

I AM SAVED!

Now What?

A Beginner's Guide for Followers of Jesus Christ
By Mark Levesque



FOR HIS  GLORY

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Acknowledgement

This “Beginners Guide” for new disciple makers would not be possible without the practical experience I acquired through working with *For His Glory Ministries’* founder and president, Rob Welch.

Thanks to Rob’s leadership of *For His Glory Ministries* and the work of his key mission leaders, Tony Vincent, the Africa Ministries Director, and Samuel Ongondo, the Africa Director of Training and Church Mobilization, I was able to see firsthand over 1.6 million people hear the Gospel, with over 310,000 people publicly receiving Christ. In addition, over 269,000 believers have been trained to make disciples.

Therefore, with so many people coming to faith in Jesus and with over a quarter of a million people being trained to share their faith and make disciples, the need for a beginner’s guide for disciple makers that included materials for new believers was clearly evident.

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A very special thanks to all those followers of the Lord Jesus Christ who value sharing the Gospel of the Kingdom and disciple making above anything else this world has to offer. You are our inspiration.

Introduction: I'm Saved – Now What?

We are providing this information to help people that are just becoming followers of Jesus and for those who are being discipled or discipling others.

That is why we are doing a series of key lessons that cover the things a person needs to know as they start walking with the Lord Jesus in the early days of their Christian journey.

We are a part of a movement that is sweeping the whole world called Training for Trainers (T4T) that started in China. The T4T model has been very successful from its inception. For example, in the first two years, over 3,535 churches were founded in China alone.

Now hundreds of thousands of people have come to faith in Jesus Christ around the world through the T4T model of disciple making.

We are taking this disciple-making model that started in China to Africa, the United States and beyond. We are heavily focused in Africa where our ministry is currently involved in training in cities across that continent.

Since 2015, we have trained over a quarter-of-a-million disciple makers, so we want to make resources like this guide available to as many new disciples and disciple-makers as possible.

Many of these resources and others are on our website. If you have questions or need help, you can go to: <https://www.forhisglorymin.org>. On the contact page, you can write us a note, call our office or send us an email, and one of our team will get back with you.

We have ZOOM Bible discussion groups that can help you be discipled. We recommend you find a good, local Bible-believing church and get into a small group. That's how Jesus discipled His followers, and we do it the same way He did.

Basically, we do what Jesus taught His disciples to do in discipleship. His disciples believed what He told them and they did what He said to do. Because of this they reached their whole known world, basically the whole Roman Empire in their generation.

We believe that if we do what Jesus did and what He taught His disciples to do, we too, will reach our whole world for Christ.

Chapter 1. Am I Really Saved?

Now let's address what it means to be saved.

Basically, if you have confessed that Jesus is the Son of God and really believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you are saved or born again.

Saved is a big word; it's more than just receiving Christ. It is also how you live your life, as well. But the most important thing about being saved is that when we die, we go to heaven. This is because eternity is a very long time, and you don't want to spend it apart from God.

First of all, let's start on the process. Many times, I ask people, "Have you ever surrendered your life to Jesus?" Many of them say they haven't, and a lot of times they say they don't understand what that means.

Part of being saved is literally having Christ living in you now and, therefore, having access to His wisdom and strength to help live a better life here on earth.

Here are a couple of verses from the Bible that are a kind of roadmap to becoming saved or born again:

Roman 10: 9-11 says that "if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

These verses basically explain what it means to be saved or born again. Jesus talked about a person becoming born again in **John 3** when He first met the Pharisee named Nikodemus.

Jesus said to him, unless you are born of water and the Spirit you cannot enter the Kingdom of God. Jesus was saying that flesh (water we are born in) gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.

So, being born of the Spirit is when we believe in our heart that Jesus is the Son of God and surrender our life to Him. This is because truly believing actually means that we are surrendering our lives to Jesus' rulership.

When Jesus becomes our Lord and Savior, we receive the very life of Christ coming into our hearts to live in and through us. That's what it means to be born again.

The Bible says in **1 Corinthians 12: 3** that no one can confess that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Spirit. So, if you have done that, congratulations - you are born again!

Chapter 2. Being a Disciple

In this lesson we are going to address what it means to be a disciple. Jesus didn't talk about doing discipleship; He talked about being His disciple, and that's really important. **(John 15: 8)**

Being a disciple of Jesus is who we really are. He changes our hearts when we become born again, thereby changing our identity. When we become a disciple of Jesus, that's who we "be", and that is very different from the way the world looks at who we are.

The world usually sees us as what we "do" rather than who we are.

People in the world always want to know what we do. When we go to a party, how do people start a conversation? After the initial greetings, they ask, "What do you do?" The next thing they want to know is what we have.

