

# A GUIDE FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

An online version is available at [yesgod.info/new](http://yesgod.info/new) Links are readily accessible there.

Accepting Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior is the most life-changing decision you will ever make. It is the beginning of a brand-new life in Christ, and as a new-born child of God, there are many important things you need to understand. As a new Christian, you may find yourself somewhat confused as to what your next steps should be. There is no exact plan spelled out in the Bible regarding your next steps. Below are tips on how to grow in your new faith; they are *not* a list of requirements to become or to stay a Christian. God has a plan for you and your life, something you will discover day by day as you grow as a Christian and mature in your relationship with Christ. The first three are suggested to be done in order.

Suggested first steps.

1. **Review:** Watch the videos on the [Steps to Peace with God](#) website prepared by Billy Graham.
2. **Pray:** God is always listening, always caring, and already knows you better than you know yourself. Tell God your wrongdoings (sin). Ask for His help to do better and for anything else on your heart. Tell Him how awesome He is (Praise). Thank Him for anything and everything you are thankful for. [Dig deeper.](#)
3. **Read:** Use the online [Bible reading plan](#) or start by reading at least 10 minutes each day starting in the Gospel of John. [Dig deeper.](#)
4. **Learn:** Work your way through a beginner [Bible study](#). Or, as you read through the Bible, take notes about what you are learning about God and what you are learning about your relationship with Him.
5. **Ask:** When you have questions, get answers. [GotQuestions.org](#) will help you answer the practical questions you have about God and spiritual issues. Or, ask a Christian friend or pastor. [Dig Deeper](#)
6. **Listen:** Until you find a good church, [listen to online messages.](#)
7. **Live:** Start living your life for God. It's one of the simplest and at the same time the hardest thing to do. It's hard because inside, we're all selfish. Show your love to God by getting to know Him and as you learn what is pleasing to your perfect Heavenly Father, do it. Pass His love on to people you have contact with, loving them by doing what is best for them. [Dig Deeper](#)
8. **Get together:** [Find a good church.](#) [Why go to church?](#)
9. **Get help:** Find a Mentor. Ask an older Christian (of the same gender as you) to mentor you. Look for someone who displays the attitudes and actions that were described above. [More on gotquestions.](#)
10. **Get baptized:** When you find a church, your local pastor will help you with this. [Dig Deeper](#)
11. **Get friends:** Build friendships with other Christians. [Dig Deeper](#)
12. **Help others.** The Holy Spirit will lead you in ways to help. You might serve the poor in your community, assist a neighbor with yard work, or visit a

sick friend in the hospital. The Spirit will call you to show God's love [1 John 3:17-18](#)).

13. **Share your good news:** Tell someone about your faith. In some cases, other people will come to faith in Jesus through the example you share. Christians are still called to share the hope within us with others ([1 Peter 3:15-16](#)). [Dig Deeper](#)
14. **Never forget** how much God loves you.

## Important things to know

**God's Love** The one thing that the Bible emphasizes more than us loving God and people is that God loves us. He cannot not love you ([Romans. 5:8](#) and [1 John. 4:16](#)). Your motivation and the purpose of learning, serving, worshipping, giving, reaching, reading, praying, etc. is to grow relationally more in love with God and people ([Matthew 22:36-40](#)).

**You are now a child of God.** Just like as human children, we have a position with our parents that others don't have, It's the same with God. We have security and intimacy with God, being sure that even if we do wrong, we won't stop being children, including a [promised inheritance](#) in Heaven and one thing we don't always appreciate, discipline. [Dig Deeper](#)

**You are completely Forgiven:** It took a perfect and all-powerful Jesus to be able to forgive everything you could possibly do wrong. *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness"* ([1 John 1:9](#)). If you feel condemned, it is not God's voice. *"There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus..."* ([Romans 8:1](#)). [Dig Deeper](#)

**You're different now:** [2 Corinthians 5:17](#) says, *"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation: the old has gone, the new has come!"* When we ask Jesus into our lives, we are made new. You are not the person you used to be. You now, by God's power have the ability to overcome all the things that used to control you. [Dig Deeper](#)

**You may experience doubts:** One of the most common things that happens to a new believer is that the Devil tries to whisper doubts in your thoughts: "You're not really saved," or "Nothing really happened to you." But don't buy into Satan's lies and deceptions! If you placed your faith in Jesus Christ, then you are saved, regardless of whether you feel it or not. God's Word promises, *"If you confess with your mouth, Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved"* ([Romans 10:9](#)). [Dig Deeper](#)

# DIGGING DEEPER

The below sections are linked above by topic. You can choose between scrolling down or clicking on the Dig Deeper links above about topics that interest you.

