

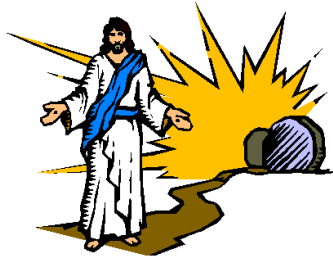
Resurrection Life

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die." (John 11:25-26 NRSV)

Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. (Rom. 6:4b)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

You are probably reading this a month or so after Easter Sunday, I hope you have joined with other Christians in celebrating our Savior's victory over death, because that victory is not only His, it is a glorious victory for all believers! Hallelujah! Praise God the Father for His wonderful plan of Salvation, by which Jesus's shed blood washes away the filthiness of our sins!



"The thief [Satan, this world's god] comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they [we who are the Good Shepherd's "sheep"] may have life, and have it abundantly." (John 10:10)

How does one experience the abundant life that Jesus came to provide?

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God."

Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above."

Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?"

Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. (John 3:1-6)

Have you been "born again"? Truly?

You might say, "Well, I prayed the 'Sinner's Prayer' once and asked Jesus to come into my life." That's good, for a start.



Or you might relate any of a hundred experiences that amount to "meeting Jesus" or "finding Christ" or "turning your life over to the Lord." All good, as far as they go. But is that far enough?

When Jesus said to Nicodemus (and to us), "You must be born from above," He was talking about a fundamental change that must occur in a person. The Apostle Paul said a similar thing this way:

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! (2 Cor. 5:17)

So I'm asking, are you a completely different person than you were before you "met Jesus"? Are you walking in the "newness of life" that the new birth gives?

Okay, I admit that it's not a fair question, simply because being "born again" is not an instant change from darkness to light, like switching on the light in a dark room. Though it can be almost that dramatic, usually it is more of a process—one that begins at conversion, and is not completed until the end of this life. Even the Apostle Paul, certainly one of the most committed Christians who ever lived, confessed that he still sometimes sinned.



I'm going to share with you a six-part formula for allowing this process to happen in your life. If it is helpful to you, use it. If the Holy Spirit shows you a better way, then by all means go that way. "Work out your own

salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who is at work in you ..." (Phil. 2:12-13)

1. **Confess** to God and to yourself that you have sinned and you are indeed still a sinful creature. You do things that you know are wrong; you don't always do what you know you should.

If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:10,9)

2. **Repent** of your sins. This means that you turn away from sinful pleasures and selfish actions. You make the decision that, with God's help, from now on you will do what is right and avoid doing what is wrong.



Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out, (Acts 3:19)

3. **Believe** what the Bible says about God and Jesus. Do not allow doubts, and do not demand proofs. Simply accept the truth of God's word.

But ask in faith, never doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind; for the doubter, being double-minded and unstable in every way, must not expect to receive anything from the Lord. (James 1:6-7)

4. **Devote time** to becoming closer to God, by studying His word and by praying with a listening, expectant attitude. Understand that He will not guide you unless you make yourself available to be guided.



With my whole heart I seek you; do not let me stray from your commandments. I treasure your word in my heart, so that I may not sin against you. (Ps. 119:10-11)

Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. (Luke 18:1)

5. **Submit** to God's authority; to His Lordship over you. He is God; you are not. Ask to be guided by the Holy Spirit.

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. (Rom. 8:14)

6. **Obey** the guidance of the Spirit and the Word of God, and walk in the way He will show you.

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life. (Eph. 2:10)

But if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1:7)

Whoever says, "I abide in him," ought to walk just as he walked. (1 John 2:6)

And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment just as you have heard it from the beginning—you must walk in it. (2 John 1:6)

This process is not complete in me yet, and I do not expect it be completed during this life. But if I will stick with God, He will stick with me. These additional Scriptures give me courage and strength to continue:

Therefore we have been buried with Him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we will certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His. (Rom. 6:4-5)

I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. (John 15:5)

I can do all things through him who strengthens me. (Phil. 4:13)

I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil. 1:6)

Don't pay attention to what I say, but pay very close attention to what Paul has said, and to what Jesus has said, and to what God is saying to you today by His Word and His Holy Spirit. Hang in there with God—He has wonderful things in store for you.

So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. (Gal. 6:9)

May you truly walk in newness of life, in Christ—

Brother Roland

A CHRISTIAN POEM

by Maya Angelou

When I say... "I am a Christian"
I'm not shouting "I'm clean livin'."
I'm whispering "I was lost,"
Now I'm found and forgiven.

When I say... "I am a Christian"
I don't speak of this with pride.
I'm confessing that I stumble
and need CHRIST to be my guide.

When I say... "I am a Christian"
I'm not trying to be strong.
I'm professing that I'm weak
and need HIS strength to carry on.

When I say... "I am a Christian"
I'm not bragging of success.
I'm admitting I have failed
and need God to clean my mess.

When I say... "I am a Christian"
I'm not claiming to be perfect,
My flaws are far too visible
but, God believes I am worth it.

When I say... "I am a Christian"
I still feel the sting of pain,
I have my share of heartaches
So I call upon His name.

When I say... "I am a Christian"
I'm not holier than thou,
I'm just a simple sinner
who received God's good grace,
somehow.

