

*Come Together*

ALL ABOUT EVANGELISM

BILL NEWMAN

WELCOME  
TO THE  
**Family**

A GUIDE BOOK FOR  
NEW CHRISTIANS

*With  
Bonus*

HOW TO LIVE  
IN VICTORY

WELCOME  
TO THE  
**Family**

Today

I FULLY COMMITTED MY LIFE TO  
THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

MY NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

The testimony is this: God has given us eternal life,  
and this life has its source in his Son.

Whoever has the Son has this life; whoever does  
not have the Son of God does not have life.

1 JOHN 5:11-12

BILL NEWMAN PRESENTS

WELCOME  
TO THE  
*Family*

Welcome To The Family - A Guide Book for New Christians  
by Bill Newman

Published by:  
Bill Newman Ministries, PO Box 1700, Carindale, Qld, 4152, Australia  
[www.bnm.org.au](http://www.bnm.org.au)

In partnership with  
Spongecake Publishing, PO Box 813, Springwood, Qld, 4127 Australia  
[www.spongecakepublishing.com](http://www.spongecakepublishing.com)

This book or parts thereof may not be reproduced in any form, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means - electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording or otherwise - without prior written permission of the author or publisher, except as provided by Australian copyright law.

Scriptures taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. [www.zondervan.com](http://www.zondervan.com) The “NIV” and “New International Version” are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™

Scripture quotations marked\* taken from the New American Standard Bible® (NASB), Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation  
Used by permission. [www.Lockman.org](http://www.Lockman.org)”

Scriptures quotations marked\*\* are from the Good News Bible © 1994 published by the Bible Societies/HarperCollins Publishers Ltd UK, Good News Bible© American Bible Society 1966, 1971, 1976, 1992. Used with permission.’

Copyright © Bill Newman 2018

Third Edition: September 2018

ISBN: 1 875121 26 9

BILL NEWMAN PRESENTS

WELCOME  
TO THE  
**Family**

A GUIDE BOOK FOR  
NEW CHRISTIANS



# Contents

Congratulations from Bill Newman .....	8
Bill Newman's Eternity Presentation .....	10

## 1. Getting Started

1. Your New Birth .....	16
2. Your New Master .....	21
3. Your New Life .....	25
4. Your New Family .....	30
5. Your New Responsibility .....	40

## 2. How to Live in Victory

1. How Do You Live the Life Christ Died For? .....	46
2. Developing Your Relationship with God .....	49
3. Obeying God .....	51
4. Being Honest with God .....	53
5. The Filling of the Holy Spirit .....	56
6. Increasing Your Faith .....	59
7. The Abundant Life .....	61
8. Living for Victory .....	62
9. Victory Prayer .....	66
10. Living a Life of Service .....	67
11. Developing a Daily Devotional Time with God .....	69

# CONGRATULATIONS



You have made the greatest decision that you will ever make – that of committing your life to Christ. The Christian life is unique because the Lord Jesus Christ is its dynamic power.

In this booklet I want to share with you some important facts that will help you to grow in your new Christian commitment.

Things like:

- Reading the Bible for your spiritual food.
- The importance of prayer.
- Discovering how relevant the Bible is to our daily lives.
- Telling others about Christ  
(you can do it, even as a new Christian!)

And then we will cover some of the practical areas of living victoriously as a Christian from day to day.

The greatest thing that can happen to anyone is to become part of the family of God. As you open your heart to Christ you become a child of God and enter into His family. The Bible says, “To all who received Him, to those who believed in His Name, He gave the right to become children of God,” (John 1:12).

To believe in the Lord Jesus Christ means committing your life into His hands. Becoming a Christian means repenting



of your sin, receiving Christ and following him. You not only have to admit your sin and be sorry for it, you have to be willing to turn from it.

When you become a Christian, you must allow Christ to rule in your life; tell others of this choice; obey as He directs; and make the Bible your guide for life.

At this point you may be uncertain as to what it is all about. Don't be surprised - a tiny baby isn't quite sure what life is all about and if you have just received Christ you are a spiritual baby.

One question may be troubling you: Is this experience real and lasting or is it just a temporary emotion? Will it pass away in the cold light of daily living?

God says, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you," (Hebrews 13:5).

The Bible says, "He who has the Son has (eternal) life," (1 John 5:12). Just as He helped you to make that important first decision to receive Him as Saviour and Lord, so too He will help you to live your life for Him day by day as you allow Him.

Make sure you meet with other Christians in the fellowship of a church. This too will help you to grow in the Lord. Let me say again, welcome to this great adventure with Christ! May God richly bless you in this new step of faith.

Yours together in God's forever family.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Newman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a prominent initial "B".

Bill Newman and Team

BILL NEWMAN'S

---

*Eternity*

---

PRESENTATION

More:

YOUR COMMITMENT TO CHRIST IS FOR

Eternity

## 1. ETERNITY - WHERE ARE YOU GOING?



Eternity means forever. It means that yesterday, today and tomorrow are not all there is. Eternity means there can be life beyond the life we now live.

What do you feel is the best way to be sure we have eternal life?

Keeping the Ten Commandments, Gifts to charity or the church, Living a good life, Going to church, Believing in God, Praying to God etc.

The Bible says that all these things may be *good* in themselves, but they *will not guarantee* eternal life.

It may surprise you to know that good people don't necessarily have eternal life.

God has a plan for you: to enjoy eternal life with Him forever! God's desire is for you to come to Him and receive His free gift of eternal life.

The problem is we have broken God's laws and commandments and stand guilty and condemned.

However, God loves us so much. He can forgive us and give us eternal life!

The Bible says, "*For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son (Jesus Christ), that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.*" John 3:16.

The question is: "How can we come to God and be sure we have eternal life?"

## 2. GOD'S PLAN - ETERNAL LIFE



### 3. OUR PROBLEM - SEPARATION



Sin separates people from God. We have all disobeyed God and gone our own wilful way.

The Bible says, *"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."* Romans 3:23.

The Bible also adds, *"The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."* Romans 6:23. People have

tried to bridge this separation in many ways...without success.

### 4. GOD'S ANSWER - THE CROSS

God's love bridges the gap of separation between God and us.

When Jesus Christ died on the Cross, He paid the penalty for our sin. In the Bible it says, *"But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."* Romans 5:8

Jesus Christ also states, *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through Me."* John 14:6



### 5. OUR RESPONSE - TO CROSS OVER



God invites us to respond to His love by crossing over the separation through trusting Jesus Christ. This means accepting Christ's death on the Cross as payment for our personal sin and believing that God raised Him from the dead. It also means we completely

entrust our lives to Jesus as our living Saviour and Lord. Jesus says, *"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life."* John 5:24

## 6. GOD'S INVITATION - TO COME

SINFUL



HOLY

Will you right now choose to cross over by taking the step of totally committing your life to Jesus Christ? If so, pray this prayer:

*"Dear God, thank you for loving me. I confess I have sinned against you. Please forgive my sin. I believe that your Son Jesus Christ died on the Cross to pay for my sin and rose again from the dead. I confess Jesus as my Lord. I receive your gift of eternal life. Amen."*

---

## 7. HOW TO BE SURE

If you prayed this prayer, the Bible says that you now have eternal life.