## PRAYER

Prayer is simply talking with God and similarly, how you talk to those you love, no special formal words or locations are needed. Throughout each day, you can give thanks to God, ask Him to answer your daily needs and pray on behalf of others. [More on gotquestions.](#)

Getting to know God better is similar to getting to know a person, you'd talk and listen to them, talk to others who know them, and talk about them.

Prayer is vital to your spiritual growth. God is your Heavenly Father, and He wants to hear from you and have ongoing daily fellowship with you. 1 Thessalonians 5:17 tells us to "*pray without ceasing*," an ongoing communication with God.

Prayer is such a vital aspect of a healthy walk with God. Think of it, we can talk with GOD! Anytime, anywhere, no matter how we feel at the time. God is always there, always listening. Hebrews 13:5b "*Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.*". Psalm 62:8 tells us to "*pour out your hearts to God.*"

A way to pray is to use the acronym [ACTS](#):

[Adoration](#)...is where we praise God for who He is: loving, good, kind, understanding, gracious, etc. As you read Bible you'll learn more about God and will have more and more to praise Him for. You could read a Psalm a day (takes less than 5 minutes) and praise God for what you learn about who He is. Adoration (Praise) to God is similar to what you hear people saying about the talents of star athletes. Wow, they are awesome! God is SO MUCH more awesome. TELL HIM!

[Confession](#) The things we do wrong (sins) get in the way of our close relationship with God. The word *confess* means "to agree with." A somewhat popular phrase is, "My bad." Confession is looking to God and saying, "My bad." We're telling Him that we have sinned against Him by what we have said, thought, or done. It's good to express sorrow for how we have hurt God and how our actions caused Him to have Jesus suffer on our behalf God forgives us and restores our closeness with Him ([1 John 1:9](#)).

[Thanksgiving](#)...is when we just say thanks to God for all He has done. Again, the Psalms are a great place to head to be reminded of all He has done for us. Try using the psalmists' words as your own to learn to talk with God. The difference between worship and thanksgiving is that worship (adoration) focuses on who God is; thanksgiving focuses on what God has done. Make a list of all the things you're thankful to God for (Spiritual, Physical, and Relational). Note that all good comes from God so every good you have has its source in God. ([James 1:17](#))

[Supplication](#) – The S stands for supplication, which refers to prayer for our and others' needs. A supplication is a request or petition. We may pray for mercy ([Psalm 4:1](#)), leading ([Psalm 5:8](#)), wisdom ([James 1:5](#)), and much more. Paul encouraged us to make "supplication for all the saints" ([Ephesians 6:18](#)), which means to pray diligently for our brothers and sisters in Christ. Consider praying for friends, family,

your pastor, missionaries, government leaders, and persecuted Christians around the world. You can pray for yourself for such things as God's guidance, wisdom, and opportunities to serve.

## THE HOLY BIBLE

**God's Word to you** The Bible is God's Word, and as you read from it every day, it will cause you to grow spiritually ([2 Timothy 2:15](#)). As you study His written word (start with the Gospel of John), He will strengthen your faith, speak to your heart, and give you guidance and direction for every need and decision in your life. *"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path"* (*Psalms 119:105*).

The Bible is the very word and will of God, preserved for us so we can get to know who He is and what He wants for our lives. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, *"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."* That is why we need to spend time reading the Bible every day. If you don't have a Bible that's easy to understand, Begin with the Gospel of John in the New Testament. (This Book, sometimes referred to simply as "John", is the fourth book in the New Testament, near the beginning, not to be confused with 1 John, 2 John, and 3 John, found at the end of the New Testament.) I like using a journal or pad of paper to write down inquiries and observations. Answer these two questions for each chapter: What do I learn about God or Jesus? Are there things discussed that I should begin practicing or avoid altogether? This will help you to see that the Bible is very practical to your life today. After you finish John, just keep going all the way to Revelation.

When we read the Bible we learn how loved we are by God. *"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!"* (1 John 3:1). We learn that we are entirely new people because we've invited Jesus to be our Savior and Lord. Read [Ephesians 1:3-14](#) and spend a moment listing all the things that are true of you as a Christian. Amazing, isn't it?