The world defines who we are based on our vocations and our possessions - what we do and what we have. They tend to rate who we are by these things.

This conditions us to see ourselves as a collection of what we have and what we do. This mindset leads to us competing with each other for recognition and "things".

We are then left to find our meaning, value and purpose in life by what we do and what we possess, which is actually the opposite of being a disciple.

When we become a disciple, God changes who we are on the inside. Redefining who we "be", which is a new creature in Christ. This is actually the first important step we take as a disciple of Jesus.

We now find our identity in our relation with Jesus Christ, which means that we should focus on cultivating our relationship with God. We also want to grow in our understanding of who we are in Jesus Christ and who Christ is in us.

(Colossians 1: 27)

As the Bible says in **1 John 4: 15**, "They that confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him, and he in God". That is our identity.

It also says in **1 John 3: 2**, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." This means that we have been given the authority and power of the Son of God on earth. God calls us sons of God, which is our identity. When we are in Christ, we "be" sons and daughters of God.

Out of who we are in Christ, God flows His life through us into everything He has called us to do.

We might have a sales position, work as a mechanic or work at some other profession. These are all the things we do, but they are not where we find our

identity. Our true meaning and purpose in life comes from who we are in Jesus Christ and that's who we "be".

So, if I am in Christ, whatever I do for a living, allows me to be the best possible person at that role I can be since Christ is doing it through me. As long as my identity is in Christ, His life flows through me into what I'm doing.

Therefore, I don't get my meaning in life from the things that I do. Now all that I do is from Christ and for Christ, and I actually find more meaning and fulfillment in the things that I do.

In addition, now that I am Christ's I realize that everything that I have comes from Him. Therefore, I am a steward of all the things that I have because they belong to Jesus. This means that although I have stuff, my stuff no longer has me!

At the beginning of Jesus' ministry, He went to John to be baptized. John declared regarding Jesus, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world...."

John was announcing that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah. After John baptized Jesus, He came out of water and heard the voice of God the Father saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I'm pleased."

Jesus was told at that moment that He is the Son of God. Everyone heard it - John the Baptist, Jesus and even the devil.

When Jesus came out of water, Holy Spirit led Him into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

After 40 days of fasting, the devil brought four temptations to Jesus. It's usually taught that there were three, forgetting that the first temptation was the primary attack and would set up the next three temptations.

The devil's first assault was on Jesus' identity and against the Word of God. The devil was trying to make Jesus doubt His Sonship and doubt what God had said at His baptism.

The devil comes to us with the same temptations through our weakest areas. When Jesus was hungry and at His weakest, the devil said to Jesus that if He was the Son of God then prove it - change the stone to bread.

Changing the stone to bread is not a sin, but the devil wanted Jesus to doubt that He was the Son of God and then try to prove His identity by His performance, changing stones to bread.

That's the same thing we need to learn as disciples. First, trust God's Word - the Bible. We need to have faith that if the Bible says that when we confess that Jesus is the Son of God risen from the dead and believe that in our hearts, we become sons of God.

We need to believe what the Bible says - that we are sons and daughters of God; and because we are His children, we can do the things that He calls us to do. The things that we are good at, things we are gifted to do, and even things that seem too big for us to do, are all done in His strength.

This means that we can find more fulfillment in what we do in this world than people that don't know Christ because we know our identity and believe the Word of God and what it says about us. We can be comfortable with who we are because Jesus is in us!

That is what it means to be a disciple. We focus on Jesus, living our life from Him. Our Identity is in Jesus and Jesus is in us, so we live an empowered life.

Our entire being - spirit, soul and body - is resting in who Jesus has told us we are. He is teaching us through His Holy Spirit who we are in Him so that we live our lives comfortably and confidently in our identity in Christ.

Chapter 3. Can the Bible Be Trusted?

I was a young man when my grandmother passed away. I remember being at the church during her funeral when my father, who was a deacon there, said, "I wonder if this is all a sham?"

What my dad said caught me by surprise. As a deacon, a lay minister, someone who was serving in that church, shouldn't he know where she was going when she passed away?

In that moment, I really wanted to know the truth about where we go when we die. However, I was really struggling with issues around me, such as why is the world such a mess? If there is God and He loves us, why doesn't He do something? I doubted God.

A few years after that I became very ill. I was suffering from very severe panic attacks and didn't know what was wrong with me. No one knew what a panic attack was back then.

I went to various doctors but they couldn't help me. I was really miserable. I got to the point where it was difficult to drive or go to work. I was really worried.