*"And this is the testimony; God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life."* 1 John 5:11-12

---

## 8. YOUR NEW LIFE Here are some key steps to follow:



### Love God and all people

*"Love the Lord your God...Love your neighbour..."*  
Matthew 22:36-40



### Study the Bible daily (start with the Gospel of John)

*"Crave spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow"*  
1 Peter 2:2



### Pray to God about everything

*"...In everything, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."* Philippians 4:6-7



### Meet regularly with other Christians

*"Let us not give up meeting together... but let us encourage one another..."* Hebrews 10:25



### Tell others about Jesus Christ

*"Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."* Mark 16:15



WELCOME TO THE FAMILY

**Part 1**

GETTING  
***STARTED***

# 1. YOUR NEW BIRTH

Becoming a Christian is actually a new birth into God's family. Just as we become members of our earthly family only by natural birth, so we become members of God's family only by supernatural re-birth.

When you have invited Jesus Christ into your heart, you do more than turn over a new leaf, you actually receive a new life. "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe on His name" (John 1:12\*).

## **What being born again is not:**

Becoming a Christian isn't just adopting a new system of beliefs or a new code of ethics or a new set of habits – although it is certainly true that Christ will make a difference in the way you think and decide and act. You have actually entered into a new personal relationship with God. "...you are all sons of God through faith..." (Galatians 3:26\*).

The new birth is essential for entrance into God's family. Jesus said you must be born again. In fact He said "...unless one is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God" (John 3:3\*). In these early days, as a brand new Christian, it is very important for you to grow in your new faith in Christ. It's great to have a new birth, a new Father, and a new family. You have become a child of God. You have been born into His family as a spiritual baby. This is a strategic moment in your life.



## **Knowing for sure:**

I would like to share with you a few simple truths which will strengthen you for the battle that is ahead and keep you safe from the onslaughts of satan, your chief enemy.

## **1. REPLACE DOUBTS WITH PROMISES FROM GOD'S WORD**

Because you have taken this step it does not mean that your problems are automatically solved. In fact, you might find you have some new ones. You will find that satan, the enemy of your soul, will try to spoil the work that God is doing in you and will try to make you seriously doubt many things day by day.

His first approach is often to cast doubt upon the work which God has done in your heart. Although you will not hear his audible voice, he may whisper to your heart, "Surely you don't think you are saved and that your sins are forgiven just by believing and receiving Christ? That's not enough!"

What is your answer going to be? Your only hope to withstand such an attack is to go to God's Word. What does God say about the matter? That's the important thing.

Memorise this passage from 1 John 5:11-13 and you will gain victory every time a doubt arises during the days that lie ahead:

**"And this is the testimony; God has given us eternal life and this life is in His Son. 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.”

You see, we can be sure we are Christ’s if we are basing our assurance on the right ground. Not on our own goodness, not on our ability to get to heaven by our own way, but by giving our lives totally and completely to Jesus Christ.

When you first committed your life to Christ you felt good, you felt clean because God had forgiven you of all your sin and you knew that you had made the right choice in receiving Jesus Christ. But don’t rely on your feelings. Remember it was not Noah’s feelings that saved him from the flood, it was the fact that he had actually committed his life and the life of his family into that ark. So you, too, must commit yourself to the fact that God has promised in His Word that, once we receive Christ, we become part of the family of God. We receive Christ’s gift of eternal life.

Paul, the apostle, could say, “But I am still full of confidence because I know whom I have trusted and I am sure that He is able to keep safe until that Day what He has entrusted to me” (2 Timothy 1:12\*\*).

**Every time you have a doubt, replace that doubt with a promise from the Word of God.**

Remember, you are fighting against the devil!

“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the

same kind of sufferings” (1 Peter 5:8-9).

*The symbol for Christianity  
is a cross, not a cushion!*

## **2. MEET REGULARLY WITH FELLOW BELIEVERS**

A coal separated from the fire goes out quickly. You need to meet with other Christians.

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (Acts 2:42).

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another - and all the more as you see the Day approaching” (Hebrews 10:24-25).

## **3. RELY ON CHRIST AND NOT ON YOUR OWN STRENGTH**

“I can do everything through Him who gives me strength” (Philippians 4:13).

“God has said, ‘Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you.’ So we say with confidence, ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?’” (Hebrews 13:5-6).

You will find that learning to live the Christian life is like learning to walk. Like a little toddler learning to walk, you

will have many ups and downs. This is quite natural.

“If the Lord delights in a man’s way, He makes his steps firm; though he stumble he will not fall, for the Lord upholds him with His hand” (Psalm 37:23-24).

The aim of the devil is to trip you up and cause you to fall. Sin spoils our relationship with God unless it is confessed. The devil aims to keep you in a constant condition of broken fellowship with God. He never gives up.

When you were learning to walk you often fell down. Did you stay down long? No, you reached out to the extended hand of your mother or father, who put you back on your feet. Learn to walk with God in this way. When you fall, reach out to God through prayer and accept His merciful, helping hand.

Memorise 1 John 1:9 and practise it daily -

“If we confess our sins He (God) is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

Whenever you have done something that displeases the Lord, as soon as the Spirit of God has made you aware of it put it right immediately. God will forgive and cleanse and you will enjoy constant fellowship with Him.

Remember, satan will always try to bring you down but God promises victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

## **2. YOUR NEW MASTER**

This chapter is so important because, as a new Christian, it is vital that you understand the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. He wants to help you as you grow in your new found faith in Him. Living the Christian life is simply growing more and more like Jesus Christ.

“All the armies that ever marched and all the navies that ever were built and all the parliaments that ever sat and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as has this one solitary life - the life of Jesus Christ” (Phillip Brooks).

### **GETTING TO KNOW THE LORD JESUS**

Now that you have decided to trust your life to Jesus Christ you will want to get to know as much about Him as you possibly can. It is only natural - the better you know someone the more you will trust him.

The Apostle Paul’s greatest desire in life was to get to know the Lord Jesus more and more. [Philippians 3:10] Nothing could be more exciting. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal more of Jesus Christ to you every day, not as a cold doctrine or some historical figure, but as a living, exciting, powerful reality in your life right now.

### **THE DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST**

Read – John 1:1-3; Matthew 1:18, 20, 21.

Christianity differs from all religions because it is more than a religion – it is the life of the Son of God made living

in man or woman. Christ is Christianity and Christianity is Christ. He is the supreme theme of each book of the New Testament and fulfils all the promises of God in the Old Testament, from His incarnation to His second coming as Lord of Lords and King of Kings.

## **THE HUMANITY OF JESUS CHRIST**

The humanity of Jesus Christ is seen in His human parentage (Matthew 2:11).

1. He developed as a normal human being. (Luke 2:52)
2. He was subject to all the problems of human nature:
  - He was hungry (Matthew 4:2)
  - He was thirsty (John 19:28)
  - He was weary (John 4:6)
  - He wept (John 11:35)
  - He was tempted (Hebrews 4:15)

Jesus is man and yet He is more than man. He is not God and man, but the God-man. He is God in human flesh.

The virgin birth of Jesus Christ is without parallel in human history. It was by the virgin birth that God became man, one perfect person but two natures (Luke 1:26-35).

The virgin birth was prophesied in the Old Testament (Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 9:6-7; Micah 5:2).

## **THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST**

The death of Jesus Christ is mentioned more than 120 times in the New Testament and is spoken of many times by the

prophets in the Old Testament.

1. On the cross, Jesus Christ died taking our place. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

Although sinless, Christ died for the sinner. By faith in Him the sinner is made righteous with the righteousness of God.

