

**CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL OF KNOWING AND SERVING GOD**

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TEACHING ON BASIC DOCTRINES

UNIT 1

« THE WAY OF LIFE »

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LESSON 5: THE NEW CREATION

REMINDER

Dear student,

We are happy for the interest that this course has produced in you.

The purpose of our Bible Correspondence Course is to help you to find the Lord Jesus. This first series of the Bible course comprises seven lessons based on the book entitled “The Way of Life”. As you begin to study, we encourage you to press on right to the end.

We particularly insist that you get a Bible that you will read systematically. If you fail to do this, then this course might not be of full benefit to you. All the Bible passages quoted should be carefully read.

Our prayer is that by the time you finish studying these lessons, you would have entered into a living relationship with Jesus so that you will truly begin to live.

May God bless you richly!

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INTRODUCTION

In the first lesson we saw how the first Adam (the first man) became an old creation following his disobedience to God. Adam, having become an old creation, all his descendants belong to the same race as he, (the old creation). Sin being the origin of the old creation, all the descendants of the above mentioned race are sinners by nature. We saw that in spite of Adam's disobedience, God continued to love humanity. God prepared a place by Him and a place in His heart for man because of this love. But His holiness constrained Him not to admit a filthy Adam who bore the deed of the devil that is rebellion in His presence. The solution God found to this problem, was to send His only Son into the world to die for the sins of humanity in order to remove man's filth. In His death on the cross, Christ enclosed all of humanity and legally put an end to the first Adam's race. Legally, Christ, therefore, was the last Adam, the Omega (the end) of the old creation. It is important to note that on the cross, Christ knew spiritual death at the moment when He took upon Himself sinful humanity. It was at this point that He cried: "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27: 46). Having identified Himself with a humanity that was dead in its trespasses, Christ died with it (humanity). But the death of Christ was wrapped up in victory for, death could not keep Him. He became the first born among the dead (Revelations 1:5). The Bible says, "He is the head of the body the church; He is the beginning, the first born from the dead, that in everything He might be pre-eminent" (Colossian: 1:18). Jesus is not only the last Adam (the Omega of the old creation). He is also the second Adam, the Alpha (the first) of the new humanity also called the new creation. Only those who belong to the new creation will enter God's kingdom (John 3: 16). The Bible says, "Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creation, the old has passed away, behold the new has come" (2 Corinthians 5: 17). In this

lesson, we shall see what the characteristics of the new creation are. We shall see what it is and what its advantages are. Let us make it clear that the new life in Christ is not a reformation of character. It is not a suppression of sinful desires. It is not a human attempt to love by some principles, like keeping the demands of one penal code or another.

The new life is God's supernatural life imparted into any human being whose old life has been brought to an end by union with Christ in His death on the cross. This new life is Jesus resurrection life imparted by the Holy Spirit to those who become one with Him in His triumphant resurrection.

The new creation life that is received in Christ is something exceedingly greater than what Adam lost when he sinned. The new life in Christ, has in it all that Adam, through consistent obedience to the Lord, was to become. The one who is recreated in Christ Jesus is far better placed in the relationship with God than Adam was before the fall. The new man in Christ possesses potentials that Adam had before the fall. The new creation has all capacities for power, authority, etc. than Adam had and much more.

1- HOW TO BECOME A NEW CREATION

1-1- God can change lives

The Bible says, "to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become the children of God ; who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1 : 12-13). The Lord Jesus said, "Truly, truly I say to you; unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3: 3). "Truly, truly I say to you, unless one is born of water and the spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3; 5). "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whosoever believed in Him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3: 16). "Come to me all

who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11: 28). “He who believes and is baptised will be saved” (Mark 16:16). “Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts2 38). “If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you will be saved. For man believes with the heart and so is justified, and he confesses with his lips and so is saved” (Romans 10: 9-13).

The Bible verses are God’s promises to those who sincerely repent of their evil ways and who cry to God for a change. What God promises, He can also accomplish. At the end of Lesson 2 and lesson 4, we have written the testimonies of 2 lives, totally transformed by the Lord. The third could be your own testimony. God can impart new life to all those who return to Him sincerely and ask Him for it.

1-2- How much time is needed.

The moment that any individual repents towards God and puts his faith in the Lord Jesus, God instantaneously and immediately gives him power to become a child of God. A sinner is justified at the split second he calls upon the Lord Jesus to save him. His decision may require preparation, battling, weighing the pros and the cons, but from the very moment that with faith in the Lord Jesus, he asks for forgiveness and salvation, he receives both from the Lord and more. God does not need time to prepare.. God is always ready. God in Christ Jesus never takes minutes or days to make one a new creation. The hymn writer wrote, “And so quickly the transaction was made when as a sinner I believed”. My dear friend, I want to let you know that within a matter of seconds you can pass from death unto life in Jesus Christ. You can cease to be the son of the devil and become God’s child within seconds.

1-3 what conditions are needed?

