



WEEK 1 COVENANT PARTNER CLASS VIDEO SCRIPT

Vow #1 (Salvation) By God's Grace, Jesus is my Savior and Lord

- God has saved me by grace, through faith, not because of anything I have or have not done (Ephesians 2:8-10).
- I am a new creation, a fundamentally different person, because of Jesus' sacrificial death and resurrection (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- The Holy Spirit lives in me and is continually transforming me as I live my life for Christ (Romans 8:9-11, John 14:26, John 15:1-17)
- Through Jesus Christ, God has given me eternal life (Romans 8:11) and I eagerly await Christ's return (Revelation 21:3-4).

Outline

- It All Starts with Faith
 - Embracing that We are a New Creation
 - Developing a Personal Relationship with Jesus
 - ▶ Bible Study
 - ▶ Prayer
 - ▶ Reflection
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Welcome! Whether you're part of a Covenant Partner Class or you're just wanting to find out what it means to be a Covenant Partner of this faith family, I'm so grateful you're watching today. It's our prayer that this and the other three videos will help you deepen your faith and understand more of what it means to be a Covenant Partner with WPC.

Our Covenant Partner Class includes: 1. A weekly informational video related to one of the Covenant Partner Vows, 2. Questions for you to prayerfully reflect on, and 3. Group discussion which we trust will provide an opportunity to further reflect, share, and understand what's intended by each vow. These discussions also give you an opportunity to get to know the other folks in your class as well as the Elders who will be leading the conversation. It is my pleasure to join you for this video, discussing vow #1, Jesus is my Savior and Lord. By the way, I'm Lori Boehning, Pastor of Congregational Life here at Westminster. So, again, welcome!

"Faith walk" is a phrase we use to describe the deepening of our faith and growing relationship with Christ as we walk with Jesus throughout every day of our life. This week focuses on the beginning of that faith walk: the recognition of our sinfulness and imperfections and the acceptance of Jesus Christ as our Savior and Redeemer.

It All Starts with Faith

Our **faith** in Jesus comes from a belief, a firm conviction that what the Bible tells us about God, ourselves, and other people is true. This is not a simple thing, is it? There is no absolute evidence of that truth. Yet God gives us the ability to see evidence of Him in the world and in those who follow Him in order to help us take that initial step of faith. As the Holy Spirit guides us and we learn more, we gain greater certainty of both the historical truth of the Bible and that God is still working in our lives today. It encourages us to obey and serve Christ in every area of our life, with all of our heart. It is a lifelong challenge, "a long obedience in the same direction" as Eugene Peterson wrote, but one we pursue because Jesus is our Lord. A lifelong obedience that we only will fully realize when we are in His presence for all eternity. (Hebrews 11 is a great description of faith if you want to read more.)

Take a moment to pause this video and think back to people, events, or other realizations of led you to take that initial step of faith to know Jesus as your Savior?

So, looking at our first Covenant Partner Vow, what does it mean to say, "Jesus is my Savior"?

1. We're admitting that we need saving. Because of sin we have a broken relationship with God and we acknowledge that fact. We agree with the apostle Paul that any of our good intentions have been corrupted. As Paul writes in his letter to the Romans, "For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want it is no longer I who do it, but the sin that dwells within me" (Romans 7:15a & 19-20).
2. We accept God's grace, the unmerited gift of salvation through Jesus Christ, as the only remedy for our condition. "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. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:8-10).

Embracing that We are a New Creation

Saying 'yes' to Jesus is a life-transforming experience. By accepting Jesus as our Savior, we become "a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come" (2 Corinthians 5:17b). We no longer live a life apart from God, plagued by doubts and fears that we'll never be good enough. We can reject the lies that have bounced around in our head. Lies that tell us: You're worthless! You'll never live up to your potential. You're stuck with the hand life's dealt you. You're powerless to make a difference in this world. Thankfully, Jesus frees us from the power of sin, frees us from guilt, and frees us from hopelessness about the future. The Holy Spirit lives in us, guiding our lives in a new direction, giving us new purpose. As a new creation, we are freed from all the labels and identities that the world wants to put on us and we are given the most important identity we could ever have: a child of God, a son or daughter of the King of the Universe, someone Jesus loves unconditionally and gave His life to save.

But this is just the beginning — at this point, we are just starting to get to know this Jesus. The one who was fully God, yet fully human. Born a baby in Bethlehem and growing into a man in ancient Israel, Jesus experienced all the struggles of human life, ultimately dying a horrific death – death by crucifixion. As Christians, we believe Jesus' willing sacrifice enables us to have a restored, life-giving relationship with God, a relationship God longs for all people to have with Him. But the story doesn't end there. After three dead days in a tomb, Jesus came alive again showing the world his power and authority as God over sin, evil, and even over death itself. Jesus returned to His Father in heaven but sent His Holy Spirit to live in all who believe in Him so that His followers carry on His mission of bringing the Kingdom of God to this world. When our mission on earth is done, He calls us home to be with Him in glory forever.

