

## Introduction

When you believed in Jesus, confessed your sin and opened your heart to God, you made the most important decision of your life: you became a Christian. Through Jesus' life, death and resurrection, God saved you from the penalty of your sins and the judgment of your sinful nature. But salvation is really only the first step in Christianity; it gets better -- much better. Now, through Jesus, you have been given a new nature that is not sinful. God has declared you innocent and reclassified you as a saint, rather than as a sinner. You were once detached from God in your sins, but now God has adopted you and calls you his child. You were once alone, but now you are united to God in Christ. While these things are true about you, take time and intention to begin to really understand. This six-part study you are about to begin is designed to help you understand the basics of your new relationship with God.

Growing to know God is really like any other relationship. Even though there are a variety of ways to learn about another person, nothing matches the experience of living in oneness. The living in oneness with God is the central theme of Christianity and can be described as an extended walking journey taken by very close friends. One of my favorite verses about growing as a Christian uses this idea of walking and moving forward in maturity:

*Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him... .*  
Colossians 2:6, English Standard Version

Here you can see this idea of walking and growing and moving forward in maturity.

Your salvation was an expression of faith and belief in Jesus. Likewise, your maturity as a Christian will depend on faith and belief. The *First Steps* resource introduces six fundamental principles of Christianity. If you choose to believe these principles, you will begin to move forward in your journey with God. As you learn to embrace the truth by faith, you will *walk* with God and experience a deepening relationship with Him as your Creator.

Take your time. Ask God to guide you and speak to your heart as you *walk* with him through each lesson. Also, be sure to utilize the embedded video introductions.

It is my prayer that *First Steps* will propel you toward walking in oneness with our Great God.

Chris Campbell

# First Steps for New Christians

*Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him ... .*  
Colossians 2:6, ESV

## Walk in Truth

There are so many opinions about God today. What is a Christian supposed to believe? How can we know for sure what God is like? Is there a way to check out an idea about God and determine whether or not it is true?

Thankfully, God always takes the initiative to help his children grow in their understanding. God has provided a book that tells us the truth. The Bible reveals the truth about everything. Most importantly, the Bible shows us the truth about who God is and what he is like. Christians read the Bible because it tells us the truth.

## What do you think?

1. Where do most people think the Bible came from? Check any boxes that describe popular opinions you've heard about the Bible.
  - Wise people wrote down their thoughts on wise living.
  - The Bible has been around since the beginning of human history.
  - Men wrote stories and created rules that would help control the behavior of people. They claimed these writings came from God.
  - God used a variety of people to record his views in their own words.
  - The bible is a collection of some of the best stories from ancient times.
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
2. The following are a list of important issues which people are concerned about in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. See if you can guess how many items in this list are actually addressed in the Bible. Put a check beside each issue you believe the tackles.

<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage	<input type="checkbox"/> Depression	<input type="checkbox"/> Bitterness
<input type="checkbox"/> Dealing with guilt	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Happiness
<input type="checkbox"/> Friendship	<input type="checkbox"/> Time management	<input type="checkbox"/> Stress
<input type="checkbox"/> Addiction	<input type="checkbox"/> Finances	<input type="checkbox"/> Finding love
<input type="checkbox"/> Anger	<input type="checkbox"/> Purity	<input type="checkbox"/> Sex
		<input type="checkbox"/> Politics

The Bible actually deals with every one of these issues; this may surprise you, but it is a fact.

## My Truth, Your Truth: What's the Difference?

Undeniably, it is rude to question another person's beliefs. Most people today are content to think that there are actually many truths from which to select. Some people assert that it is possible to create their own "truth" by choosing what they like from a variety of religions, philosophies and ideas. Real Christianity, however, makes some very bold claims regarding truth: 1.) Truth can only be found in God. 2.) The Bible is the ultimate written authority on truth. **Translation: if the Bible doesn't back it up, then it can't be true.**

1. See for yourself: look up the following verses in your Bible.  
Draw a line between each scripture reference and its matching claim.

Psalms 19:7-9

God's Word is truth

John 17:17

The Word of God (the Bible) is everlasting

2 Timothy 3:16

All of the Bible was written by God through men who were inspired by the Holy Spirit

1 Peter 1:24-25

The written law of God (the Bible) is perfect, sure, pure, and true

2 Peter 1: 20-21

The Bible is God-breathed

2. Circle the number on each line that best measures your beliefs about the Bible up to this point in your life.

										
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
The Bible has no errors					The Bible is not totally true					
										
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
The Bible is relevant for today					The Bible is outdated					



The Bible requires me to believe and do what it says

The Bible gives suggestions that I can select from

God doesn't expect you to blindly accept the exclusive claims about the Bible without giving it some careful consideration. God has provided both internal and external evidence about the Bible to build our faith and increase our trust. Below is a brief list of facts about the Bible.<sup>1</sup>

- + The Bible is the **best-selling** and **most reproduced** book of all time.
- + The Bible was written by 40 authors over a period of 2,000 years on 3 different continents, addressing hundreds of subjects that consistently point to **the same message**.
- + Archaeology has repeatedly confirmed that the **Bible's historical details are accurate**.
- + **Scientific truth before scientific proof.** God revealed scientific facts thousands of years before scientists had the technology to confirm it to be so! For example, the Bible declares the Earth to be round in shape. The Bible claims that the earth is suspended in space. The Bible provided a perfect plan of sanitary engineering for millions of Hebrews during the wilderness exodus from Egypt.
- + The Bible has hundreds and hundreds of specific **prophecies** (supernatural predictions about the future) and **none have been wrong**.
- + Throughout history, no other resource has **transformed more lives and cultures** for the better than the Bible.

Which of these facts matters the most to you? Why?

---



---



---



---



---



---

<sup>1</sup> For more exciting evidence of the Bible being God's exclusive Word to mankind, check out the following resources. *The New Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson Publishers); *The Case for Faith*, Lee Strobel (Harpers Collins Publishing); *How Do We Know the Bible is True*, Brian H. Edwards (Answers in Genesis Publishing)

## **So, What's the Big Deal?**

Here's the thing: If the Bible is the one absolute authority on truth and reality, then any idea or viewpoint that does not line up with scripture qualifies as a *lie*. When a person believes a lie is truth, they automatically fall into deception.

Deception is dangerous: It blinds us to truth and encourages choices which ultimately prove to be harmful to our relationship with God. Jesus spoke very clearly about deception and about the source of all lies:

*You are of your father the devil ... . He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*  
John 8:44, ESV

When you became a Christian, God saved you from the devil's clutches. The devil, however, does not give up easily. Even though you are forever delivered from his grasp, he works very hard to keep you from growing in a loving relationship with God. The most effective way to stop you in your tracks is to feed you lies. From the time we are very young, our minds are full of lies about God, about life, about ourselves, etc. The best way to rid your mind of lies is to consistently look for truth and embrace it when it is revealed to you. The only place you can find absolute truth is--you guessed it--the Bible.

Shortly before Jesus gave us this warning about the devil, he had this to say about truth:

*So Jesus said to those who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my followers, and **you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.**"*  
(paraphrased from John 8:31-32, ESV)

## **Walking in Truth**

*Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him ... .*  
Colossians 2:6, ESV

Jesus said, "*I am ... the truth ...*" (John 14:6). Therefore, moving forward in spiritual growth and maturity requires that we learn to *walk in the truth*; we do this by making God's Word (the Bible) a priority in our lives. The Bible brings us into a deeper encounter with God, who is the source of all truth and uses his Word to actually talk to us.

There are many ways to read and study the Bible. You'll want to try a variety of methods and make up your own mind about which methods work best for you.

