



Now What?



**A guide to kick-start
your faith journey**



**Christ
Fellowship
CHURCH**

Congratulations on your decision to follow Jesus!

Your decision to follow Jesus is, without a doubt, the most important and exciting decision that you can make. That one decision changes everything in this life and the next.

Over the past 36 years, Christ Fellowship has journeyed with hundreds of thousands of people just like you who have made the decision to follow Jesus—and over time, many of those new believers have asked similar questions.

We want to share a few of those questions to help you as you begin your journey of following Jesus.

What does it mean to be saved?

When Christians talk about someone being “saved,” it means that they have begun a personal relationship with Jesus. It means that person is actively turning away from their sin, the things that separate us from God, and turning to Jesus for forgiveness. When Jesus—who was perfect—gave His life on the cross and died in our place, He took on the punishment for our sin. He rose again three days later, conquering sin, death, and grave.

When we confess with our mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord and believe in our hearts that God raised Him from the dead, scripture says we will be saved—meaning that we are free from the penalty of sin and that our relationship with Jesus secures our eternity in Heaven with God. At the moment of salvation, the Holy Spirit of God begins to live in us, and He empowers us to begin to live a life that honors God. Through our words and actions, we can now point others to the abundant and everlasting life that only comes from Jesus.

Here are some scriptures you can read that help us understand what it means to be saved:

“For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.” -Romans 3:23-24 NLT

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.” -Romans 6:23 NLT

“For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.” -2 Corinthians 5:21 NLT

TAKEAWAY

One great step to start you on your journey with Jesus is to get a Bible. You can download one on your smartphone by searching for the YouVersion Bible App.

The Bible

Now that you've begun this new relationship you may be wondering how you can know what God wants you to do. God reveals Himself to us through His Word, the Bible. He also shapes our hearts and lives through His Word. As you begin this new relationship with God the best way to get to know Him is His word to you.

Before we talk about a great way to begin to read the Bible it's important to understand more about what the Bible is...

1. The Bible is GOD'S WORD

What sets the Bible apart from every other book that has ever been written is that it is ultimately authored by God Himself. All other books have their origin in the human heart and mind, but the Bible is the product of the mind and heart of God.

2. The Bible teaches us what is TRUE

The only way we can know what is true and what's false is if we have an objective standard of truth. The Bible is our standard of truth.

3. The Bible is our ROADMAP

Human beings have a tendency to get lost. It's why we invented maps, and why we have GPS. The Bible is like our spiritual GPS. When we start going our own way, wandering down the wrong path in life, the Bible can reveal to us where we went wrong and teach us how to get back on track.

4. The Bible is our TRAINER

The Bible works like a trainer for the Christian life. It coaches us, guides us, and gives us the knowledge we need to live out God's way in God's world. The Bible helps us get spiritually "fit."

The Bible is all these things and so much more. It's the most remarkable work of

literature ever compiled. It's the best selling book of all time. It has been a source of inspiration, guidance, and truth for people from all areas of the world for centuries. It is living and active. It contains wisdom for how to live life and live it to the full. It has the power to change us from the inside out. But the only way we can discover any of this is if we open it up and get into the scriptures and allow the scriptures to get into us.

"Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path."

-Psalms 119:105

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A really easy, practical way that you can read God's Word and engage in a passage of scripture or a verse is the practice of the SOAP Method...

- SOAP stands for **Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer**
- This method allows you to dig into God's Word in a way that is doable for any of us
- You don't have to remember a ton of steps or concepts, just S-O-A-P.

Here's how you start...

S - Scripture

- First, you find a verse or passage of scripture and you read it.
- After you've read it, maybe take a couple of minutes to literally write out the verse that you have read.
- You could write out the verse or verses in a journal or notebook.
- You want to take the time to do this because it helps us understand the scripture and focus on it if we see it written out.
- When we write it out, it also makes it easier if we want to go back and look at what we've read and learned.
- This is also a great step towards memorizing the verse or passage. This is important because there may be times in your life when you're going through a challenging time, and God will remind you of a verse you've memorized to help you during that time.