**Where to start?** The Bible is God's message to us today. Many Bibles are direct translations and are best for study. Some are paraphrased for readability.

A free online bible for your computer, tablet, or phone can be found at [Bible.com](#). You can listen to it as well as read it online. Bible.com also provides a [great daily devotional and easy online reading plan](#) just for people who want to learn more about God. Should you choose to read on your own, some books of the Bible are easier to [read first](#). Some translations are [more accurate](#) than others.

**The Books** The Holy Bible is a collection of many books written by several authors inspired by God over a period spanning some 1,500 years or so. The Old Testament contains books written before the time of Christ, while the New Testament contains documents about the life of Christ and the early Church. The Gospels include Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. These four books contain accounts of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. John is a good place for a new Christian to become introduced to Christ and His message. Next, you will find the book of Acts, which records many exciting and challenging events in the life of the early Christians and the early Church. It introduces a key individual known as Paul, who went on to become one of the most important Christians in the early church. Following Acts you will encounter several epistles, or letters, from various individuals writing to other Christians. These are highly practical letters, emphasizing the Christian life. James is a good epistle to read for practical insights into the Christian life. The last book in the New Testament is Revelation, a work of apocalyptic literature that contains many images and predictions (prophecies). Although it tends to get a lot of attention in popular books and discussions, Revelation is generally not the best place for a new Christian to begin studies. This is not because it is not useful or helpful, but because approaching it and being able to make helpful sense out of it requires a fairly broad background in Bible history and other passages that it references. Revelation also provides wonderful imagery of a future time when Christ will return and evil will ultimately be overcome.

## **YOU'LL HAVE QUESTIONS**

Most likely you will have several questions about Christianity. Don't be discouraged if you do, but do your best to get your questions answered. Christianity is not a belief system that discourages questions or the life of the mind. All truth is God's truth. [More on Focus on the Family](#)

## **BAPTISM**

symbolizes your new life in Christ and proclaims that you are now committed to Jesus. Even Jesus was baptized ([Luke 3:1-22](#)), and He calls His followers to also be baptized. Baptism was practiced by the very first followers of Jesus in [Acts 2:41](#).

## **CHILD OF GOD**

These webpages do a good job from different perspectives explaining simply and deeply what it means to be a child of God. [Steps of Faith](#) [The Good Book](#)

## **FIND A MENTOR**

So many people have believed the lie that seeking others' help and guidance is a sign of weakness. This is called pride. The truth is that we can only grow so much on our own and that alone we are much more prone to damaging mistakes.

*"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up on meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another--- and all the more as you see the Day approaching."* [Hebrews 10:24-25](#)

## **FIND AND KEEP GOING TO A CHURCH**

The Bible tells us we need to attend church so we can worship God with other believers and be taught His Word for our spiritual growth. Church is the place where believers can encourage one another ([Hebrews 3:13](#)), "spur" one another to love and good works ([Hebrews 10:24](#)) and instruct one another ([Romans 15:14](#)). Church is a good habit, and allows us to feel reverence, provides opportunities to give back, helps us understand difficulties, teaches us forgiveness, provides opportunity to worship through song, helps us find deeper meaning, gives us good teaching, is essential for growth and a positive example for others. Church is what Jesus did and we're to follow His ways. [Dig Deeper Doc](#)

## **LIVE YOUR LIFE FOR GOD**

Christians are not perfect. However, God wants you to "aim" toward perfection, toward being like Jesus. That is, your goal must be to grow in submitting yourself to the new nature of His Spirit in your heart, follow the example of Jesus, and live a godly and wholesome life ([Hebrews 12:14](#)). You repented and asked Him to forgive your sins, and now you need to grow closer to Him each day, which will take you farther away from sinful thoughts and behavior which are displeasing to God. Your faith in God will cause a desire to obey Him and do those things pleasing in His sight ([Colossians 1:10](#)).

