

Seeking God Workbook

How You Can Have
A Real Relationship with God



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1

Preparing To Find God

Buried within the heart of every human being lies a feeling of emptiness, tugging at our hearts. Some time around high school or maybe even earlier, you and I began to sense something missing in our lives.

As we grew older, we came up with ways to fill that void: social media, relationships with our family and friends, our jobs, our hobbies, a car or house, TV, video games, socializing, and a million other little things that consume our time. But, in the quiet times, we still can't shake the loneliness--an inexplicable emptiness--that fills our hearts.

Perhaps you can feel that emptiness right now.
Maybe that's what started you on your search to find God.

There are answers waiting for you--answers that you can discover at your own pace.

Consider this workbook to be a road map to help you unravel some of the mysteries about God that have been lurking in your mind and help fill the void in your heart.

✂ Digging Deeper

Take a few moments and contemplate the following question.

What do you hope to get out of this workbook?

♥ Connection Point

Before we go any further, take a moment to open your heart to what you'll be reading. You may even want to utter this quick prayer...it's a request to God:

"God, if You're there, help me have an open mind. Help me find You."

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Identifying What You Believe

The alarm goes off. A phone rings. A message pops up. A car horn honks. A crying child. Twenty minutes to cook dinner. Watch a movie. Go to a concert. Get ready for work. Visit the parents. Find that lost sock. Taxes, taxes and more taxes. Buy a new pair of pants. Bills. Wait in line. Car repair. Time to go to the grocery store. Work on your relationships. Barking dog. The news of the day. Noise, noise, noise. Scream!

The demands of our daily world can be very distracting. It's so easy to get caught up in the day-to-day events that fill up our lives, without taking much time to contemplate the real meaning of life. Plus, who really knows the meaning of life, anyway?

The answer is out there. Perhaps one reason you're reading this is because you're interested in figuring out the answer. So, let's get started.

✂ Digging Deeper

Take a few moments and contemplate the following questions.

What do you believe about God?

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Can you think of a time when you felt the presence of God?

Do you believe in Heaven? Why or why not?

If you could know the truth about God, would you want to know it?

You might find it helpful to jot your answers in the space provided and some notes in a notebook. Write as much or as little as you want. If you have questions you want answered, include them as well.

♥ Connection Point

At this point, you may find it helpful to say a quick prayer:

"God, I've heard a lot of things about You over the years. Some things might be true; others false. I'm sure there are many more things that I have never even heard! I really do want to know the truth. I want to know what life is all about and who You really are. Please help me learn the truth about You. Help me see how Jesus fits into the picture. Open up my heart and mind so I can hear You. Amen."

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Discovering Evidence of God

Evidence of God is all around us. Tragically, though, we often ignore or explain away obvious signs of His presence. Teachers, family, friends, TV and social media can even be distractions as we try to discover the truth.

In this step, we're going to go back to square one and examine some of the basic evidence. In this chapter, you'll see three fact-finding activities that will help you uncover clues. Choose one. Choose them all. Consider yourself a spiritual detective. Sift through the evidence until you are ready to move to **Chapter 4**.

🔍 Clue #1: Nature

Immerse yourself in nature. Choose one of these activities or one of your own.

- ☐ Take a walk through a park.
- ☐ Drive through the countryside.
- ☐ Sit by a lake, river, or stream.
- ☐ Listen to the ocean waves.
- ☐ Photograph a nearby forest.
- ☐ Visit a garden (even your own!).
- ☐ Sketch or paint a landscape scene.
- ☐ Visit the zoo and watch the animals.
- ☐ Canoe down a stream.
- ☐ Hike or climb up a hill or mountain.
- ☐ Play with puppies or kittens.
- ☐ Look at nature photographs.
- ☐ Write a poem about the growth of a tree.
- ☐ Look up at the planets and stars.
- ☐ Observe newborn babies in a nursery.

♥ Connection Point

Before you get started, silently say to God, "God, please open my heart and mind to see Your role in the creation of the Earth. Help me to take a fresh look at things I see every day. Don't let me be biased by what I've heard in the past."

As you enjoy your nature experience, take a few moments to consider the enormity and complexity of the world around you. Contemplate God and the awesome power required to create the Earth. If you'd like, jot a few notes in on a journal page (see next page; make plenty of copies!) for each activity, documenting any new revelations you've had about God.

