

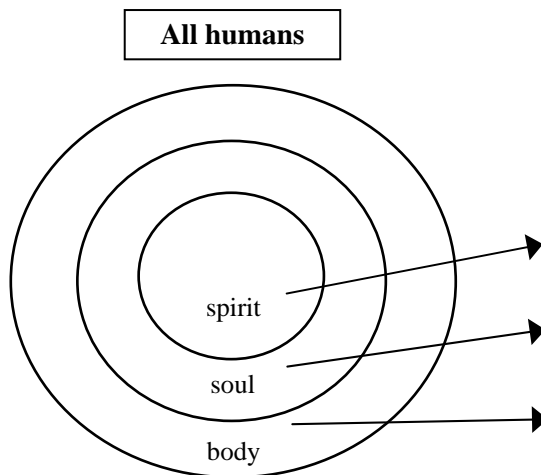
THE CHRISTIAN LIFE SUMMARIZED

1. Salvation is more than just being saved from hell

God has a much greater purpose for our lives here on earth and into eternity. (Jesus said) "... I came that they might have life, and might have it **abundantly**. (John 10:10)
it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, **all that God has prepared for those who love Him.**" (1 Cor. 2:9)

2. Man is a special creation

God set man apart and put His spirit into him. *the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.* (Genesis 2:7)



*Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your **spirit** and **soul** and **body** be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* (1 Thess. 5:23)

spirit - **God** awareness. We interact with God through our spirit.

soul - **self** awareness. Personality, reasoning, emotions, mind, will, understanding.

body - **world** awareness. We interact with the physical world through our physical body senses.

Animals have **no spirit** - thus **no consciousness** of God.

3. The problem started with Adam and Eve

God gave a commandment (a law), which they disobeyed. As a result of their disobedience sin and death entered into the world. ... *Therefore, just as **through one man** sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—* (Romans 5:12)

The Bible describes God as: Loving, Perfect, Sovereign, Faithful, Holy, Just, Merciful, Forgiving. He can do no wrong. He cannot lie. He never changes. **He is totally trustworthy.**

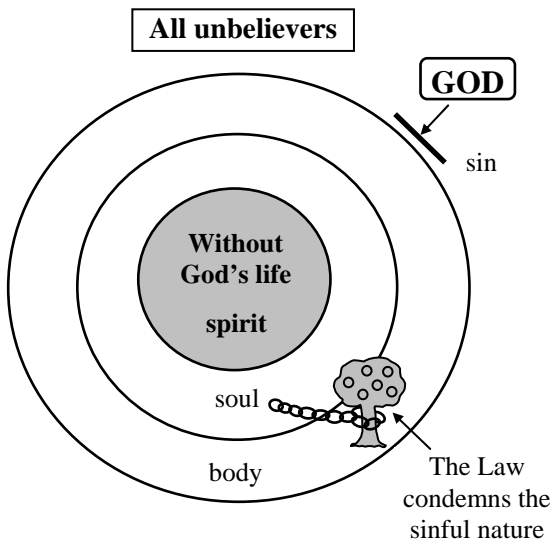
Satan portrays God as someone who cannot be trusted, nor counted on to do what is in my best interest. Satan's **lie** is that we can obtain peace, happiness, satisfaction, joy and lasting pleasure **independent of** God.

The joy and peace that God intends for every human is **only possible in companionship with Him**. (Jesus said) ... **My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you.** ... John 14:27
*for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy **in the Holy Spirit**.* (Romans 14:17)

4. NOT EVERYTHING AN UNBELIEVER DOES IS EVIL

An unbeliever can do many good things from man's perspective. The problem is that man cannot do good that measures up to God's perfection.

All that man does is **blemished, distorted, and falls short**. **God cannot accept "my best"**.



Their works (fruits) have no life (eternal), are less than perfect, and cannot please God. Even their good deeds are **temporary, only for this life**.

Eph. 4:18 ... *being **darkened in their understanding, excluded** from the life of God ...*

Rom. 3:23 *for **all** have sinned and **fall short** ...*

Rom. 3:10-12 ... *"**THERE IS NONE** RIGHTEOUS, **NOT EVEN ONE**; ... **THERE IS NONE** WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; ... **THERE IS NONE** WHO DOES GOOD, ..."*

Rom. 8:7-8 *because the mind set on the flesh is **hostile toward God**; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is **not even able to do so**, and those who are in the flesh **cannot please God**.*

 = The **human nature** is pictured as a **bad tree**: (Jesus said) ... **nor can a bad tree produce good fruit**. (Matt. 7:18)

The human nature can only produce **artificial** fruit. It may look good, but it has **no life**. How much nourishment would you get from eating a piece of artificial fruit? Would it be satisfying?