O - Observation

- What did you notice? What jumped out at you? What seems important?
- How did Jesus respond to these people who mocked him? Why did he respond with that question?
- What details in this passage matter?
- What is the theme of the passage or verse? What are the words that repeat or stick out to you?
- Make note of those observations and write them down.

A - Application

- How is this verse relative to my life?
- Or more specifically, how can I live out what I have read?
- The Bible isn't about information, but it's all about transformation.
- How will I apply this verse to my life that it TRANSFORMS me?
- If I read a verse that tells me to "love my enemies" and walk away and do nothing, I have missed the point, right? But, if I apply this verse to my life, I can ask myself- Who do I need to love so that I can live out the truth of God's word and be more like Jesus?
- Don't forget to write down your application

P - Prayer

- Pray over the verses you have read, and make it specific.
- If the Lord has revealed something through the scripture, then ask the Lord that the truth you read will become evident in your life.
- Pray that He will give you the strength and might to be obedient to His Word.
- Take the time to write out your prayer.
- This will help you to focus, instead of getting interrupted in your prayer with a "squirrel!" moment.
- When we write out our prayer, we can go back to it and see what God taught us or even see prayers answered over time.

So, are you ready? Let's try to SOAP together!

Example:

S - Scripture

“Be still and know that I am God.” -Psalm 46:10

O - Observation

- Two commands in this verse- “be still” and “know”
- It goes in that order- first- be still, and THEN you will know

A - Application

- In our world today we’re constantly going, constantly stimulated by something- thinking, listening, talking, moving, filling our minds with something, that there are times that we’re not still. In fact most of the time we’re not still.
- And it’s hard for us to really know that God is God when we’re NOT still.
- But when we are still, that’s when we can hear His voice, meditate on who He is, and remember His purpose.

P - Prayer

“God, help me to be still. Help me to be still in order to know and remember who you are.” Let my focus be on you, and only you. I want to hear you when I am still, so still my heart, my mind, and show me things about who you are that I would MISS if I was not still. Draw me closer to you in the stillness. In your name, amen.

That was it! Great Job! In our relationship with Jesus, it’s key to make time to be in the Bible every day.

Tips to help you do that:

1. Pick a time
2. Pick a place
3. Pick a plan

Start today - A great place to start reading is the Book of John. You can read it by opening your YouVersion Bible app to the book of John.

How Do I Pray?

What is prayer? Maybe you've wondered this yourself before. Is it some spooky spell, or a crazy formula with big words that you have to say just right? No, prayer is none of those things. Most simply put, prayer is a conversation with God.

Have you ever wanted to get to know someone better? Of course you have! We have all had that moment in our life. In order to really get to know someone better, you have to spend some consistent time talking with them.

The same is true in our relationship with God! If we are to ever really get to know God, we have to be willing to consistently talk with God. And it's pretty amazing that the God of the universe, the God that created all things actually wants to talk with us.

That's why we have this thing called prayer. We believe that developing consistency in prayer will truly help you become who God wants you to become and also help you get through anything that you may go through in this life. In the tough moments of life, you always have God to turn to in prayer.

It's also important to know that God wants you to prosper, to do well in life. The Bible tells us that God has great plans for your life, but for you to truly succeed in what God wants for your life, you are going to need prayer along the way. We will never have a growing relationship with God if we don't talk with God.

So maybe you're new to this and you're wondering where to start.

Pray Simply

Jesus Himself actually begins to teach His followers how to pray in Matthew 6. In fact, the first thing He shares when He begins teaching about prayer is this:

“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”

The first thing Jesus shares about prayer here is that prayer doesn't need to be flashy or formal! Just pray simply.

Pray Declaratively

In your conversations with God, we can declare the promises of God to Him. When you're going through something tough, you might pray “God, your word says that You work all things for my good so I pray that You will do just that for me.” We declare God's promises in our prayers not because He needs a reminder, but because it aligns our heart with His!