Ask Christians who have a vibrant relationship with God how they study the Bible: a trusted adult like a parent, pastor or youth leader may be an excellent Bible study resource. The point is: begin to read and study the Bible!

Review the following tips for Bible study, then try using the format suggested below during the coming week.

### **Tips for Truth**

- ✚ Get an authorized copy of God's Word (the Holy Bible) that is written in a way you can easily understand.
- ✚ Before you begin, always pray that God would give you understanding.
- ✚ Don't be afraid to make notes or mark in your Bible.
- ✚ Rather than skip from one passage to another, select a book to study. For example, you could begin with the Gospel of John (which tells the story of Jesus) or the book of James (which is filled with godly wisdom).
- ✚ Take your Bible with you wherever you go; have it handy at church, Bible studies or any occasion when you might have a spare moment.

### **A Simple Way to *Walk in Truth* Daily.**

Get your Bible, a notebook/notepad, something to write with and find a quiet place to focus.

1. Ask God to teach you as you read today's Scripture. Try James 1:1-8 (Note: You can find this particular passage by using the table of contents in the front of your Bible or your search tool if you are using an electronic Bible. The first number in the scripture reference indicates the chapter and the numbers following the colon indicate the verses to be read.)
2. After you read the text, summarize these verses in your own words, as if you were going to explain them to a friend.
3. Reread the verses and compare them to your summary. Is there something you added or left out? If needed, adjust your summary to reflect the big idea(s) in these verses.
4. Ask yourself the following questions:
  - What do these verses teach me about God?
  - What do these verses teach me about myself and humanity?
  - If these words are from God (truth), what is He asking me to believe? What do I need to do to obey Him?
  - With whom can I share these truths?
5. Close with prayer. Thank God for the truths you have seen in his Word. Ask Him to give you faith to believe these truths and strength to obey them.

Use your notebook daily and refer to your notes to remind you of the truths you have read and how to walk in truth.

# First Steps for New Christians

*Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him ... Colossians 2:6*

## Walk in Trust

It's common for new Christians to have *trust issues* with God. The Christian's journey with God requires trust-- but can God really be trusted? Does he have your best interest in mind? Will he take care of you? Does he even know what is best for you?

Jesus captured the attention of his followers when he addressed the issue of trusting God by inviting them to think of God as their father (Matthew 6:9). Can you imagine God Almighty, the Creator of All and the Master of the Universe as a father? As *your* Father?

The idea of God as Father can provoke strong emotions. Our initial feelings are typically based on the experience we've had with our biological dad or father figures throughout childhood. Regardless of your experience, try to imagine a father who is perfect in every way. Imagine a father who is a protector and provider for his children, accepting and full of unconditional love. Many dads have wanted to be faultless in these areas, but only one Father is perfect. According to the Bible (Lesson 1), God is the perfect father.

## Measuring Trust

Circle the number on each line which best describes your feelings toward God up to this point in your life.



I feel close to God

I feel very far from God



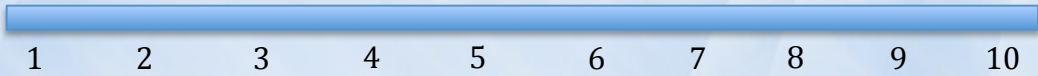
I trust God to look after me

I've learned that I need to take care of myself



God knows what is best for me and he wants to bless me

It's hard for me to think that I'll really like God's plan for my life



1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

I am confident that God  
accepts me and is  
pleased to call me his  
child

God is waiting to see if I  
will disappoint him



1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

I am confident  
that God will  
never let me go

I worry that God  
will ultimately  
reject me

### Profiling the Perfect Father

Read the following passage that describes God as Father. Circle every word that describes God's character.

*The Lord is compassionate and merciful,  
slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love.  
He will not constantly accuse us, nor remain angry forever.  
He does not punish us for all our sins;  
he does not deal harshly with us, as we deserve.  
For his unfailing love toward those who fear him is as great as the height of  
the heavens above the earth.  
He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west.  
The Lord is like a father to his children,  
tender and compassionate to those who fear him. **Psalm 103:8-14, NLT***

Which of these fatherly qualities are most important to you? Why?

---



---



---



---

What do you think it means to "fear" God?

---



---

How could fearing God be a good thing?

---

---

---

---

Below are more truths about God, the Father of every Christian. Connect the verses with the matching facts:

Hebrews 13:5

Protective of me

Exodus 34:6

Gracious and gives me the freedom to fail

Psalms 18:2

Always with me

Lamentations 3:22-23

Trustworthy and full of endless love and mercy

Hebrews 4:15-16

Patient and slow to get angry

The Bible is full of good things to say about God as a father. However, the most important thing is that you believe that He is *your* good Father. Read the following verses and write your name in the blanks provided.

**Ephesians 1:4-5 (NLT)**

*Even before he made the world, God loved \_\_\_\_\_ and chose \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt \_\_\_\_\_ into his own family by bringing \_\_\_\_\_ to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.*

## What do you think?

Read Ephesians 1:4-5 again, carefully. Put a check in any box below that represents the truth about your father-child relationship with God.

- God loved me before I knew Him.
- God chose me to be his child before I could even consider choosing him to be my father.
- God makes me holy.
- God knew who I would be before he created the world.
- No sin is too big for God to forgive.
- It gave God great pleasure to make me his own.

The love of God the Father is strong. He chose you first but, in your natural state of sin, you rebelled against God and did things your way. Even though you didn't know how to cooperate with God, he provided a way to adopt you as his child and love you in Christ.

God's love is difficult concept to wrap your mind around; because it is vastly far-reaching. Check out another passage that describes God's great love as our father.

*And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Romans 8:38-39 NLT***

According to these verses, what can separate us from God's love? \_\_\_\_\_  
If this is true, and it is (Lesson 1), what does being the recipient of God's perfect love mean to you?

---

---

---

---

Learning to recognize and trust God as your Father is vital to your success as a Christian. To help you begin to *walk in trust* commit to reading aloud the following truths twice a day for the next week.

### What about when we sin?

Sin is a big deal to God, especially after we become a Christian. Sin will impact your sense of closeness to God. Thankfully, God has made a way for us to address our sin when we fail.

*"If we confess our sin, he [God] is faithful and just to forgive us of our sin and cleanse us from all unrighteousness"*

(1 John 1:9).

Quickly admitting our sin to God allows not only for forgiveness but, also cleansing. This keeps our fellowship with our Heavenly Father fresh and intimate.

Sometimes our idea of “Father” clouds our understanding of God. Consider the following lies we can believe about God. If you have believed any of these lies about God, you can break free by simply refusing the lie in Jesus’ name and affirming the truth.

**I refuse to believe the lie that my Heavenly Father is...**

1. distant and disinterested.
2. insensitive and uncaring.
3. stern and demanding.
4. passive and cold.
5. absent or too busy for me.
6. never satisfied with what I do  
impatient or angry.
7. mean, cruel, or abusive.
8. trying to take all the fun out of life  
for me.
9. controlling and manipulative.
10. condemning or unforgiving.
11. nit-picking, nagging or  
perfectionist.