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Clue 1: Nature -- Journal Entry

Date: _____ Location: _____

Activity: _____

What I Did

What I Discovered About God

Things I Want to Explore Further

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🔑 Clue #2: His Holy Word

If you want to know the truth, you must go to the source and examine God's Holy Word, the Bible. The theme of the Bible could be summarized as "God's Loving Plan for Humankind." The Bible reveals answers to some of life's toughest questions, such as...

- ✓ How and why was the Earth created?
- ✓ How and why has God been an ever-present force for centuries?
- ✓ How does God want me to live?
- ✓ What is sin?
- ✓ Is being a sinner a "fatal" condition? What's the cure?
- ✓ Who is Jesus? Why did He live? Die? Come back to life?
- ✓ How can I have a personal relationship with God?

In this exercise, you will begin to study the Bible. Your goal here is to examine the Bible and look for evidence of God.

If this the first time you've ever read the Bible, you may want to start with reading the Book of Luke or the Book of John in the New Testament. These books will tell you more about Jesus.

Then, begin reading Romans in the New Testament. This will help you understand the significance of Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

Then, jump back to the very beginning -- the creation. Read the first few chapters or so of the Book of Genesis, which is the first book in the Old Testament.

After that, read as much as you like of the Bible, particularly the Books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.. You may want to purchase a copy of the Bible in your local bookstore or online. Some of the accepted modern translations include: the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), the New International Version (NIV), the New King James Version (NKJV). The New Living Translation (NLT) is also a very good, easy-to-read version and is our favorite. The classic version is the King James Version (KJV). It's beautifully written but can be a little tedious to read.

As you read through the Bible, you may want to make a journal entry (see next page). Write about your thoughts regarding God and Jesus.

♥ Connection Point

Before you get started, silently say to God, "God, I really want to know whether or not this is Your Holy Word. Please help me see evidence of You. Help me understand who Jesus is and why He's mentioned so often in the Bible."



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Clue 2: His Holy Word -- Journal Entry

Date: _____ Passage Read: _____

Here's a Summary of What I Read

Here's Something That Stood Out to Me

Things I Read That I Want to Explore Further

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🔑 Clue #3: The Experiences of Others

God has touched the lives of many over the years--some subtly, others miraculously. In this exercise, begin to interview Christians, ones who you feel could have a good grasp of the true meaning of what Christianity is all about. You can conduct interviews in several different ways.

A. Talk to Devout Christians You Know and Respect

Do you know any Christians that you respect? Using the interview worksheet on the next page, ask them questions about why they believe in God and how He has made a difference in their lives.

If you find it helpful, take notes and read over them after your interview. What did you learn?

Note: Some Christians may urge you to take the next step (making a decision to follow Christ) at that moment. If you're ready, by all means, go right ahead! If you aren't ready, just tell them that you're still investigating and that you may talk to them again at a later date.

B. Talk to a Pastor/Preacher/Priest

Ask a Christian you respect to refer you to a pastor, preacher or priest. If you don't know anyone who can refer you, search online for a nearby Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, Lutheran, Reformed Christian, Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ or other mainstream denomination that has pastoral counseling. Use the interview worksheet on the next page to guide your conversation.

♥ Connection Point

Before we go any further, take a moment to open your heart to what you may hear during your interviews. You may even want to utter this quick prayer...

"God, help me learn more about you during these interviews."

Clue 3: Interviewing Worksheet

Date: _____ Person Interviewed: _____

What do you believe about God?

Why did you decide to follow Jesus?

How has God made a difference in your life?

Has God made a difference in the lives of other people you know?

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God's Plan for Your Life

God exists and He wants to have a relationship with you!
God loves you more than you could possibly imagine—
regardless of what you've ever said or done or thought about
Him! He wants you to be his child! Let's take a moment to
walk step-by-step through God's grand design and His plan
for your life.

♥ Connection Point

Before we go any further, take a moment to open your
heart to what God is trying to tell you about His plan for
our world and your life...

"God, please open my heart so I can see how much you
love me and so I can understand your plan for our world
and my life. Help me to see the truth. Please help me to
know what to do with all of this."

Step #1: Understanding God's Plan

The ability to love and be loved is shared by all humans.
Creating us in His own image, God desires for us to live in
harmony with complete satisfaction of all of our needs,
sharing and communicating regularly with Him. He wants us
to have peace and fulfillment, joy and eternal life with Him.

