KNOWING GOD PERSONALLY RECONCILED INTO GOD’S FAMILY
1. GOD’S PERSPECTIVE

GOD LOVES YOU AND CREATED YOU IN HIS IMAGE. HE WANTS YOU TO KNOW HIM AND TO EXPERIENCE HIS LOVE AND FREEDOM AS PART OF HIS FAMILY.
**GOD’S LOVE AND FREEDOM**

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16

“And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” John 17:3

God’s love for us is unconditional and He created us to know Him and live in freedom from shame, isolation, and meaninglessness. (Galatians 5:1)

**GOD’S GOOD CREATION**

“So God created mankind in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.” Genesis 1:27

“God saw all that He had made, and it was very good.” Genesis 1:31

In a unique way, God displays His image in men and women from every ethnicity and culture. He created us to be a reflection of Himself in the world. This gives each person tremendous and inherent dignity and value. God created us to live out this identity in the context of a family that is much larger than our biological family.

What prevents us from knowing God and experiencing love and freedom as a part of His family?
2. Our Condition

We are all sinners. Sin is part of the human condition. Sin keeps us from knowing God, being part of His family, and experiencing His love and freedom.
**SIN HAS BROKEN GOD’S GOOD CREATION**

Sin is not merely the actions we do but is also our innate desire to take the place of God. It is the desire to be in complete control. God created us to be in relationship with Himself, with other people, and to reflect Him in the world. Our sin breaks these relationships and keeps us from reflecting God in the world. We can express our own sin through an attitude of active rebellion or through passive indifference. The death, brokenness and suffering we endure regularly are all evidence of sin’s influence in the world.

**PEOPLE ARE SINFUL AND SEPARATED**

“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” *Romans 3:23*

“For the wages of sin is death.” *Romans 6:23*

Our sin not only brings physical death but it also separates us from God and excludes us from His family.

Our sin can also lead to shame, isolation from others, and a lack of purpose and meaning in our lives.

How does God address our sin?
3. **GOD’S RESPONSE**

**Jesus Christ is God’s only provision for our sin. Through Christ’s death and resurrection, God reconciles us to Himself and adopts us into His family so we can experience the love and freedom He offers.**
**JESUS WAS SINLESS AND DIED IN OUR PLACE**

“[JESUS] COMMITTED NO SIN, NEITHER WAS DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH.” 1 PETER 2:22

“...WE HAVE ONE [JESUS] WHO HAS BEEN TEMPTED IN EVERY WAY, JUST AS WE ARE—YET HE DID NOT SIN.” HEBREWS 4:15

Only Jesus Christ was able to pay the penalty for our sins because He is perfect and free from sin.

“BUT GOD SHOWS HIS LOVE FOR US IN THAT WHILE WE WERE STILL SINNERS, CHRIST DIED FOR US.” ROMANS 5:8

**JESUS IS THE ONLY ONE AND THE ONLY WAY**

“CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS ... HE WAS BURIED ... HE WAS RAISED ON THE THIRD DAY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SCRIPTURES ... HE APPEARED TO CEPHAS (PETER), THEN TO THE TWELVE. THEN HE APPEARED TO MORE THAN FIVE HUNDRED...” 1 CORINTHIANS 15:3-6

Jesus’ resurrection from the dead shows that He has power over death so He can offer us eternal life with God.

“JESUS SAID TO HIM, ‘I AM THE WAY, AND THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE. NO ONE COMES TO THE FATHER EXCEPT THROUGH ME.’” JOHN 14:6
Jesus brings reconciliation and adoption

Jesus’s death and resurrection give us the opportunity to have a relationship with God. But that is not all Jesus came to do. His death and resurrection also allow us to be reconciled with others and have restored relationships as we are adopted into the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural family of God. *EPHESIANS 2:14-18*

What do we need to do in order to be in relationship with God, be adopted into His family, and accept the love and freedom He offers?
4. Our Response

We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Only then can we be in relationship with God and experience His love and freedom as part of His family.
WE MUST RECEIVE CHRIST

“But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,” John 1:12

WE RECEIVE CHRIST THROUGH FAITH

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” Ephesians 2:8, 9

There is nothing we can do to earn a relationship with God, but it is by grace (an undeserved, unearned gift) because of faith (trusting in God) that we can be saved (rescued from the penalty of our sin and brought into a relationship with God).

WE EXPERIENCE LOVE AND FREEDOM WHEN WE RECEIVE CHRIST

[JESUS SPEAKING] “I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.” John 10:10

Our relationship with God provides forgiveness instead of shame, a family instead of isolation, and purpose instead of meaninglessness.
WE ENTER THE FAMILY OF GOD WHEN WE RECEIVE CHRIST

“SO THEN YOU ARE NO LONGER STRANGERS AND ALIENS, BUT YOU ARE FELLOW CITIZENS WITH THE SAINTS AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD” EPHESIANS 2:19

When we receive Christ by faith, we are adopted into a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural family of God where everyone uniquely reflects God’s image and is united by Christ.

WE RECEIVE CHRIST BY PERSONAL INVITATION:

“BEHOLD, I STAND AT THE DOOR AND KNOCK. IF ANYONE HEARS MY VOICE AND OPENS THE DOOR, I WILL COME IN TO HIM” REVELATION 3:20

Jesus is ready and waiting to be in relationship with you.

Receiving Christ involves turning to God from self (repentance) and trusting Christ to come into our lives to forgive us of our sins and to make us what He wants us to be. Just to agree intellectually that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that He died on the cross for our sins is not enough. Nor is it enough to have an emotional experience. We receive Jesus Christ by faith, as an act of our will.
THESE TWO CIRCLES REPRESENT TWO KINDS OF LIVES

A LIFE WITHOUT JESUS CHRIST
SELF IS IN THE CENTER AND ON THE THRONE;
CHRIST IS OUTSIDE.

A LIFE ENTRUSTED TO CHRIST
CHRIST IS IN THE CENTER AND ON THE THRONE, AND SELF YIELDS TO CHRIST.

Which circle best describes your life?

Which circle would you like to have represent your life?
YOU CAN RECEIVE CHRIST RIGHT NOW BY FAITH THROUGH PRAYER

Prayer is talking to God. God knows your heart and is not so concerned with your words as He is with the attitude of your heart. The following is a suggested prayer:
“LORD JESUS, I NEED YOU. THANK YOU FOR DYING ON THE CROSS FOR MY SINS. I OPEN THE DOOR OF MY LIFE AND RECEIVE YOU AS MY SAVIOR AND LORD. THANK YOU FOR FORGIVING MY SINS AND GIVING ME ETERNAL LIFE. THANK YOU FOR MAKING ME IN YOUR IMAGE, GIVING ME VALUE AND DIGNITY, FOR ALLOWING ME TO KNOW YOU, AND FOR ADOPTING ME INTO YOUR FAMILY. TAKE CONTROL OF THE THRONE OF MY LIFE. MAKE ME THE KIND OF PERSON YOU WANT ME TO BE. HELP ME TO LOVE YOU AND LOVE OTHERS.”

If this prayer expresses the desire of your heart, then you can pray this prayer right now and Christ will come into your life as He promised.

DOES THIS PRAYER EXPRESS THE DESIRE OF YOUR HEART?