**I choose to accept the truth that my Heavenly Father is...**

1. intimate and involve (Ps. 139:1-18)
2. kind and compassionate (Ps. 103:8-14)
3. accepting and filled with joy and love  
(Rom. 15:7; Zeph. 3:17)
4. warm and affectionate (Is. 40:11; Hos. 11:3-4)
5. always pleased with me and eager to spend time  
with me (Heb. 13:5; Jer. 31:20; Ezek. 34:11-16)
6. patient, slow to anger, and pleased with me  
in Christ (Exod. 34:6; 2 Pet. 3:9)
7. loving, gentle, and protective of  
(Jer. 31:3; Is. 42:3; Ps. 18:2)
8. trustworthy. He wants to give me a full life.  
His will is good, perfect and acceptable  
(Lam. 3:22-23; Jn. 10:10; Rom. 12:1-2)
9. full of grace and mercy, and He give me freedom  
to fail (Heb. 4:15-16; Lk. 15:11-16)
10. tenderhearted and forgiving. His heart and arms  
are always open to me (Ps. 130:1-4; Lk. 15:17-24)
11. smiling as He thinks of me and proud of me as  
His growing child (Rom. 8:28-29; Heb. 12:5-11;  
2 Cor. 7:4)

# First Steps for New Christians

## Lesson 3

*Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, (Colossians 2:6)*

### Walk in Freedom

Visualize countless people being enslaved in captivity: they have never been free so they have no understanding of liberty and the freedom they have missed. Then a rescuer comes: he breaks the chains of bondage and throws open the doors of imprisonment. All who care to leave the prison and start a new life, filled with new possibilities are free to do so. Initially there is great joy and excitement as scores of people embrace their freedom. Once beyond the walls, however, what will they do? How will they live? The only life they've mastered is a life of slavery. Released people do not naturally know how to live as free people--and so it is with many Christians.

The Bible teaches that we were all once enslaved to sin (John 8:34). Jesus came to rescue us from the cruel slave-masters of sin. His blood, shed on the cross, bought the freedom of every person who believes in him (Matthew 26:28). And you did just that; you believed in him- but now what? Do you know how to live as a free person?

Learning to *walk in freedom* is another essential goal for every Christian. You might not automatically know how to live as a free person, but your Savior does. In this lesson we will look at how Jesus not only sets us free, but also shows us how to live in freedom.

*Christ has set us free to live a free life. So take your stand! Never again let anyone put a harness of slavery on you. Galatians 5:1, The Message*

### **FREEDOM!!!**

Freedom is defined in a variety of ways. Check the boxes that represent ideas that currently held about freedom.

- Freedom is being able to do whatever I want.
  - Freedom is not having to answer to anyone.
  - Freedom is getting my way.
  - Freedom is not having rules [or: the absence of rules.]
  - Other
-

A common understanding of freedom shared by many people today is that it is the right to do whatever I want, whenever I want, however I want.

Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Believe it or not, freedom is not a life without rules or accountability. The absence of rules and accountability to authority is actually *anarchy*. There is no safety or justice with *anarchy*.

**Anarchy:** a state of disorder due to the absence or non-recognition of authority.

There is, however, safety and security to be found in authority that is trustworthy, honorable, and sovereign. If you live in a *free* country, you know firsthand the liberties that are guaranteed by a strong government for its citizens. What are some freedoms your country provides which other countries do not? See how many you can list below.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Freedom can, therefore, be defined as the privilege to choose what is right.**

Strong, moral leadership with the authority and power to hold citizens accountable provides maximum freedom.

Look up the following Bible verses and connect each Scripture with the matching claim on the right.

**Matthew 28:18**

**Jesus is perfect in righteousness.  
There is no corruption in his  
leadership**

**1 John 2:1**

**If Jesus sets a person free, they are  
fully free.**

**Hebrews 13:8**

**Jesus has all power and authority.  
There is none who can rival him.**

**John 8:36**

**Jesus never changes. His  
leadership will never weaken.**

In your opinion, what do these verses teach about Jesus' leadership and freedom?

### **Thing About It**

The biblical word for Jesus' supreme leadership is *Lord*. [There is none higher than Jesus. There is none wiser than Jesus. There is none greater than Jesus].

The key to *walking in freedom* is embracing Jesus as Lord. This is more than just lip service or making a quick confession with your mouth. Embracing Jesus as Lord means you choose to come under his leadership in every aspect of your life. When you do, you are guaranteed a freedom no one can take away. When Jesus is Lord of your life, you have a leader who will teach you how to recognize what is right. He will always give you the opportunity to do what is right and to benefit from obedience.

Let's look at a few more verses that teach us about freedom in the *Lord* Jesus Christ. Fill in the blanks:

- In Christ, I am a \_\_\_\_\_ of Heaven. (Philippians 3:20)
- In Christ, I am free from the power of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. (Romans 8:2)
- In Christ, I am free to discover God's \_\_\_\_\_ for my life. (Romans 12:2)
- In Christ, I am no longer a sinner. Instead, I am a \_\_\_\_\_. (Ephesians 1:1)

There is so much more to be said about freedom in Christ. I can't tell you that if you make it your daily practice to consider Jesus your *Lord*, you will be delighted with freedom. You will find yourself consistently *walking in freedom!*

There is a special tool available through Generation Freedom and Freedom in Christ Ministries called *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*. The *Steps* have been used by millions of Christians around the world to maximize their experience of freedom in Christ. Again, it's all about surrendering to the right leader the Lord Jesus Christ. Ask your mentor, pastor or this ministry about *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*. It will quicken your pace as you continue to *walk in freedom*.

In the meantime, let's conclude this lesson with another list of important truths about your new identity in Christ your Lord. Review the truth about your new identity in Christ your Lord.

# ***In Christ***

## **I Am Accepted**

I am a child of God. (John 1:12)

I am Jesus' chosen friend. (John 15:15)

I am holy and acceptable to God (justified). (Rom. 5:1)

I am united to the Lord and am one spirit with Him. (1 Cor. 3:16)

I have been bought with a price. I belong to God. (1 Cor. 6:19, 20)

I am a part of Christ's Body, part of His family. (1 Cor. 12:27)

I am a saint, a holy one. (Eph. 1:1)

I have been adopted as God's child. (Eph. 1:5)

I have been bought back (redeemed) and forgiven of all my sins. (Col. 1:14)

I am complete in Christ. (Col. 2:10)

## **I Am Secure**

I am free forever from punishment. (Rom. 8:1-2)

I am sure all things work together for good. (Rom. 8:28)

I am free from any condemning charges against me. (Rom. 8:31f)

I cannot be separated from the love of God. (Rom. 8:35f)

I am hidden with Christ in God. (Col. 3:3)

I am sure that the good work that God has started in me will be finished. (Phil 1:6)

I am a citizen of heaven with the rest of God's family. (Eph. 2:19)

I can find grace and mercy in times of need. (Heb. 4:16)

I am born of God and the evil one cannot touch me. (1 John 5:18)

## **I Am Significant**

I am salt and light for everyone around me. (Matt. 5:13,14)

I am part of the true vine, joined to Christ and able to produce lots of fruit. (John 15:1, 5)

I am hand-picked by Jesus to bear fruit. (John 15:16)

I am a Spirit-empowered witness of Christ. (Acts 1:8)

I am a temple where the Holy Spirit lives. (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19)

I am at peace with God and He has given me the work of making peace between Himself and other people. (2 Cor. 5:17f.)

I am God's co-worker. (2 Cor. 6:1)

I am seated with Christ in heaven. (Eph. 2:6)

I am God's building project, His handiwork, created to do His work. (Eph. 2:10)

I am able to do all things through Christ who gives me strength! (Phil. 4:13)

# First Steps for New Christians

## Lesson #4

*Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, (Colossians 2:6)*

### Walk in Power

The Trinity. There it is. I just introduced one of the toughest concepts of Christianity into a beginners bible study. Not fair... I know.