I had everything that people said should make me happy but nothing could fill the emptiness I felt. I a very good marriage, a beautiful son, a nice home and even a sports car, but nothing satisfied me or made that feeling go away.

One of my friends invited me to go to a church service in a local meeting hall. Even though I doubted God I was ready to try anything, so I went. During the service something amazing happened. I was actually touched by God, and He completely healed me from the panic attacks and all the related symptoms!

I didn't know what happened, but it was wonderful to be free of all this sickness and pain! I went and spoke to the pastor to tell him what happened, and he said that it was Jesus that healed me. Later on, I surrendered my life to Christ, I received Him by faith and became saved (born again).

At that point the pastor told me that the Bible is the only book that can be 100% trusted to base my entire future on, even beyond the grave. I wanted to figure out for myself if Jesus is really who He said He was and if could I really trust that book called the Bible that recorded what He said.

Even though the pastor told me that it was the power of Jesus that touched and healed me, I wanted to find out for myself. I wanted to be sure if the Bible was the truth and if it could be fully trusted the way the pastor said it could be.

I felt that this was really important for me to understand, so I started to look at the Bible to see if there was a way that I could know that what it says is true.

I started reading in the Bible that there were many people who experienced the resurrection of Jesus Christ. I realized that if Jesus really did rise from the dead then that would prove that He is the Messiah, the Christ.

The Bible points to evidences like the empty tomb, eye witness accounts, including five hundred people who saw Jesus all at once after the resurrection, and that Jesus' enemies could not find His dead body.

However, what really convinced me was the reaction of Jesus' disciples after His resurrection. After Jesus was first arrested and crucified His disciples were very afraid and ran for their lives. Peter literally denied Jesus, cursing that he didn't even know Him on the day Jesus was arrested.

Almost all of Jesus' disciples were in a locked room hiding from the very people that crucified their Lord only days earlier. They were afraid that what happened to Him was also going to happen to them.

In **Luke 24: 36 – 39**: Jesus appeared to His disciples while they were in the locked room. He wanted them to touch Him and see His wounds. As He showed them His hands and His side, they believed; that was the proof they needed that Jesus rose from the dead.

Just before Jesus ascended to heaven, He told them to wait until after they received power when His Holy Spirit would come upon them. On the day of Pentecost God's Holy Spirit came with the power just as Jesus said He would. **Acts 1 and 2.**

After Jesus' resurrection there was such a transformation in the lives of His disciples that it left no doubt that they knew He rose from the dead.

There is an account in **Acts 4: 18** of the Apostles Peter and John standing in front of the same council that crucified Jesus. This council told Peter and John not to speak or teach in the name Jesus.

Peter and John replied to the Jewish council, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." **Acts 4: 19 – 20.** The members of the council marveled at the boldness of Peter and John and took note that they had been with Jesus. **Acts 4: 13.**

Something dramatically changed in the hearts of Jesus' followers. Before His resurrection they were hiding in fear, but afterward they were so transformed that they were openly and fearlessly proclaiming Jesus. For me, that was the proof I needed to see that they knew that Jesus had risen from the dead!

People will not die for a lie they know is a lie. People may fly planes into buildings for what they believe but they are deluded. They would definitely not kill themselves if they really knew their beliefs were not true.

If the disciples themselves had fabricated a lie about Jesus rising from the dead, they wouldn't have been able to stand in the face of death themselves, knowing it was a lie. This confirmed that they were convinced that it was the truth.

Eleven of Jesus' disciples were murdered for their faith and for their testimonies that Jesus was raised from the dead. This is a tremendous proof about Jesus' resurrection.

I discovered another proof that Jesus was who He said He was at a Jewish bookstore. To further prove for myself that the Bible is true, I visited a bookshop in the Jewish section of Chicago where I hoped to discover what the original texts of the Bible said about the Messiah.

I asked the man at the Jewish bookstore for a copy of their Bible. He handed me a big book that contained the first five books of the Bible called the "Torah", which also included the books of the prophets and psalms. They called this collection of books the "Tenakh". This was basically the entire Hebrew Bible.

I went through that Hebrew Bible and to my fascination it contained the exact same books as my Old Testament in my Christian Bible. I discovered that the Jewish Bible contained all the same prophetic books as my Bible and the writings within the books were virtually the same, as well.

I learned that the people who translated the Bible from the original languages of Hebrew and Greek kept it the way it was written even before Jesus was born.

There are sixty major prophecies in the Bible that were fulfilled in one man's life, Jesus Christ, and over two hundred minor prophecies. Here are a few examples:

Micah 5: 2 prophesied that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem 507 years before Jesus' birth. How could Micah know that?

Another is the Old Testament prophecy fulfilled in **Matthew 27:9**, that Jesus would be betrayed by thirty pieces of silver.