1-3a- The indispensable commitment of the heart.

Although man needs no public announcement of his commitment to the Lord Jesus in order to be justified, Jesus will not accept those who want to deal with Him only in secret. He said, “And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before men, the Son of man also will acknowledge before the angels of God, but he who denies me before men will be denied before the angels of God” (Luke 12 : 8-9).

Jesus is not moved by human words. He weighs human hearts. From the very beginning of His ministry, the Word of God declares of Him that “Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs which he did; but Jesus did not trust Himself to them because he knew all men and needed no one to bear witness of man; for he himself knew what was in man” (John 2: 23-25). Yes the Lord knows what is in man, not only for now but for all time. He knows the past, present and the future attitude of the heart of each person. He sees the hearts which are not (or will not be) totally given to Him.

Although man does not need to be baptised in order to be justified, Jesus will not receive anyone who says to Him, “Lord, I will come to you so that I may be forgiven but I will not obey your command to be baptised. That command is not for me”. Jesus said, “He who believes and is baptised shall be saved”. He means it. Believe, then be baptised and then be saved.

Although no one needs to carry out restitution in order to be forgiven, the Lord cannot receive anyone who is prepared to sit on stolen things and pretend to be saved. The new life demands that the old life is brought radically to an end.

It is by obedience to God that the Lord Jesus won the great battle which He fought against Satan. The Lord will not enter the hearts of people who are not prepared to be obedient.

Anyone who has reservations about the Lord Jesus and His Word either in part or in whole can take some decisions for Christ, weep, etc., but remain unjustified. God looks at the heart. He accepts only those who will come to him in a total way. To come to Jesus on man's own conditions is rebellion.

There are many who pass for born again believers: for saved people, for true Christians, etc., who are not. They have never touched God. The Bible says that as many as touched Him were made whole. No one can touch Jesus conditionally and become a partaker of His divine nature. The rich young ruler was sent away. He was willing and he was humble but he was half-hearted and Jesus could not help him.

Jesus asked people to count the cost. Dear friend, have you counted the cost? The Lord said, "Unless you repent; you will likewise perish" (Luke 13: 3). And some one said to Him, "Lord, will those who are saved be few?" And He said to them, "Strive to enter by the narrow gate for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able" (Luke 13: 23-24).

Justification is by faith and by faith alone but genuine faith embraces the Lord Jesus and His Word and has no reservations whatsoever. My dear reader, do you have reservations in your heart about the Lord Jesus or any of His commands? If there is any such reservation, be careful. Such reservations indicate the fact that your heart is divided and Jesus has no use for divided hearts. Are you clinging to something that separates you from the life of the Lord Jesus? Is that thing worth all the glory of heaven that you are about to throw away? Will that thing satisfy your heart when at the end you are in hell? Think again on these words; "For what will it profit a man if he should gain the whole world and lose his soul?"

1-3b- Repentance.

Repentance is a change of mind. The normal sinner's mind is blinded by the devil. The Bible says, "And even if our

gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. In their case the God of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ. Who is the likeness of God” (2 Corinthians 4: 3-4). The devil holds men’s minds in captivity. However, the devil’s power over men’s minds is powerless against the Lord Jesus who is the light of the world. The Bible says that “The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has never overpowered it” (John 1 .5).

In spite of all of Satan’s work in blinding men’s hearts, the Holy Spirit is able to penetrate the darkened mind and call men to repentance. Man on his own is so helpless that even repentance is a gift of God. The sinner on his own, unaided by the Holy Spirit, cannot repent. The Bible says, “Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance unto life” (Acts 11: 18). “God may perhaps grant that they may escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will” (2 Timothy 2: 25-26).

If God did not grant repentance, the unbeliever would hear the Word, understand the grammar and the fact of it but not understand the spiritual truth there embodied and so remain in captivity. But when God grants repentance there is a change of mind: a change of mind towards God, a change of mind towards the devil, a change of mind towards the world, a change of mind towards the church, etc. Before, God was seen as an interferer, but the changed mind loves God and wants Him. Before, the devil was accepted actively or passively, now he is dreaded. Before, sin was considered good or only as a mistake, but now, it is known to be all-terrible. Before, the world and its passing glories were treasures, now it is known for what it is: vain and passing. Before, the body of Christ- the believers, were regarded with contempt, now they are seen as utterly precious, etc.

Repentance leads to a knowledge of the truth and truth leads people to come to their senses. In their proper senses

they escape the snare of the devil whose captives they have been and whose will they would have done until now. They are now prepared to return to Christ.

1-3c- Faith in the Lord Jesus

When a person repents towards God, he is not yet a believer. He must now have faith in the Lord Jesus. The apostle Paul told the Ephesians elders, “I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of REPENTANCE TO GOD AND FAITH IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST” (Acts 20 : 20-21). If repentance is not genuine, there will be no real faith in the Lord Jesus. False repentance will lead to a false faith and to a false conversion experience.