What a miracle, what a gift! When we allow God's love to truly change us, we can't help but show our gratitude to Him through the way we live our daily lives. Such amazing, unconditional love is hard to believe, but very, very real. It gives us the foundation and courage to live our lives differently, showing that same forgiveness and grace to those we encounter each day. It drives us to learn more about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and the life He would have us live. It inspires us share our story of how Jesus changed our lives and invite others to know this Jesus, too. (Romans 12 gives a great picture of this new life.)

Take a moment to pause this video and think about how knowing Jesus as your Savior has changed who you are and how you approach life.

If now, or at any time during this video, you begin wondering, "I don't know that I've ever really given my life over to Jesus Christ," please reach out. Either of us pastors or any of our elders would all be delighted to talk with you. It only takes a short prayer to begin your faith walk. You can take that step now!

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead to set me free. Thank You for that gift, for forgiving my sins and creating a way for me to have a relationship with You. I no longer want to live my life for myself. I want to trust and follow You as my Lord and Savior. Send your Holy Spirit to guide and help me do just that. In Jesus' Name I pray, Amen.

What does it mean to say, "Jesus is my Lord"?

It is to give Jesus absolute control of all aspects of our life, confidently knowing He has only our ultimate best in mind. Now, while that's easily said, let's be honest: handing every aspect of our lives over to Jesus is a process and an ongoing commitment. It's the ultimate challenge and the greatest blessing of the Christian life, something we can only do by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit as we daily, intentionally seek to place His will before our own and do what He would have us do. In theological terms, this is called the sanctification process. Although we cannot fully get there this side of heaven, by God's grace we allow ourselves to be transformed by the Holy Spirit bit by bit, every day.

Developing a Personal Relationship with Jesus

Take a moment to pause this video and think about the steps you taken so far to develop your personal relationship with Jesus.

The Bible is a primary way God communicates to us and the final authority to how we live out our faith. Through the Bible, we meet real people, women and men, and learn how God works through them to accomplish His purposes – often in spite of their struggles, successes, and failures. We see that Before you sit down to listen to or read a passage from the Bible, pause to pray, “All-Wise God, open my ears and mind to grasp what You want me to learn today – about You, about myself in relationship with You, and about others.”

As you read passages, make sure to pause to reflect on what you read. Though the Bible was written long ago, it has an amazing way of speaking to our situations now. Listen for the Holy Spirit to give you insights into how that passage may apply to you now.

Prayer is two-way communication with God. Ultimately, helping us align our desires with God's desires for us, even as Jesus prays, “not my will but your will must be done” (Luke 22:42). Through prayer, we are reminded of who God is, who we are, and our true identity in Christ.

Reflection is a key component to solidifying our faith. Beyond reflecting on Bible passages and in prayer, it is important to make time to reflect on what God has done throughout your life, particularly after pivotal moments. That habit of reflection and sign-posting critical times you have seen God leading you can help get you through future challenges.

Take a moment to pause this video and think about one or more pivotal moments in your life where you can pinpoint God's leading as He walked alongside you during that challenging time.

If you want to read more about deepening your relationship with Jesus, consider reading *Deeper, Real Change for Real Sinners*, by Dane C. Ortlund.

While all these things can be done in solitude, people were not created to be solitary creatures. We need community — friends, family, and others that pop into our lives for short or long periods. Similarly, our faith is strengthened through joining together in community with fellow believers. This will be the focus of week 2.

Closing

If you are in a New Covenant Partner Class, step is to participate in the Week 1 discussion. In preparation for that discussion, please spend some time reflecting on the three questions that came out of this video in the Week 1 Handout.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion Slide & Handout

1. *What people, events, or other realizations of led you to take that initial step of faith to know Jesus as your Savior?*
2. *What habits (spiritual disciplines) have you nurtured to develop your personal relationship with Jesus?*
 - a. *Do regularly spend time reading or studying the Bible? What makes this time valuable to you? What makes it hard to carve out this time on a regular basis?*
 - b. *Do you regularly spend time in prayer? What about prayer do you find challenging or difficult? What do you love the most about prayer time with God?*
 - c. *What are the pivotal moments in your life where you can pinpoint God's leading? Is there one you'd be willing the share with the group this week?*
3. *How has knowing Jesus as your Savior has changed who you are and how you approach life?*
 - a. *How are you different because of your relationship with Christ?*
 - b. *How is your relationship with Jesus impacting in your life right now?*
 - c. *How real has God/Jesus/the Holy Spirit been to you this week? Where have you seen God at work in your life or the lives of others this week?*
 - d. *How can you show God's grace, love, forgiveness to someone today?*