2. The death of Jesus Christ was not an afterthought with God; it was the forethought of God. (Revelation 13:8)

3. The death of Jesus Christ was voluntary. (John 10:17,18)

Jesus said, “No one has taken it away from me.” Then He said, “I lay it down on my own initiative” (voluntarily). “I have authority to take it up again” (voluntarily). This He did on the cross and on the third day He rose from the dead.

## **THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST**

Read – Matthew 28:5, 6

“As a lawyer I have made a prolonged study of the evidences for the resurrection (of Jesus Christ). To me the evidence is conclusive and over and over in the High Court I have secured the verdict on evidence not so nearly compelling...The Gospel evidence for the resurrection...I accept unreservedly as the testimony of truthful men to facts they were able to substantiate” (Sir Edward Clarke).

Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25). The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the doctrine of every disciple, the faith of every true believer, the courage of every martyr, the theme of every sermon, and the power of every evangelist.

## **THE ASCENSION AND SECOND COMING**

Read – Acts 1:9-11

After forty days of instructing His disciples the risen Christ ascended up on high and is seated at the right hand of the Father (Hebrews 10:12). The message of the second coming of Christ is so important that it is mentioned over three hundred times in the New Testament (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17).

“Jesus Christ has trod the world. The trace of Divine footsteps will never be obliterated. And the Divine footsteps were not the footsteps of a man...not an angel, not a disembodied spirit, not an abstract ideal, but **THE MAN JESUS CHRIST**” (Peter Bayne).

To believe in Jesus Christ means more than agreeing with what the Bible says about Him. To believe in Jesus is to choose to trust Him alone for eternal life. You can't earn eternal life by performing good deeds or religious works. It is important to understand that Jesus alone can forgive your sins and give you eternal life.



### **3. YOUR NEW FAMILY**

“The Church is the only fellowship in the world where the one requirement for membership is the unworthiness of the candidate” (Robert B. Munger).

The road to heaven isn't one that you ride on a bicycle built for two - you and God. It is a road that you travel in the company of other believers.

God planned not only for you to be born again, but for you to be born into His household, the great company of believers, through whom God has planned to bless the whole world.

That is why if someone says, “I'll be a Christian but I won't join a church,” it is like saying, “I'll join the Navy...but just don't put me on any one ship.” It is tremendously important that you have a good church home where you can grow in Christ.

#### **CHOOSING A CHURCH**

Now that you have become a Christian how do you know which church to join? You are joined to the true Church the very moment you are converted. Your name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life in heaven (Revelation 21:27). The true Church is made up of every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, whatever the believer's race or colour may be. Members of the true Church are found throughout the world, though the entire Church has never met together in one place.

However, it is possible for Christians who live near one

another to meet together as members of a local church and conduct services, using the Bible as their guide. In the early days the Christians met in their own homes (Romans 16:5 and Philemon 2).

How can a Christian know which local group they should join?

1. Pray earnestly that you may clearly know God's thoughts about the matter and where He wants you.
2. Be sure the group believes that all of the Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God. (2 Timothy 3:16)
3. Be sure that the group teaches the truth about the PERSON of Christ. (Colossians 2:9)
4. Be sure that there is right teaching about the WORK of Christ.

We are saved by faith in Him alone and any goodness or works we may do have no part in our salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9).

5. Be guided by trusted Christian friends.

What should you, as a Christian, be doing each week? Read Hebrews 10:25.

## **THE PERFECT CHURCH**

Avoid one attitude - trying to find a "perfect" church. There has never been one. Even Jesus had a traitor among his twelve disciples and the rest failed when Christ was arrested! The church is not a museum. It is not a place to put stuffed saints on exhibition. It is a hospital. It is a place to heal and purify sinners who are being saved. Remember,

if you found a “perfect” church they wouldn’t let you in. Then it wouldn’t be perfect anymore!

Let’s look at some of the characteristics of the early New Testament Church.

Read Acts 4:31-33.

Note that the early church was:

1. A praying church.
2. A church filled with the Holy Spirit.
3. They had a bold witness.
4. They were a growing church.
5. They were a united church.
6. They were an unselfish church.
7. They were a powerful church.
8. They were a gracious church.

## **WHY GO TO CHURCH?**

### **1. Go to GROW**

A baby is expected to grow. Attending a local church will help you to grow in the things of God. (Hebrews 10:25).

### **2. Go to SHOW**

Going to church is a witness to a watching world of your allegiance to Jesus Christ, (Matthew 16:18).

### **3. Go to KNOW**

Getting to know others Believers will help support you in your new faith. I drove through the a giant redwood forest onetime and was told that although the trees have shallow

roots they continue to stand because below the surface the roots are entangled together helping each other to stand. (Acts 2:42).

#### **4. Go to BESTOW**

Christians need to worship God together. (Psalm 5:7. Psalm 149:1).

#### **5. Go to SOW**

The church is a place of service. (Ephesians 2:10. Matthew 28:18-20). Our service for God can make a difference for eternity in the lives of others by our witnessing, praying giving financially and serving in whatever capacity we can.

In serving with other Believers you will discover the gift God has given you.

1. Realise you have at least one spiritual gift, perhaps more.
2. Pray to discover your spiritual giftedness.
3. Be willing to use your spiritual gifts.
4. Explore what the Bible says about spiritual gifts.
5. Seek guidance and advice from mature Christians. Some gifts appear quickly others over a period of time as you grow in Christ.

#### **6. Go to GLOW**

A growing Christian is a glowing Christian. Glowing Christians radiate the likeness of Christ in word and deed. (Matthew 5:14-16. Acts 4:13).

Church attendance is as vital to a disciple as a transfusion

of healthy blood to a sick person.

Keep on keeping on and let me say again - “Welcome to the Family”.

## **4. YOUR NEW LIFE**

Becoming a Christian is not an end. It's a beginning.

That is why the Bible so often compares it to a baby being born. Peter says, "You have been born again" (1 Peter 1:23) but goes right on to say, "Like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation" (1 Peter 2:2).

I remember when our first baby was born. I breathed a sigh of relief and thought to myself, "I'm glad that's over." Then the thought hit me – it has really just started!

We love to see a baby smile and to hear it coo and gurgle in its crib. I could hardly wait for the day when my baby said, "Daddy". But it would be a real tragedy and sorrow for us if we had a baby and at twenty-one was still only saying "Daddy". Maybe this can help you to see how God, our Heavenly Father, would grieve over us if, though He had redeemed us, we never grew up to accomplish His purposes!

### **THE START OF A WONDERFUL FUTURE**

When you were born again, you began a spiritual life; you became a spiritual baby.

But we're not to remain spiritual babies. It is tremendously important that we "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18).

The Christian life is like riding a bicycle. If you don't keep on going forward you will fall. Don't ever be satisfied to stay where you are now. Your "experience" of coming to

Christ has been wonderful, but now you have to press on, for there are vast areas to be explored for Christ in your life! God has a destiny for our lives! He wants to reproduce Christ in us!

“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first born among many brethren” (Romans 8:29).

Jesus Christ is the measuring-stick. Your spiritual growth will not be measured primarily by the amount of time you spend in prayer, or the number of Christian meetings you attend, or the amount of Scripture you read and memorise, or even the number of people you win to Christ. These things are vital - but are means and results, not goals. The true test of Christian maturity is: Am I beginning to react to life and people and problems and sin as Jesus would? Am I becoming like Him?

