

Life Group Guide: New Life in Christ

Overview

This guide is based on a message about what happens spiritually when a person decides to follow Jesus, and how to begin growing in that new life. Whether your group members are new believers, returning to faith, or seasoned followers of Christ, these conversations are meant to ground everyone in the foundational truths of the gospel and encourage one another toward growth.

Key Takeaways

- When a person receives Jesus, something genuinely new begins. The old identity shaped by sin is no longer the defining reality of that person's life.
 - Jesus was not a martyr. He was a willing sacrifice, the only one qualified to pay for humanity's sin because He was without sin Himself.
 - The resurrection is not just a historical event. It is the power by which God brings spiritually dead people to life today.
 - The Holy Spirit now lives inside every believer, and His ongoing work is to make us more and more like Jesus, even in our imperfections.
 - Spiritual growth is not a solo endeavor. God designed believers to grow in community with one another.
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Scripture References

- **2 Corinthians 5:17** — Paul describes anyone who is in Christ as a new creation, with the old having passed away and the new having come.
 - **2 Corinthians 5:21** — Paul explains that Jesus became a sin offering on our behalf so that we could be made right with God.
 - **Genesis 2:7** — God breathes life into Adam, bringing him into existence and into relationship with his Creator.
 - **John 20:22** — After the resurrection, Jesus breathes on His disciples and tells them to receive the Holy Spirit, echoing the creative act in Genesis.
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Discussion Questions

Opening

1. Before today, how would you have described what happens when someone becomes a Christian? Has your understanding shifted at all after this message?
 2. The Bible is not a collection of separate books but one unified story. What is one connection between the Old and New Testament that has always stood out to you, or one you noticed for the first time in this message?
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Going Deeper

3. The message draws a parallel between God breathing life into Adam in Genesis and Jesus breathing the Holy Spirit into His disciples after the resurrection. What does that parallel tell you about what God intends for every believer?
 4. Pastor Chris described sin as something that keeps people in death and darkness. How have you personally experienced that reality, and how have you experienced the contrast of coming into light and life?
 5. The message emphasizes that Jesus was not a martyr but a sacrifice. Why does that distinction matter? How does it change the way you think about what He did on the cross?
 6. Pastor Chris said: "Even in our imperfections, He is working to reproduce the image of Jesus in us." What does it mean to you personally that God is at work in you even when you feel like you are falling short?
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Reflection and Application

7. If the Holy Spirit is actively working inside every believer to make them more like Jesus, what does that mean for how we view our own struggles and failures? How should it shape the way we view each other's struggles?
 8. Pastor Chris described following Jesus as an adventure. In what area of your life do you most need to embrace that sense of adventure and trust right now?
 9. New believers are encouraged to take practical steps to grow. As a group, what are the habits or rhythms that have most helped you grow in your own faith? What would you say to someone just starting out?
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Practical Applications

- **This week:** If you made a decision to follow Jesus recently, or if you returned to faith, take time to write down in your own words what you believe happened spiritually. Use 2 Corinthians 5:17 as a reference point and reflect on what being a new creation means for your daily life.
 - **As a group:** Identify one person in your circle who is either new to faith or has recently returned to God. Commit to praying for them by name this week and consider reaching out to encourage them personally.
 - **Ongoing:** Ask yourself regularly, "Where do I see the Holy Spirit working in me to make me more like Jesus?" Keep a simple journal of those observations over the next month and share what you notice with your group.
 - **For new believers especially:** Take one concrete step toward community this week, whether that is joining a small group, attending a church service, or having a conversation with a more seasoned believer about what questions you have.
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Closing Prayer Focus

Close your group time by praying together over these themes:

- Gratitude for the sacrifice of Jesus and the gift of new life
 - Openness to the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in each group member
 - Those in your lives who have not yet said yes to Jesus
 - Boldness to walk in the identity of a new creation, even when old patterns feel familiar
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"The Holy Spirit works in you and the Holy Spirit works in me to make us more and more like Jesus." — Pastor Chris