Pray Boldly

Prayer becomes a lifeless exercise when we're not looking for answers. Jesus invites us to expect God to work.

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.”

-Matthew 7:7

How much more exciting prayer becomes when we keep our eyes open to watch for God's answers.

Sometimes I wonder how many answers we miss because we don't really expect God to respond. My favorite part of prayer is saying AMEN! Amen isn't the "period" at the end of your sentence, it's more like an exclamation point. AMEN means "it is so." We say AMEN at the end of our prayers, because we are believing that God will make "it so"- that He will answer our prayers! We can pray boldly and expectantly.

Pray Continuously

If I only talked to my spouse once a day, our relationship might feel pretty distant. We often find ourselves doing that with God, talking to Him only once a day. If you want to grow strong in your prayer life, don't be a one and done Christian! Make your prayers an ongoing conversation with God. Prayer isn't confined to a time and place; we can talk to God anywhere at any time. What a privilege that is! Talk to God

often, all throughout your day, stay in conversation with Him.

Jesus actually modeled prayer for us. In Matthew 6, He said this:

"This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'"

Let this acronym be a guide and take a moment to PRAY.

P - Praise – Give God His due. He is worthy of praise.

R - Repent – Tell God about your struggles. God's not mad at you.

A - Ask – Tell God what you want and what you need. God is good.

Y - Yield – Submit to whatever He wants for your life. Lord, let your will be done.

What is Worship?

What is worship? Is it singing? Is it praying? Is it the way we live our lives? Yes! It is all of these things. Worship is setting your mind's attention and heart's affection on God. It means giving God all of the honor and praise He rightfully deserves. Why? Not only because He is morally perfect. By that I mean, it's not that God chooses not to do evil, but it's literally impossible for Him to do evil because it goes against His nature. That's praiseworthy enough! But even more than that... God is the Creator and Maker of all things, the Savior of all humanity. That deserves our worship.

Maybe you're thinking to yourself; "I don't know how to worship." Of course you do. See we were all created to

worship. In fact, whether we realize it or not, we all worship something or even someone. There is something in our lives that gets the majority of our focus or our time, and as a result, our hearts. Maybe for you, it's social media or video games or even that special someone in your life. None of these things are inherently bad but they are not worthy of your worship. Only God is.

God is the only one who deserves our praise and worship. True worship comes from a heart that says, "God, there is nothing I will hold back from you. You have full access to my life." Maybe you have even seen people raise their hands when they worship. This is a sign of surrender. Worship reminds us of our great need for God.

Like we mentioned before though, worship is not just singing or raising your hands. Worship is a lifestyle. It's choosing to put God at the center of everything we do. We can worship God with our lives, honoring God with every step we take and every decision we make.

I want to encourage you to take some time to think about how you can worship God with your life. What would that look like for you? What

would change? I also want to encourage you to worship God by singing songs of praise. Maybe you've never tried it before, but a really easy way to start is to simply put on some worship music from Spotify or Youtube and sing along to God. Speak to Him about how worthy He is, how good He is or how thankful you are for Him. It may feel new, but it's what you were created to do. So go ahead, take a few minutes and try it!

Our CF Worship Team has created a great playlist for you! Scan the QR code to check it out.



Don't do Life Alone

Why you need community more than you know

God did not design you to live alone. We are all created for community. We are stronger when we are living with others and not trying to do life alone. This is especially true as a new believer. You need other believers to encourage, teach, pray, and worship with you.

In Genesis 1-2, we read about how God created everything. If you haven't read these chapters before, you might want to take a look at them.

In the first book of the Bible called Genesis, we see how the world was created. With little effort but wonderful creativity, God creates the heavens and the earth and everything in it. The breadth and depth of what God was able to get done in just six days is sobering for any

results-oriented, type-A person. Talk about cranking it out! But then again, there is no one like Him. He's God.