In **Psalms 22** it says that His bones would be out of joint, His hands and feet would be pierced and that the soldiers would divide His clothes among themselves and would gamble for His cloak.

Another prophecy in **Isaiah 9: 7** says Jesus would be seated on the throne of David.

There are multiple prophecies in the Old Testament that were fulfilled by only one man who ever lived, Jesus. I saw a statistical analysis stating that based on just eight of these prophecies being fulfilled by Jesus, the likelihood of Jesus NOT really being the Messiah is one hundred quadrillion. Now that's a big number!

These evidences convinced me that Jesus is who He says He is. The Bible is what it says it is, and we can believe it is inspired by God to be our guide throughout our life and beyond.

That's why I recommend that we read the Bible. We read, study and meditate on it, for in it we find tremendous truths for knowing who we are, knowing who Jesus is and what He has done for us, and knowing what is available for us.

Reading a Bible is not a burden or a work. It's like digging for gold.

We should treat the Bible like we are looking into something that has answers for everything we need. The Bible is something we can treasure to read and study so that we can be transformed into the kind of people God sees that we can be.

Chapter 4. Forgiveness

In this session I would like to talk about forgiveness of sins. Forgiveness of sins is the key to knowing the love of God and His unspeakable joy and peace.

Forgiveness is so important because our sin separates us from God and each other. One of the things that happens when we come to Christ (when we are saved or born again) is that we receive forgiveness for our sins.

That forgiveness isn't just for sins in the past but also for our present and future sins. Jesus actually paid for all our sins once and for all.

One important thing I learned was that Jesus sacrificed Himself over 2,000 years ago to pay for the sin of mankind. His sacrifice worked for God's forgiveness for all our sins before the cross and after. His sacrifice was enough. He paid the penalty for all the sins of the entire human race.

Jesus, by one sacrifice, paid for all our sins - even the ones we haven't committed yet! This was needed so that when we sin after being born again, we would not be separated from God when we sinned again. **Hebrews 10: 12**

That may seem controversial, but John the Baptist makes this very point as he announced that Jesus was the Messiah. His proclamation regarding Jesus is recorded in **John 1: 29**, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world".

When the first man, Adam, sinned, his conscience was so filled with guilt and fear that he hid from God. To get the human race to come out of hiding God ordained the blood of His Son Jesus to cleanse our conscience from sin. That's why the Bible says, "The blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself to God, purged your conscience from dead works to serve the living God". **Hebrews 9: 14**

John the Baptist was contrasting two methods of being forgiven, two covenants, two temples (the old temple and the new temple). The old temple was in Jerusalem where animals were sacrificed to cover sins under the old covenant.

God dealt with sin two ways: the old covenant way and the new covenant way. The new covenant was the only covenant that brought complete and eternal forgiveness.

Although animal sacrifices didn't end until the destruction of the Jewish temple by the Romans in 70 AD, John the Baptist declared it finished when he called Jesus the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Every year on the day of Atonement each Jewish family would bring an animal to be sacrificed at the temple in Jerusalem. They would lay hands on the animal, which signified transferring their sins to that animal, and the blood of that

animal would cover their sins for the whole year. That was the model for dealing with sin under the old covenant.

This was the method God used to help His people cope with their sins each year. It was also a foreshadowing of the new covenant that Jesus would bring.

As it says in the Book of Hebrews, the blood of bulls and goats is not adequate to take away sins. They are not enough to cleanse our conscience; the blood of bulls and goats could only cover sins for one year.

But the blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God, the sinless Son of God, was enough, not only to cover but to take away sins. Therefore, by one sacrifice His blood took away our sin forever. **Hebrews 9: 11 – 14**

Again, there is only one thing mentioned in the Bible that can cleanse our conscience. We need our consciences cleansed to where we have no more consciousness of sin, and that's by the blood of Jesus. **Hebrews 10: 2** His blood alone is the only thing perfect enough that can take away our sins.

We have been taught various religious practices designed by men to give us some relief from the guilt of our sins. However, they only offer temporary relief.

Some say that you need to confess your sins to a man to be forgiven by God. That doesn't work because he doesn't have the power to remove your sins. It can only make us feel better for a period of time. Then the desire to sin comes back and we often find ourselves worse off than we were before.

Only by true repentance and the blood of Jesus Christ can our conscience be freed from the guilt and shame of sin.

The word "confession" means to agree with. When we confess our sin, we are agreeing with what God says in the Bible - that the blood of Jesus was enough for our forgiveness. **Psalm 103: 3, 12**

Jesus is the new temple. When Jesus was on the earth, the presence of God was in two places: the Jewish temple and in Jesus' physical body. After Jesus rose from the dead, the Spirit of God left the temple and only resided on earth Him.