Jesus told His disciples: “You did not choose Me, but I chose you...that you should go and bear fruit” (John15:16). What is this fruit? “...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...” (Galatians 5:22,23). We ought to measure our lives daily against this list. All of these are traits of character that were embodied in our Lord Jesus Christ.

## **GOD AT WORK**

A Christian isn't a person who strains desperately to reach God's standard by their own strength. You could almost hang a sign on a Christian saying, "God at work"!

It is tremendously important for you to grasp this right now: God is living in your personality through the Holy Spirit. You see, we come to know God the Father as God above us; God the Son as God who lived among us; and God the Holy Spirit as God within us. God doesn't merely call down from heaven as a sort of celestial cheerleader and encourage us to become like Christ. He actually goes to work inside us when we become His children.

If you said to me, "Write a play like 'Hamlet,'" I'd answer, "I can't. Shakespeare could do it. But I can't." And if I say to you, "Be like Jesus Christ," you would answer back quite rightly, "I can't. Jesus could, but it's beyond me." But if somehow Shakespeare could get inside me, then I could write a play like him. Obviously, Shakespeare can't get inside me, but it is possible for Jesus Christ to get inside of you. In fact, He came in when you received Him.

You're not a stranger trying to copy Christ in a superficial way. You're His child sharing God's own life, for Christ lives in you (Galatians 2:20). Your responsibility is to cooperate with His purposes by a daily surrender of yourself, your heart and will, to the control of the Holy Spirit.



## **1. YOUR NEW POWER - THE INDWELLING HOLY SPIRIT**

One of the greatest and most exciting truths that you will discover as a new believer is the presence and indwelling power of the Holy Spirit.

The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit is a person who comes to indwell you the moment you become a Christian. It is He who gives us power to live the Christian life (Acts 1:8).

### **You can always recognise a Holy Spirit-powered person:**

- They evangelise: they share their faith.
- They reproduce: by constantly sowing the seed of the Word of God.
- They see change: in people, places and things.
- They turn the world upside down or right side up!

### **How to be Spirit empowered:**

- Confess sin according to 1 John 1:9

Before we can be filled with the Holy Spirit we must deal honestly and completely with every known sin in our lives. Repentance must be evident in our lives. Restitution will also have to be made. For example, if we have stolen anything it must be repaid as far as possible.

- Ask the Holy Spirit to empower you (Ephesians 5:18)
- By faith accept the fact that you are empowered (John 15:7)

It is not a matter of feeling but of faith. The filling of the Holy Spirit should not be a once-for-all event, but a

continuous reality every day of our lives. It is not only a beginning, but a process.

The most basic question any Christian can ask is this: who is ruling my heart - self or Christ?

To help you to learn to “practise the presence of Christ”, I would like to suggest that the most valuable habit you can have is to set aside a “quiet time” each day to be with God. Perhaps the best thing is to have a few minutes early in the morning before you start the day.

The power of the Holy Spirit is given to enable us to live godly and fruitful lives.

## **2. YOUR SPIRITUAL FOOD**

### **- GOD’S WORD**

You will become a strong Christian by reading the Bible.

Just as we need daily food to keep our bodies going, so too we need daily spiritual food to help us grow, develop and mature as Christians.

A Bible-reading Christian is a growing Christian. It is most important to have a daily intake of the Word of God. The Bible is God’s Word from cover to cover.

“All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults and giving instruction for right living” (2 Timothy 3:16 - GNB).

This wonderful library of books in the Bible is filled with instruction on how to live the Christian life in the power of

Christ. It also contains many promises from God to claim for ourselves.

A basic part of your “quiet time” each day should be a study of the Bible. Remember that sin will keep you from God’s Word, or God’s Word will keep you from sin. “Thy word I have treasured in my heart that I may not sin against Thee” (Psalm 119:11).

When Jesus was tempted by satan He resisted by quoting Scripture (see Luke 4:1-13). Obviously He had saturated Himself with the Scriptures. If Jesus Christ, the Son of God, studied the Scriptures how much more do you and I need to! “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16,17).

The following suggestions may be helpful:

- Get your own Bible

Buy one that is easy to read, one you can feel free to mark.

- Set aside a definite time for Bible study in addition to your “quiet time”

Maybe a Bible break instead of a “coffee” or “tea” break would be one way.

- Take one book at a time and study it thoroughly

Begin with the Gospel of John. I would highly recommend that you use “Word For Today” published by Vision Radio.

- As you read several verses each day ask yourself questions.

For example: What does this teach me about God? About man? Is there an example for me to follow? A command to obey? A sin to avoid? A promise to claim?

- Jot down, for future reference, the ideas and questions that come to you.

If you come to something you don't understand don't throw out the whole Bible! When you eat fish, if you come to a bone, you put it aside and eat what you can!

- Keep pencil and paper handy. Make notes in your Bible as well.

Here is a good summary for studying any passage of the Bible:

- Study it through - until you grasp its meaning.
- Mark it down - for future reference.
- Pray it in - that God will make it real in your life.
- Pass it on - share with others what God says to you.

### **3. YOUR LIFELINE TO GOD - PRAYER**

You will become a strong Christian by praying.

“Don’t be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God” (Philippians 4:6).

Prayer is so mysterious but so thrilling! God’s Holy Spirit speaks to us as we read the Bible. In prayer we speak to Him. Prayer is to your soul what breathing is to your lungs.

As you pray and see wonderful answers to your prayers, your faith will grow. God has made us to have fellowship with Himself and prayer is the means of this contact. “My soul thirsts for God, for the living God” (Psalm 42:2). All of us have a hunger in our souls for God.

Practise talking to God as to a friend. Don’t limit your prayers to a formal act once a day - get into the habit of sending short prayers to God many times during the day. Pray when you wake up; pray before meals; pray when you walk, ride or wait; pray when you can’t sleep. Just living your life to the glory of God can be a prayer. We can pray without even closing our eyes or kneeling down.

It is important, though, that we have a definite time each day where we discipline ourselves in talking to God and listening to Him. Many find the best time to be alone with God is in the morning. Perhaps a busy mother may find the best time is midmorning or late at night. As we meet God in this “quiet time” it brings strength, peace and a sense of direction, purpose and dedication for the day.

Divers would not think of going down into the water, without first making sure that their air hoses were connected so that they would get oxygen from above. A Christian should not venture into the temptations and duties of the day without first making sure that his/her connections with heaven are clear.

### **Remember these four important areas of prayer:**

#### **A - C - T - S**

##### **A-doration**

Reflecting on God Himself. Praising Him for His love - His power and majesty - His wonderful gift of the Lord Jesus Christ.

##### **C-onfession**

Admitting to God when you have sinned. Being honest and humble. Remember, He knows you and loves you still.

##### **T-hanksgiving**

Telling God how grateful you are for everything He has given, even the unpleasant things. Your thankfulness will help you see His purposes.

##### **S-upplication**

Making specific requests. Pray for others first, then for yourself. Make a list of those friends, relatives, work mates, neighbours or school friends whom you want to find the Saviour as well.

As we read the Bible, God's Holy Spirit speaks to us. In prayer we speak to Him. So you see our "quiet time" should be a dialogue - a two-way communication!

There is something abnormal about a hermit. Man longs for the company of others. But in our hearts is also a yearning to be with God...to pray. Our car engines are not made to run on water; they need petrol. The soul cannot run on self will; it needs God. Prayer is to our soul what breathing is to our lungs.