THE BELL

I KNOW WHO I AM

I am God's child (John 1:12)
I am Christ's friend (John 15:15)
I am united with the Lord (1 Cor. 6:17)
I am bought with a price (1 Cor. 6:19-20)
I am a saint (set apart for God) (Eph. 1:1)
I am a personal witness of Christ (Acts 1:8)
I am the salt & light of the earth (Matt.5:13-14)
I am a member of the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27)
I am free forever from condemnation (Rom.8: 1-2)
I am a citizen of Heaven. I am significant (Phil.3:20)
I am free from any charge against me (Rom. 8:31-34)
I am a minister of reconciliation for God (2 Cor.5:17-21)
I have access to God through the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:18)
I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realms (Eph. 2:6)
I cannot be separated from the love of God (Rom.8:35-39)
I am established, anointed, sealed by God (2 Cor.1:21-22)
I am assured all things work together for good (Rom. 8: 28)
I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit (John 15:16)
I may approach God with freedom and confidence (Eph. 3: 12)
I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Phil. 4:13)
I am the branch of the true vine, a channel of His life (John 15: 1-5)
I am God's temple (1 Cor. 3: 16). I am complete in Christ (Col. 2: 10)
I am hidden with Christ in God (Col. 3:3). I have been justified (Romans 5:1)
I am God's co-worker (1 Cor. 3:9; 2 Cor 6:1). I am God's workmanship (Eph. 2:10)
I am confident that the good works God has begun in me will be perfected (Phil. 1: 5)
I have been redeemed and forgiven (Col. 1:14). I have been adopted as God's child
(Eph 1:5)
I belong to God
Do you know
Who you
are?

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The Resurrection of Jesus

This puzzle consists of several phrases from the Gospel accounts of the events that took place on the morning of Jesus's Resurrection. Enjoy!

Puzzle:

T E Y A W A D E L L O R E N O T S M E O Y V F U F A S O W P
A D T C B P I G Y N D L F A B T V J I U K S V K L X H E M S
M I O I K E T B E V L L Y I E E Q L W H N H D Z D S D K E O
K S O T H E R D I S C I P L E L Z M M B T Z T O R Q Y L R A
I N H S Z W T D E V E I L E B D N A W A S Y E H T T P E X E
N I D R V U N Y F G O M Z J X M L L J D H K U I P I T V O T
X D A I C O M I A G Y B O D Y T A K E N A W A Y C E W T M I
V E S F W Y K I S B M M Y D M V U V S V V N R S P E L J B S
M K A D M O B X R L I N E N C L O T H S L Y I N G T H E R E
A O D E D D O O C I E M U G X L C O E R Y D O F L W Q S G V
R O U V E Y T O P M D G B N S U Z S T M D M H W N A S U N A
Y L V I T H X K R L X T N U I Q H J H L I Y E E P S H S I R
M Y B R E W P R O F X H S A I M A X O S P R A A T D E S N G
A R P R G P O H U O Q E N B O Q Y T U P E M D B G N R T R E
G A S A J X T Y D U J Y U V G W E W G U B Y C G N A A A O H
D M R N C O S H T E Y R A B P H T F H D B S L S I D N N M T
A P C H N U N D N I H A V E S E E N T H E L O R D E T D Y O
L K L O I L X O G E O N R Q D N Y Y G X A K T P N N O I A T
E U D J N T E I H W G T E I P O A V A S K H H T E R T N D A
N X R M I H D I A L U O Y E V A H E R E H W S I C U E G N A
E T A B T T T N I D O G T M R B K T D C Q S E I S T L T U U
P J E S U S N O T T H E R E K D K F E B F P P K A Y L H S W
P H Z Z B E K X R U R T H M X Q V H N A O A A O M R C E Y C
E S I R O T D A H E H H T D S B N C E A K F R N A A U R L T
G Z Y X P F B F N C A E J B K O T A R T G D A J I M A E R F
G S G Z A B B T Z T J R Q E R E H W W O N K T O N O D F A K
E H C J O W E S T O B Q D I S C I P L E S W E N T H O M E K
B J L N R R T O M B W A S E M P T Y W B K T X R V G L K Q V
O S I T E W C R C R U I P N Q M P F W P T H P V G S H M X E
N L V D O O T S R E D N U T O N D A H P R M L O X F H T L D

Words:

EARLY SUNDAY MORNING
MARY MAGDALENE
TO THE GRAVE SITE
STONE ROLLED AWAY
TOMB WAS EMPTY
JESUS NOT THERE
SHE RAN TO TELL
SIMON PETER
OTHER DISCIPLE
THE ONE JESUS LOVED
BODY TAKEN AWAY
DO NOT KNOW WHERE

THEY RAN TOGETHER
JOHN ARRIVED FIRST
LINEN CLOTHS LYING THERE
PETER ENTERED
HEAD CLOTH SEPARATE
THEY SAW AND BELIEVED
HAD NOT UNDERSTOOD
HE HAD TO RISE
DISCIPLES WENT HOME
MARY LOOKED INSIDE
TWO ANGELS IN WHITE
WHY DO YOU WEEP?

MARY TURNED AND SAW
JESUS STANDING THERE
SHE THOUGHT GARDENER
WHERE HAVE YOU LAID HIM
RABBONI
DO NOT HOLD ME
TELL MY BROTHERS
I AM ASCENDING
SHE TOLD DISCIPLES
I HAVE SEEN THE LORD