When Christians refer to the *Trinity*, they are talking about the mystery of God's 3-in-1 nature. The Bible, reveals God to be 1 or consistent in his character (Deuteronomy 6:4), yet he is 3 in composition. He is *God the Father, God the Son* and *God the Holy Spirit*. Perhaps the best picture we have of the Trinity occurs at Jesus' baptism. As *Jesus (The Son)* is baptized, *God the Father* speaks from Heaven and the *Holy Spirit* descends like a dove (Luke 3: 22). It's hard to wrap your mind around and understand it. I know.

While it's important for you to be aware of the truth that the God of the Bible is 3-in-1, the focus of this lesson will be the often overlooked and misunderstood person of the Trinity; the Holy Spirit.

Most Christians know a lot more about *God the Father* and *Jesus the Son* than about the Holy Spirit. God gave Jesus to the world so that all who believe might have eternal life and overcome the consequences of sin. God gave his Spirit to believers in Christ so they might overcome the power of sin and be transformed into people who resemble their God.

*Walking in power* means that you are learning to welcome the Holy Spirit's presence into your life and depend fully upon His power for living in a way that is pleasing to God. It is a life-long journey to become like Jesus. The Holy Spirit guarantees that transformation for you.

### What do you know or think you know about the Holy Spirit

- The Holy Spirit lives inside every Christian.  Agree  Disagree  Not Sure
- The Holy Spirit makes people do crazy things.  Agree  Disagree  Not Sure
- The Holy Spirit is mystery that is impossible to know  Agree  Disagree  Not Sure

- The Holy Spirit lives inside Christ-followers \_\_\_\_\_ Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure
- The Holy Spirit should be referred to as “He” not “it”. \_\_\_\_\_ Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree \_\_\_\_\_ Not Sure

### **A Proper Introduction**

The night before his crucifixion, Jesus spoke to his disciples about the person who would continue his earthly ministry in a very powerful way. Look carefully at the following passages that record Jesus’ words and follow the instructions.

- Read **John 14: 15-18**. Jesus is talking about sending someone to help his followers keep his commandments. Check the boxes that match Jesus’ description of this *Helper*.
 

<input type="checkbox"/> He is a Spirit	<input type="checkbox"/> Only Christians can fully recognize Him
<input type="checkbox"/> He is someone like me	<input type="checkbox"/> He will live on the inside of Christ-followers.
<input type="checkbox"/> He is like Jesus	<input type="checkbox"/> He is like God, the perfect Father
<input type="checkbox"/> He is truth	
<input type="checkbox"/> The world can easily recognize Him	
- Read **John 14: 25-27**. The Holy Spirit assists Christ-followers by \_\_\_\_\_ them all things and helping them to \_\_\_\_\_ the things that Jesus has said (vs. 26).  
According to Jesus, the presence of the Holy Spirit is recognized by a strong sense of \_\_\_\_\_ (vs. 27).
- Read **John 15: 26**. According to Jesus, the Holy Spirit can be thought of as the Spirit of \_\_\_\_\_. When we need to speak up and share the truth about Jesus, the Holy Spirit will
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Help us to run away	<input type="checkbox"/> Help us to keep quiet
<input type="checkbox"/> Help us change the subject in a funny way	<input type="checkbox"/> Give us the words and the confidence to testify

Read **John 16: 7-11**. Have you ever tried to convince someone who was stubborn and refused to see things from your perspective? It can be very frustrating and disappointing. When it comes to sharing Jesus and God's plan of salvation, the Holy Spirit plays a powerful role.

*He convinces people of their \_\_\_\_\_ and God's standard for \_\_\_\_\_ and their unavoidable \_\_\_\_\_ (vs. 8).*

What does it mean to you to have Jesus' promise that the Holy Spirit will do all of the convincing. All we have to do is share the truth and encourage others to cooperate with God's plan of salvation?

---

---

---

---

Read **John 16:12-15**. Jesus understands that he has more to share than our minds can absorb at one time. Therefore, the Holy Spirit comes to every Christian to act as a guide and a tutor of all truth (vs. 13). According to Jesus the Holy Spirit will help us in this way for several reasons. Check the boxes that apply.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Holy Spirit likes to draw attention to himself. | <input type="checkbox"/> The Holy Spirit likes to charge for information.                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Holy Spirit works to make Jesus famous.         | <input type="checkbox"/> The Holy Spirit delights to freely give Jesus' insight to Christ-followers. |

### **Experiencing the Holy Spirit**

After Jesus departed planet earth, the Holy Spirit came. Just as Jesus promised, the Holy Spirit made a huge impact and functioned just like Jesus said he would. You can check it out for yourself in **Acts 2**.

So what about you? Have you begun to recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life? Is he teaching you and guiding you daily? Are you finding the power to live the life Jesus died to give you? There are some things about the Holy Spirit's presence to know so that you might walk in His *power*.

Consider the following verse from **Ephesians 5:18**,

*Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, (New Living Translation)*

This verse is comparing what two things? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever encountered a person who was drunk? Check the boxes that describe a person under the influence of alcohol.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slurred speech    | <input type="checkbox"/> Impulsiveness         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confused thinking | <input type="checkbox"/> Physically unbalanced |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less reserved     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other?                |

Likewise, a person under the influence of the Holy Spirit should be easy to recognize. **Galatians 5: 22-23** describes a person under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Fill in the blanks.

*But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, kindness, \_\_\_\_\_, faithfulness, gentleness, and  
\_\_\_\_\_.* **(Galatians 5: 22-23a)**

The power of the Holy Spirit does not end here. He helps us to pray (Romans 8:26). He gives us a supernatural skillset to serve God (spiritual gifts; 1 Corinthians 12: 7-11). And the list goes on. The Holy Spirit has been given to you as a helper and a guarantee that you can be the you that God created you to be!

### **Cooperation is the key**

God wants you to enjoy the presence and empowerment of his Spirit every day. But it is important for you to understand that God will not force himself on you. Instead, God will meet you at the level of trust and surrender you are willing to give him. He will match his power with your level of cooperation. When the Bible says “...*be filled with the Holy Spirit...*” it is telling us to go all in and cooperate fully. We are to daily drink in God’s Spirit and surrender total control to him.

I am often asked, “How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit?” The answer lies in simple strategy that we have emphasizing in these lessons.

*Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, (Colossians 2:6)*

When you received Jesus you confessed your need for God and by faith handed over your life to him. To be filled with the spirit means that you daily confess your need for God to empower you and you willingly hand over control of your life to him. I literally pray out loud, everyday, “Lord, please fill me with your Spirit” or “Holy Spirit, I welcome your leadership today. Please fill me and control every part of my life.”

If you've never prayed to be filled with the Holy Spirit before, it is sometimes helpful to have a trusted Christian parent, pastor or mentor pray with you the first time. They can support you by laying a hand on you and praying in agreement with you.

### Remember that cooperation is the key.

- **Ephesians 4:30** describes what happens when you choose to yield to the temptation of sin and do not cooperate the Holy Spirit by doing something he doesn't want you to do. Put a check in the correct box.
  - The Holy Spirit is humiliated.
  - The Holy Spirit is saddened.
  - The Holy Spirit is furious.
  - The Holy Spirit thinks it's funny.
  - The Holy Spirit ignores it.
- **1 Thessalonians 5:19** explains what happens when the Holy Spirit directs you to do something and you choose not to cooperate. Put a check in the correct box.
  - The Holy Spirit is humiliated.
  - You limit the Holy Spirit's power in your life.
  - The Holy Spirit is furious.
  - The Holy Spirit thinks it's funny.
  - The Holy Spirit ignores it.