After Jesus ascended to His Father, He appeared to His disciples, breathed on them and said receive the Holy Spirit. After that, the Holy Spirit was not only in Jesus but also in each of His followers.

By breathing the Holy Spirit into each of His disciples, Jesus made each of them living containers of the presence of God. They, like Jesus, had become temples of God. The temples of God in the new covenant are the believers of Jesus because the Holy Spirit dwells in their hearts.

If you have confessed that Jesus is the Son of God and believed that God raised Him from the dead, the Holy Spirit dwells in you and you are one of the temples of God here on earth. You are born again and God dwells into you.

The blood of Jesus has been applied to your sins - past, present and future - and your sins have been cast away from you as far as the east is from west. **Psalms 103: 12**

This does not mean we will not sin anymore. It means that the blood of Jesus was poured out for our forgiveness and empowers us to stop sinning and be truly free from guilt and shame. God has given us the free gift of forgiveness - free to us but of great cost to Jesus.

God wants us to realize that He has given us the free gift of forgiveness. Why? Because when we realize that Jesus died to pay all of our sin debt, we start to experience the incredible love God has for us.

God loved us so much, He sent His own Son to die for our sins. When this revelation of God's free gift of His Son dawns on our hearts, we begin to know the love of God.

Knowing what the blood of Jesus did is key to living a victorious life. His blood is what it took for us to be forgiven and to know the love and joy of God. This is important as the Bible says, "The joy of the Lord is our strength". **Nehemiah 8: 10**

Chapter 5. Baptism

Next, we are going to cover Baptism.

Baptism was practiced and referred to throughout the entire New Testament. Baptism is very significant in the Bible. It literally means to be fully immersed, inside and out.

When a person confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, the Bible says that God abides in him and he in God. **1John 4: 15** We call this being born of the Spirit, or being born again, which declares that we are fully immersed in God's Spirit.

Another way to say it is that we have been put in God and God has been put in us. Therefore, we are new creatures and baptism is a physical expression of what has happened to a believer in the Spirit.

Baptism has been practiced by the Church over two thousand years and is an outward sign that we, as believers, are saying we belong to Jesus. We are choosing to go under the water of baptism as a testament to men and angels that we are His.

When someone gets baptized, I believe that the entire person of God (Father, Son and Holy spirit) are also saying that he belongs to Us as well.

This act of faith called baptism actually helps to cement the reality of our being in God and God in us in this physical world. This makes baptism a very important practice for seeing more of God's nature in our lives here on earth.

Some people say that you have to be baptized in water in order to go to heaven. As important as baptism is, you don't have to be baptized to get into heaven when you die.

If that wasn't the case, the thief on the cross wouldn't be able to go to heaven after Jesus said, "...you're going to be with me in paradise...". The thief on the cross next to Jesus wasn't baptized but he went to heaven, so baptism isn't a prerequisite for heaven; only faith in Jesus is.

Other people think that baptism is just a symbol. Therefore, they feel they don't have to do it or they can just put it off. A casual symbolic view of baptism is not Biblical either because Jesus and others, like the Apostle Paul, set an example of the seriousness of baptism.

Jesus was baptized right before He began His ministry. The Apostle Paul and his friend Silas were badly beaten and imprisoned in the city of Philippi for preaching about the Lord Jesus. At midnight they were praising God loudly when all of a sudden, the whole place shook, all their chains fell off and all the doors of the prison were opened. The jailer fell before Paul and Silas and asked, "What must I do to be saved?" Paul replied, "Believe and be baptized and you and your house will be saved." This shows the importance of baptism.

Paul didn't want to wait to baptize the jailer and his family even though he had been beaten the day before. He didn't rest until morning, and he didn't eat first, even though he hadn't eaten in quite some time. All he let them do was dress his wounds before he baptized them. **Acts 16: 16 - 34**

The Apostle Paul's example helps show the urgency for baptism. It is also important because it helps activate our faith here on earth by reminding us that when we went under the water we died to our old selves, and by coming up out of the water we rose with Christ to new life. Baptism is very powerful and worth doing if you are a believer in Christ and have not yet taken that step.

Jesus set the example with His own baptism. When Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist there were some things that happened. The Holy Spirit came upon Jesus and stayed with Him, and He heard the voice of His Father telling Jesus that He was His beloved Son in whom He was well pleased.

It's very important for us to hear about the significant things that happened at Jesus' baptism and to realize that something very significant also happens to us when we are baptized.

