



# THE WHEEL DIAGRAM

The Basics Series  Lesson 5

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## The Basics Series ❖ Lesson 5

What are the basics of the Christian life? Don't let anyone push you off the road onto an exit ramp that will have you focusing on the "exotics" rather than the "essentials" of following Christ. Keep it simple, keep it doable, keep it biblical! Just keep diving deeper and deeper into the Lordship of Jesus Christ, your daily time in prayer and the Word, your love for other believers, and outreach to the lost. If you can get strong and consistent in these "basics," you are surely on your way to becoming a sold-out disciple of Jesus Christ. This Wheel Illustration is a great tool to evaluate your own spiritual growth, but also as a guide as you start to disciple other new believers. In fact, you might consider pulling it out every week to discern what aspect of "The Wheel" you personally need to grow in, as well as helping you put together a practical and biblical growth plan for the upcoming sessions you are having with your young disciples!



The Wheel Diagram by the Navigators

## The privileges of our identity in Christ

As you can see on the rim of the wheel diagram, the fruitful Christian life is essentially made up of living out the privileges of our new identity in Christ. The moment that we begin to see the aspects of the wheel diagram as requirements we need to fulfill — as opposed to privileges brought about by our identity in Christ — is the moment we step into legalism. Legalism is the mindset that we need to perform for God in order to get his approval. The good news of the gospel is that Jesus has performed for us on the cross, paid for our sins, and allows us to have a relationship with God that is not based on our performance, good or bad! With this in mind, now we can more closely look at who we are in our new God-given identity and what our new privileges are as God's children and servants.

## Christ the center

Just as the hub of a physical wheel is the power source, what the rest of the wheel depends on, so it is with our Christian life. The center of the wheel, our Union with Christ and the Lordship of Christ, is by far the most crucial aspect to understand about this illustration.

### Union with Christ

Based on the following verses, we see that because of what Jesus has accomplished on the cross — the taking on of our sin and curse and the transferring of his righteousness to us — we are now one with him and enjoy the benefits of the blessing that he deserves!

- **Read:** 2 Corinthians 5:14–17, 21; Galatians 3:13–14; John 15:4–7; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 1:27–29; Philippians 3:8–11
- **Application:** Ask yourself if you tend to find your identity from your union with Jesus, or from other places.

### Lordship of Christ

Not only have we been saved through our union with Christ, but King Jesus now rules in our life through the authority of his word. We get to obey the King who laid down his life for us!

- **Read:** Luke 6:46–49, 9:23–25; Colossians 1:15–23; Titus 2:11–14; Ephesians 2:1–10; Romans 12:1
- **Tool to Consider:** The Lordship Circles (Who is on the throne of your life?)
- **Application:** Ask yourself if Jesus truly is the Lord of your life or if he is just one among many advisors.

Our overall purpose in life can be summed up as follows: We are created to know (enjoy and glorify) God and make him known (1 Corinthians 10:31; Isaiah 43:7, 21; Mark 12:28–31). The rest

of the wheel diagram is built on this twofold purpose of knowing God (vertically) and making him known (horizontally).

## Vertical relationship with God

### Underneath the vertical spokes: Our identity as children

All Christians have the privilege of being called God's sons (Galatians 4:4–7; Romans 8:14–17), and the vertical spokes of the wheel represent the practical ways we can take advantage of our new status as God's children. Underneath the vertical spokes, pulsating out from our union with Christ, is our identity as children. As God's children, we get the opportunity to delight in a relationship with him! This is by far the most incredible privilege of our Christian life! (John 17:3; Philippians 3:10)

As with any relationship, two-way communication is a vital aspect to its health. In our relationship with God, we get to talk with God through prayer, and he talks with us through his word, the Bible.

In approaching God in prayer, we should be passionate and reverent (Heb. 5:13) as well as bold and confident (Hebrews 10:19–23; Ephesians 3:12). We should be desperately acknowledging our dependence on him while we ask him to do big things!

### Prayer

- **Read:** Colossians 4:2–4; Matthew 6:7–13; Philippians 4:6–7; John 15:7
- **Tool to Consider:** The ACTS method of prayer (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication)
- **Application:** Consider trying to pray through the ACTS method for 10 minutes along with a friend.

### Word of God

God has given us his perfect, authoritative, and inspired word to hear, read, study, memorize, meditate on, and apply to our lives. We should seek him in his word like we would seek silver or hidden treasure (Proverbs 2)!

- **Read:** 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:16–17; Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:1–3; 119:9–11; Romans 12:1–2
- **Tool to Consider:** The Hand illustration (Hear, Read, Study, Memorize, Meditate, Apply)
- **Application:** Consider studying, memorizing, and meditating on Romans 6:23.

## Horizontal relationships with people

### Underneath the horizontal spokes: Our identity as servants

Remembering that our performance of the spokes of the Wheel Diagram does not capture God's attention, we must look at our God-given identity that is underneath the horizontal spokes. God has not only given us the privilege of knowing him as his sons and daughters, but we also get the opportunity to be servants to others as we share the good news of the gospel with our non-believing and believing friends! God calls us into his mission of glorifying his name by making him known to all peoples! It's not that we "must" share our faith or encourage other Christians, but we *get* to live out our identity as servants just like Jesus did! (Mark 10:45)

### Fellowship

Coming into a new relationship with God as his children necessarily implies that we also come into a family relationship with his other sons and daughters. We have the duty and privilege to serve and encourage our brothers and sisters.

- **Read:** Hebrews 3:13; 10:24–25; John 13:34–35; Acts 2:42–47
- **Application:** Labor as a team, serve and encourage one another, and sharpen one another in accountability.

### Witnessing

We also get to come alongside God in his global mission of making his name known through personal evangelism to our friends. It's too good to be true! God not only saved us, but also wants to use us in his global purposes! How could we not share the great news of the gospel with our friends and receive the joy of working with God!

- **Read:** Matthew 28:18–20; Romans 1:16; 1 Peter. 3:15; 2 Corinthians 2:18–21; 2 Timothy 2:2; Matthew 4:19
- **Tool to Consider:** The Bridge Diagram (One verse evangelism using Rom. 6:23)
- **Application:** Compassionately care for people who do not know Jesus and courageously share the gospel with them.

## Discussion questions

1. What questions do you have about this illustration?
2. What aspect of the wheel do you feel strong in right now?

3. In which aspect of the wheel are you feeling weak?
4. What is your plan to grow in that area?
5. What kind of sacrifices do you think you may have to make to get strong in that area?
6. I know you're busy, and I am too, but I am trying to grow in that same area and would be very open to meeting with you to help you reach your goal. If you're serious about growing in this area, I am open to meeting. What do you think?

## **Follow up**

1. How could this tool be used each week in your own spiritual growth and development?
2. How could this tool be used with the young believers you are trying to help grow?
3. Show me. Draw the wheel illustration out for me, explain the components, and help me discern what I am strong and weak in.
4. Now use the tool to recruit me to start meeting with you for a more structured/committed discipleship relationship.