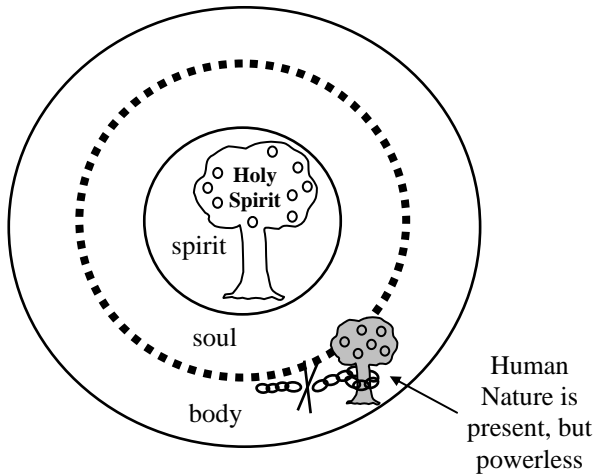
5. SALVATION

An unbeliever comes to the conclusion (after enough pressure) that things are hopeless and cries out to God. **"WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."** (Romans 10:13)

Salvation is **just the beginning** of the Christian life. "Eternal life" is **not an object**, it is God's life, without end.

6. AT SALVATION I RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT AND A NEW LIFE WITH GOD

The Normal Christian Life



At salvation I was put into this position of fellowship with Him, by virtue of Jesus' righteousness, not through my own merits. *But **by His doing** you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us ... **righteousness** ...*, (1 Cor. 1:30)

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A PERSON!

1 Cor. 6:19-20 ... *do you not know that your body is a **temple of the Holy Spirit** ... ?*

John 16:13 (Jesus said) "... *the Spirit of truth, **He will guide you into all the truth;** ...*".

Romans 8:16 *The Spirit Himself **testifies with our spirit** that we are children of God,*

Before (as an unbeliever), I was a **guilty sinner** before a **holy Judge**. **Now** (as a believer), I am a **child** of the **Father**, cared for by a divine Person, the Holy Spirit.

Note: The circular "dotted line" represents the "conditional" aspect.

7. THERE IS GOOD NEWS and BAD NEWS!

Bad News! **Our human nature has not been changed**, it still cannot produce good fruit.

*"It is the Spirit who gives life; the **flesh profits nothing**;" (John 6:63)*

Good News! **It doesn't matter that our old sinful human nature has not been changed, because God has given us a new nature, His divine nature in the Person of the Holy Spirit.**

*... His divine power has granted to us **everything pertaining to life and godliness**, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, **so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature**, ... (2 Peter 1:3-4)*

MY HUMAN NATURE WAS NOT CHANGED WHEN I BECAME A CHRISTIAN!



= Same sinful human nature, not the least bit improved, still incapable of producing acceptable fruit.

*... Having begun by the Spirit, **are you now being perfected by the flesh?** (Gal. 3:3) for the flesh sets its desire **against the Spirit**, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are **in opposition to one another**, ... (Gal. 5:17)*

THE LAW EXPOSES THE CHARACTER OF OUR HUMAN NATURE.

... for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin. (Rom. 3:19-20)

The human nature is pictured as a **salty spring, unable to support human life:**

*Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? Can a fig tree ... produce olives, or a vine produce figs? **Nor can salt water produce fresh.** (James 3:11-12)*

Imagine the Law as a sign by a water hole in the desert;

"WARNING! This water is contaminated and unhealthy to drink."

8. MORE GOOD NEWS and MORE BAD NEWS

Good News = The Holy Spirit is **permanent**. He will **never** leave you.

... *the Father, ... will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever;* (John 14:16)
(**Note:** The Holy Spirit helps the believer to understand and follow Him, He should not be regarded as a Servant who waits for the believer to command Him.)

Bad News = The human nature will not leave you until you physically die. We **all** have the **same** sinful human nature.