I believe that at our baptism, God makes the same declaration over us that He made over Jesus. We are His sons and daughters and that He is pleased with us! I have learned that God is honored by our obeying His Son's call to believe and be baptized.

Jesus' last words were very important. In **Matthew chapter 28** He said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go you therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."

Jesus has actually called us to go and make disciples and baptize them. It is very important that we follow what Jesus calls us to do. He obviously looked at baptism as something very important.

Jesus begins His final message to His followers in **Matthew 28** by declaring that He now has all authority in heaven and earth. He then transfers His authority to us when He tells us to "go". Therefore, when we go out into the world to make disciples, Jesus says His authority is following us as we follow and obey Him in what He calls us to do.

Baptism is one of the first things Jesus said to do in making disciples, which makes it extremely important. Baptism is a key step for a disciple. First of all, it represents the dying of self and receiving new life in Christ. Also, when we remember our baptism it helps reinforce that we are dead to our old life and that we now belong to Jesus.

When we are born into this world and before we know Jesus, we are very self-focused. We are self-sufficient, self-centered, selfish, and self-reliant. Life in this world is all about self.

When we come to Jesus asking Him to be our Lord and Savior, we are actually surrendering ourselves to Him. We are not only asking Jesus to give us His life but also to be the ruler or the boss of our life.

We are asking Him to direct and guide us by His Holy Spirit and by His Word, the Bible, to give us access to His life, authority and power in this world. We need all of these heavenly qualities to live a blessed life here on earth. Baptism helps us release our faith to receive these spiritual attributes in the physical world.

Dying to self is hugely important in our walk with Christ. Going under the water of baptism is a type of dying to, and burying, self; coming up out of the water is a type of rising up from the dead as a new creature.

When we believe and confess the Lord Jesus, we become a new creature. When we are baptized, the reality of being a new creature in Jesus is reinforced because every fiber of our being felt the water and knows that we surrendered our lives to Christ.

When we believe and confess that Jesus is the Son of God, we are born of the Spirit. We are in Him and He is in us. As it says in **1 John 4: 15**, "He that confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him and he in God."

But we are not just spirit beings; each of us also has a soul and live in a body. As already mentioned, when we go under the water every fiber of our physical being knows that we have made this commitment to God and that we have gone under the water and have come out of the water to confirm that we are new creatures.

Our personal baptism is a landmark and a reminder that we are God's. I look back on my baptism after I came to Christ as a turning point in my spiritual walk with Christ in this world. I see it as a time when my faith in God's presence, provision and protection became real to me in this natural world.

If you have not been baptized, I strongly recommend that you do so. If you know someone who is a believer and has not been baptized, that fact won't keep them out of heaven. However, I don't understand why anyone would not step into the blessings and protection available through baptism.

Baptism is a really important step in our journey as a disciple of Jesus Christ, one I hope you have taken.

Chapter 6. What Should We Focus on to Grow Spiritually?

This chapter covers what to do to grow as a follower or a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Until now we have been focusing on certain foundational principles for the Christian life, such as how to be sure of our salvation, how can we trust the Bible, why reading, studying and meditating the Bible are important and what it means when disciples of Jesus are called new creatures.

It's important for a believer to grow spiritually because, even though God has recreated our spirit in His Son Jesus, we still need our soul and body to become more and more like Jesus, as well.

We are trying to receive in our soul (our mind, will and emotions) and our body a manifestation of what God has already given us in the spirit. This is not something we can earn or work for. God has actually given us everything we need in Christ Jesus; it is ours and it is a free gift.

What we do with the spiritual practices of Bible reading, prayer, meeting with other believers, communion and baptism, etc., is unfold what God has already given us.

God has provided everything we need for a meaningful and rewarding life in Jesus Christ. However, these blessings are often hidden. It is like looking for hidden treasure. God has already put many valuable gifts in us, in our spirit. We just need to search them out.

We get these things out by the word of God and by the direction of His Holy Spirit. We also get these things to come to the surface of our souls through the spiritual practices and disciplines.

We are not trying to get God to give us something. We are not trying to earn something. We are trying to receive in the natural world what is already ours in the spiritual world. The Bible says that all spiritual blessings in heaven places are ours; all blessings of God are ours in Christ Jesus. **Ephesians 1: 3**

The Bible says that promises of God are “Yes” and “Amen” in Christ Jesus. In other words, they are already ours and ready for us. **2 Corinthians 1: 20**

All these blessings have been given to us in Jesus Christ in our spirit, and we want to get them into our minds, our wills and our emotions (our souls) and into our physical bodies, where they will positively influence our lives and our relationships.

In other words, what the spiritual disciplines do for us is that they help us find out what is already ours so we can begin to walk in them.

