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2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

Dear Friend,

Congratulations! Your decision to trust in Jesus as your savior is the most important decision you will ever make. We would like to take a few minutes of your time and give you some information to help you better understand the decision you have made and the results of that decision.

The Bible, which tells us about Jesus, is where we discover exactly what it means to be a believer in Jesus. In the book of 2 Corinthians, in chapter 5 verse 17, God tells us: “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ (trusted him as savior) he is a new creation; the old (condition) has gone, the new has come.” We would like to tell you about the new things that have happened to you as a result of your decision to trust in Christ. There are four things we would like to tell you about: You now have a new FUTURE, a new FATHER, a new FAMILY, and a new FRIENDSHIP.

A new future – In the video you watched, Pastor Rick Long explained how the Bible tells us that no one is perfect and therefore no one is qualified to live in a perfect heaven with a perfect God. If God allowed imperfect humans into His perfect heaven, it would soon become just like our imperfect earth. Something had to be done to remove those imperfections - the Bible calls these imperfections “sin.” That is why Jesus, who was perfect because He was God living in a human body, had to die on the cross in order to pay the price of death to remove our sins from us. When we trust in Jesus and the payment He made on our behalf, instantly our future destination is changed. Instead of living for eternity separated from God in hell, we will live in heaven with God for eternity. Jesus Himself said in the Gospel of John, chapter 5 verse 24: “I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.” The moment you trusted Christ to save you from your sin, you passed from an eternity of death in hell to an eternity of life in heaven. God wants you to have the assurance that you will live with Him forever. The Bible tells us in 1 John 5:13: “I write these things to you who believe in the name of the son of God (another name for Jesus) so that you may know that you have eternal life.” You never have to doubt where you will spend eternity if you have trusted in Jesus.

A new father – The Bible tells us in John 1:12-13: “Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God- children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.” The moment you trusted in Jesus, you went through another birth: not another physical birth, but a spiritual birth that God brought about. You have now been born into God's family, He is now your heavenly Father. The Bible tells us in Ephesians 1:4-5 : For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will. It gave God great pleasure to adopt us into His own family and make us His children. You have a new relationship with God, the relationship of a child to their father. Unlike many earthly parents, God loves and accepts us unconditionally. In the book of Romans, God tells us exactly what He thinks of us as His children: Romans 8:31-39 - “What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? 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? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen?”



It is God who justifies. 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. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 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." This is an amazing passage of the Bible, for it tells us exactly where we stand with God as His children: God is for us, He was willing to sacrifice His own son for our salvation, God wants to do good things for His kids, nothing in the universe can cause God to not love us or to abandon us, He will not listen to those who would condemn us. God is a loving Father who knows what is best for us and wants what is best for us.

A new family – It only follows that if you are part of a family, then you have brothers and sisters. The same is true of God's family: you have millions of new brothers and sisters all over the world. The name that God gives to this family is The Church. You may have thought that churches are those buildings with steeples and cheesy sayings on their marquees. They are not. The church is a living organism made up of every person who has ever accepted Christ as savior. You are now part of that organism, a part of the body of Christ. God wants His children to love and support each other. The church is God's hands and feet in the world. You need to learn to live within this new family, for it in this family that you will learn about your new life as a child of God. The Bible tells us this in Romans 12:4-5: Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. And then in Ephesians 4:16: From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. These verses tell us several things about this new family of ours: We are all a part, we all have a place. We all have chores to do in this new family. We should stick together as a family. Each part of the body should give support to the other parts, like a ligament does in your body. We should love each other as brothers and sisters. It is within this context of a family that God defines what He wants us to do as His children. God designed the church so that we are never alone, we always have family members who love and care for us. Even though the church is not a building, the church in your area does meet in a specific location. You need to find a good Bible-believing, teaching church in your area where you can go begin to be active in your new family. If you need help in locating a good local church, feel free to contact us and we would love to help you find a good church home for you to attend. If you are in the Denver, CO. area, you are more than welcome to come visit us at Grace Church in Arvada. You are also welcome to listen to Pastor Rick's weekly messages at www.gracechurchco.com

A new friendship - The best word to describe your new relationship with Christ is "friend." Because you are now Jesus' friend, you get to enjoy everything that God has for you for the rest of your life on earth. Jesus told his followers in John 15:13-15: Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.



You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. There are some vital concepts in this passage that we need to understand if we are not only to enjoy Jesus' friendship with us, but to also be his friend in return.

First of all, Jesus tells us that the absolute greatest demonstration of love that one friend can have for another is to willingly give up his life for the benefit of his friend. Guess what? That is what Jesus did for his friends, which includes you when you accepted Christ as savior. Then he says that you show your friendship to him by listening, learning, and doing the things he asks you to do. You see, in order to have friendship, you must have things in common with someone, you must share similar interests. Since Jesus is God and therefore perfect, he cannot share sinful and destructive behaviors and interests that we might have, we must adopt his interests. In order to be someone's friend, you must have a relationship with them. That is what Jesus desires, to have a relationship with you. This relationship begins when we become a believer in Christ, but this relationship can only grow as your interests begin to be the same as Jesus' interests.

The key to any relationship, if your friendship is to advance, is that you must communicate with the person. God speaks to us through His word, the Bible. It is in the Bible that we find out what Jesus' interests are and we discover what God intended life on earth to be. You need to begin to read the Bible on a regular basis to allow God to speak to you. If you do not have a Bible, go to www.youversion.com/the-bible-app/ and download their app for your electronic device. Select a version of the Bible to read that is written in more modern language so it is easier to understand, like the New International Version or the New Living Translation. If you are new to the Bible, you may not realize that the Bible is not just one book, it is a compilation of 66 books divided into two sections, the Old Testament which talks about the time before Jesus came and the New Testament which talks about Jesus' life and the time after he came.

We recommend that you begin your reading in the gospel of John to learn more about Jesus. Also, as you read the book of John, take note of every time it says that if you believe in Jesus, you have eternal life. When you find a local church home, they could help you get a printed Bible if you would prefer a hard copy. Since communication is a two-way street, we carry our end of the conversation with God by praying to Him.

The Bible tells us in Philippians 4:6-7: Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. It also says in Ephesians 6:18: Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.

Many people think that prayer is a religious speech directed at God with fancy words, or a mantra to repeat time after time. Those are not prayers. Prayer is simply talking to God the same way you would talk to any person. You do not need to have a made-up script full of religious words to pray to God, just talk with Him about everything you think and feel. That is how you would address a friend.

In conclusion, realize that you are now embarking on a new life with meaning and purpose as a child of God. You have a secure future, a heavenly father who loves you, a new family who wants to meet and help you, and a friend who is always there for you. If we can help you in any way on this new journey, feel free to contact us through our website www.gracechurchco.com or you can reach us at 720-895-9000.

welcome

to the

family!