### Final thought

Imagine taking a trip and at your destination you have two options for lodging. The first option is the home of a nice family that gives you a bedroom with your own bathroom. They give you a key to a side entrance to the house where you can come and go to your area. They tell you to be sure to let them know if you need anything and they'll do their best to help you, but you need to understand that they have a busy schedule and have other priorities that take up their time.

The second option is a home of comparable size. The family here gives you a bedroom with your own bath, but also gives you a complete tour of the entire house (including the kitchen and the pantry) and tells you to make yourself at home. This family wants you to consider their house, your house. If there is anything you need, just let them know. There is nothing off-limits. Their greatest desire is that you would feel at home.

Question: Which of these two housing options would you choose? \_\_\_\_\_

Most everyone would choose the second option. Yet, I wonder how many Christians treat the Holy Spirit in the same way the first family treats their houseguests?

So what about you? Will you give the Holy Spirit full access to his new dwelling place in your life? Or will you try to restrict his access?

This week, as you learn to pray to be filled with the Holy Spirit everyday, consider the invitation you are giving him. Will you surrender completely to the Holy Spirit and give him total control and influence or will you limit his power in your life. Don't miss this fundamental principle.

*Walk in power!*

# First Steps for New Christians

## Lesson #5

*Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, (Colossians 2:6)*

### Walk in Community

Here is a simple truth; a collection of lit candles dispels much more darkness than a single candles burning alone. Likewise, Christians were meant to shine for Jesus together. Nowhere does the Bible suggest that a Christian's faith should be practiced privately. Instead, followers of Jesus are repeatedly encouraged to band together for the sake of making God famous. We can do much more together than we can apart.

Christian community or *faith-community* is commonly referred to as "church". You might think that the *church* is a building. Or you might hear people refer to Sunday worship services as "*going to church*". But the church is neither of those things. Church is an interconnected group of Christ-followers who seek to practice their faith in Jesus together on a variety of levels. These Christ-followers meet in various locations and settings. Regardless of the where and the how, the bible instructs Christians to get together regularly.

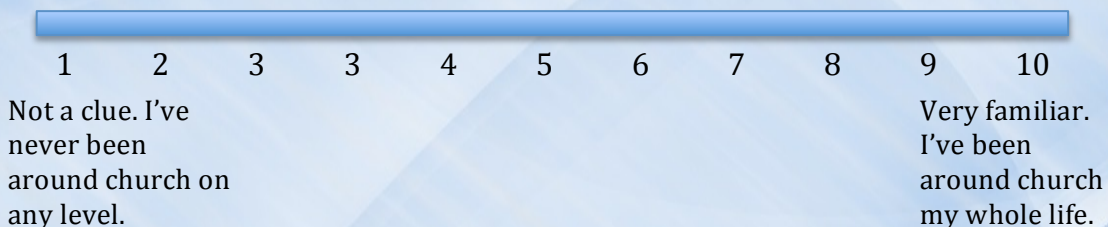
*Walking in community* is a step you will need to take in your journey with God. While some view participating in church as optional, your involvement in Christian community is a must for spiritual growth.

### What do you think?

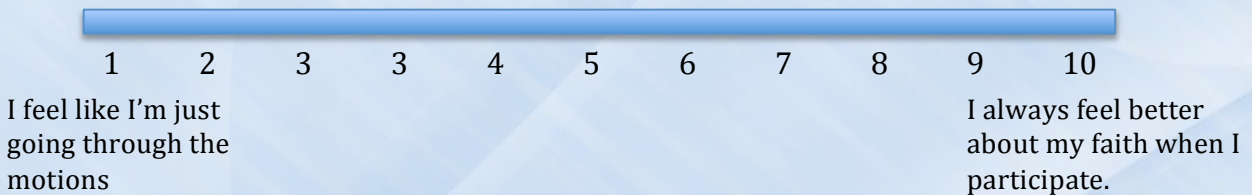
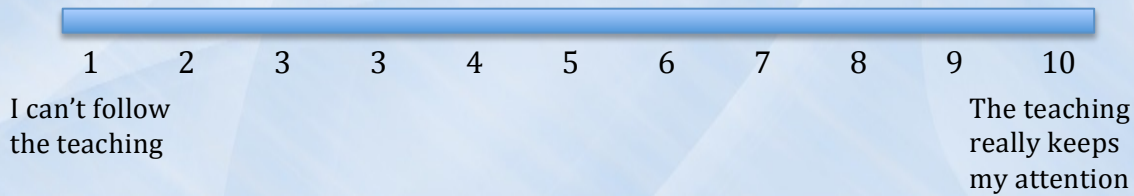
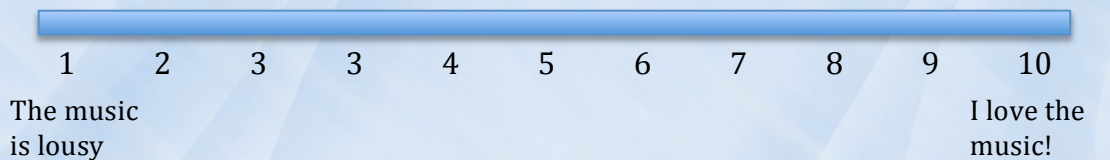
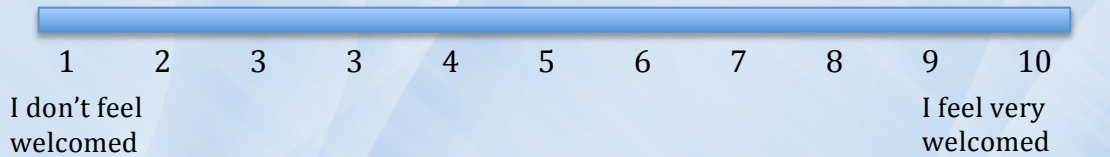
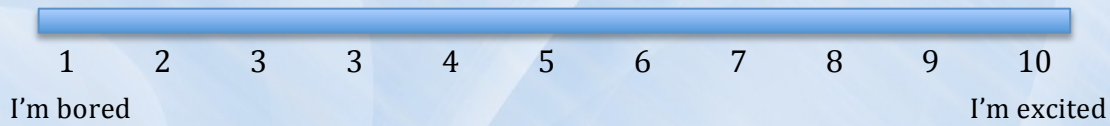
Think of some of the churches you have seen near your home. In your opinion, what are some of the reasons people attend church services?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> To worship God                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> To get a spiritual boost                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To learn more about God                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Because they've always gone...it's a habit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To get caught up on neighborhood news and gossip | <input type="checkbox"/> Other?                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To show off their families                       |   |

How familiar are you with church gatherings?



What is your current attitude regarding church gatherings and programming? Circle the number that describes you best.



### God's Bod

Nowadays, it's a popular thing to take a stand against "organized religion". Religion has indeed been the source of many problems throughout history. But often, when a person says, "I don't believe in organized religion", what they are likely meaning is "I don't see the need to participate in church". However, it's important to remember that *Christianity* is not *religion*. Christianity is really a relationship with God. Jesus has made a way for people to be one with God. Therefore, if you think about it, the church is really a collection of people who represent the physical presence of God on planet earth. Or, as the bible puts it, we (the church) are the body of Christ. See for yourself.

**Read 1 Corinthians 12: 12-20.**

These verses describe the church as a \_\_\_\_\_.

**Continue by reading 1 Corinthians 12: 21-31.** Check the blank that best describe the teachings in these verses.

The church, like a human body, functions best when everyone works together.

\_\_\_Agree    \_\_\_Disagree    \_\_\_Not sure

The church is a place where people should do there own thing.

\_\_\_Agree    \_\_\_Disagree    \_\_\_Not sure

It's easier to be a Christian if you avoid church.