Let's take a look at the early first century Church and what they did. These were the first disciples of Jesus who had been with Him for three and a half years. They learned firsthand from Jesus how to grow spiritually and how to further His

Kingdom on earth. Therefore, because they followed Jesus' example and His instructions, they reached the whole known world in a generation.

It's exciting to know that if we do what they did, we, too, can grow strong spiritually and make a significant difference in this world for Christ.

Now let's look at what the apostles told their disciples to do. The early Church followed certain practices that are mentioned in **Acts 2: 42-47**.

This was following the message that the Apostle Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, just after Holy Spirit fell upon the followers of Jesus as tongues of fire in the upper room. The coming of God's Spirit was so spectacular that the very building they were in was shaken by a mighty wind, and many people came to see what all the commotion was about.

The Apostle Peter shared with them that Jesus had risen from the dead and that He was the Messiah, the Son of God. When they heard this many asked, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" **Acts 2: 2: 37**

Peter replied, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." **Acts 2: 38**

So, three thousand came to Christ, they were baptized, and began to follow the example of the apostles and their disciples, learning what they needed to do. That is what disciplines and practices they needed to learn to grow and mature as new creatures in Christ. This was all done under the apostles' guidance.

Let's read **Acts 2: 42 - 47**: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

44. Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, 45. and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

46. So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, 47. praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved."

That is what they did! They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, which today we have in the Bible as guided by our spiritual mentors and leaders.

They came together to fellowship, shared meals, practiced the Lord's supper, and were devoted in these things including prayer, which are just as important today!

They also practiced the things that Jesus did. Jesus, Himself, said, "The things I do you will do also." **John 14: 12** The apostles, like Jesus, performed many miraculous signs and wonders. I'm sure people were healed and many other

miraculous things happened. We should expect similar things to happen through the followers of Jesus in this day and age.

All of them together in one place was a large gathering, such as when multiple churches come together at a festival in a city. They also met together in synagogues, like our meetings at churches on Sundays, and in small groups from house to house.

They had a spirit of joy and generosity when sharing with each other. They got together and praised and worshipped God. They also went out and shared their story about what Jesus had done for them, with many people coming to faith in Jesus, joining their fellowship (“as many as were being saved”).

Let’s look at the few key practices that the apostles taught their disciples to do:

All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching. The apostles’ teaching was basically what they learned from Jesus in the three and a half years they were with Him, some of which became the Gospels in the Bible.

It was very important that the apostles were discipling new believers (**Matthew 28: 18 – 20**), and these new believers would disciple others.

The first day of the early Church, Pentecost, there were instantly three thousand new believers, too many for just the apostles to disciple. Therefore, the apostles had to train new believers how to disciple, and so on.

This meant that many brand-new followers of Jesus were immediately involved in the ministry. They were disciplined by the apostles and then were instructed to pass on what they learned as they disciplined others, who disciplined others, etc.

It is best to disciple in groups of 3 people or larger. Once you get more than 12 in a group (8 to 10 people being the most effective), training gets more difficult and people won’t get the proper instruction.

It’s important to always have someone who is discipling you, and it is equally important that you be discipling others.

If you know Jesus you will always have something to share with a disciple because His Holy Spirit will be there to guide you. If someone doesn’t know Jesus and you know Him, you know something much more important than anything they know.

That means you can disciple them on how they can come to Jesus by telling them how you came to Him. You can always share what Jesus has done for you, even if you have only known Him for a short time.

Every new follower of Jesus should share their story about how they came to Jesus with other people within the first 24 to 48 hours of becoming a

believer. This will create a lifelong habit of sharing with others and will be a blessing to everyone involved.

You need to find a group of people you can be with that can help you to grow in the apostles' teaching and who can help to disciple you. If you don't know someone, *For His Glory Ministries* will get you on a conference call and find some way to help you in this regard.

Everyone needs someone in their life discipling and guiding them, answering their questions and helping them grow in the Lord.

The Bible says that early followers of Jesus devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching. The word devoted means that who or what you focus most of your attention on is the most important person or thing in your life. If that devotion is placed on Jesus, you will begin to resemble Him more and more.

They were also devoted to fellowship. Fellowship means getting together with other followers of Jesus Christ, having meals together, and growing in those relationships. These people become our family. They will likely become closer to us than our biological family. Having meals together and growing in our relationships with others is important.

We also want to share the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is what Jesus did right before He went to the cross when He took wine (today we usually take juice), representing His blood that would be shed for our sins, and bread, which represents His broken body for our healing and for all of us to be part of His body. The Lord's Supper is an important practice that we do to remember the importance of the Lord Jesus in our lives.