As God creates the world, a recurring phrase appears. In fact, six times after God creates something the Bible says, "and God saw that it was good." From the light, to the sea, to the sky, to the land, to the sun, the moon, the stars, and the animals, God's assessment of what He's created is always the same: it is good. God is pleased. Then on the sixth day, God creates humanity. And God is so pleased by what He's created that His assessment changes. He looks at humanity and says that we're "very good."

But then something unexpected happens.

God looks at Adam, the first man, and says that something isn't right. In Genesis 2:18 He says, "It is not good for the man to be alone." Many people hear this Bible verse at weddings and think it is about marriage. But God is making a statement here that goes beyond marriage. At its core, this is a statement about how each of us needs community.

Many of us live lonely and isolated lives like Adam. At the end of a long, hard day at work, we retreat to our homes, close the garage door and escape. We spend hours on the internet or social media. We binge watch whatever we can find on Netflix or Disney+. The truth is, at the end of most days, we don't want to see any more people. We want to get away from them!

But at the same time, we crave relationships. We have this deep longing for them. We're around people all day long but nobody truly knows us. And deep inside we know that's not the way it's supposed to be. This is because God created us for deep and meaningful relationships with others who will encourage us, support us, love us, and help us grow.

You see, we were created in the image of a relational God. God is a relational being. Together, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit make up the Trinity and are three persons in one. That's why when God creates Adam He says, "Let US make man in OUR image" (Genesis 1:26). And just as God is a relational being, we too were created for significant relationships. The need for deep and meaningful relationships is part of our genetic makeup.

Henry Cloud, who is a Christian author and psychologist says it well: "God created us with a hunger for relationship—for relationship with Him and with our fellow people. At our very core, we are relational beings." He goes on to say, "The soul cannot prosper without being connected to others."

And this is why, from God's perspective, doing life alone is "not good." At Christ Fellowship we are passionate about making sure you don't do life alone. We want to help you grow in your relationships with God and others.

Here's a way to find community at Christ Fellowship:

Join a Group/Class

Groups and Classes are great places to be in community and to grow spiritually with both In-Person and Online options available. Scan here to find an option that works best for you!



Should I get Baptized?

In the New Testament, we see that people are usually baptized upon placing their faith in Jesus. Baptism is the act of being immersed in water to symbolize the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Christians do this as a symbol of our salvation. It is an outward confirmation of inward transformation, and through baptism, we publicly declare that we are followers of Jesus.

What is the meaning of Baptism?

It represents Jesus Christ's death and RESURRECTION.

"Christ died for our sins... He was buried...And He was raised on the third day." -1 Corinthians 15:3-4

"For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with Him, you were raised to a new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead." -Colossians 2:12

It represents my NEW LIFE as a follower of Christ.

"We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life." -Romans 6:4

Baptism is like a wedding ring: It's the outward representation of the commitment you made in your heart to God. Baptism shows that you already believe, but doesn't make you a believer. Baptism does not "save" you. Only Christ saves you by grace through faith in Him.

Who should be baptized?

ANYONE who is a believer in Jesus Christ.

“Those who accepted His message were baptized.” -Acts 2:41

Why should I be baptized?

To follow the example set by JESUS CHRIST.

“At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.”

-Mark 1:9

Because Christ COMMANDS it.

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

-Matthew 28:19-20

When should I get baptized?

As soon as you have believed! There is no reason to delay. As soon as you receive Christ into your life, you can and should be baptized. You can be a Christian without being baptized, but you can't be an obedient Christian without following the Lord in believer's baptism.

At Christ Fellowship we offer opportunities to get baptized every month. You can find more information about Baptism at cf.church/baptism.

What's Next?

We hope this guide has been able to help you with your new relationship with Jesus. You may be asking yourself, “what’s next?” Just keep coming back; that may seem simple, but if you want this new relationship to get stronger, it is essential that you keep coming back to church, keep connecting with other believers, and keep growing in your faith.

We know that we haven’t been able to answer every question you have about this new journey you’re on but we want to continue to walk with you in this new relationship.

We can’t wait to see you back at church this week!

