

# SESSION 8: A Miracle of New Life from Above

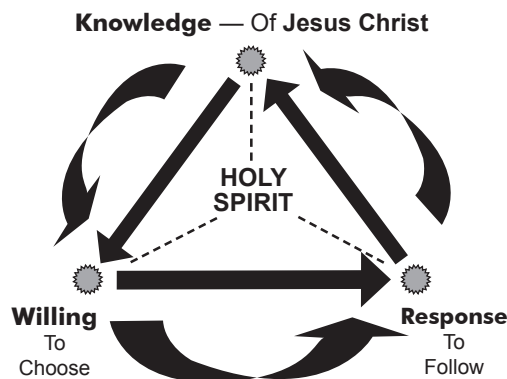
## Discovering the Life-Changing Dimensions of Faith

Reference: *Surprised by Faith*, pages 100-110 (fourth edition); pages 94-102 (third edition)

### Making the Discovery

Becoming a Christian is more than subscribing to a certain set of religious beliefs.

- Besides the three essential components of biblical faith identified in the previous chapter, becoming a Christian must also include a \_\_\_\_\_ component.
  - Jesus told the religious leader, Nicodemus, that he must have “\_\_\_\_\_” (spiritually and miraculously conceived by the Holy Spirit) in order to become a Christian and go to heaven (John 3:3).
  - Jesus taught that everyone who believes in Him will receive the indwelling \_\_\_\_\_.
- As a result of God’s miraculous new creation within us, faith includes three life-changing dimensions.
  - Becoming a Christian establishes you in a new \_\_\_\_\_. Two personal beings, God and you, are reconciled through the forgiveness of sin. You become a child of God; God lives within you. In other words, you are family (John 1:12; 14:16-17).
  - Becoming a Christian releases you into a new \_\_\_\_\_. God’s grace has set you free from the destructive power of sin to become all He created you to be. You do not have to perform a set of rules and regulations in order to earn God’s favor, but are rather disciplined by grace and motivated by love (Ephesians 2:8-9).
  - Becoming a Christian qualifies you for a new \_\_\_\_\_. You realize there is ultimate and absolute justice. Death is not final. You can have the confidence of God’s promise that He is preparing an eternal home for you in heaven (1 John 5:11-13; John 14:1-3).
- Faith is not merely subjective, but has \_\_\_\_\_ realities as well.
  - The historical person of Jesus Christ is an objective reality.
  - The observable results in a believer’s life are an objective reality.Both of these realities can be evaluated. A changed life can be tested in two ways. The first test is to consider the number of people who claim the same results in their life. For instance, if millions of people say they have each experienced inner peace, love and joy after becoming a Christian, it gives their faith greater objective credibility. The second test is to observe the behavior of those who claim to be Christians. Generally, are they more “Christ-like” than before they became Christians? If so, it gives statistical confirmation of the power of faith to transform lives.



## DISCOVERY #8

**“Ah-ha!”** Becoming a Christian is a **MIRACLE** of new life by the Holy Spirit resulting in a new relationship, freedom, and hope!

### Confirming the Discovery from God’s Word

In summary of God’s Word, God does a miracle in our lives when we confess faith in Jesus, and sets us free from our bondage to sin and death (1 John 5:4). Grace and forgiveness are necessary because we are morally and spiritually bankrupt before a holy God. As a gift, salvation cannot be earned by any good deeds we do (Ephesians 2:8-9). As a result, we have a personal relationship with God because we are created anew by the Holy Spirit who indwells us. We are adopted into His very family as His children (Galatians 4:6-7). Having the Holy Spirit within us means that we please God because God Himself is transforming our lives by inspiring our wills and empowering our response to obey His Word (Philippians 2:13). These life changes which God causes in us are a testimony to the unbeliever. Unbelievers are drawn to our heavenly Father because of the integrity and holiness they observe in us (Matthew 5:16).

Answers to “Fill in the Blanks”: 1. miraculous, new life from above, Holy Spirit; 2. relationship, freedom, hope; 3. objective