9. ABIDING IN FELLOWSHIP WITH THE LORD

The condition of **living in fellowship** with Him is called **ABIDING**. **Everyone starts the Christian life here.**

Illustration of Abiding: If you are holding a small object and you let go of it, the force of gravity overcomes the object and it immediately falls. Think of gravity as a representation of the way in which your human nature attracts you away from God and towards sin. Now place that object on your open palm. Because the power of your hand is greater than the force of gravity, the object can safely “rest” on your palm. The object does not fall, even though the force of gravity has not diminished.

The Holy Spirit can be represented by your hand, and you can be represented by the object. For as ever long **as you desire** you can confidently “rest” in Him, that is, you can continually experience **His** power over your sinful nature.

This is a place of **rest**. This is the condition of a **branch** on a tree. (John 15)

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. “For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30)

10. SHOULD I EXPECT TO LIVE A SINLESS LIFE?

Continue to think of gravity as a picture of the way in which my sinful nature attracts me to fall. Do I go through the day expecting to physically fall? Of course not. Although I must always remain alert, I should not “expect” to be dominated by the sinful nature.

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; (1 John 1:9, 2:1)

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. (Gal. 5:16)

11. WHAT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT DOING AS I ABIDE IN FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM?

» **He is increasingly producing His fruit through my life.**

Gal. 5:22-23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*

John 15:5 *“... he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, ...*

» **He glorifies the Father through me.**

John 15:8 *“My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, ...*

» **He is causing me to grow in spiritual maturity.**

John 15:2 *... every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit.*

Rom. 12:2 *..., but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

» **He causes me to experience His joy.**

John 15:11 “*These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.*”

» **He is producing an eternal inheritance for me.**

John 15:16 “... *I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain.* ...

2 Cor. 4:17 ... producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,

» **He is attracting others to Himself through my life.**

Acts 1:8 (Jesus said) ... *you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”*

12. LIVING IN ABIDING FELLOWSHIP IS “CONDITIONAL”

I still have the sinful human nature, and God will not take away my right to choose. At any moment I can choose to remove myself from the condition of “rest” (“abiding”), and allow my human nature to reign as my master.

Going back to the hand illustration, if you are not resting on the hand it is because you have **chosen** to remove yourself. This has nothing to do with the issue of salvation, but rather with the fruitfulness of your life here on earth.

The **Christian husband - wife relationship** is meant to be a **model** for abiding fellowship.

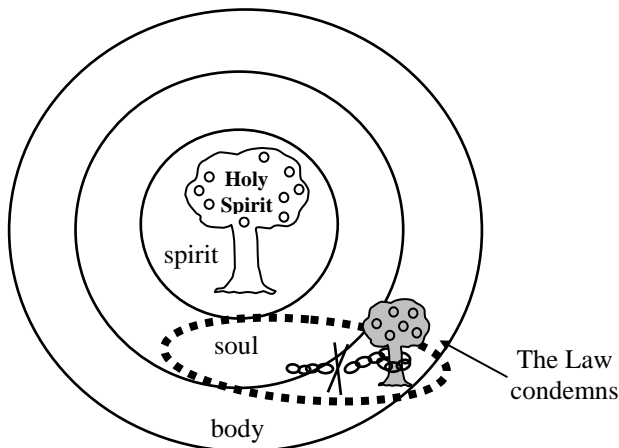
... *a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.* (Eph. 5:31-32)

Do not grieve (offend) *the Holy Spirit of God,* ... (Eph. 4:30)

As a Christian you have that living water **ready to flow** through your life. But when you are out of abiding fellowship, the **tap is turned off**. Jesus said in John 7:38-39 “*He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’*” *But this He spoke of the Spirit,* ...

13. AS A CHRISTIAN YOU CAN LIVE UNRECONCILED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

A believer who is not abiding



IF I CHOOSE TO SUBMIT TO THE SINFUL NATURE I WILL FIND MYSELF HERE, BUT I DO NOT HAVE TO STAY HERE!

I do not need to be out of fellowship with the Holy Spirit **any longer than I choose** to be. Restoration to the position of abiding fellowship will take place **immediately** upon confession of the offense(s) for which the Holy Spirit is holding me accountable.

Note: The circular “dotted line” represents the “conditional” aspect.

How can I know if I am out of fellowship (not abiding)? Usually symptoms indicate an ailing body. Similarly look for “**on-going**” spiritual **symptoms** of the sinful nature, such as: **Worry, Anxiety, Stumbling, Striving, Critical or Judgmental attitude, Impatience, Lack of peace, Anger, Frustration, Sense of defeat, Complaining, Irritability, Addictive behavior, etc.**

IMPORTANT: In a healthy family the **oversight** of parent-child harmony is the responsibility of the parents, **not** the children. In the same way, the Holy Spirit oversees our abiding harmony with Him, and we need to be **continually** sensitive to His promptings, since our judgment is often flawed.