\_\_\_Agree    \_\_\_Disagree    \_\_\_Not sure

Some members of the church are more important than others

\_\_\_Agree    \_\_\_Disagree    \_\_\_Not sure

When Christians love each other through the church, God is honored and things get done.

\_\_\_Agree    \_\_\_Disagree    \_\_\_Not sure

**Now read Ephesians 4: 11-14**

According to these verses, the church provides Christians the opportunity to

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be trained   | <input type="checkbox"/> Be unified           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be cared for | <input type="checkbox"/> Be mature            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be taught    | <input type="checkbox"/> Be focused for Jesus |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be motivated | <input type="checkbox"/> Other?               |

## Is it really that important?

Doesn't God have bigger things to worry about than your regular involvement in church? Well, God's plan to address those bigger issues, involves His church. The church is to lead the way in giving hope and spreading God's love by sharing the truth about Jesus and serving those who are in need. That's a pretty big job, for sure. This is why God doesn't put those expectations on individuals alone.

### Read Hebrews 10:24-25.

Rewrite these two verses in your own words. \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

---

Walking in Community, or actively involving yourself in church, is one of the more challenging steps toward maturity. As we have seen in previous lessons, God's favor and grace is always ignited by our faith. Take some time to allow more of God's word to build your faith in regard to church. Match the correct verse on the left with the church principle on the right.

1 Thessalonians 4:18

Serve each other in community.

Galatians 5:13

Confess your sins and pray for each other in community.

James 5:16

Show love and respect for each other in community.

Romans 12:10

Allow community to teach you patience, humility, gentleness, and consideration.

Ephesians 4:2

Allow community to teach you the blessing of forgiveness and make you tenderhearted.

Ephesians 4: 31-32

Encourage one another in community

## **Convinced yet?**

Let me share a simple truth, based on the Scripture that you've just studied, that you can absolutely trust. *People grow better together!*

There is an old Chinese proverb that points out the phenomenon of trees in their natural habitat. Basically, trees that grow together in the forest tend to be much taller than trees planted individually in people's yards. The reason is because the trees in the forest will naturally stretch toward the sunlight and strive to get as many of their leaves as possible exposed to the life giving light. Trees planted by themselves tend to be a little lazy and do not put forth the effort to stretch. I'm sure you can see where I'm going with this. Involving yourself in Christian community (the church) will boost your spiritual growth. Why? Because the church uses the Bible to help Christians *Walk in Truth*. Because the church draws our attention to God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit which, helps us to Walk in Trust, Walk in Freedom and *Walk in Power*. And finally, the church is the place where you can find all kinds of Christians, who come from all sorts of background, who have many layers of wisdom to share with you and help you *walk out your faith!*

So what will you do from this point forward? Will you make the church a priority in your walk with God? Maybe you are wondering about the best way to pick a church. As a wrap up for today's lesson, I've included some important questions for you to ask when you are choosing which church to attend.

- ✚ ***Is the teaching and opinions of leaders centered on the Bible?***
- ✚ ***Does the worship focus on God and help me to worship him?***
- ✚ ***Do the people of this church care about living out their faith in the culture and making a difference?***
- ✚ ***Are there people in this church who will take a personal interest in my spiritual growth?***

Walk in Community!

# First Steps for New Christians

## Lesson #6

*Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, (Colossians 2:6)*

### Walk in Victory

I've got some good news and some bad news. If you're like me, you want the bad news first, so here it comes, bad news first.

You have an enemy. And not just any enemy, but you have an enemy that is not human. This enemy is supernatural and spiritual. This enemy is stronger than you, smarter than you, fiercer than you and does not fight fair. The bible describes this enemy as having a powerful leader, Satan, and a vast army consisting of demons. Their intent is to wage war against humanity for the purpose of minimizing God's fame. Human beings were made in God's image (Genesis 1 & 2) and have the capacity to reflect God's glory in remarkable ways. Therefore, this enemy works very hard to distract human beings from God's love and keep them spiritually dead in their sins and disconnected from God. And should a human being trust in Jesus; this enemy then works hard to keep the Christian in a defeated lifestyle where they never grow to their full God-honoring potential in this life. Now, are you ready for some good news?

The good news is that you have a God who loves you and has adopted you as his own child. Even though the enemy is strong, God is the Almighty. Even though the enemy is clever, God is the All-knowing. Even though the enemy is very organized, God alone is All-present (everywhere at once). There is really no comparison between this enemy and your Great God who cares for you and has promised to never leave you or abandon you. Your God has you covered! Now that's good news!

Although your relationship with God in Christ is secure, you must do your part to be victorious in the spiritual battles you will face in this life. Just because you have now become a Christian, doesn't mean the enemy will leave you alone, quite the contrary. You are now the focus of attack. The more you grow to be like Jesus, the more the glory of God will shine upon you and others will realize God's love and salvation. Therefore, the enemy does not want to see you succeed. There is much at stake in the battle between good and evil. In order for you to walk in victory you will need to realize that every day you will face a battle. You will need to know your enemy. You will need to realize that the victory has already been won through Jesus' life, death and resurrection. Perhaps most importantly you will need to believe and trust in the truth that "Greater is he who is in you than he who is in the world (1 John 4:4)." This lesson will give you the basics for *Walking in Victory!*

## What do you know or think you know about the Enemy

- The Devil is a fallen angel.  Agree  Disagree  Not Sure
- The Devil has powers just like God.  Agree  Disagree  Not Sure
- Demons typically operate just like they are portrayed in movies.  Agree  Disagree  Not Sure
- The Enemy tends to be organized like an army with different levels of leadership and ranks.  Agree  Disagree  Not Sure
- The Devil is a real person.  Agree  Disagree  Not Sure

It's never productive to take our focus off the Lord Jesus Christ (Hebrews 12:2). However, it is wise for Christians to have a basic understanding of the Enemy so that we might be victorious in battle. In order to simplify this lesson, most of the commentary will be in reference to Satan/the Devil. Just realize that the same ugly traits that characterize Satan are true of lesser demons.

Take a look at this list of names the bible uses to refer to Satan:

- |                      |                                  |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| ➤ The Devil          | ➤ Serpent                        |
| ➤ Lucifer            | ➤ The Accuser of Christians      |
| ➤ The Destroyer      | ➤ Angel of Light                 |
| ➤ Belial (Worthless) | ➤ Prince of Darkness             |
| ➤ The Dragon         | ➤ Beelzebub (Lord of Flies)      |
| ➤ Father of Liars    | ➤ The Opposer/Adversary          |
| ➤ Tempter            | ➤ Prince of Demons               |
| ➤ Evil One           | ➤ Murderer                       |
| ➤ A Roaring Lion     | ➤ Prince of the Power of the Air |

Which of these names stand out to you the most? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

Satan is commonly portrayed in literature, and other media as an obnoxious creature with horns, a pointy tail and carrying a pitchfork. But Satan's beginning and original conception by God couldn't be further from the truth.

**The prophet Ezekiel** gives us a stunning picture of Satan before he became an enemy of God. Ezekiel recorded the very testimony of God regarding his creation of Satan. **Circle** all of the positive things God has to say about Satan's original condition.

*...You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and exquisite in beauty....  
Your clothing was adorned with every precious stone— all beautifully crafted  
for you and set in the finest gold. They were given to you on the day you were  
created.*

*I ordained and anointed you as the mighty angelic guardian.[c] You had access  
to the holy mountain of God and walked among the stones of fire. You were  
blameless in all you did from the day you were created until the day evil was  
found in you. (Ezekiel 28: 12b-15 NLT)*

If you remember anything about these verses, remember that Satan is a created being. He is nowhere close to the splendor and power of the eternal God. God created Satan in perfection. He was beautiful until evil was found in him.