True love, though, can only be fully experienced when you are
not expected to love the other person. In other words, for us to
be able to truly demonstrate our love for God, He had to give
us the free will to choose otherwise...not to love Him and not
to obey the laws He created for us.

Step #2: Realizing Our Separation from Him

When Adam and Eve so many years ago chose their own
selfishness over the request of God, they sealed our fate. Since
then, our forefathers and every one of us have been
predisposed to a fatal flaw -- sin.

"There is a way that seems
right to a man, but in the end it
leads to death."
Proverbs 14:12

"For all have sinned; all fall
short of God's glorious
standard."
Romans 3:23

"But your iniquities have
separated you from your God;
your sins have hidden
His face from you,
so that He will not Hear."
Isaiah 59:2

"For the wages of sin is death,
but the free gift of God is
eternal life in
Christ Jesus our Lord."
Romans 6:23

"But God demonstrates His
own love for us in this:
While we were still sinners,
Christ died for us."
Romans 5:8

"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

"For Christ died for sins once
for all, the righteous
for the unrighteous,
to bring you to God."
1 Peter 3:18

"For there is one God and one
mediator between God and
men, the man Christ Jesus."
1 Timothy 2:5

"Here I am! I stand at the door
and knock. If anyone hears my
voice and opens the door,
I will come in and eat with him,
and he with Me."
Revelation 3:20



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Sinfulness is disobedience to God and, whether we like it or not, we have all been guilty of sinning. Perhaps we lied...or we felt pride...or we said something cruel to someone...or we committed various immoral acts... Whatever the case, we have all sinned.

Tragically, our sin creates a significant barrier between us and God. God is completely infallible and as such, He cannot support or come in contact with our sin. This means that once we've sinned, we've lost our right to eternal life with Him in Heaven.

But the story didn't end there...

Step #3: Learning about Our Second Chance

Gracious and loving, God could not tolerate this as the "final verdict" for the humans he created. As it stood, all humans were condemned to die and spend eternity apart from Him.

So, He created a solution. As a just God, he could not remove the penalty for sin--that was required. What He could do is shift the penalty to someone else...someone completely blameless whose death would give us renewed hope.

Who would be spotless and blameless enough to bear that penalty for everyone else? As we've already said, all of us have sinned. All of our so-called "good deeds" won't bridge the gap between us and God. The only solution was for God to send a part of Himself (the Father) to the earth--in the form of a human. Only He could live the sinless life that was required to save us from our sins.

This divine person was the Son of God, foretold for years as the coming Messiah in ancient Jewish texts. Born to a young virgin Jewish woman named Mary in a small town called Bethlehem, Jesus lived during the time of the ancient Romans (approximately AD 3-36). He spent the majority of His life telling how each of us could have a personal relationship with God and live according to His will. Because the religious leaders of the time were so threatened by His views, He was sentenced to death by crucifixion at the age of 33.

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

"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

"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."
Romans 10:13

"Yet to all who receive Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God."
John 1:12

"For it is by grace you have been saved--and not from yourselves, it is the gift of God--not by works, so that no one can boast."
Ephesians 2:8-9

"He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life."
1 John 5:12-13

"We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."
Romans 5:1

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But His death was not the end. After three days, Jesus conquered death by resurrection (coming back to life). He appeared to many before He ascended again to Heaven.

Jesus is our only hope for forgiveness and eternal life. He is the only one worthy and able to bridge the gap between us and God. For that reason, there is only one way to God--through Jesus Christ.

But choosing to accept and follow Jesus is very simple. In fact, it's a free gift...

Step #4: Responding to God

So, since Jesus died on the cross for our sins, we all automatically go to Heaven, right?

No. This gift of forgiveness and everlasting life is not simply automatic—something forced on you.

God offers this to us as a free gift, but you must consciously and willingly accept it.

Here's how: In prayer to God...

- ✓ Admit to God that you are a sinner and confess your sins (as many as you can remember).
- ✓ Be willing to turn from your sins--repent.
- ✓ Confess to God that you believe that Jesus suffered and died to take the penalty of your sins. Call upon God to save you and forgive your sins. Ask God to help you turn away from your sins (repent) and obey Him.
- ✓ Declare that Jesus is your Lord and that you vow to follow Him no matter what--through the hard times and easy times.
- ✓ Declare to God that you will put Him at the center of your life and that He will be your #1 priority from now on.
- ✓ Ask the God's Holy Spirit to live in you, to teach you God's truth, to teach you to obey God, to show you how to love and serve God, to show you how to love others and to guide your paths forever.