When a person repents towards God, he is a believer. He must have faith in Christ; he must receive the Lord Jesus. The Bible says, “But to all who received Him, who believed in his name, He gave power to become children of God” (John 1: 12). And the Lord said, “Behold I stand at the door and knock, if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him and he with me” (Revelation 3: 20).

When a person repents towards God and receives the Lord Jesus, he is born again from above by the power of the Holy Spirit. His heart and mind are illuminated by the light of God’s presence and he becomes a partaker of the divine nature.

1-3d- Receiving the Lord Jesus.

You can receive the Lord Jesus right now by praying in the following lines – or other words of your own choosing: “Lord God, I have personally sinned against you in my thoughts, in my words and in my actions. Nothing that I can do on my own can take away my sin. I deserve to go to hell. But you loved a

wretched sinner like me and sent your Son Jesus Christ to die in my place on the cross. I recognise that only Jesus can save me. I now surrender my life to Him completely, without reserve. Take away all my sins and send the Lord Jesus to come into my heart right now as my personal Saviour and Lord. I give You my life to do with it as You like. I will follow You at any cost. Thank You for hearing my prayer and saving me”.

If you prayed the above prayer sincerely, then Jesus has come into your heart and you have immediately become a child of God. Glory be to God the Lord.

2. THE MARKS OF THE CONVERTED.

2-1- A vertical love for God.

All those who have passed from the kingdom of satan to the kingdom of God, love Jesus Christ who is the author of their salvation. This love is not just sentiment. It is a rule of conduct which consists in keeping the commandments of the Lord Jesus. The Lord Himself said: “If you love me, keep my commandment” (John 14: 15). It is then understood that all those who call themselves Christians but who do not obey the Word of God, are liars, serving the devil. They hide behind religion and seduce men and women who are unaware. It is, therefore, understood that, those who, in this twentieth century, have published a decree stipulating that adultery is a lesser sin than the other sins, are the devil’s agents, for, Jesus Christ never said what they have said. Instead, He said “...For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished” (Matthew 5: 18). Those who are converted, love the Lord Jesus. Those who love Jesus, keep his commandments and teach other to keep them.

2- 2- A horizontal love for the brethren.

Those who are truly converted have a special love for the brethren. The Lord said: “By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13: 35). This love talks of a particular attachment of the one who is converted to his brethren in the faith as compared to the rest of human beings. This attachment is the product of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the one who is converted. We received the following testimony from a brother:

“I was fundamentally tribalistic, and at the level of my tribe, I adored my village, and I was animated by an exclusive zeal for this village. During the 1977-1978 school year, I was the leader of the Students Association of my village and we were determined “to carry the said village on our shoulders”, in order to make it known. This was my ambition, and also that of many youths of my age. When in December 1978, I gave my life to Jesus, my heart was changed and my attitude also. I became a child of God and my village was no longer of particular significance. My heart irresistibly, opened to all those who, like me, had received Jesus. The family of God was more precious to me than my village. Tribal and social prejudices were wiped out, to the extent that the girl that I later married came from a very distant tribe. The basic criterion of our union was the fact that we both belonged to Jesus and we both loved Him.”

As a matter of fact, if you say you are a Christian when you are more attached to the people of your tribe and nation than to true Christians, it is most probable that you are not really converted. You are deceiving yourself and you still need to be converted since the true disciples of Jesus were recognised through their love for one another.

2-2- A commitment to follow Christ at any cost.

The Bible says, “ Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover feast, many believed in His name when they saw the things which He did ; but He did not trust himself to them,

because He knew all men and needed no one to bear witness of man ; for He Himself knew what was in man” (John 2 : 23-25). Many can pretend to be Christians but only those who can accept to bear the shame of Christ are those who are truly converted. Only those who are truly converted can stand the test of the narrow way and the way of persecution. True converts are not ashamed of their Lord and they confess Him everywhere. The Bible talks of a Jewish leader called Nicodemus, who went to Jesus at night, because of shame and fear of the Jews, beyond doubts. This man was of the pharisean sect, a very influential politico-religious party in Israel, which openly manifested their opposition to the Lord Jesus. When this man met Jesus, he became converted and was never the same afterwards, see (John 3: 1-12; 7: 40-52; 19: 38-42).

3. THE STANDING OF THE NEW CREATION

3-1- Justification

Justification is the rendering of a guilty person as not guilty before a judge. Our sin had made us guilty before God, but through His death on the cross Christ made it possible for us to stand before God just as if we had never sinned. “We are now justified by His blood” (Romans 5: 9). Justification makes it possible for sinners to have peace with God for “since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God” (Romans 5: 1).

A young man committed a very grievous offence against the law of his country. He was brought before the judge, tried and found guilty. His punishment was stated: Death by hanging! As he was about to move to the place of his death, the judge’s son stepped forward and offered to be punished in the place of the man who had committed the crime. He was stripped and hung on the tree instead of the young man. The judge’s son bore the penalty but the young man was justified. He was asked to go away “just as if he had never

committed the offence". He was justified because another took his place.

