A dramatic sky with sunbeams and clouds. The top half of the image shows a bright blue sky with sunbeams radiating from the top center. Below this, there is a layer of white, fluffy clouds. The bottom half of the image shows a darker, more turbulent sky with brown and orange tones, suggesting a storm or a dramatic transition.

New Life

A look at the New Life
that Jesus offers

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Published by BeaconLight Trust
PO Box 91, Banstead, Surrey, SM7 9BA
United Kingdom
www.beaconlight.co.uk
Email: books@beaconlight.co.uk
ISBN 978-1-906526-29-0

Design & print: Alpha to Omega

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A look at the New Life that Jesus offers

Could life be better?

On a scale of 1 to 10 (where 10 is 'Life just could not be any better'), where do you rate your own life? As you have picked up this booklet, possibly you would rate it towards the other end of the scale.

If that is the case (and even if it is not), God wants you to hear the very best news that there is: that He loves you more than you can possibly imagine; that He knows your pain and cares for you; that He does not want to simply 'patch up' your old life but offers you a new life – a life which puts Him at the centre.

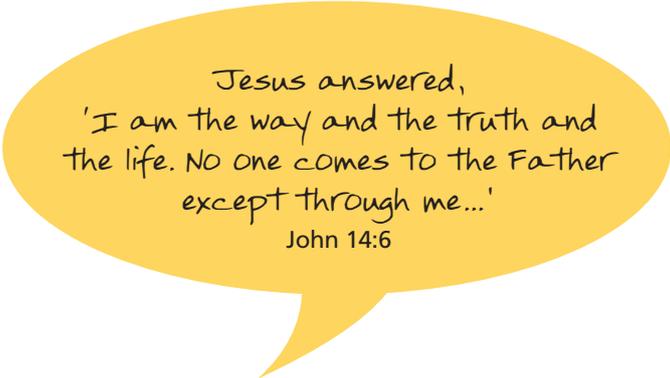
God's love for us is especially good news for those who are tired of their past and their present and long for a fresh start to a new life.

Of course, God hates all the things we have done of which we are ashamed (as well as all our everyday failings which do not trouble our consciences). But He is more concerned about our future than our past.

As we think about the new life that God wants for us, there are two questions we have to answer:

- Are we ready to confess our sins to God and ask for His forgiveness?
- Are we ready to turn our backs on our old ways and start living God's way?

We will come back to these questions later. First, we need to look at what this new life involves and who it involves – Jesus.



Jesus answered,
'I am the way and the truth and
the life. No one comes to the Father
except through me...'
John 14:6

It is all about Jesus

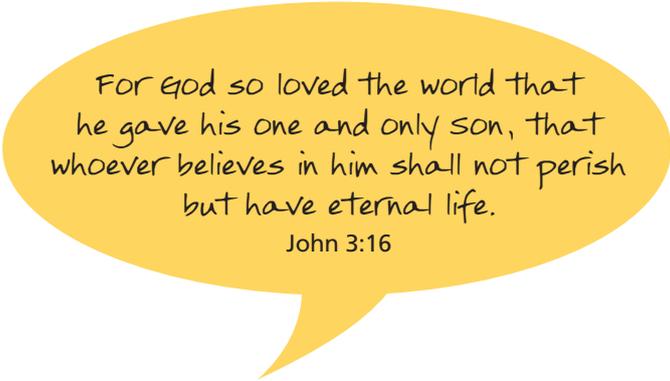
God cannot simply overlook all the wrong things we have done and which we continue to do – and perhaps even enjoy. Not only is He holy and pure but He is also just. And because He is just He demands justice. And justice demands punishment.

But God demonstrated His love for us by sending His Son, Jesus, to take the punishment which we deserve.

Jesus has always existed: He was in heaven with God the Father before the very beginning of creation. Then, just over 2,000 years ago, God sent Jesus to be born on earth where He lived a perfect, sinless life as both God and man.

At the age of 33, Jesus sacrificed His life, enduring the most horrible and cruel death by crucifixion. Three days later He rose from the dead and, after forty days, went back to be with His Father in heaven, which is where He is today.

Through His death and resurrection, Jesus made it possible for God to forgive our sins because Jesus Himself was punished for them.



For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

So, what is this new life that Jesus has made possible?

The New Life with Jesus

A new identity

When we accept the new life which Jesus offers we receive a new identity. To use the words of the Apostle Paul, we are 'in Christ': we belong to Him.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here!

2 Corinthians 5:17

A new relationship

The new life that Jesus offers brings us into a relationship with God. God created us for that very purpose – to be in relationship with Him, to live to please Him and to bring Him glory.

God is a tender, merciful and loving Father to all who choose to be obedient to Him. He is the perfect Father.

the LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.

Psalms 103:8

A new family

The new life that Jesus offers brings us into God's family. We become children of God.

see what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!

1 John 3:1

The New Life with Jesus

A new kingdom

The world comprises two kingdoms – the kingdom of darkness under Satan's rule and the kingdom of light under God's rule.

We all belong to Satan's kingdom of darkness but can be rescued from it by accepting the new life that Jesus offers.

For he has rescued us from
the dominion of darkness and
brought us into the kingdom
of the son he loves,
Colossians 1:13

A new freedom – from guilt

As we receive the new life which Jesus offers we no longer stand condemned. We can enjoy this new life, knowing that we are free from guilt and shame and will not face God's judgment.

Therefore,
there is now no condemnation
for those who are in
Christ Jesus,
Romans 8:1

The New Life with Jesus

A new destiny

The new life that Jesus offers brings with it a certainty over our destiny after death. It assures us that we will be with God, in His Kingdom, forever.

Many people scoff at what the Bible teaches, refusing to believe that there is a real place of dreadful suffering – hell.

