

Jesus: Everyone who practices sin is a slave of sin. John 8:34b
Paul: If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. 2 Corinthians 5:17a

How Do I Receive A New Kind of Life in Christ Now?

I don't "do" it. God "does" it. But I must "choose" it—daily.

1. **Repentance:** I acknowledge my sin, and choose to re-direct my life away from self-centeredness and toward God-reliance. *Matthew 4:17*
2. **Faith:** I come to believe, not just profess (I can profess what I don't truly believe) that Christ is who he said he was. Such belief catalyzes action. *James 2:14*
3. **Grace:** God immerses me in his grace—empowerment to do what I cannot do on my own. But he doesn't force it on me. I must choose to access it. *2 Peter 3:18a*
4. **The "with-God" life:** God unites me with him in a new kind of life—divine life—by grace (unearned) through faith (my choices). All benefits of Christ's passion are now accessible; e.g., forgiveness of sin and transformation of character. *John 3:5-7*

Dallas Willard: Grace is not opposed to effort; grace is opposed to earning. *1 Corinthians 15:10*

5. **The flesh:** The old life—received from parents—wars against new life with God, seeking to subvert it, *Galatians 5:16-18*. I learn the path to victory in discipleship.

Paul: Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! *Romans 7:24-25a*

6. **Discipleship:** I am with Jesus to learn from him how to live this new life. It is not about trying harder; it is about my inner life being re-formed. *Luke 6:40*

Does anyone really believe that Jesus did not intend for his disciples actually to do the things he said were best—the ways of eternal life in God's kingdom? *Luke 6:46*

7. **Spiritual formation:** The product of discipleship. Being with him, learning from him, I am gradually re-made. "Behold, the new has come." *2 Corinthians 5:17b*

8. **Christlike character:** Behavior expresses the condition of the heart. A heart transformed into Christlikeness makes holiness of action the norm. *1 Peter 1:14-16*

Thesis: The foundational curriculum for all Christian education: Teach people how actually to live the way Jesus taught; e.g., how to learn to love one's enemy.