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Specifically, to accept this free gift, you must pray to God, confessing out loud that Jesus is Lord, and believe that God raised Him from the dead. Here are my suggestions on how to do this in prayer to God (with your eyes open or shut!):

Here is a sample prayer.

You can put this in your own words.

Father in Heaven,

I know that I am a sinner. Please forgive me for all of the sinful things I have done [list as many as you can remember]. I know now that any good works that I may have done will never make up for the sins I have committed.

I believe that Jesus Christ, your Son, died on the cross for my sins, so I would be forgiven and would have eternal life with You in Heaven.

From this moment forward, I am choosing to from my sins and stop acting contrary to how You would have me live. Please help me in the next weeks, months and years to stay close to You and to turn away from my sins.

I vow to trust and follow Jesus during the hard times and the easy time. Please guide me every day to do what You want me to do, through your Holy Spirit, who I invite into my heart and life. Thank you so much for this amazing gift.

In the name of your son Jesus. Amen

If you need to talk to someone and have them lead you personally through the steps to become a Christian, please email us at sharewithfriendsteam@gmail.com



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Jump-Starting Your Relationship with God

In Chapter 4, you discovered that the Bible teaches that to have a relationship with God, we must accept Christ. He is our only path to God.

Did you decide to follow Christ and become a Christian? If so, congratulations! Below are some suggestions on how to begin your new journey as a Christian.

1. Tell Someone!

- ✓ Share your good news with us at sharewithfriendsteam@gmail.com. Tell us about your life. Tell us how and why you decided to become a Christian. Save a copy of the e-mail. You'll want to look back at it! Complete the Testimonial Worksheet on the next page.
- ✓ Tell others about Christ.
- ✓ Make your decision public by speaking with your pastor or priest or by going to the front of the church during the closing invitation song.
- ✓ Be baptized as a symbol of your new life in Christ.

2. 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.

What To Read in the Bible

- ✓ 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 and guidance.
- ✓ Read Acts to learn how Christianity spread in the early days of the Church and about Paul's (one of the first Christians) miraculous conversion.

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- ✓ 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 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. Don't slip out of the 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 you 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.

3. 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.

Some things you may want to pray about...

- ✓ Confess your sins (be as specific as possible). Ask for His forgiveness and for the strength and guidance to avoid committing the same sins.
- ✓ Talk to Him about your day.
- ✓ Tell Him your worries.
- ✓ Praise Him for what He's done for you, others and the world as a whole.
- ✓ Ask by faith to supply you with what you need.
- ✓ Pray for others to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior. (pray generally and for specific people)
- ✓ Pray for Him to help guide, heal and protect others around you.

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4. Worship and Build Relationships with Christians.

Go to a church where the teachings of Christ are preached and where 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 for a nearby Christian church (such as Baptist, Methodist, Christian Church, Presbyterian, Church of Christ, Catholic, 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 help you learn more about God (which will help you grow spiritually) and will connect you with other Christians who will help guide you. It also can be a lot of fun! As you attend, get involved in church, make friends and look for ways to use your talents to express your love for God and others.

5. Be an Ambassador for Jesus.

You are now Christ's representative in a sinful world. It's your job to show others the love and forgiveness that you have found in Jesus.

- ✓ **Follow the teachings of Christ.** You are now charged with the mission of learning to be like Christ. 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."
- ✓ **Turn 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 constantly work keep yourself 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.

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- ✓ **Symbolically show your rebirth.** When you are baptized by water as Jesus was, you are symbolically stating that you have been washed clean of your sins and that you have risen to walk in a new life with Him. This is an important step in confirming your decision. Even if you were baptized as an infant, you may want to consider being baptized again.
- ✓ **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.
- ✓ **Tell others about Christ.** Share this workbook with them. Invite them to attend church with you. For more ideas, visit the Sharing Your Faith section of ShareWithFriends.com.

♥ Connection Point

Congratulations! This is the end of our study! Before we wrap up, take a moment to pray:

"Father in Heaven, thank you for everything you have done for me! I am so curious to see how our relationship will grow. 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. Please keep me away from temptation. Please give me a thirst to learn more about you. In Jesus' name, Amen."

*Need more explanation or assistance? Want more helpful spiritual resources?
Visit ShareWithFriends.com or email sharewithfriendsteam@gmail.com*

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