He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might...

2 Thessalonians 1: 8-9

Those who rightly believe in hell may wrongly believe that our destiny – heaven or hell – is determined by the life we live – good or bad.

But the Bible is very clear: our destiny is not determined by the way we live but whether we are 'in Christ', as part of God's family and living in His Kingdom. For those who are 'in Christ' there is a promise of a wonderful inheritance.

In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you...

1 Peter 1:3b-4

The New Life with Jesus

A new hope

The new life that Jesus offers brings us hope. It is not the 'fingers crossed' sort of hope which is simply wishful thinking. The hope that Jesus' followers have is a certainty: it is the certainty that God will always be with us and watching over us.

...God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.'

Hebrews 13:5

A new peace

We can only experience true inner peace when we turn from our rebellion towards God and receive the new life which Jesus offers. As we do so, we cease to be God's enemies.

Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behaviour. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation...

Colossians 1:21-22

A new strength

With the new life that Jesus offers comes the gift of God's Holy Spirit who lives within us. He is our comforter and helper and gives us strength as we face life's struggles.

Because you are his sons, God sent the spirit of his son into our hearts, the spirit who calls out, 'Abba, Father.'

Galatians 4:6

What this new life does not offer

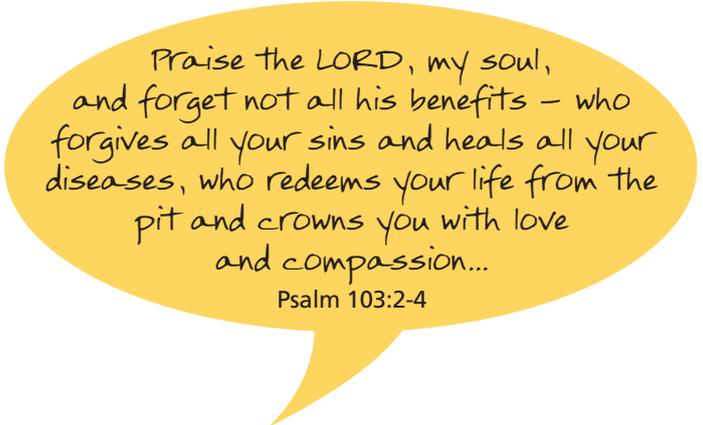
The new life that Jesus offers is the only life that will be truly satisfying.

But it is not a trouble-free life. We will still encounter the disappointments, struggles and stresses that are a normal part of life. Particular issues that we have will not just go away.

We will also gain a new enemy – Satan – as we leave his kingdom of darkness. He will try every possible means of making our new life difficult for us. But as we resist him, with God's help, we will grow stronger in our faith.

And so we are faced with a choice: to remain in the kingdom of darkness under Satan's rule (and God's judgment and everlasting punishment) or to ask God to receive us into His Kingdom of light under His rule.

I urge you to choose God's Kingdom. You will experience the same peace, hope and joy that King David (in the Bible) experienced after God had forgiven him.



Praise the LORD, my soul,
and forget not all his benefits – who
forgives all your sins and heals all your
diseases, who redeems your life from the
pit and crowns you with love
and compassion...

Psalm 103:2-4

Are you ready to receive this new life?

There is nothing you can do, or need to do, to earn this new life. Most people find that difficult to grasp. We have a natural tendency to want to earn God's favour. But that is not possible. We all have a sinful nature – we have had it since birth – and are incapable of meeting God's perfect standard of holiness.

This new life is God's free gift to us, reflecting His kindness, love and mercy. But it cost Jesus His life.

But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.

Ephesians 2:4-5, 8-9

You can receive this new life by:

- confessing your sins to God and asking Him to forgive you, and
- turning your back on your old ways and, with God's help, starting to live His way.

If you are ready to make this decision – the most important decision you will ever make – this is a prayer you can pray.

Dear Father God,

I am very sorry for everything in my life, past and present, which is not right. I want to stop living that way. I want a new life.

Thank You for sending Jesus to die in my place, for my sins, in order to save me from the punishment which I deserve. I want to live to please Jesus and to make Him the centre of my life – to be my King.

So please forgive all my sins and accept me as Your child. Please fill me with Your Holy Spirit to help me live this new life which Jesus offers.

Amen

If you have prayed that prayer, what now?

If you have been sincere in praying that prayer, God welcomes you into His family as His child. Do not worry if you do not feel any different. An important lesson to learn is not to rely on your feelings but on God's promises (which we find in the Bible).

One of those promises is expressed in the following words of a hymn:

*O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood!
to every believer the promise of God;
the vilest offender who truly believes,
that moment from Jesus a pardon receives.*

From the hymn, To God be the glory! Fanny Crosby, 1820-1915.

You must now tell someone – a chaplain or church leader – of your decision. Ask that person to help you to begin reading the Bible. Join a Bible study group if you can.

It is also important to start meeting with others who are on the same journey of following Jesus as you have started. You will be able to encourage one another as you each work through the changes which you will have to make to your lives.

And if you are undecided

Perhaps you have questions you wish to ask or you may feel that you need more time to think about what you have read. That is understandable for it is not a decision to be taken lightly. But it is important to understand the urgency.

The Bible warns us to be ready for Jesus' return: He will come suddenly and unexpectedly to judge everyone who has ever lived. It will be a day of immense joy for everyone who is God's child. But those who are not His children are His enemies (living in Satan's kingdom): for them, it will be a day of judgment and everlasting punishment.

Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

Matthew 7:13-14

We will be glad to help you with any questions you may have after reading this booklet.

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God longs for us to have
a relationship with Him.
He created us for that very
purpose. But our sin has created
a barrier between us.

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