistic world upside down. One can't even 'see' God's kingdom without a spiritual rebirth. The new birth is the act of God that causes a believer in the Person and work of Jesus to be born again (Titus 3:5, 2 Cor. 5:17, 1 Pet. 1:3, 1 Jn. 2:29, 3:9, 4:7, 5:1,4,18). To belong to God's kingdom, one must be born into it. The Pharisees thought physical lineage and keeping the 'rules' qualified them for God's kingdom.

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**:5-6 Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. :6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.** Jesus again addresses the real issue: the inner man/spirit/heart/nature. Again, “I tell you the truth: you must be born of water and the Spirit to enter God’s kingdom.” Jesus is removing even the possibility of getting into God’s kingdom by keeping the law or having the right rules. It has to be an act of God. It’s not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God (**1:13**).

Several ideas for the water: the Word of God (15:3, Eph. 5:26, 1 Pet. 1:23), Baptism, perhaps tying together what Jesus experienced at His baptism: the water and the Spirit (**1:29-34**). What did the original writer intend his original readers to know and understand? How would Nicodemus have understood this? Probably he would have thought of the cleansing talked about in Ezek. 36:24-27 (read). “A new heart I will give you...and My Spirit I will put within you.” This is part of the new covenant. The Spirit must take out the old heart and give you a new heart, life from above, making you God’s new creation. The new birth is from God through the Spirit.

“Nicodemus, you’re thinking of only what the flesh can do.” Even if a physical rebirth was possible, it would produce only flesh. Flesh seeks to explain and handle everything in its own power apart from the presence and power of God. God does what no flesh can do; He imparts His own life through the Spirit. Remember **Eph. 2:1-10**: God made us alive with Christ!

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Nicodemus can only think of ‘born again’, a new start, in his own strength.

The wind and the Spirit (the Greek word is the same for both). The effects of both can be detected. Although we can’t control the wind, we can certainly tell when it’s blowing. And, where the Spirit blows, there is undeniable and unmistakable evidence. What a lesson for this legalist, thinking he could save himself by obedience to the law of Moses and human regulations! Legalism does not deal with the essential issues: identity and causes of the change.

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## Keys to Discipleship #2

Understanding How to Become a Christian and How to Share God's Good News with Others

**When and how did you become a Christian? Write your story.** Here is how any person can become a follower of Jesus (use **Gal. 2:16, Rom. 3:21-28, 10:9-15, 2 Cor. 5:17-21**). Write subject and verses in front of your Bible).

Use **Rom. 10:9-15** or **2 Cor. 5:17-21** + 4 SYMBOLS: ♥ X † ? =  
God's love, our sin and nature, Jesus' death, your decision.

### The Bible's Message of Salvation through Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ

If you were to die tonight and stand before God in heaven, and He would ask you "Why should I let you into my heaven?", how would you answer?

- ♥ The story of the Bible is that God loves each of us; Jesus' death on the cross proves it. His love is a historical fact! **Jn. 3:16, Rom. 5:8.**
- X The cross was necessary because of our sin. **Rom. 1:18-3:23.** All are sinners by nature, by heredity, the practice of sins, and sin in the flesh. What is sin? Sin literally means to miss the mark. It is anything other than authentic Christianity, which is (1) Walking in line with God's Word, (2) by the power of God's Spirit, (3) for the purpose of God's glory. The Good News is that on the cross, Jesus dealt with all the sin issues. Now it's a **Son** issue. However, if one refuses the Son, it's still a sin issue.
- † Jesus died for our sins, was buried, was raised from the dead, and appeared to many. He's a living Savior, a triumphant Lord! **1 Cor. 15:3-5a.**
- ? What have you done with Jesus, who loves you, who died for you and your sins, and who wants to reign in your life as Lord? **Rom. 10:9-15.**

