



Quick Guide for New Christians

7 Basic Steps for Anyone Beginning to Follow Jesus

We are so glad you decided to become a Christian, dedicating your life to serving Jesus!

You are not alone on your journey. Jesus is with you always. You are also now part of the worldwide group of Christian believers referred to as the Church in the Bible. We all may have different backgrounds and different views at times, but we're united in our love and devotion to Jesus Christ.

Below are some brief suggestions on how to begin your new journey as a new Christian. Remember: This is a life-long journey – you won't have all of this mastered overnight! 😊

1. Tell Someone about Your Decision!

- Share your good news with other Christians as well as your family and friends.
- Make your decision public by speaking with a pastor/minister/priest or by going to the front of the church during the closing invitation song.

2. Be Baptized!

Be baptized by water. Baptism serves as a powerful event demonstrating the washing away of your sin and your new, fresh life in Christ. Some Christians believe that baptism is symbolic; others believe that baptism actually removes sin. Whichever you believe, make sure that you are baptized. If you were baptized as an infant, talk to your minister about being baptized again.

3. Begin Reading the Bible.

Now that you are a Christian, you will want to learn more about God and how to follow His will for your life. Reading His inspired Word, The Bible, will help you reach this goal. Before you begin reading, always pray for the Holy Spirit to guide you and to reveal God's truth to you.

Structure of the Bible

The Bible is divided into the Old Testament (events that happened prior to Jesus) and the New Testament (Jesus' birth and subsequent events). Each testament is divided into books. The books were all inspired by God but written by a variety of different authors. Each book is divided

into chapters and then subdivided into verses. The verse helps you find a specific point in the Bible. The notation looks like this: Romans 3:23 (Romans is the book; 3 is the chapter; 23 is the verse). Every Bible is broken into these books, chapters and verses so you can easily find a verse that you need.

Bible Translations

We recommend getting a copy of the King James Version (KJV). It is very accurate to the original Greek and Hebrew texts but may be hard to read at times. That's why we also suggest getting a copy of the New Living Translation (NLT). The NLT is easier to read because it is paraphrased, but our opinion is that the accuracy is not as high, so make sure that you always compare both. Other popular translations include the New International Version (NIV) and New King James Version (NKJV). Most recently, a public domain version has been created called the World English Bible, which is quite good and reasonably close to the KJV.

Where to Start Reading

- Start with the New Testament books of Luke and John. They're a great way to learn about Jesus, His life, and His teachings.
- Read Genesis. You'll learn about the beginning of the world and God's early guidance.
- Read Psalms and Proverbs. These Old Testament books will give you inspiration, comfort and guidance.
- Read Luke and Acts to learn how Christianity spread in the early days of the Church and about Paul's (one of the first Christians) miraculous conversion.
- Read some of Paul's letters to the early Christian churches (I and II Corinthians; Galatians; Ephesians; Philippians; Colossians; Romans).
- Read through other New Testament (such as the Book of James) and Old Testament books.

How To Read

- Keep reading your Bible every day, particularly the New Testament. If you forget, pick it up the next day. Just like anything else, you have to be persistent to make it a habit.
- Before you begin reading, pray for the Holy Spirit to help you understand and apply what you read to your life.
- Think about what you've read. Consider what it means for your life.
- Talk about what you've learned with other Christians.
- If you have a question, ask your pastor/preacher/priest or a mature Christian to help guide you.
- If you'd like, keep a journal nearby, write notes about what you've learned.

4. Talk to God in Prayer Every Day.

Did you know that you can have an audience with God any time you want it? What earthly king would ever give us such an invitation? Enjoy this gift that God has given us. Pray only to Him and no one else. Pray as often as you can. In fact, the Bible tells us to pray without ceasing!

Suggestions for Your Prayers

(See the Bible, the Book of Matthew, Chapter 6, Verses 5-19 for Jesus' model prayer, commonly referred to as the "Lord's Prayer")

- Address your prayers to your "Father in Heaven."



- Praise and thank Him for what He's done for you, others and the world as a whole.
- Praise Him for the awesomeness of His creation (the mountains, the ocean, etc.).
- Pray for His kingdom to come and His will to be done here on earth like it is in Heaven.
- Ask Him by faith to supply you with what you need (e.g. food, healing, etc.).
- Ask Him to help you make decisions.
- Ask Him to move in other people's hearts so they will know Jesus as their Lord and Savior. (pray generally and for specific people)
- Ask Him to protect you and others.
- Ask Him to use you as his servant.
- Ask Him for spiritual gifts (wisdom, knowledge, discernment, teaching, evangelism, mercy, hospitality, prophecy, etc.)
- Ask Him to develop your spiritual nature (love, peace, joy, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control).
- Ask Him to guide, heal and protect others around you.
- Confess your sins (be as specific as possible). Ask for His forgiveness and for the strength and guidance to avoid committing the same sins.
- Declare to him your forgiveness of other people (be as specific as possible). Ask Him to keep you away from temptation and evil.
- Declare that His kingdom, power and glory will last forever.
- Close your prayers with "In Jesus' name, Amen" or "I ask all these things in Jesus' name, Amen." Jesus promises that whatever we ask in His name, according to God's will, shall be given to us.

5. Worship God and Build Relationships with Christians.

Go to a church where the teachings of Christ are preached and Jesus is the only true path to God.

There are lots of ways you can find a church. If you know Christians, ask them to recommend a church (or go with them!) If you don't know anyone to ask, surf the web or check out your local phone book for a mainline Christian denomination (such as Baptist, Methodist, Christian Church, Nazarene, Community Church, Church of Christ, Presbyterian, Lutheran, etc.).