Christ did a similar thing. We too, like the young man, have sinned very grievously. By rebellion, we have committed high treason against the government of heaven. We have been tried by God, the righteous Judge and found guilty and our punishment (eternal hell) declared.

However, Jesus, out of love for us, took our place and was hung on the cross where we ought to have been hung. In this way, God's demand that sin must be punished was met and He now sees us as free people who have never sinned. This is God's method of setting people free from the penalty of sin. It is such a costly way that His Son had to be sacrificed for us. Yes, Jesus paid the price for us. The Word of God says, "The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53: 6). "For Christ also died for sin once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous that He might bring us to God" (1 Peter 3: 18) and for our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we may become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

3-2- Redemption

Redemption is the setting free of a person who is held in bondage, through the payment of a ransom. Sin makes the sinner a prisoner, and has a penalty. By His death on the cross, Jesus set the sinner free from both the penalty and the power of sin. "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us" (Galatians 3: 13). "Jesus Christ who gave Himself to redeem us from iniquity" (Titus 2: 14). "They are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3: 24). "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses according to the riches of his grace" (Ephesians 1:7).

Imagine a slave market. There are slave owners with chained slaves. These slaves are to be sold to some far off

country. Because they are chained, they cannot set themselves free. Suddenly, a big boss comes into the slave market, pays the price for each slave, takes away the chains, and declares the slaves free. How wonderful!

Jesus did that! We were Satan's slaves and imprisoned by him and were meant to share his eternal home (Hell) with him. On the cross, Jesus paid the price for our liberation. He now declares all of us who turn from sin to Him, free. On the cross, Jesus paid the price for our liberation and declares us free. The freed slave needs a new home. Jesus also made provision for this by his death on the cross. We are lifted out of the kingdom of our former master (Satan) and transferred into an entirely new kingdom which is His. The Bible says, "He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of his Son; in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sin" (Colossians 1: 13-14).

The story is told of a young man who fell into a pit. Many people passed by, and in order to be safe, stood that at a safe distance from the pit. From that distance, they began to try and sympathise with him. Some made suggestions to him on how he would get out of the pit. One person said to him, "Believe that there is one God and you will be out of the pit". The man in the pit replied that he had never doubted the fact that there was one true God. He further added that he believed absolutely in the existence of God. That however, did not get him out of the pit. Another person told him that all that was required to get out of the pit was frequent fasts and many prayers each day. He tried to pray and since there was no food in the pit, fasting posed no problem to him. This also failed to get him out of the pit. The third person suggested that all he needed was to attend church services in a particular denominational church building and pay all his contributions and all would be well. He replied that he did in fact belong to that denomination and that he was a financial member in the said church. However since he was in the pit, he needed to get out of it in order to be able to attend

church services and bring his position in the church up to date. The next man advising him asked, “Are you sure that you are baptised and confirmed? This is all important for getting you out of the pit”. He replied that he was fully baptised and confirmed and that his Christian name was John, and that before falling into the pit, he partook regularly of Holy Communion. He then added with deep frustration, “But all this does not seem to be able to get me out of this pit”.

Finally, someone great and noble came along. He went very close to the pit, saw the fallen man’s plight. He took on rags and wore them and then entered the pit. Inside the pit, he lifted the fallen man out of the pit. In the process of lifting him out, he bruised himself and blood flowed out. Outside the pit, he looked at the man who had fallen inside the pit. He was out of the pit, but clothed in rags. He had compassion on him, took the dirty clothes off his body and put on him his own rich clothing, saying to the man, “I can get others for myself”.

Jesus did just that. All human beings have fallen into “the pit of sin”. All human, philosophical and religious attempts at getting man out of that pit have failed. In man’s helplessness, God looked from heaven, had compassion on him, put aside His glory as God, took upon Himself our humanity, came right into the human mess, and by His death on the cross, paid for our redemption and now clothes redeemed people with His glory.

3.3. RECONCILIATION.

Reconciliation is the making of peace between enemies. Because of sin, man became an enemy of God. As an enemy of God, man needed to be reconciled to God. However, God never changed His attitude towards man. It is man who through rebellion changed his attitude towards God. Repentance is the change of this wrong attitude and reconciliation brings man whose attitude has been changed through repentance, into vital fellowship with God. The death of Christ on the cross

provided the way by which rebel man, can get back into fellowship with God.

The Bible says, “While we were yet helpless, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly. Why? One will hardly die for a righteous man, though perhaps for a good man one will dare even to die. But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.” (Romans 5: 6-8). “While we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son.” (Romans 5: 10). “God through Christ reconciled us to himself” (2 Corinthians 5: 18).

Because we have been reconciled to God, the Bible says, “But now in Christ Jesus, you who once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ “(Ephesians 2: 13). “For through Him we both have access in one spirit to the Father (Ephesians 2: 18).

