

What Are My Next Steps as a New Christian

Whenever anyone first says, “Yes!” to Jesus and starts a new life in Christ, they often ask, “What’s next?” We are centering this teaching around the next steps a person should take after becoming a Christian. We will go over the following topics:

- Prayer
- Daily Reading
- Being Mentored
- Sharing Your Faith

We congratulate you and want to encourage you as you start down this new path in life. Some of you may be returning to your Christian faith. That is great, too!

There are a couple of things you need to know right now. First, this is not the finish line, it is the starting line of a new life. Becoming a Christian by asking Jesus to be your Lord and Savior is opening the door to a new life long journey. Second, you will have setbacks. There will be times you revert to the old self. We do not want to say that this is okay, but it does happen. None of us are perfect. We all make mistakes. The important thing is God does not expect you to be perfect and He is ready to forgive the moment you realize you have fallen. Just get back up ask God for forgiveness, and move on.

We are currently working on an online educational course titled, “Beginning the Journey” that will detail your new life in Christ better. This course is not quite ready yet. Sign up for our emails and be one of the first to know when the course is available.

Let’s start to look at the four things we listed and how they help you take the next steps as a new Christian.

Prayer

Prayer is the most important aspect of the Christian life and the first step as a new Christian. We believe that Jesus was raised from the dead, ascended to Heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father interceding for all of us who have made Him Lord of our lives. This is a basic tenet of the Christian faith and a piece of doctrine that all denominations agree.

You prayed when you asked Jesus to save you and be the Lord of your life. That should not be the last time you pray. In fact, that is the first of what should be a lifetime of prayer. But, what is prayer?

Prayer is simply talking and listening to Jesus. It is a time to commune with God. We present praise and requests to God in Jesus’ name. We celebrate and worship Him and all He is doing in our lives and the lives of others.

Jesus’ disciples once asked him to teach them to pray and He taught them to pray by giving them an example prayer. We call that prayer *The Lord’s Prayer* and some recite it often. Just reciting scripture is not prayer in and of itself. Reciting scripture is not a bad thing. Meditating on scripture is a good thing and we will talk about that in a moment, but just reciting the Lord’s Prayer is not praying. Praying is having a conversation with the Lord.



Here are some examples and words of wisdom from the Bible.

Jesus gives instruction about prayer in Luke 21:34-36

Luke 21:34-36

(34) "Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you suddenly like a trap. (35) For it will come on all those who live on the face of the whole earth. (36) Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."

Jesus is telling us to pray so we see the escape path from the devil's ways and temptations. There is always a way out of temptation and sin. The only way we will know the escape route is through frequent prayer and listening to the voice of the Lord.

The Apostle Paul shares about prayer in Ephesians 6:18-20

Ephesians 6:18-20

(18) And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. (19) Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, (20) for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

We should not only present prayer and praise for ourselves, but also for others. Present the needs of people you know to the Lord. Ask the Lord to grant wisdom to people in leadership and steadfastness and patience for those facing difficult situations. Of course, we should ask the Lord for healing for those who are sick. We also want to praise the Lord for all He has done in prayer time with him.

There is no magic formula for prayer. It is just a conversation with the Lord. It is important to understand that there is a time of listening involved, also. In any conversation, you cannot be the only one talking. Give the Lord opportunity to speak to your heart. You most likely will not hear the audible voice of God, but you will hear God's small still voice in your heart. When you hear it, you will know it.

Daily Reading

Spending time each day with God is critical for a successful abundant life in Christ and the next step as a new Christian. Spend part of that time in prayer and spend part of that time reading the Bible. Don't let that scare you. Today, there are many resources available to read the Bible or have it read to you. There are Bible reading plans available, along with apps on smartphones, like YouVersion and websites, like bible.com. There really is no excuse to not spend even just 5 minutes each day reading the Bible.

Read the Gospel of John first. This is found in the New Testament which is the second half of the Bible. This details the life and ministry of Jesus Christ as he ministered to people leading up to his crucifixion and resurrection. John records so many stories of Jesus sharing lessons in this gospel. Find something else to read after you have read this gospel. The best way to find something else is to find a Bible reading plan on one of the websites or in the app we spoke of.

