

# Further Steps – Week 2 – Establishing the New Life

Connect and review	
<p>How does this link to other concepts explored last week namely: sin, separation and redemption.</p>	<p>Revisit key question from last week. What did we learn from 2 Co 5:21? <i>Who did live up to God's perfect standard? Why is this significant for us?</i></p>
Inspire and engage	
<p><i>Comment:</i> Being 'born again' is more than just a fresh start once our sins are forgiven. It is an inner renewal of the human spirit. To interact with the physical world we must be born physically. To fully relate to God, who is Spirit (see <a href="#">John 4 verse 24</a>.) we need to be 'reborn' spiritually. Some brief context would be helpful here: Peter addresses the crowd, speaks of the need of salvation (link to last week) Back up comment: Read <a href="#">1st John 1 verse 9</a>.</p>	<p><b>1. New Birth</b> <i>Could use clip from 'The Chosen' where Jesus meets with Nicodemus.</i> When you accepted Christ as your saviour you became a <i>new creation</i>. You have a new life. God has graciously given a new, everlasting, life to those who will accept the death of Jesus on their behalf. As we read the following passages, make a note of the questions you have. <a href="#">John 3 verses 1-7</a> and <a href="#">2nd Corinthians 5 verse 17</a>.</p> <p><b>2. New Conduct</b> <i>Comment:</i> Having received such grace from God we shall want to live in obedience to Him. This change of resolve is called <i>repentance</i>. We cannot undo our past mistakes, but since God has forgiven them, we can put those behind us (subject to making any needed reparations that are within our power). We are likely to make more mistakes, but God continues to forgive provided we continue to repent and have faith in Christ as Saviour. <i>Bible Reading: Acts 2 verse 37-38</i>.</p> <p><b>3. A new relationship</b> When we are <i>born again</i> we become God's <i>child</i>. ("To all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God." John 1 verse 12 NLT). He looks after us as a good father looks after the children he loves. The Bible says we can call God "Abba" (Galatians 4 verse 6), which is an intimate expression by which a Hebrew child called his or her father.</p> <p><b>4. Declaring the new life.</b> The way Jesus told us to declare you have made this life change is by baptism – signifying death to the old life and rising to the new. The Holy Spirit will help you live this new life. <i>Bible reading. Acts 2 verse 37-38, 41.</i> <i>Comment:</i> Submitting to being briefly plunged under water represents dying to the old life and rising to a new life – a break with the old and the start of the new. Baptism is an excellent way of declaring you have become a Christian. For this reason, it is usual to invite friends and family to observe the event.</p>
Explore and apply	
<p>These questions needn't be all tackled in succession. Feel free to be flexible. Some ideas: Different groups could discuss an assigned question and then feedback afterwards; People could choose one that is of most interest to them; Unanswered questions could be 'set' for further study or in between session. Links to the 'inspire and engage' section are crucial here so that participants are clear about which question relates to which part of the input.</p>	<p><b>Explore</b> <i>Question 1:</i> Nicodemus was puzzled by Jesus' statement that a person must be <i>born again</i>. How would you explain this to him? <i>Question 2:</i> If God forgives our sins, does it matter if we continue to do what we like, whether right or wrong? (See Romans 6 verse 1-2 and verse 16-17 if appropriate). <i>Question 3:</i> How do you think our relationship with God affects our prayer? <i>Question 4:</i> The Holy Spirit, mentioned in these verses, is the Spirit of God, who helps us live the new life. Why do you think we need help?</p> <p><b>Apply</b> <i>Exercise:</i> In what ways does baptism suggest/symbolise the following? a)Repentance, b)Dying to the old life, c)A new life, d)Washing away sin <i>Discussion:</i> Have you been baptised by immersion or attended the baptism of someone who has? Can you share with the group something of your emotions or thoughts about the event?</p>
Reflect and review	
<p>For facilitators, a degree of sensitivity is essential here. This is a key aspect of the session in helping participants to internalise the content</p>	<p><b>1. To think about during the week:</b> Are there any behaviours in my life that are not fitting to my new life in Christ and I ought to break away from? <b>2.</b> What has stood out to you today? What takeaways will you remember? <b>3.</b> Finally, if there are any questions that we didn't get to during our session, consider exploring them, and reading the scriptures suggested.</p>

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and allow the Holy Spirit to bring guidance. It may be appropriate to play some quiet music and guide participants in their reflections.

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