

TENSION: You can become a Christian in a MOMENT

& It will take FOREVER to figure it out

**Icebreaker: Is there an activity, hobby, skill that you
have dedicated considerable time and effort to
become excellent at doing?**

Introduction:

Ephesians 2:8-10 8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

The tension is that on one hand, in a moment, we are saved as a free gift from God through faith and not by works we do. But on the other hand, God has good works for us to do for His glory.

The Christian journey is lived in the tension between Salvation and Sanctification. Salvation occurs in the moment when a person commits himself in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ and the Gospel message. Sanctification is the life-long living out of on-going faith in Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit that leads to increasing Christlikeness to the glory of God.

I. Becoming a Christian can happen in a moment; when you believe and receive the Gospel message.

Use these passages to address the following questions: Romans 10:8-13, 1 Peter 1:21,

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Colossians 1:19-23, Galatians 4:4-7, Hebrews 9:15

1. What is the Gospel message?
2. What is required in accepting the Gospel?
3. What is the result of accepting the Gospel message?
4. How has the Gospel message changed your life?

II. It's a lifelong tension between the flesh and the spirit. (spiritual battle)

5. What does it mean to live in the flesh? What does it mean to live in the Spirit? (Proverbs 20:9, Romans 7:15-25, Galatians 5:13-18)
6. Describe the tension between the flesh and the spirit. (Luke 16:13, 1 John 1:8-10, James 3:2)
7. How should we address this tension in our lives? (Luke 9:23, John 15:3-5, Romans 8:1-5, Philippians 3:12-14, Colossians 3:1-11)

III. Consumers reject commitment, but followers demonstrate it and demand it. (Commitment/Perseverance)

Use these passages to address the following questions: Matthew 22:37, Hebrews 12:1-3, 1 Corinthians 15:58, 2 Thessalonians 1:3-4, James 1:3-4, Colossians 1:9-11, 1 John 2:19, Hebrew 10:24-25

8. Why are perseverance and commitment important markers of a follower of Christ?
9. How should we share the need to persevere and commit to walk with Christ when sharing the Gospel?
10. What actions or attitudes demonstrate perseverance and commitment in the life of the believer? What is the result in the life of the believer?

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11. What can we do to avoid losing commitment in following Christ? Have there been times when you recommitted yourself to following Christ? What prompted you to make that commitment?

IV. The disciples' experience went from "our" kingdom to "Your" Kingdom. (Perspective)

12. What is the Kingdom of God? (Luke 17:20-21, Mark 4:26-32, Acts 17:5-7, Colossians 1:12-14, Revelation 17:14)

13. What does it mean to have a Kingdom focus? (Matthew 6:33, Romans 14:17-18, 2 Thessalonians 1:3-5, 2 Peter 1:5-11)

14. How can we take our focus off building our kingdom and commit to seeking and building the Kingdom of God?

V. Your story will be defined by how you display sacrificial faith to gain what you cannot see. (good works/action)

15. Biblically the word faith is both belief in Jesus Christ that leads to salvation and on-going trust in the promises of God through Jesus Christ. How are both understandings of faith important for the Christian? (Hebrews 10:22-23, 32-11:2, Romans 4:19-21)

16. What do you think sacrificial faith means? Why is it important for Christians to display this kind of faith? (Matthew 5:14-16, 2 Corinthians 9:13, James 2:20-22, 1 Peter 2:12)

17. How can we demonstrate sacrificial faith to the people and world around us to bring glory to God?