So because of the death of Christ, the broken relationship between man and God has been restored. The veil that separated the Holy place from the Holy of holies in the temple, was torn to show the fact that man can come to God by Jesus and be accepted. This is very good news.

The reconciliation that was accomplished by the death of Christ was not only a reconciliation of man with God. It was also a reconciliation of man with man. In the Lord Jesus, colour, national, tribal, class, etc., barriers are broken down. The Bible says, “For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ” (Galatians 3: 26-28). Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of His creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, freeman, but Christ is all, and in all” (Colossians 3: 9-11).

Yes, indeed in Christ, barriers are broken, this is reality and not theory. Let me illustrate it with a true story. I was

visiting one country on a scientific tour. At the earliest opportunity, I made contact with the believers and was invited to speak at a meeting arranged particularly for the wives of university teachers. The Lord moved at the meeting and many were blessed. At the close of the meeting, an elegant lady of about forty-five asked if she could have a private talk with me. We arranged a meeting for the next day. At that meeting, I just sat down for two hours while she poured out her sad story. She had been married for twenty-five years. She was a virgin at the time of their marriage and all through her life her husband was the only man in her life. She had loved him and trusted him. However, five years before then she discovered that he had been untrue to her for all their years together and had had children in secret with other women. "I saw the children and they all resemble him", she said. From then on, her heart was broken and her deep love for him turned into bitter hatred. He apologised and was truly repentant but her heart was closed to him. Then she added, "Every day I sit at table opposite him, the sight of him makes me feel like ending my life and his". As she spoke at some point this sophisticated and well educated lady became the very embodiment of anger and she stood and paced the room, talking aloud about the man's unfaithfulness. I did not know what to do, so I prayed and asked the Lord Jesus to be especially close to me and show me what to do. I also asked the Lord God to calm down the woman so that I could talk to her. After some time, she sat down and said, "We have money, position, respect, everything, but finally, I have nothing". I then talked to her not about the husband but about herself. I made her see that she was a sinner by nature and that her bitterness over the years was a clear evidence of her sin. I further showed her that both she and her husband were sinners and lost. Her husband's sinful nature manifested itself in adultery and hers in bitterness. There was really no difference between them before the Lord. The Holy Spirit used those words to convict her and soon she was weeping before God over her sin. I enabled her to

see Jesus as the sin-Bearer and helped her to receive Him. It was wonderful. Her tears turned into laughter and as she stood up to go, she said to me, “I am going home to tell my husband that because of the death of Christ for us, I love him and forgive him unconditionally”. She left the room, a transformed woman, and I fell on my knees to thank the Lord God who in Christ reconciles people to Himself and to each other. Glory be to God for His wonderful reconciliation”.¹

3-4- The new birth.

The new creature is described as born again. In his first birth he was born into the old creation. He died in Christ and thereby passed out of the old creation. By resurrection with Christ, he receives God’s supernatural life. He is born again from above (from heaven; from God). It is totally a supernatural transaction carried out by God in the life of the willing person. The Bible says, “Truly, I say to you, unless one is born again (from above) he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3: 3).

In his first birth, he came as a fallen creature into the family of Satan. He died with Christ outside that family in order to be born again in the family of God. The Bible says: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By His great mercy we have been born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead ” (1 Peter 1: 3). All who have received the Lord Jesus are born again people. It is not something that they can do for themselves. It is God’s supernatural work carried out in people at the moment when they receive the Lord Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. It is nothing that can be done by the will of man. It must be done by God. The Bible says, “But to all who received Him, who believed in His name, He gave power to become children of

¹ Pr. Zacharias Tanee Fomum’s testimony.

God ; who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God “(John 1 : 12-13).

This new birth must be experienced at a personal level. No amount of theoretical knowledge will help a man. He must be born again. The need for this personal experience with the Lord Jesus as personal Saviour is borne by the following testimony by a lady we know. She says “I was born into a religious family, my father being a church minister. In infancy, I was duly “baptised” and when I became of age, I was confirmed. I dutifully attended Sunday school classes and had nothing against God or against Jesus Christ. In fact, I loved God in a vague kind of way although I did not know Him! I was an active member of our denominational students’ movement and maintained a high moral standard. After secondary school, I got myself well-grounded in church going and even joined the choir and the Christian youth group where I was elected a committee member. In the group, we carried out, among other things, hospital and prison visitation. We were supposed to evangelise people (even though we ourselves needed to be evangelised). Church-going became such an integral part of my being that I felt ill whenever I could not go to church for one reason or another. Even after dancing until the early hours of Sunday morning, I always managed to go to church even though that meant that at times I slept throughout most of the service. With such involvement and zeal in religious things and not knowing that there was something more in the Christian life, I thought I was a very good Christian. Some of my friends even thought that I was getting too involved with religion.

