



The BASIC Good News

COMPLETION

Issue 5

Discovering the Essentials of the Christian Faith

The Color **GREEN** symbolizes that we grow as we live by faith, trusting and glorifying our God who is making us COMPLETE.

Sin Defeats Us, But God Completes Us

The Bible tells Christ's followers this: Through every life circumstance, the good and the bad, the triumphs and the tragedies, *God is at work for us*. And what God begins, He finishes. Despite our struggles with sin, our failures and our weakness, our Lord is going to make us **COMPLETE** in Him. He is going to bring those who trust in Him to heaven, and this is a process that has already begun. And in this process He invites us, actually *commands* us, to be His partners. God is growing us, and God calls us to grow.

How do we cooperate with our Lord as He transforms us ac-

ording to the riches of His glory, as He makes us fit for heaven? How do we grow? Once again, there is a helpful acronym... G.R.O.W.

"G" - "Go" to prayer and "Go" to church. Developing a habit both of communicating personally with the Lord and of meeting corporately to worship and learn of Him is crucial.

"R" - "Read" the Bible. This book is like no other. It is God's Word. It tells us what we need to know. It is our authority on all matters



of faith and life. Having a Bible is a great privilege. Studying it is great wisdom.

"O" - "Obey" what God says. We find real health and wholeness and our light shines bright for Christ in the world as we do what God tells us to do.

"W" - "Witness" to your faith. Tell others the truth about what Jesus means to you and what He has done for you.

These are some helpful guidelines concerning how we grow in our faith. It is part of God's call to wholeness and His work of making us complete in this life and into the next.

Salvation: Not Just A Destiny, A Way of Life

"All she cares about is heaven. Her life is a mess, and she just sits there waiting to die. It's the saddest thing I've ever seen." My friend didn't know Jesus Christ as her Lord and Savior, and she was resisting

my attempts to point her toward Him. Against my meager but sincere evangelistic efforts, she was telling me about a Christian woman from her home town. I disagreed with her assessment of the woman's life. Living only for earthly things is much sadder than living only in anticipation of heaven. But her words told some truth.



God saves us in Christ. Believers, His

people, are going to heaven. But God calls us to live into the fullness of life He gives here and now as well. God wants us to grow, in this life and into the next.

Last time I looked, people don't become Christians—declaring their faith in Jesus Christ who is Savior and Lord risen from the dead—and then get struck by lightning immediately zapping them up to their heavenly reward. (I suppose this might cut down on the number of people coming forward at Billy Graham Crusades and the like.)

Instead, after people believe and profess faith in Jesus Christ, God leaves them here on earth for a while longer. Apparently He

doesn't want them simply to sit around waiting for the lightning bolt to arrive. It seems He has more for them to do.

And the Bible is full of major clues as to what those things are... Our God wants us to get to know Him. He wants us to learn to love Him and follow His ways and glorify Him. He wants us to join Him in his work in His world. He wants us to point others toward Him. He wants us to grow...

"C" is for COMPLETION

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B.A.S.I.C.

- **BEST** (GOLD): The BEST of everything is found from, through, in and to the Living God.
- **ALIENATION** (BLACK): Sin has ALIENATED people from God and His best for them.
- **SALVATION** (RED): We are SAVED eternally only by the gracious sacrifice of God's Son Jesus Christ.
- **IDENTIFICATION** (WHITE): We recover our true and best IDENTITY by *admitting* our need, *believing* in Jesus and *calling* on God.
- **COMPLETION** (GREEN): We *grow* as we live by faith, trusting and glorifying our God who is making us COMPLETE.

Romans 8:28-39 — God Works for Our Good

²⁸ And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us,



who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or

sword? ³⁶ As it is written:

“For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

“In all these things we are more than conquerors...”

Questions to Ask: 1. Who works for the good of those who love God? Why do you suppose this is true? What difference does this make to you?
2. What factors listed here insure that God’s people are secure in His love?
3. What do you see as the greatest threats to your eternal security, your salvation? How does this passage speak to those fears?

Philippians 1:3-6 — What God Begins, God Finishes

Thanksgiving and Prayer

³ I thank my God every time I re-

member you. ⁴ In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy ⁵ because of your partnership

in the gospel from the first day until now, ⁶ being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Questions to Ask:

1. What does the Apostle Paul say he is confident God will do?
2. What are you confident God will do?

John 14:21-24 — He Who Loves Jesus Obeys Jesus

²¹ Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.”

²² Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, “But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?”

²³ Jesus replied, “If anyone

loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. ²⁴ He who does

not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

Questions to Ask:

1. How does Jesus say people demonstrate that they truly love Him?
2. What does He say He and His Father do for people who obey His commands?
3. What then is the real issue in our relationship with Him?

Mark 8:34-38 — Lose Your Life for Christ and Save It

³⁴ Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ³⁵ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. ³⁶ What good is it for a man

to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? ³⁷ Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? ³⁸ If anyone is

ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father’s glory with the holy angels.”



Questions to ask:

1. What does it mean for a person to “deny himself?” (What is it we are supposed to say “No” to?)
2. What are some ways that people foolishly try to “save” their own lives? How do they wisely “lose” them?
3. Why is a person’s own soul of greater value to him/her than everything else in the whole world?

Matthew 28:16-20 — The Great Commission

¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make dis-

ciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy

Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

“Go and make disciples of all nations... teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

Questions to ask:

1. What does the Risen Jesus tell people He wants them to do?
2. On what basis does He give this command? (What gives Him the right to say this?)
3. What does Jesus promise to us as we set out to accomplish His mission?

Ephesians 2:10 — We Are God’s Workmanship



¹⁰ For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Questions to ask:

1. Who made us? What are we made to do?
2. How do “good works” relate to our salvation? (see the preceding two verses in Ephesians 2)
3. How might doing good works help us grow in our faith?
4. What insight from this verse might give us confidence as we step out in faith to follow God’s leading in our lives?

COMPLETION



*Reaching Out with
the Message and
Love of Jesus Christ*

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Our Mission

*Covenant Presbyterian Church is a
Christ-centered
church whose members seek to:
reach out to others with the message and love of Christ,
enable people to become faithful, mature disciples of
Jesus, and help people discover and use their spiritual gifts
through meaningful worship, nurture, prayer, education
and service to our members and beyond.*

Our Focus

Teaching the Word of God

Our Vision

*To proclaim, teach and live the Word of God so that our
members, their families and friends, and our neighbors in
the community receive and respond to God's Word by
coming to know Christ as their Savior and Lord, growing
in their relationship with Him and with one another,
fulfilling God's unique purpose for their lives,
and sharing their faith with others.*

We Share with You the Good News...



For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures... (I Corinthians 5:3-4)

✝ That Christ died for our sins

Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows... But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed... We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; & the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:4-6)

✝ And that He was buried

You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:19) ...as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. (Psalm 103:12)

✝ And that He rose again

For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. (I Corinthians 15:22)... Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives & believes in me will never die..." (John 11:25-26)

🔑 Humanity's Need

But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear. (Isaiah 59:2)... for all have

sinned and fall short of the glory of God... For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 3:23, 6:23)

🔑 God's Remedy

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. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. (John 3:16-17)

➡ What shall I do, Lord?

That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved... for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." (Romans 10:9-13)

♥ Choose Life

I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. (Deuteronomy 30:19-20)... Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near. (Isaiah 55:6)