At the same time it is essential that we have some definite time each day when we discipline ourselves to talk to God and listen to Him. Remember that prayer is conversation with God. God's greatest concern is not the length of our prayers, not the correctness of our language, but the attitude of our hearts. Jesus said, "God is spirit and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth" (John 4:24).

## **5. YOUR NEW RESPONSIBILITY**

### **SHARE THE GOOD NEWS!**

“He (Jesus) said to them, ‘Go throughout the whole world and preach the Gospel to all mankind’” (Mark 6:15).

Our Lord Jesus Christ said that we should be salt and light in this world. Salt makes people thirsty. We should ask Jesus Christ to put in our personalities a saltiness, a tang, which will make people thirsty for Him. Light gives us direction when the way ahead is not clear. “Your light must shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:13-16).

You and I, of ourselves, cannot live the Christian life. It is only as we fully yield and totally surrender to Jesus Christ, allowing Him to have His power in and through our lives, that we enjoy victorious Christian living. It is then that we become the kind of witnesses that our Lord wants us to be.

### **DEMONSTRATE A DIFFERENCE!**

As you allow Christ to live through you, people will notice something different about your life. Demonstration always leads to conversation. Take and make opportunities to share this good news about Jesus Christ with others in a natural, honest way. Even though you are a new Christian you can share your new faith with others. You may often fail, as we all do, but don't allow this to discourage you.

Ask another Christian or pastor or elder to teach you how to lead others to Christ.



Don't stop witnessing for Christ because you feel you don't know all the answers. There isn't a person who knows all the answers anyway. But you do know the reality of Jesus Christ and you can testify to that.

Tell someone you know that you have become a Christian. This may be your first opportunity to witness for Christ. Begin right away.

## **WITNESSING FOR CHRIST**

You can't be a secret disciple. I once heard it said that if you try to be a secret disciple, either your secrecy will destroy your discipleship or your discipleship will destroy your secrecy! You need to stand openly for your faith and to witness for your Lord.

One mark of a genuine relationship with Christ is the desire to share what you have discovered of Him.

## **REASONS FOR SHARING YOUR FAITH**

It seems to me that these first Christians shared their faith for at least two reasons.

First, they were simply obeying what Jesus told them to do. When He called some fishermen, He said, "Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men." (Mark 1:17 NASB). It was just part of following Jesus to try to win other men to Him.

Second, I also have a feeling that they were gripped by an irresistible impulse to share Christ. Even if He hadn't told them, "You shall be My witnesses" (Acts 1:8), they couldn't have held it back. Take a look at the fourth chapter of Acts.

There you will find some of the religious authorities telling Peter and John to stop talking about Jesus. What did they reply? “...We cannot stop speaking what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20\*). A current of spiritual power had been turned on that they couldn’t control – God was controlling them!

You owe it to yourself to witness for Christ. One of the best ways to keep your own faith fresh is to share it with another. I find it a sort of spiritual rule that my own relationship to God seems to be most vigorous and healthy when I’m witnessing to others.

## **PEOPLE ARE READY TO HEAR – WE HAVE TO TELL THEM**

You owe it to other people, as well as to yourself, to be a witness. How would you have known of Christ if someone hadn’t told you? How will the world know of Christ if we who know Him keep quiet? Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, “You are the salt of the earth” (Matthew 5:13). Like salt, we believers are to bring purity where there is decay and flavour where life has become tasteless. But salt can’t do its work if it stays in the saltshaker. It has to get out of the saltshaker and onto the food to do its work!

I think the worst mistake we Christians make is to sit complacently in the saltshaker, enjoying the safety of fellowship with Christian friends and forgetting those outside who need Christ. We need the strength of fellowship in our church, but don’t let it be an escape. Let it be a base

where you get spiritually equipped to move out and witness everyday to those around you.

## **LOOK, LISTEN AND SHARE**

Here are three simple words to help you in witnessing for Christ - look, listen and share.

**1. First of all, look around you.** You don't have to go ten thousand miles away to find someone who needs Christ. Jesus didn't go out of His way to find someone. He usually looked and saw someone right there where He was. There are people around you - a shopkeeper in a store, someone who travels on the same bus with you, the lady next door, the fellow who works next to you. Many of them - though they may not appear to be so, are really hungry for something - the abundant life that only Christ can give.

**2. Listen to them.** Most people, especially in this busy, modern world, would love to have someone they could trust and who would really take an interest in them. Jesus was a friend of sinners. He never took part in their sins, but He was always available to them. And they came to Him and talked to Him.

Be a friend to those who are not Christians. Look for things that you can do for them. Always be ready to listen to them. Don't just hear the surface words, but listen to what's under the surface. Someone has said that a Christian, by listening, puts his hand into someone's soul and runs it around on the rim of their life until he comes to a cracked or rough place, something that hurts. If you're really listening, prayerfully

and sensitively, you'll often find someone will bring up a real need in his or her life that Jesus Christ can meet.

**3. Learn to share.** Watch for an opportunity to tell this friend what Jesus Christ has meant to you, honestly, simply and without pious tones. You may be able to do so over a cup of tea or coffee. You may be able to do it by taking friends to some Christian service where they will hear the Gospel proclaimed and then you can ask them what they thought of it. On other occasions you may be able to give them a carefully selected piece of Christian literature.

Don't be kept back from witnessing for Christ because you feel you don't know all the answers. You don't know them. I don't know them. No one knows all the answers. Admit that you don't. But you do know the reality of Jesus Christ and you can testify to that.

Witnessing is not merely an activity - it is a way of life. Christians don't do witnessing; they are witnesses - good or bad. Concentrate on improving your witness for Jesus Christ.

You can use the Eternity presentation at the beginning of this book to share your faith with others, showing them how to be a Christ follower.

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY

**Part 2**

HOW TO LIVE  
IN  
***VICTORY***

# 1. HOW DO YOU LIVE THE LIFE CHRIST DIED FOR?

Jesus made powerful promises of abundant life and then died and was resurrected to make those promises a reality. But all too often, the only abundance we feel is an abundance of frustration.

Our lives seem to lack direction and purpose, instead of living triumphantly every day, we live in a state of instability – up one day and down the next.

God wants you to live in victory; Satan wants you to live in defeat. As a Christian, you choose which road you will take.

Whether you're a new Christian or a life-long disciple, the practical principles and step-by-step guidelines presented in this part of the book will inspire your passion for God and strengthen your spiritual legs for the adventure ahead.

You'll find yourself filled with hope and courage and the belief that with God's help you can live victoriously every day.

You'll be amazed at how the simple concepts presented here will change your life. Everything you need for consistent victory is waiting for you – all you have to do is tap into God's awesome power.

The following pages reflect some basic principles I know to be true:

1. God wants you to get in and stay in victory.

2. Satan wants you to live in defeat.
3. As a Christian, you can choose whether to walk in victory or defeat.
4. It's easier to drift into defeat than to fight your way into victory and stay there.
5. Living and walking in victory isn't automatic; you have to passionately seize the victory.
6. All the components for consistent victory are available to you if you'll avail yourself of them.
7. Living in defeat day after day curtails your witness and damages your testimony.
8. Living in victory empowers your witness and affects people positively for Christ.
9. Victorious living is not complicated or impossible to attain.
10. Certain God-given principles must be adhered to if you are to walk in victory on a consistent basis.

Living victoriously doesn't mean that we won't get sick, go broke, or experience severe hardship. It doesn't mean that everything will always go the way we think it ought to go. Nor does it mean we'll always have dry eyes and smiles on our faces.