If you don't like the first church you attend, don't despair. God will help you find the right church. Just pray about it and try another.

Make sure you do go to church, though. Attending church will give you a unique opportunity to express your praise and thanks to God with others, help you learn more about God (which will help you grow spiritually) and will connect you with other Christians who will help guide you. Once you find the right church, you'll have a lot of fun, too!

As you attend, get involved in the various activities at church, make friends and look for ways to use your talents to express your love for God and others.

Remember, though: Humans make mistakes. Sometimes people get disillusioned because the people they see in church aren't "perfect" – whether they be attendees or even a preacher! Fact is: some people who attend churches aren't even Christians. And, those of us who are still make stupid mistakes sometimes. Being a Christian doesn't make you instantly perfect. Only

Jesus is perfect. As Christians, we strive to be more like Christ, but the road is a long tough one and we step in potholes along the way or wander off the path. For that reason, never place your faith in people around you; people will let you down. Always keep your faith firmly rooted in God, and if you're looking for perfection, look to Jesus alone.

In addition to searching for a church, you may want to get plugged-in with an online group of Christians. ChristianForums.com is one of the Top 20 largest forums in the world. You'll find lots of fun things to do there and plenty of helpful Christians to answer your questions. It's totally free and certainly worth checking out.

6. Discover Your Spiritual Gifts.

As you grow as a Christian, God will give you special spiritual gifts, such as the gift of teaching, wisdom, knowledge, hospitality, etc. You can always pray and ask for a spiritual gift and for the Holy Spirit to show you how to use it. [To learn more about your spiritual gifts, click here](http://www.churchgrowth.org/cgi-cg/gifts.cgi?intro=1) (or go to: <http://www.churchgrowth.org/cgi-cg/gifts.cgi?intro=1>). It's fun and free-of-charge!

7. Be an Ambassador for Jesus.

You are now Christ's representative in a sinful world. You now know the Good News about how people can be free from the penalty of sin! You now have the honor of showing others the love and forgiveness that you have found in Jesus and spreading the Good News about Jesus.

- **Live the teachings of Jesus.** As a Christian, you are now charged with the mission of learning to be like Jesus. How do you do this? Christ gave us many instructions on how to live as God wishes. They are outlined in the Gospels (the books of the Bible called Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). The most important rule to remember is the Golden Rule provided by Jesus: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Pray for the Holy Spirit to show you how to live like Jesus.
- **Be a role model for others by turning away from your sinful nature.** This will be tough, but don't get discouraged. You may really wrestle with turning loose of your old sinful ways. But, you must ask the Holy Spirit to guide and strengthen you to keep you from falling into the trap of sin. When you slip up, immediately ask for forgiveness from God and ask Him to help sensitize you to sin and show you how to stay away from sin traps (temptation). Don't let yourself fall into a pattern of sin (if you do, pray for God's forgiveness and help and seek Christian counseling). Remember: Jesus died to set us free from the chains and bondage of sin, but the Bible says that our sins even as Christians can grieve the Holy Spirit. Why get caught up in something that will only hamper your relationship with God?
- **Demonstrate God's mercy to others.** You have received the very precious gift of salvation from God. He has shown you tremendous mercy by forgiving your sins. Since we are all sinners (and continue to be so after we are saved), we must not judge, criticize or condemn anyone else for the sins they commit. We are no better than them—just forgiven. Now is a good time, too, to forgive everyone who has wronged you in the past. Show them mercy, as God has shown mercy to you. When you forgive others, you turn over "justice" to God so

that He can heal your heart.

- **Help those in need.** Give of your time and money to help the needy, the sick, the elderly, the homeless, widows, orphans and others who are experiencing a crisis. One reason why we like the Christian relief organizations, [Samaritan's Purse](#), [Compassion International](#) and [Gospel for Asia](#), is because they are so focused on helping those in need (and they have very good [MinistryWatch](#) ratings).
- **Tell others about Jesus.** Pray for the Holy Spirit to show you every available opportunity for you to share Jesus with others (telling others about Jesus is also called evangelism).

Some Evangelism Ideas:

- (1) Invite your friends, neighbors, co-workers and family to attend church with you.
- (2) Tell them what God means to you. Share your story! Don't be argumentative. Be genuine.
- (3) Give them information about how to become a Christian. Most churches have pamphlets you can use or you can download and distribute information from www.ShareWithFriends.com.

Conclusion

This is the end of this study, but it's just the beginning of an exciting adventure that awaits you as a Christian, here on earth and one day in heaven.

Keep growing in your faith and praying that God will bless you abundantly with spiritual treasures — faith, hope, joy, patience, kindness, mercy, peace and much more! Store up those spiritual treasures in heaven and don't let yourself get distracted by trying to store up earthly treasure (money, possessions, etc.).

*Jesus said, "I have come that they may have life,
and that they may have it more abundantly."
— John 10:10*

Before we wrap up, let's take a moment to pray:

"Father in Heaven, thank you for everything you have done for me, especially for sending your Son, Jesus, to die for my sins! Please guide me and direct me in everything that I do. Help me stay on the right path and grow in love, faith, hope and wisdom. Help me to grow. Please keep me away from temptation and evil. Please give me a thirst to learn more about you. Give me the courage and the words to tell others about what you mean to me. In Jesus' name, Amen."

May God bless you, protect you, reveal Himself to you and guide you all of your days!

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