14. WHY DO SOME CHRISTIANS LIVE UNRECONCILED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Some are unwilling to give Him authority over their lives. Do you think of yourself as walking **side by side** with the Lord, but **you are in charge (that is, He’s your Partner?)**. Is He just there to help you when you think you have a need? Or do you see Him as **your Master**, the One you **follow** as **His servant**? That is **Lordship!**

He doesn’t ask you to design your future and let Him fit in at your convenience. It is the other way around. **He** has a personalized plan that He is willing for you to fit into if **you** are willing.

Some see God as the **Divine 911**. They call upon Him when things get out of hand. (Is God your co-pilot in case you get lost?) **Do you want God, or just His blessings?**

Some think that God’s greatest priority is **to make me happy here on earth!** As a matter of fact He does want our happiness, but not just temporary. God wants to give us lasting satisfaction. If left on our own we will usually accept temporary satisfaction. Because God loves us and wants what is best for us, **He will not let you be content with less** than what He has planned for you, in companionship with Him. **Your happiness** is a **by-product** of living in fellowship with Him. God loves you so much that He will only let you experience His true joy as you abide in fellowship with Him.

Who knows what will best satisfy me, me or God? We come into the Christian life with a perceived mental list of what is good and what is bad, what makes me happy and what doesn’t. We **need to unlearn** many habits and misconceptions that we brought into the Christian life, and some we’ve learned since we became Christians. As Christians we cannot expect God to fit into **our** program. He has **better** things, things that can only be experienced through trusting Him.

*Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. (Romans 12:1-2)*

Can you do “**good**” **spiritual deeds** while you are living out of fellowship with the Holy Spirit? Absolutely! You can attend **church services, read your Bible, pray, give money, do good deeds,** etc. **Doing good things is no guarantee** that you are abiding in Christ. Paul warns us in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 *If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a **noisy gong** or a **clanging cymbal**. If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, **I am nothing**. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, **it profits me nothing**.*

15. HOW TO IDENTIFY "UNRESOLVED ISSUES"

Often, being overcome by sin is a symptom of a problem. There is a good chance that the **most troublesome areas** for you are **symptoms** and not the problem. That is, He will not allow me to abide in fellowship with Him and have victory in one area of my life while I am **consciously allowing** disobedience and defeat in another area.

What is keeping you from abiding in fellowship?

Unforgiveness?

Mark 11:25 "... **forgive, if you have anything against anyone,** ...

Unreconciled relationships?

Matthew 18:15 "*If your brother sins, **go and show him his fault in private**; if he listens to you, you have won your brother.*

Matthew 5:23-24 "... **go; first be reconciled** to your brother, and then come and present your offering.

Restitution?

Numbers 5:5-7 ... "*When a man or woman commits any of the sins of mankind, acting unfaithfully against the Lord, and that person is guilty, then he shall confess his sins which he has committed, and he **shall make restitution in full** for his wrong and add to it one-fifth of it, and give it to him whom he has wronged.*

Unconfessed sin? (Consider "sin" to be "anything that is displeasing to the Lord".)

Proverbs 28:13 *He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who **confesses** and **forsakes** them will find compassion.*

1 John 1:9-10 **If we confess** our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. *If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.*

16. NEED FOR RESTORATION

Yes, it is true that sin is an offence against God's holiness. However, the greatest effect that sin has on my relationship with God is that **it disrupts** my abiding fellowship with Him, and hinders Him from blessing and using me. God cannot bear His good fruit in my life while I am choosing to allow my human nature to reign.

(Jesus said) "*Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself **unless it abides** in the vine, so neither can you **unless you abide in Me**. "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for **apart from Me you can do nothing**. (John 15:4-5)*

Only what is motivated by the Holy Spirit has eternal value.

King David is an example of a believer living out of fellowship for about **9 months**. (2 Samuel 11:1 - 12:25)

God's desire is for you to be **restored** quickly. The Holy Spirit wants to reveal to you whatever disrupted your fellowship. You only need to be honest with Him and to acknowledge whatever He shows you. Ask the Lord to show you in what way(s) you have offended Him.