This state of things continued until I went abroad to study. There, I joined the Christian group as usual. I was, however, surprised that the members of this group talked and lived as if Jesus was real to them and meant everything in the whole world to them. They even claimed to talk to Him personally. I would have rejected their claims as presumptuous had it not been for the fact that their lives showed that they possessed something

positive which I lacked and which they attributed to the inner working of Jesus in their lives. As I continued in that Union, I was shown my need of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. I then repented of my sins and turned my whole heart and life over to the Lord Jesus and begged Him to come and live in me. He did come into my heart and life, and Christian involvement then took on a new dimension. I have been born again from above since that day I received the Lord Jesus and it is my joy to serve Him.”

3-5- Salvation.

Although man was lost and needed to be saved, and although the Father wanted him saved, this did not put any obligation on the Lord Jesus. All that He did for the salvation of sinners was motivated by love. As the Father so loved the world that He gave His Son for its salvation, so also did the Lord Jesus so love the world that He gave Himself away for its salvation.

In all His teaching, miracles and life, Jesus was love incarnate. He loved the most unlovable, touched the most untouchable and made friends with the rejects of society. Think of the Samaritan woman at the well who had been rejected by five husbands and was trying it out with a sixth man when she met Jesus. Each of these men saw her as something to be used and then rejected her but Jesus looked at her, loved her, and saved her from death by loving her with an irresistible love that forgave her and gave her a fresh start and bright future. Think of the woman who was caught in the very act of adultery. Her neighbours judged her, and wanted her dead but Jesus looked at her, loved her and saved her from death by stoning, and eternal fire. So mighty was His love for her that it transformed her life. Think of the despised tax collector Zaccheus who was so despised by all for his wickedness; yet Jesus loved him, paid him a personal visit that led to his conversion and salvation.

There is no sinner that Jesus does not love and does not want to save. Here is another illustration.

“On the 24th of December 1970, I as a postgraduate student at Makerere University, Kampala. I wondered how best I could spend Christmas Eve. I later on decided to spend the day in prayer and asked the Lord to send people to me who needed to hear about the salvation of God. At seven o'clock that evening, I set out on one of the streets of Kampala telling everyone whom I could persuade to listen to me about the love of Christ revealed by His death on the cross. At eleven p.m. as I was returning to the University campus, I stopped by to tell brother Laban Njumba, who had promised to pray for me, how the evangelism had gone. After a brief talk with him; I began to hurry home as it was rather late. A night watchman stopped me and asked for my identity. I told him who I was and what I had been doing. I further inquired of him if he would let me tell him something about the mighty rescue operation of God. Upon obtaining his permission, I briefly told him about man's need and the love of God as revealed in the incarnation, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. I further pressed upon him his own need of being saved from the coming wrath of God. Upon hearing this, my friend whom I prefer to call, Mr X, asked me, “Can God receive a wretched sinner like me? Can He save one as sinful as I am?” He then went on to tell me the sad story of his life. This is what he said: “I was a police officer but when I found that soldiers earned more money and better privileges than policemen, I resigned from the police and joined the army. After some time I thought that the best way to make money quickly was becoming a business man. I therefore resigned from the army and set up a business. When I began to make money, many women came into my life and each woman took away more money from me than the previous one. Finally, I became broken and my business collapsed. As a penniless man I decide to seek employment as night watchman”.

Then he looked at me with tears in his eyes and asked again, “Can Jesus receive a wretched sinner like me?” At that moment, I saw, in a new way, the glory of the all-loving Christ whose love is so great that He accepts and receives all kinds of repentant sinners, irrespective of the degree of their sin. I gladly told him that Jesus was just too willing to receive him there and then, if he would repent and turn to Him. So we bowed in prayer and Mr X confessed his sins to God, asked for forgiveness and then asked Jesus to come into his life as his Saviour and Lord. We stood up from prayer transformed, his past cancelled and his sins forgiven. He was saved immediately; he received the Lord Jesus” (1)

The Bible says, “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your doing, it is the gift of God” (Ephesians 2: 8). He was saved from the consequences of sin immediately he believed. That salvation is a finished fact and so he stands in it. Because of its reality, it enables the saved person to believe the Lord Jesus for his daily salvation from the power of sin and assures him that the day is coming for certain when he would be saved from the presence of sin by being taken into God’s immediate presence where sin has no place.

Is it arrogance for the man in Christ Jesus to say that he is saved? Is it not humility to say that he is not quite sure? Well the Bible says that he is saved. He should confess it aloud to the glory of God. When a believer confessed his salvation from sin and its consequences, he is exalting Jesus the Saviour. All saved people must announce and live out their salvation. Great is their standing.

3-6- Adoption.