The prophet Isaiah also wrote down the Word of God concerning Satan's descent into wickedness. Circle the phrase "**I will**" every time it appears in the text below.

*"How you are fallen from heaven, O shining star, son of the morning! You have  
been thrown down to the earth, you who destroyed the nations of the world.  
For you said to yourself, 'I will ascend to heaven and set my throne above God's  
stars. I will preside on the mountain of the gods far away in the north.  
I will climb to the highest heavens and be like the Most High.'  
Instead, you will be brought down to the place of the dead, down to its lowest  
depths. (Isaiah 14: 12-15 NLT)*

Satan's rebellion can be summed up in a 5-letter word.   P           D     

The bible also tells us that a large number of angels joined Satan's rebellion and were cast out from God's Heaven. (Luke 10:18; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6)

After Satan and the rebellious angels *fell* from Heaven, we see them surface on planet earth. Satan is seen in Garden of Eden, where he tempts Adam and Eve (Genesis 3). His activity is also detailed in several other bible passages. See for yourself.

*One day the members of the heavenly court came to present themselves before the Lord, and the Accuser, Satan, came with them. "Where have you come from?" the Lord asked Satan.*

*Satan answered the Lord, "I have been patrolling the earth, watching everything that's going on." (Job 1: 6-7 NLT)*

*Then Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan River. He was led by the Spirit in the wilderness,[a] **2** where he was tempted by the devil for forty days. (Luke 4: 1-2 NLT)*

*Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. (1 Peter 5:8 NLT)*

What do these verses tell you about demonic activity on planet earth? Write out your thoughts.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

There is much more that can be said about the Enemy, but let's redirect our focus back on Jesus for now.

Look carefully at the verse that follows 1 Peter 5:8 (above).

*...Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. **Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith...** (1 Peter 5: 8b-9a NLT)*

Here it is again. The key to *walking in victory* is the same truth we have been studying in every lesson so far. The key to victory over the enemy is faith. Remember our key verse for these lessons...

*Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, (Colossians 2:6)*

Faith, or your belief in Jesus' sacrifice and God's love introduced the saving grace of God into your life. Your faith ignited God's grace, which in turn, cleaned you up, gave you eternal life and brought you into God's family as his precious child. The Devil himself couldn't stand in the way of God saving you. The same will be true for your victory and success as a Christian. If you continue to trust in God's truth and power, the Enemy will not be able to prevent God's will and purpose for your life.

Without God, we are no match for the Enemy. With God, however, the Enemy is no match for the favor and empowerment of God (grace) in our lives. That is good news.

So how does a Christian continue to walk by faith when it comes to daily victory over the Enemy? I'm glad you asked.

The winning strategy for spiritual warfare and victory over the enemy is best summed up in one simple verse.

*Submit to God, resist the Devil and he will flee. (James 4:7)*

This short verse has two commands and one promise. Write them in the blanks below:

Command #1 \_\_\_\_\_

Command#2 \_\_\_\_\_

The Promise \_\_\_\_\_

If you want to keep the Devil off your back learn to submit, or surrender, to God every day. In addition to surrendering to God, learn to recognize the Enemy's temptation and lies. When you notice the Enemy's activity, resist him by rejecting his lies out loud and instead embrace God's truth. The tactic especially works well in the face of temptation.

### **Think About It**

Pick a situation in which you commonly face temptation.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stealing/shoplifting               | <input type="checkbox"/> Anger                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lying                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Complaining/criticism          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fighting                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Depression/hopelessness        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quarreling/arguing                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Impure thoughts                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hatred                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Eagerness for lustful pleasure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jealousy/envy                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Cheating                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gossip/slander                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Greed/materialism              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Procrastination—putting things off | <input type="checkbox"/> Apathy/laziness                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swearing                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                    |

Imagine using the strategy of James 4:7 the next time you are tempted to sin in this way. Plug your sin into the prayer below and practice saying the declaration out loud. (Remember the Devil can't read your mind. He's not God. When we resist the Enemy we need to do out loud. There's no need to shout or raise your voice. Remember that living by faith is not just a matter of believing something is true in your heart, it's also about confessing with your mouth (Romans 10:9-10)).

**[Prayer]** *God, I confess to you that I am being tempted to \_\_\_\_\_.  
I agree with you that this is sinful and my participation in this behavior would demonstrate that a lack of faith in you. I give you my life and I welcome the Holy Spirit to control me fully. In the name of Jesus I pray. Amen.*

**[Statement of faith]** *In the name of Jesus I reject the lie that \_\_\_\_\_ will satisfy my soul or give me lasting peace and joy. I am a child of the Most High God. He alone can meet my every need. In the name of Jesus I command any evil spirit to leave my presence this very moment.*

What was that like to pray a prayer that followed the directions of James 4:7?

What might this approach to James 4:7 look like if you were struggling with fear? Or stress? Or gloominess? Pick one of these negative thoughts and write out your own prayer and declaration to use below.

**[Prayer]** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**[Statement of faith]** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Remember! Every time we choose to submit to God and resist the Devil, the Enemy will flee!!! That is great news!

For more helpful information on Walking in Victory, be sure to read *Stomping Out the Darkness* and *The Bondage Breaker Youth Edition*, both by Anderson and Park. Another very helpful resource is *The Steps to Freedom in Christ for Teens and Young Adults*. All three of these resources are available through Freedom in Christ Ministries USA ([www.freedominchrist.com](http://www.freedominchrist.com)).

Final thoughts...

Look at two final verses that tell the truth about your position in Christ as Christian.

*But you belong to God, my dear children. You have already won a victory... because the Spirit who lives in you is greater than the spirit who lives in the world. (1 John 4:4a,c NLT)*

*We know that God's children do not make a practice of sinning, for God's Son holds them securely, and the evil one cannot touch them. (1 John 5:18)*

As you finish this lesson think about the following:

**Don't overestimate Satan.**

**Don't underestimate him.**

You will walk in victory when you walk by faith, are immersed in the Word of God and filled with the Holy Spirit.

*Walk in Victory!*

# First Steps for New Christians

## Bonus Lesson

*Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, (Colossians 2:6)*

### Prayer. Conversation with God.

Some people wrongly think that God is too big and too concerned with universal issues to care about the every day details of your life. That idea is simply not true. Throughout the bible, God is revealed to be a God who initiates contact and conversation with individuals and groups of people. Jesus was known for loving conversation and interaction with people. As a matter of fact, immediately after his resurrection from the grave, Jesus took a walk with 2 guys as they headed to their rural home outside of Jerusalem. During that time Jesus invited his travelling companions to speak from the heart. He listened intently and then he spoke in the most revealing ways as he taught them the Scriptures. The understandings of these two guys were supernaturally expanded.

In the same way, God wants to communicate with you as you walk with him. Prayer is the way Christian converse with God. Prayer builds a relationship with God like nothing else. Therefore, praying is one of the most important things you can learn to do as a Christian. The key to prayer is the same as every other concept of Christianity. It begins with faith. Your ability to focus on God as your faith object, your determination to learn as much as you can about who you're talking to when you pray and your willingness to obey whatever God may ask of you through prayer, will determine how positive your prayer life will be.

In this bonus lesson we will look at some basic truths about prayer. We'll discover the right way to talk to God in prayer. And we'll look at some possible reasons God doesn't answer our prayers in the way we think he should.

### That's why we pray!....

What importance has prayer played up to this point in your life? Check any box that applies. Prayer is...