It does mean, though, that in the midst of the challenges of life, we will be soldiers who know and walk in the aura of victory. We may lose a few battles, but we will always win the war, because we are more than conquerors through him who loves us.

Living victoriously means that we will walk tall, unafraid, unashamed, and undaunted by hardship – not in unrealistic denial, but in the truth that we’re always victorious in Jesus Christ – even if we’re bleeding!

This part of the book is a practical guide to help every Christian stay on the victory road.



## **2. DEVELOPING YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

God is a person, He is not a force, or a vapour, or an invisible eye. He wants to talk with you and He wants you to talk to Him. The old song “Getting to know you”, is all about relationships. It takes many hours of communicating to get to really know a friend. God wants to become your deepest friend. He is the most exciting, interesting and loving person you will ever know. Jesus said, “Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent” (John 17:3).

The deep cry of every person’s heart is to know God. Everyone has a built-in spiritual craving to know his Creator. This hunger can only be satisfied by spending time getting to know Him. This is why it is so vital to establish a daily quiet time of prayer and Bible reading.

In Genesis, we read that Enoch pleased God because Enoch walked with God (Genesis 5:24). He did this by putting God first. Every day we have decisions to make and responsibilities to take care of: to please God, seek Him first (Matthew 6:33) and seek those things that are above (Colossians 3:1-2). Remember, Jesus commended Mary because she sat at His feet, listening to Him (Luke 10:38-42).

Take some time and read these verses to see how various people in their “quiet time”, diligently sought God:

Psalm 119:2, Jeremiah 28:13, Matthew 5:6, 2 Chronicles

7:14, 16:9, Psalm 34:10, Proverbs 8:17, Hebrews 11:6, 1 Chronicles 28:9, 2 Chronicles 31:20-21, Ezra 7:10, Deuteronomy 30:19-20.

God will never force Himself or His will upon us. He has given us a free will to choose life or death, blessing or cursing.

Getting to know God, like marriage, is a life-long commitment. It takes time, effort and patience. It takes the whole of your heart. Getting to know God is so very worthwhile.

### 3. OBEYING GOD

As we are walking with God then we will want to be obedient to Him. Remember, He is a loving Father, not harsh, cold and unbending with a short-fuse. As a little child leaps into the arms of a father in full trust, so we too can trust and obey God because He has our best interest in mind.

Jesus said, “If you love me, you will obey what I command” (John 13:34-35). This new commandment is radically opposed to our selfish, sinful nature. Loving God with all our heart, soul, mind and body will result in a greater love for our loved ones and those we come into contact with.

To obey God brings blessing to ourselves. God is not a big killjoy or a cosmic-policeman in heaven shaking His head when we blow-it. Yet it grieves Him so much when we continue to disobey the guidelines He has written for us in the Bible. All of which He intended for our well-being and greater good.

As we live for, and obey God, our desire will be to not conform to the world (1 John 2:15-17). This world is doomed anyway and going down like the Titanic.

Obedience to God will enable us to forget the past. The devil will try to put you on a guilt-trip by bringing up your past and what you used to do, say and think. Always remember, if the devil brings up your past, tell him about his future!! Keep on looking ahead to your high calling in God (Philippians 3:13-14). You are cleansed and forgiven by the blood. Your old life is dead (Galatians 2:20). Get rid

of any paraphernalia and reminders of past sin in your life like those in Acts (Acts 19:18-19).

Obedience to God will result in attending a good church (Hebrews 10:24-25). Relationships with other believers are vital. Good friends and companions are so important. Value friends who share your enthusiasm and love for Christ (1 Corinthians 15:33).

The old song says it so well (I remember when they sang it at my baptism). “Trust and obey, for there’s no other way, to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.” Obey the Lord by being baptised if you have not been already. Water baptism is an outward demonstration of the inward work that God has done in your life. Water baptism is an act of obedience in which you publicly declare to the world that your old life is dead and buried and your new life is now identified with Christ (Acts 8:12).

Obedience to God will also result in going into the world to share Christ with those who do not know Him. Our Lord Jesus has instructed us to go into all the world to tell others of His great love and forgiveness (Mark 16:15, Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 1:8).

## 4. BEING HONEST WITH GOD

It is so important to be honest before God. As we confess our sin before Him, we enjoy a loving relationship with the Lord.

I remember in high school doing a science experiment with two pieces of flat glass. A film of water was smeared on the surface of each piece of glass. The air pressure was so great, it was impossible to pull them apart with our hands. However, when we placed just a small grain of sand between the surfaces, they could be pulled apart easily. Any sin that comes between us and God, results in loss of closeness and fellowship.

Unconfessed sin in a Christian's life, over a period of time, can block the flow of God's love. It can cause a heart to harden toward God and develop a bitterness toward the things of God. We constantly need the precious blood of our Lord Jesus to continually cleanse us from all sin as we keep our hearts open and pure before God.

There is no better time than now to apply 1 John 1:9 to your life. If there are areas of your life where you have sinned and have not confessed them to the Lord, write them down on a piece of paper. Now read 1 John 1:9. After you confess these sins and ask God to forgive you, write "1 John 1:9" across that piece of paper as an act of your faith and say, "All these sins are now forgiven, and I am cleansed from all unrighteousness!" Now tear that piece of paper into tiny pieces and throw those pieces away, never to be

remembered. That is exactly what God does with your sin. He will remember them no more! He buries them in the sea of His forgetfulness and puts up a sign that says “No fishing!”

Once we are born into the family of God, we become one of His forever family. Nothing can change our relationship with our heavenly Father. However the quality of our relationship with the Lord depends on the closeness of our relationship with Him.

Although the quality of our friendship with God can change according to our behaviour, our right standing with God is not based on our goodness or our behaviour. Our right standing with God is based solely upon the love of God.

God the Father loves us more than we will ever know and He has given us certain instructions to obey. These instructions are not intended to restrict us or to keep us from enjoying ourselves; they are actually for our good. God knows what is best for us, and His commandments are designed to enable us to live life to the full. Slavery to God is perfect freedom.

For more than any earthly father, God loves His children. He does not condemn us or hold a grudge against us. At the same time, however, God is not spineless either. He does not overlook sin, but He offers forgiveness to those who will confess and forsake it (Romans 8:1).

Always remember that temptation is not sin. To be tempted is normal for the Christian. Our Lord Jesus was tempted by the devil in the wilderness, and yet, we know that He

never sinned. Resist the temptation, and you will not sin (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Satan does not want us to experience freedom. He often works on our minds and emotions with feelings of guilt or condemnation. He puts us on the guilt-trip (remember what you used to do, say, act, etc) to make us feel as though we are not forgiven. We must receive our forgiveness by faith, based on the Word of God, and not on our feelings (1 John 1:7).

God wants to forgive and cleanse you for all sin. There is no greater sense of liberty than to know you are right with God and that there is nothing between you and your heavenly Father.

## **5. THE FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Here is some extra information about the Holy Spirit:

The Holy Spirit is a very real person (Acts 5:3-4). How can we get to know the Holy Spirit better and to experience the power He wants to give to us? How can we be filled with the Spirit, and what does being filled with the Spirit really mean?

There is a difference between being born of the Spirit and being filled with the Holy Spirit. When we are born again or converted, the Holy Spirit comes to indwell us (John 14:17). When a person believes in his or her heart and confesses with their mouth that Jesus is Lord and that God raised Him from the dead, they receive the gift of salvation and eternal life. At this point, a person is born of the Spirit and is made a new creation in Christ.