A freed slave needs a new status. Christ’s death on the cross also made provision for that. The process is called adoption, in which the full rights of a son are conferred on someone who is not one’s son by natural birth. By natural birth

we are the devil's children and bound to him. By His death on the cross, Jesus freed us from that bondage and made us God's adopted sons. Believers are destined to son ship. The Bible says, "For those whom He foreknew he also predestined to be transformed to the image of His Son, in order that He might be the first born among many brethren" (Romans 8 : 29). "For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through suffering. For Him who sanctifies and those who are sanctified have all one origin. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying "I will proclaim thy name to my brethren, in the midst of the congregation I will praise thee" And again, "I will put My trust in Him". And again, "Here am I, and the children God has given me". Since, therefore, the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the nature, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage. For surely it is not with angels that he is concerned but with the descendants of Abraham. Therefore, he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people" (Hebrews 2 : 10-17). All believers are God's adopted children. They are brothers to Jesus who is the only begotten Son.

As adopted sons, believers are the objects of the Father's love. The Lord Jesus prayed saying, "I in them and thou in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them even as thou hast loved me" (John 17 : 23). As adopted sons, believers bear God's image (2 Peter 1: 4) and are indwelled by His Spirit ...) So that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts crying, "Abba! Father!" (Galatians 4: 5-6). Adopted sons are also heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ (Romans 8:17; 1 Peter 1: 4).

By Christ's death on the cross, this possibility of becoming God's children is open to everyone in general and to you in particular. You can indeed become a child of God and enjoy all the privileges of a son even to the extent of sharing the throne of God with the Lord Jesus. "But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave the power to become the children of God" (John 1: 12).

3-7- Heavenly citizenship.

The new birth is carried out from above. It is something carried out by God. At the moment of conversion, God puts in the one to whom He imparts new life something that is essentially of the other world. The Lord Jesus said, "My kingship is not of this world" (John 18: 36). Jesus, the first Son, is of the other world. The Lord Jesus testified to them saying, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17:14). Believers are citizens of heaven. The Bible says "For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city which is to come" (Hebrews 13: 14). "But our commonwealth is in heaven, and from it we await a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Philippians 3: 20). The Lord Jesus said: "In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also" (John 14: 2-3). You, believer, are heaven's ambassador on earth with full diplomatic status.

You may be wondering how an unworthy person like you can receive the full rights of heaven. You rightly feel that you do not deserve it. This feeling is right, for you by nature, as a sinner deserve nothing but the lake of fire. However, you have been rendered worthy by the death and resurrection of Jesus on your behalf. Let me illustrate it this way, by a true story. Many years ago in the colonial era, when every white person was

considered to be a dignitary, an important football match was to take place in Kampala, Uganda. All the dignitaries were also invited. A certain missionary as a white dignity was also invited and given a special V.I.P. pass to the football match. However, owing to pressing duties, he gave his V.I.P. pass to one of his primary school teachers and asked him to attend the football match in his place. When the teacher got to the stadium, by the looks of his unimpressive clothing, he was asked to go away from the V.I.P. entrance. He insisted that he had a pass to the match and so the policeman thought that if a man like him had a ticket, it must be for the open stand. So they asked him to go to the open stand. On his way to that stand, he met another policeman who did not look at his appearance but at his ticket. On seeing that he had a special V.I.P. pass, he said to him, "You are for that comfortable stand there. Your ticket indicates that". So this poorly dressed man went to the V.I.P. stand and as he showed his ticket to the police officers in attendance, they saluted him and asked him to go even further until he got to the most important seats and was ushered to a seat. He then found to his utter amazement that he was sitting next to the famous king of Buganda and the colonial governor of Uganda. On his own merit, he deserved nothing, but by virtue of the pass that was undeservingly given to him, he was given a place of the highest honour.

At the moment that you, a lost sinner, receive Christ as your personal Saviour, even though you have no personal merits of your own, God however, confers upon you spiritual greatness. He gives you heavenly citizenship free of charge, makes you His ambassador on earth with special diplomatic immunity. In addition to all these, at death or at the return of Christ, you will be given a special V.I.P. pass to all the important banquets in heaven. Angels will stand by to salute you and direct you to the seat of greatest honour the throne of God, and there, you will reign and feast with Christ. These are the far-reaching privileges of the new creation. These

privileges are found in the union with Christ and with Christ alone. Outside of Him, there is nothing but doom. We proclaim Christ and the benefits found in Him. How great they are! What a gospel to proclaim! One can only find these privileges in the Lord Jesus Christ!

WHAT SHOULD BE RETAINED?

We saw right from the first lesson that man, God's special creature, was created for an intimate fellowship with his creator. The sin of man came and crippled this purpose. As a matter of fact, the essential consequence of Adam's disobedience was his spiritual death (Romans 5: 12). In this state, fellowship with God was no longer possible.

Man exerted a lot of effort with the aim of returning to God, It could also be that, man believed that he could return to God on his own and be reconciled to Him. But a fundamentally filthy man cannot please God. Whether he is a moralist or a religious man.

The sacrifices of filthy man are an abomination in the eyes of God. That is why God did not approve of burnt offerings or sacrifices for sin (Hebrews 10: 5-7).