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Something I have to do | <input type="checkbox"/> Talking to myself         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Difficult              | <input type="checkbox"/> Talking to God            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dull                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Listening to God          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Easy to do             | <input type="checkbox"/> Hard for me to comprehend |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asking for things      | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____               |

**The truth is....** Indicate the number of times you have prayed in the last 24 hours.

- At least twice
- More than 3 times
- None
- Too many times to remember

There are many reasons people don't pray. Some don't know how to pray. Some simply don't feel the need to pray. Some are unsure if their prayer will be heard or let alone answered.

**Fill in the blank.**

If I could be guaranteed that God would respond to my next prayer, I would talk to him about \_\_\_\_\_

---

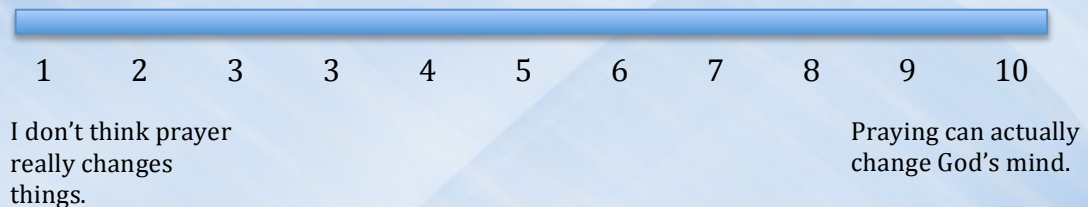
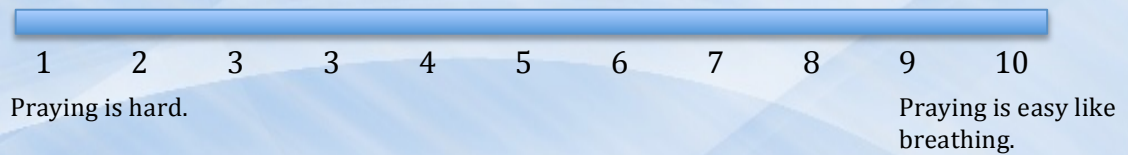
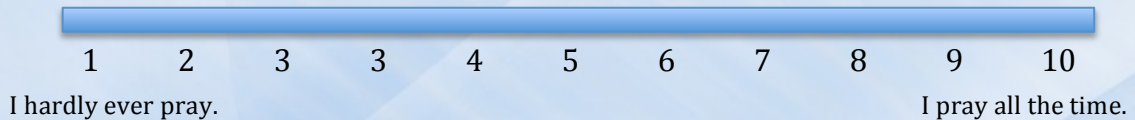
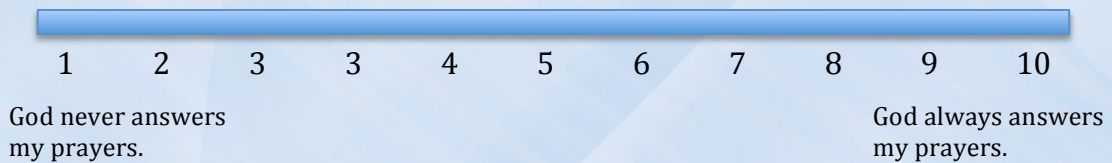
---

---

---

---

Mark the place on each line that best describes your beliefs about prayer up to this point in your life.



## **Prayer 101 – The basics.**

The best kinds of dads love to talk with their children. It doesn't matter if their son or daughter can speak in full sentences yet because they're young or if they are older children who can think big thoughts and ask big questions. God loves to talk with his kids! Thankfully, prayer does not depend on your age or your ease with words. Prayer is a matter of drawing near to God in conversation and recognizing that at the same time he is drawing near to you (James 4:8).

**Key thought:** Even though God is your Heavenly Father, He's not your *dad* in the sense that you should be careless in your approach. After all this is Almighty God we're talking about. Jesus helped his disciples with this concept when they asked him to teach them how to pray. Look at the way Jesus teaches his followers to pray. See if you can match the verse on the left with the right prayer principle on the right.

*9 Pray like this:*

*Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy.*

*10 May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.*

*11 Give us today the food we need,*

*12 and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us.*

*13 And don't let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one.  
(Matthew 6:9-13)*

**Remember to confess your sins and ask for forgiveness.**

**Depend on God for your daily needs.**

**Ask God to guard your heart from sin and evil.**

**Respect God's holiness as you look to him as your Father.**

**More than your opinion, pray that God's will is achieved in you and through you.**

There are so many more important things the bible explains about prayer. Some are listed below. Look up the verses and fill in the blanks.

**Luke 18:1-8-** Praying involves my willingness to \_\_\_\_\_ even when God doesn't respond as quick as I want him to respond.

**John 17:9-19-** Looking to Jesus as our example, we shouldn't just pray for ourselves. We should also pray for \_\_\_\_\_.

**Philippians 4:6-** List the things that you shouldn't pray about \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Trick question)

**1 John 5:14-15-** It's important for me to learn about God so that I can pray according to his \_\_\_\_\_.

## Helpful Hints

One of the easiest way to remember a new skill is to use an acronym. Let's take a look at the acronym P.R.A.Y.

**P** raise (Let God know you are grateful. Thank him for your blessings.) *Dear Father, You are so wonderful and holy. I thank you for....*

**R** epent (Admit your mistakes and sin.)  
I confess that I've failed in the following ways since we last talked .....

**A** sk (Tell God about your needs as well as the needs of others.)

**Y** ield (Don't do all the talking. Be quiet and listen for God to speak to your heart. Let God know that you will trust that he knows what is best.)

Contrary to what you might have heard, God always answers prayers. Sometimes he says “yes”. Sometimes he says “no”. Sometimes he says “you need to wait”. Prayer results can be delayed for a variety of reasons. Look at the Scripture below and link the matching truth with a line.

Matthew 6:15

**Prayer can get stuck if....**

I am walking in disobedience.

Matthew 7:7-8; James 4:2

I am harboring bitterness toward others.

John 15:7; 1 John 3:22

I am asking with selfish motives.

James 4:3

I am simply not asking.

Prayer is not a way to control God. God is not a cosmic vending machine where the right tokens (faith) will get you what you want every time. But God cares and is ready to listen and communicate with you. Prayer is talking honestly and respectfully with God. Prayer provides the opportunity to talk about detailed things with God. You can pray anytime. You can pray out loud. You can pray in your heart. Prayer can happen anywhere.

Take a moment and think through your normal daily routine. When would you have an opportunity to pray? Check the box(es).

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Before you leave for school.                  | <input type="checkbox"/> When you are nervous.            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> As you shower or bath.                        | <input type="checkbox"/> When you are fearful.            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Before you eat a meal.                        | <input type="checkbox"/> When you are sad.                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> After you sin (Ask for forgiveness).          | <input type="checkbox"/> Before you fall asleep at night. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> In the face of temptation (Ask for strength.) | <input type="checkbox"/> I can pray throughout the day.   |

Think back through the previous 6 lessons. Remind yourself that God loves you, he knows what is best for you and he desires to give you what is best. It's up to you to cooperate and trust him. Prayer will help you to do this. God's timing in answering your prayers may frustrate you at first, but hang in there. God promises that our prayers will be answered as we learn to pray in harmony with his perfect perspective. Prayer will bring you closer to God as you embrace your relationship with him and keep yourself motivated by his words (John 15:7).

Take some time to pray right now!

**One final suggestion...**

Consider keeping a journal, notebook or a log where you can right down your prayer requests and the dates you receive your answers.

Other resources for growing in Christ....