The experience subsequent to salvation, known as being filled with the Spirit, is needed by the believer, to be filled with power for service.

Compare these Scripture verses – 1 Corinthians and Luke 3:16b.

We can see from these Scriptures that the Holy Spirit baptises us and places us into the body of Christ, immediately, at the time of our salvation. This is something that happens automatically to every believer in Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus baptises us with the Holy Spirit subsequent to our



new birth. This in-filling of the Spirit is available to any believer who desires more of God (Acts 1:4-5). Compare the following Scripture verses to see the difference between the two experiences – Matthew 1:18-20, 3:16, John 20:21-22, Acts 1:2- 5, 8:5, 12, 14-17, Acts 19:1-5, 19:6.

There are two main reasons to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

First, we are commanded to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18). To be filled in this verse in the original Greek means to be constantly being filled. It is written in the present, continuous tense. We need the initial filling and then we are commanded to be constantly being filled again and again. D.L. Moody, the great preacher said, “I am a leaky vessel and I need to be constantly being filled with the Holy Spirit”.

The second reason we need to be filled with the Spirit is that we need power (Acts 1:8).

How then is a person filled with the Holy Spirit?

The first step is to make sure we are born again (Acts 2:38).

Then we simply ask and receive the Holy Spirit by faith (Luke 11:9-13). Ever since the Day of Pentecost nearly 2000 years ago, God is delighting to give the precious gift of the filling of the Holy Spirit to believers in Jesus Christ. Then we must yield to the Holy Spirit. Just as metal is a conductor of electricity and wood is an insulator, our lives are to be conductors of God’s power through the Holy Spirit. As the electrons line up far more easily in the metal than in the wood to conduct electricity, so our lives should

line up readily with the Holy Spirit, so that the Holy Spirit can flow freely and easily through us.

Are you really thirsty to be filled with God's power and Spirit? The Lord Jesus wants our lives to flow out like rivers, not just to trickle along (John 7:37-39).

Just as you were born again by faith, so by faith believe that you are filled by God's Holy Spirit in answer to your asking God to fill you with His precious Holy Spirit.

The blessing of being filled with the Holy Spirit will result in a new boldness and power in witnessing. You will receive more light and revelation as you read and study God's Word. Your praise and worship of Him will take on a new meaning, as you magnify God.

The power of the Holy Spirit is given to us to enable us to live godly and fruitful lives.

## 6. INCREASING YOUR FAITH

John Wesley, the great preacher, used to say “I preached faith until I got it myself!” It is vital for any Christian, who means business with God, to grow and develop in their faith.

We are to live by faith (Romans 1:17). We are to go from faith to faith, constantly growing. As well, we are to walk by faith (2 Corinthians 5:7). The key is to simply take God at His Word and not rely on what we see and feel (Hebrews 11:1). Don’t rely on your mind or emotions. Faith is a spiritual force. We simply take God at His Word and His faithfulness to perform His work.

Everything we receive from God is by faith. We please God by faith (Hebrews 11:6). God wants to bless us as His children beyond anything that we could possibly imagine! Take some time and read slowly and claim the promises in these Scriptures – Matthew 9:21-22, 27-29, James 5:15, 1:5-8, Mark 9:23.

Faith does not grow by praying for it, but rather by reading and believing the Word of God (Romans 10:17) D.L. Moody once said “I prayed for faith and faith did not come. I started reading God’s Word for faith and my faith has been growing ever since”. The more we read, study and meditate on God’s Word, the more our faith will grow.

God is so willing and ready to respond to our faith in Him. It delights His heart for Him to see how much His children are prepared to trust Him. He wants to bless all our requests,

provided it is consistent with His holy character and Word. God wants to give good and perfect gifts to His children. He, in His love and wisdom, withholds these gifts if we have pride and selfish desires in our heart.

I really encourage you to determine to live and walk by faith and not by sight. Start by believing God for something small. As you grow in faith you then can ask Him for bigger things.

I have found it helpful as well to read books on how God worked powerfully through men and women who have had great faith. Remember it is our faith, as small as a mustard seed, trusting in a great God. Talk to leaders who have exercised great faith. Be inspired by the way God has worked in their lives.

Start today, in living this great adventure of faith.

## **7. THE ABUNDANT LIFE**

God, our heavenly Father, not only wants us to experience life but to have it more abundantly (John 10:10). The new birth is a beginning but it does not stop there. God wants you to experience spiritual fulfilment, as well as mental and emotional peace.

So many Christians live lives of spiritual poverty. Notice our Lord said more abundantly. This means, to have more, to have enough and to spare, increase, a surplus!

Read and compare these scriptures: John 10:10, 3 John 2, Proverbs 10:22, Deuteronomy 11:21, Psalm 103:1-5, Psalm 68:19.

We can never fully be a channel and a blessing to others if we are not ourselves enjoying and experiencing God's abundant life. He wants to bless us so that, in turn, we can be a blessing to others. Read Deuteronomy 28:1-9.

When asking for God's blessing on our lives, our motives must be sure, righteous and holy. A believer who is walking in the light of God's Word and in His love of life is in a position to receive all of God's blessing.

## 8. LIVING IN VICTORY

The Christian life is an eternal adventure of knowing and walking with God. God desires that all of his children walk in victory on the earth. He desires that we grow and develop spiritually so that we overcome the trials and tests that the world, the devil and our own flesh bring against us.

Living a victorious Christian life doesn't mean that we never face any adversities, but it does mean that through God's help we can overcome. God will help us to triumph as we trust Him. He has provided everything that we need to walk in victory.

However, we have an adversary who wants to rob us of this life of victory. Our enemy wants to stunt our spiritual growth and our influence on others for Christ. Satan will try to depress, oppress and afflict our spirits, minds and bodies to keep us from being effective in our walk with God and our witness for Christ to others.

We need to constantly recognise this spiritual battle and the two opposing kingdoms of light and darkness. We need to realise who we are in Christ and our authority over the enemy through Christ. Knowing and applying this will enable us to walk in victory. At this point so many new Christians are knocked out of the saddle and go backward in their relationship with God. He wants us to move forward with Him. He is on our side and will give us His power to live in victory.

We do not fight *for* victory, but *from* victory. 2 Corinthians

2:14 tells us that God always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ. Do you remember the movie *Ben Hur*? When Ben Hur comes back into Rome with the man who has adopted him as his son, the trumpets are sounding, drums are beating. The spoils of war are displayed. Flowers are thrown in their path and Caesar is waiting. They are coming forward in triumph. This is exactly the way God wants us to live day by day and it is possible through His power working within us. Notice Paul says “who always”, this is God’s intention for us.

We need not live in discouragement and defeat. I ask some folk at times “How are you?”, they often reply, “Not so bad under the circumstances!!”. I ask “What are you doing under there?” With God, we can live above the circumstances!

Is the Christian life difficult to live? No. It’s impossible, without the power of Jesus Christ. “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27). “But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:57). “I can do everything through Him who gives me strength” (Philippians 4:13).

Does this mean that living for Christ is easy? No. The symbol for Christianity is a cross, not a cushion (Psalm 34:19). Imagine I have a glove. I hold it up on a table by one of the fingers and command it to stand. As I let it go it only drops to the table. I repeat the action and the same thing happens. Why? Because the glove has no power in itself. Now I place my hand into the glove and it can easily stand. Why? Because now a power outside of itself has come in.