If you would like to recognize Jesus as Lord of your life, pray a prayer similar to this: "God, I realize that I'm a sinner—in many ways. But Your Son Jesus died on the cross to deal with: my sins so I could be forgiven, my sinful nature so I could become a holy one by nature, sin in the flesh so I could walk pleasing to You by the Spirit, and my sinful representative Adam so I could become part of Your family. Thank You, Jesus, for doing that for me! By faith in You and Your work, I choose to turn my life over to You, to follow You wherever You lead, to let You be in control of my life. Thank You for being willing to be my living Savior and Lord. I confess You as Lord with my mouth and believe in my heart that God the Father raised You from the dead. Thank You for the changes You'll make in me. You are a wonderful God. Amen."

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### Keys to Discipleship #3

Understanding What Happens When a Person Becomes a Christian (FHIDLS)

**The new covenant is built upon a direct, intimate relationship with God where sins are not an issue nor is law nor is our flesh.** Review “New Covenant Ministry” sheet from our first time together. In terms of what happens when you become a Christian, let’s memorize six elements using an acronym: FHIDLS. Based on **1 Cor. 11:25, Lk. 22:20, Ezek. 36:25-27, Jer. 31:31-34, Heb. 7:18-22, 8:6-12, 2 Cor. 3:4-18** (read these passages):

**FORGIVENESS of sins - I will be merciful to your iniquities and remember your sins no more!** Forgiveness = to send away from, release. The price has been paid, Jesus’ blood has been shed, our sins have been forgiven. Yes, it is undeserved, but it is done and complete. It’s tragic that some Christians still think & live as if God still holds their sins against them. We accept ourselves as forgiven because this is what God Himself states! Why are sinners lost today? Not because of sins, but because they haven’t by faith turned to the forgiving Jesus as Lord. (**Heb. 8:12, Jer. 31:34, Ps. 32:1-5, Lk. 24:47, Acts 2:38, 5:31, 13:38-39, 26:18, Eph. 1:7, Col. 1:14, Heb. 10:17-18, 1 Jn. 1:9, 2:12**)

**HEART made new - I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you.** A heart/spirit transplant! A new identity. God dealt with who we were IN Adam and made us His new creation IN Christ. We are now saints (holy ones) by nature. We no longer are who we used to be—sinners by nature. (**Ezek. 36:26, Ezek. 11:19, Rom. 5:11-6:23, 2 Cor. 5:17, Eph. 2:10**)

**INTIMATE relationship with God - I will be your personal, intimate God, and you shall be My people.** This has always been God’s plan, that we know Him as Father and He knows us as part of His family. As our Father, He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. He chose us. He predestined us to adoption as sons. We have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!” We are His children and heirs. (**Heb. 8:10, Jer. 31:33, Lk. 11:2, Jn. 17:3, 20:17, Rom. 8:15-17, Eph. 1:3-5**)

**DIRECT access to God - You won’t need a priest or teacher to get to know Me. You will have direct access to Me and knowledge of Me.** You won’t need to go to a temple or offer a certain sacrifice. Jesus is the permanent, perfect high priest. We go directly to and through Him. (**Heb. 8:11, Jer. 31:34, Mk. 15:38, Rom. 8:26-28**)

**LAWS of God - My laws will be on your mind and heart, not on tablets of stone.** He gives His own children hearts that long to obey. We delight to do His will. We don’t follow His laws because we ‘have to’ but because we ‘want to’! It’s not external motivation but internal. We’re not under the written Law anymore. We’ve been freed from that so we can serve in newness of the Spirit. (**Heb. 8:10, Jer. 31:33, Rom. 7:4-6, 8:2-4, Gal. 5:18**)

**SPIRIT of God - I will place My Spirit within you.** The Holy Spirit, taking up permanent residence in our physical bodies, to live the Christian life through us! (**Ezek. 36:27, Jn. 14:16-17, Rom. 8:11, 1 Cor. 6:19, Eph. 3:16**)

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