Another great quick daily read you can do is the book of Proverbs. This is found in the middle of the Old Testament right after Psalms. There are 31 chapters in Proverbs and you can read one each day. This



was a challenge in the new year we had and you can read my favorite verses out of Proverbs and what I thought about them by searching *#ReadingProverbs* on Facebook or Twitter.

The Bible is God's word to us and it is important that we read it and start to study it. Please do not let that scare you. Studying the Bible is merely reading and meditating on what it says. It is digging deeper and applying what you read to your life today. The more you read, the more you will hunger to read more. That can be one of your first prayer requests. Ask the Lord to give you a hunger for the Bible and to direct you to what you should read and meditate on.

Hebrews 4:12 tells us

Hebrews 4:12

(12) For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

We read that the Bible is a useful tool in 2 Timothy 3:16

2 Timothy 3:16-17

(16) All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, (17) so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Being Mentored

Finding a mentor is the next step in your new Christian life. This is often known as someone to *disciple* you. Meet with this mentor often. Meeting once a week or more is best.

The word disciple in this context means to be trained or taught by someone. Jesus had thousands of followers, but He only had 12 disciples. These were the 12 that He poured himself into. The disciples learned everything about following Jesus and ministering in His name from Him.

Everyone has a mentor or someone who is teaching and guiding them. Everyone should also have people they are discipling, or teaching and guiding. This is really important. The Bible tells us in Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

(9) Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: (10) If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. (11) Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? (12) Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

We cannot live the Christian life alone. We really cannot live life completely alone. Almost none of us have been called by God to endure a life of solitude. We were created in God's image for fellowship. We were meant to live life in community. This does not mean we do not need alone time. Jesus frequently retreated away from everyone for a time of prayer and rejuvenation.

We have been created for fellowship and life together. You must be connected with other Christians so that we can help one another live the Christian life and serve our communities, as well. Find a cell site, home church, small group, or conventional church to be a part of. If you can't find one and you know a few Christians, we can help you start a group in your home.



Look at what Hebrews 10:24-25 says

Hebrews 10:24-25

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

We must gather together at least in twos and threes to encourage one another, pray for one another, and spur one another on to do great things in the name of our Lord, Jesus.

Sharing Your Faith

That leads to this last step in your new Christian life, sharing your faith. If you prayed and accepted Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior and clicked the "I Said Yes!" button on our website, you would have read that we encourage you to tell someone about this new faith you have found.

It is so important to share your faith with others. First, tell another Christian that you trust and can help guide you. Maybe they can be your mentor, or know someone who could be your mentor as you take these first steps in your new Christian life.

What caused you to answer Jesus' call and accept Him? There are many people who need to make the same decision for the same reason, they just may not know it yet. You can share and help them. There may be people praying for you that have been praying for years for your salvation, let them know.

We understand that some of you are in sensitive countries. Places where it may actually be illegal to practice Christianity or to convert to Christianity. There may be laws against proselytizing or openly sharing your Christian faith. That is okay. You just need to be careful and more strategic.

The underground Christian church in China is said to be 50 million people strong and growing. It is quite illegal for them to openly practice their faith or share it with others so they have built the world's largest underground church and have devised ways to pray, praise, learn, and grow so as not to attract the attention of those who would harm them.

We have cell sites and home churches in nations that are mostly Islamic. It is illegal there to convert a Muslim to Christianity, though it happens every day. You can carefully share and many have found ways to do that.

In short, listen to the voice of the Lord and say and do what He tells you to. Do this when He tells you to do it. He will give you all the protection you need to continue to serve in his name.

Conclusion

There you have it. We have touched on the next steps for your new Christian life. This is just an overview. Remember, sign-up for our emails on our website and you will be one of the first to know when we have that new online course *Beginning the Journey* available. It will be free of charge and open to anyone.

We are here to help you also. Remember, if you need help with a question, or finding a group, let us know. We will see what we can do and answer your questions to the best of our abilities.