In the same way, when a believer has Christ within, instead of trying to live the Christian life in their own strength and power, we allow the risen Christ to live in and through us every moment of every day.

Sometimes Christians try very hard to please God by their works. It's not trying, but trusting. Read again Galatians 2:20 "Christ lives in me". We died to self and allow Christ to live in and through us. This is the secret of the victorious Christian life.

In Romans 8:37, the Apostle Paul tells us that we are more than conquerors. Nothing is impossible with God (Luke 1:37). We can overcome the world (1 John 5:4-5).

Let me encourage you to read, study, meditate and memorise these verses. Get them into your mind and repeat them often to yourself. Life is not a Sunday-School picnic, but a battleground. Always remember that the devil is out to pull you down. (Ephesians 6:12, 1 Peter 5:8, John 10:10, 2 Corinthians 2:11). However, when our Lord Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead, He totally defeated the devil (1 John 3:8, Colossians 2:15, Ephesians 1:20-22).

Our Lord Jesus has granted you a position of authority over the devil. Jesus Christ has the right and the authority to delegate this authority to anyone He wishes, so He has granted authority to every believer. He has given any believer the right to use His name to defeat the devil. As we exercise the authority invested in us through God's Word and in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, He will make His



promises good (read Mark 16:17, Luke 10:18-19, 1 John 4:4, James 4:7, 1 Peter 5:8-10).

Our Lord Jesus defeats the devil with the same weapon that is available to us – the Word of God (Matthew 4:1-11).

God has given us real weapons with which to fight the good fight of faith and defeat the enemy's attack on our lives. Our weapons are tested and tried and guaranteed to overcome Satan. God has not left us helpless. Learn about the weapons that you have at your disposal and use them (read 2 Corinthians 10:4-5, Hebrews 4:12, Revelation 12:11, Luke 10:17, Ephesians 6:10-18).

How then do we defeat the devil? Quote the Word of God, claim the power and protection of the precious blood of the Lord Jesus, use the name of Jesus Christ and live a life of faith, believing the promises of God.

Don't allow the devil to defeat you. Ask God to cleanse you from all sin, known and unknown, place your life fully at His disposal. Ask for and claim the fullness and power of the Holy Spirit. Use God's Word, put on the whole armour of God and claim the protective covering of the precious blood of the Saviour. Learn to walk in the light of faith and victory day by day.

## 9. VICTORY PRAYER

Use this prayer daily from James 4:7

*“Lord, I submit to You and yield to You for this day. I bow to Your will and invite You to live Your resurrection life and power through me. I can only live today as a Christian should, in Your name and strength. Lord, keep me today.*

*Lord, I now obey the command of the Bible, Your Word and resist the devil and all his demons and charge him, in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ and through His precious blood, to leave me and all my possessions, my family and all my interests entirely and absolutely alone; for he is defeated by the victory and death of Christ on the cross. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for this victory. May I walk in the constant enjoyment of it today, resisting the devil and submitting consciously to God at every moment.*

*Amen.”*

As a believer, you are now in the family of God and part of His army. You are also an ambassador for Christ. As Christians, we have the wonderful privilege and responsibility of serving God and sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with others. Not only does God want you to be blessed, He wants you to bless others. He not only wants to minister to you, but through you to others.

## **10. LIVING A LIFE OF SERVICE**

It is so important that you take the time to seek God's will and purpose for your life. He has given to you at least one gift, probably several (read 1 Peter 4:10). Take the time to discover and develop the gifts He is giving to you. Ask trusted mature Christians what they believe your gifts are.

In Matthew, we see that the Lord expects a return on the talents He has given to us .(Matthew 25:14-28).

Let me encourage you to place your life totally and completely at the Lord's disposal (Romans 12:1-2). Commit yourself totally to Him. Offer your heart, time, talents and treasure. After you discover what your true talents are, offer yourself to the leadership of your church or Christian organisation for service. Start somewhere serving. Give yourself as a humble servant. Take the necessary steps to get involved. Get the necessary training. Be teachable. Take every advantage of training, growth and experience. Stay teachable and you will continue to grow.

Start where you are with what you have. Be faithful in small things. Complete what you start. Keep a good attitude. Have a standard of excellence. God will make way for your gift (Proverbs 18:16). Maintain a servant's heart and God will open the doors He has for you (Matthew 20:26-27).

Serve Him by sharing the Good News (Mark 16:15-20, Matthew 28:18- 20, Acts 1:8).

While we may not all have the gift of evangelism, each one

of us are called to be witnesses. There are lost and hurting people all around us. Pray and ask God to lead you to those with whom you can share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Evangelism is sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, so that people have an opportunity to say yes or no to Jesus Christ.

Ask the Lord to put you in contact with people that you can share His love with.

In addition to being witnesses for Christ, we need to recognise that God has a unique plan and place for us in His great plan. Your life is filled with meaning, purpose and destiny. There is nothing like finding and fulfilling the purpose for which you were created.

The Christian life is an exciting, supernatural relationship with God. As you follow Him with your whole heart, He will bless you greatly and use you.

May God bless you with a faithful life of victory, to His glory.

# **11. DEVELOPING A DAILY DEVOTIONAL TIME WITH GOD**

“Be still and know that I am God . . .” (Psalm 46:10a KJV).

If you are to live a happy, yielded, and victorious life, developing a daily devotional time with God is absolutely essential.

## **1. Begin your quiet time with prayer.**

This should be a brief prayer for understanding as your prepare to read God’s Word.

## **2. Read the Scriptures.**

Have a Bible reading schedule. Use the schedule overleaf for systematic Bible readings. Consistency and expectancy are the secrets to spiritual growth in personal devotions.

## **3. Record insights and make personal application.**

Think about the meaning of what you read. To help make a personal application you might ask these questions.

Is there . . .

A sin for me to confess?

A promise for me to claim? An attitude for me to change?

A command for me to obey? An example for me to follow?

Write your thoughts and seek to make your applications personal ad specific.

## **4. Spend time in prayer.**

Ask God to guide your throughout the day and to provide

opportunities for you to apply what you have learned during your “quiet time”.

## **5. Daily Bible Reading Schedule**

It is vital to have a plan for consistent daily Bible reading. Plan to read at a pace that is comfortable for you. Strive for understanding and not just quantity over quality.

Let me encourage you to begin with reading through the book of Philippians. Read a chapter a day for one month. After chapter four, the next day start again at chapter one. By the end of the month you will know the book.

The next month, start with reading the book of Colossians the same way. After that, choose another book. By then, you will be well on your way to understanding God’s Word.

## **6. Memorise these Bible Verses**

Memorising scripture is a very exciting way to develop your relationship with God. Develop the habit of putting meaningful Bible verses to heart. Start with the following famous verses:

*“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**

*“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”*

**1 John 1:9**

*“How can a young person stay on the path of purity?  
By living according to your word.  
I have hidden your word in my heart  
that I might not sin against you.”*

**Psalm 119:9, 11**

*[Jesus said]*

*“Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the  
one who loves me. The one who loves me will be  
loved by my Father, and I too will love them  
and show myself to them.”*

**John 14:21**

*[Jesus said]*

*“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit  
comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in  
Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria,  
and to the ends of the earth.”*

**Acts 1:8**

*“Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips;  
meditate on it day and night, so that you may be  
careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be  
prosperous and successful.”*

**Joshua 1:8**