In order to convince man of his real and inner state, God gave him the law. The purpose of the law was to show man that after his sin in the Garden of Eden, there was nothing left in him that could please God. Even though the law that was given by God was good, man could not put it into practice. For his whole being was sold to sin (Romans 7: 14-24).

This was the misery of man, when God in His infinite wisdom sent His Son, Jesus Christ to save man from his sin and its consequences. Jesus Christ came with a new covenant which abolished the old (which was based on the law). On the cross, He cancelled the act whose ordinances condemned us (Colossians 12: 13-14). It put an end to the old covenant which had proved incapable of reconciling man to God. Christ is the

only mediator approved of God. The new covenant is more excellent in that it brings about true fellowship with God which is an indispensable factor. It consists of the spiritual regeneration also known as the new birth, (Romans 8: 9-10).

God's original purpose finds its accomplishment only in the new man. The Lord Jesus said : "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the father in spirit and truth, for such the father seeks to worship him (John 4 : 20). It is only through His Son that God was able to accomplish His original purpose for man. The Lord Jesus accomplished God's purpose for man; then He went up to heaven to prepare a place for His brethren. Who are those brethren of Jesus? All those who are born again are the brethren of Jesus and they are children of God. Only those who have a regenerated spirit will be qualified to go with the Lord when He returns. Only those who are already adoring the Lord on earth will adore Him in heaven. No one will prevail with his religion or good works. Only those who are the brethren of Jesus according to John 20: 17); (Hebrew 2: 10-12), will go with Him.

In lesson 6, we will see that God's children who through regeneration are transferred from the old creation to the new creation, must terminate with their past, according to 2 Corinthians 5: 17.

**SCHOOL OF KNOWING AND SERVING GOD
TEACHING ON BASIC DOCTRINES**

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QUESTIONNAIRE ON « THE WAY OF LIFE »

Student's name and surname (in capital letters)

Date of birth

P.O. Box or postal code:

Telephone:

Email address:

City:

Country:

Profession:

Marital Status:

Student's number:

Student's mark:

LESSON 5: THE NEW CREATION

QUESTIONNAIRE

Section 1: Read Genesis Chapter 1 to 10

1. What became of the image of God in Adam after he sinned?
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.....
2. Had Adam had children before he sinned?
3. Who was Seth like, who had been begotten by Adam?
-
4. Did all the descendants of Cain perish in the flood? Justify your answer.
.....
.....
5. Did all the descendants of Seth perish in the flood? Justify your answer.
.....
6. Why did God decide to destroy mankind through the flood?
.....
.....
.....
7. Did evil disappear from the earth after the flood?

Why?
.....

Section 2: Read 1 Corinthians 15.

8. What is the old creation?
.....

9. Who is the “head” (the first-born) of the old creation?

10. Who is the “tail” (the last-born) of the old creation?

11. What does the Bible mean, when it says that Jesus is the last Adam?
.....
.....

12. Who does the Bible call the first man?

13. Who does the Bible call the second man?

Section 3:

14. Is it possible for God to give anyone new life? Support your answer with three Bible verses
.....

15. How long does God need to convert a sinner?

16. What is the difference between conversion and reformation?

.....
.....
.....

17. Is it sufficient for a person to confess his sins only in order to be saved?

.....
.....

18. Quote the four conditions to be fulfilled in order to receive the new life:

- a
- b
- c
- d

19. What is repentance?

.....
.....
.....

20. Have you repented? If so when?

21. Why, according to you, is repentance alone insufficient for one to be saved?

.....
.....

22. What must the sinner do to receive the Lord Jesus?

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.....

23. When did you personally receive the Lord Jesus?

.....

24. Give three marks of a convert.....

.....
.....

25. Do you have these three marks?

26. What is justification?

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27. What role does the Lord Jesus play in the justification of a sinner?

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Section 4.

28. What is redemption?

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29. Why is Jesus called the Redeemer?

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30. What has Jesus done to redeem sinners?

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31. What is reconciliation?

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32. How did Jesus reconcile sinners to God?

.....
.....

33. Is there anybody you need to be reconciled with? What are you going to do about it?

.....
.....

34. Is it possible for an old creation to inherit the kingdom of God?

35. What does it mean to be born again?

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36. Why must a man be born again?

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.....

37. Explain briefly how you became a child of God.

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.....

38. Is it possible to know all about the new-birth and even to explain it without having experienced it?

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39. Is it possible to know with certainty that one is saved while one is still in this world?

.....

40. Are you saved from hell?

41. Quote the three dimensions of salvation.

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42. What is adoption?

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43. Is an adopted child legitimate or illegitimate?

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44. Does an adopted son have the same rights as the one who is
a son by birth?

45. Do children of God have the same rights as the Lord Jesus?

.....

46. Is that true for you?

.....

47. What rights and privileges do you enjoy as a citizen of
heaven?

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48. Memorise the following verses and write them down again
without reading: 2 Corinthians 5: 17, John 1: 12-13.

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