## **YOU MAY EXPERIENCE DOUBTS:**

You are saved by Faith, not feelings: *"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith -- and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God -- not by works, so that no one can boast"* ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#)), There may be times when you "feel" that God is close to you, and other times when you "feel" that He's not. But remember that He has promised to always be with you and never leave you, regardless of feelings ([Hebrews 13:5](#)). Always remember that the Christian lives by faith, not by sight or the feelings of our natural senses. The Bible says *"We live by faith, not by sight"* ([2 Corinthians 5:7](#)). Consider this. We seldom experience the strength of our national defense. And yet we seldom worry that we will be overtaken by another country. As a Christian, you will have your ups and downs. It's important that you do not base the reality of your relationship with Christ or what He has done for you on your feelings. [More on Focus on the Family](#)

## **TALK TO OTHERS WHO KNOW GOD**

This is simply called fellowship, hanging out with other people who love Jesus. It can be at church, in a Bible study, or a small group. It is for the purpose of growing together (Acts 2:46-47). Many of us will need to make new friendships and learn how to have fun in different sorts of ways. By spending time with believers, our behaviors begin to change and we learn what older believers look and act like.

## **TALK TO OTHERS ABOUT GOD**

This is called witnessing. In 2 Corinthians 5:17-20, *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God."* You received an incredible gift, eternal life with an ever-loving God. Share that gift with those around you. Not everyone will be excited to hear your news. God calls people to Himself so you can't talk someone else into accepting His gift, simply share that it's there waiting for them to be ready. You can make a list of the top ten people I wanted to talk to about the Lord and then just wait for Him to open up the opportunities to do so.

## **YOU'RE DIFFERENT NOW**

As we follow Jesus, our actions and desires begin to change. Jesus' death paid the penalty for your past sins as well as all the sins you'll commit today and in the future. He's that powerful! And that same power is now in you. That's called the Holy Spirit. He is our guide and gives us the ability to overcome sin. You may not feel instantly stripped of all of your imperfections and insecurities. Part of learning to follow Jesus step by step is learning to hear from Jesus and do what He says. As we follow Jesus, our actions and desires begin to change. Instead of wanting the things our old selves would want and doing the things our old selves would do, we find ourselves wanting what Jesus wants and doing what Jesus would do. A common trap for new and growing Christians is trying to clean up their lives without God's help. God cares about your whole life, not just your "spiritual life." It is a mistake to think that God is only concerned about a section of your life called "your soul" or "your spirit." God cares about and is to be the Lord of all of your life—personal, emotional, social, familial, financial, physical, vocational, sexual, intellectual, and so on. At the moment you accepted Jesus, He came into your heart by His Spirit, and now His presence and nature lives and dwells in your heart (1 Corinthians 6:19). You did not merely become a better person, you were "born again" spiritually as a brand new person! Now He wants you to learn to live your life according to the new nature of His Spirit inside you. The Bible says *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation: the old has gone, the new has come!"* (2 Corinthians 5:17).

**YOU ARE FORGIVEN OF ALL YOUR SINS** The Bible teaches that all mankind has a sinful nature which keeps him separated from God's presence and will result in eternal death. But Jesus came to suffer the consequences of that sin as our substitute so that we could be forgiven of sin and have access to God's presence. When you repented (turned away) from your sins, and asked Jesus to forgive you and become your savior, that's exactly what he did. He forgave every sin you've ever committed, regardless of how awful or evil they may have been. God can forgive more sins than man can commit. *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness"* (1 John 1:9). You're not perfect, just forgiven. Being a Christian doesn't mean that you won't make mistakes, but it means that you are forgiven of sin and that your goal is to live like Christ and not live in the old sinful way anymore. Don't ever let the Devil condemn you if you stumble or make a mistake! God loves you and wants you to ask Him to forgive you, then He wants you to get back on your feet and keep walking for Him! Don't ever let other people or the Devil bring condemnation upon you! God loves you and will correct you, but He will not condemn you. *"There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus..."* (Romans 8:1).

**YOU HAVE THE PROMISE OF ETERNAL LIFE** God's Word says that when you place your faith in Christ, you are given eternal life. That is, someday when your physical body wears out and dies, your soul will go to be in the Lord's presence to spend eternity with Him! *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life"* (John 3:16).

The above is a compilation of personal thoughts, rewording, and quotes from the below sources.

Suggested additional reading

- <https://www.sermoncentral.com/pastors-preaching-articles/brian-mavis-10-things-every-new-believer-should-know-1963>
- <https://newspring.cc/articles/3-things-every-new-christian-needs-to-know>
- <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/becoming-a-christian/how-can-i-be-saved/first-steps-in-the-christian-life>
- <https://www.startingwithgod.com/new-life/new/>

Other sources

<http://www.victorious.org/pub/new-christians-121>

<https://www.livingwellspendingless.com/2016/12/02/the-surprising-benefits-of-going-to-church/>