They were also devoted to prayer. Prayer is like the glue that holds the Church members together. Prayer unites and empowers us. We should come together at a local fellowship or at someone's home and pray regularly. This is very effective because Jesus said if two or three gather in my name, there I Am in their midst. We can make a difference in the world if we gather together and pray.

We also want to have an individual prayer life where we spend time every day in prayer with the Lord. Our whole life is basically an outgrowth of our time in prayer. The fruit of our life, the kind of life we are living, grows out of the time we spend in the Lord's presence in prayer and meditation.

In the beginning, many find it hard because we are not used to staying quiet and focused on the Lord. However, if we persist in prayer and meditation, we will come to really know the heart of the Lord; and as we listen to Him, we learn how to ask Him for all that we need.

There is a really good model of prayer called "The Lord's Prayer". Jesus said, "Pray in this manner", meaning it was a type or model of prayer.

The Lord's model of prayer begins with addressing who we are praying to, God the Father. When we say, Our Father who art in heaven, we are talking to our Heavenly Father.

Jesus was including us as His brothers and sisters, referring to God as His Father AND as our Father.

Then He moved the prayer model into praise with "Hallowed be Your Name." It is always good to praise God during our prayer time because it helps us focus our thoughts on God rather than the world.

Then Jesus demonstrated that we should ask God to bring forth His Kingdom in the earth when He prayed, "Your Kingdom come, your will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

By praying that His Kingdom and His will be done on earth, we are asking that everything in this world become just like it is in heaven. We are praying that the things that are broken here on earth be fixed like they are in heaven. This would include all the people in this world who are hurting spiritually, emotionally and physically so that they would be healed, and that all the suffering on earth be healed by the influence of God's Holy Spirit in each situation, brought about by the prayers of God's people.

God wants to involve us in all that He does in bringing His Kingdom to the earth. That was His plan from the very beginning.

Also, in Jesus' model of prayer He wants us to ask the Father for what we need every day, which He called our daily bread. That way we are always looking to God as our source.

Jesus told us to pray that the Father would keep us from temptation so that we would always keep our focus on abiding with and in Him.

He went on to remind us when we pray to forgive others, letting go of all the things that they have done or said that hurt us. Jesus wants us to remember that He paid for our forgiveness with His own blood so we should also forgive others.

Jesus also wants us to enforce His victory over evil when we pray. He conquered evil and the evil one at the cross, but the enemy tries to get us to forget the authority we have over him through Jesus' name. In prayer we seek God's Holy Spirit to remind us of Jesus' victory over the evil one and how to overcome him by the name of Jesus and through faith in His name.

In prayer we submit ourselves to the authority of Jesus Christ, and then we turn and resist the devil by telling him to back off and get out, and he will. **James 4: 7**

Jesus ended His model of prayer, “For yours is the Kingdom, the power and the glory”! Therefore, we end our prayers with praise and adoration.

These practices don’t get God to move in our lives because He has already provided all that we need in Christ. **Ephesians 1: 3** What the disciplines and practices of the Christian life do for us is they unfold what Jesus has already provided for us in the Spirit in our lives here on earth.

One of the most dramatic changes that happened to me after coming to know Jesus Christ is that no matter what situation I might be facing in life, I always have His supernatural peace and joy in my heart.

I hope that you are having the same experience in your life, as well.

Chapter 7. What I Wish I Knew

This is the final chapter of the disciple-maker manual called “I’m Saved, Now What?” Lesson 7 is a summary of the things we wish we would have known when we first received Jesus that would have helped improve and deepen our early walk with God.

Let’s first do a quick summary of the lessons we covered so far. By the way, you can get more information on our website at <https://www.forhislorymin.org> or you can find numerous training videos on many related topics at our YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-qC0EFpS-as_Yw5vB8Bssw.

During the first six lessons we covered many of the foundational principals you need to know to grow in the Kingdom of God. We covered what it means to be a follower of Jesus, how we can be confident of our salvation, how we know that the Bible is the Truth, and that Jesus loves us and has forgiven all of our sins.

We also covered the spiritual disciplines and practices that we need to focus on to grow in Christ and mature as sons and daughters of God. So, let’s review some of these foundational practices that we would follow, now that we know that we’re walking with Jesus.

The first principle is *we need to be sure of our salvation*. This is so that we know beyond a shadow of doubt that when we die, we will be with Jesus in heaven. However, Jesus didn’t come to just get us into heaven; He also came to get heaven into us.

This means that after we have surrendered our lives to God by confessing that Jesus is Lord and believing that He is risen from the dead, God now lives in us and through us.

This is very exciting because we don’t have to wait until we die to reap the benefits of God’s eternal life. We have access to all of God’s promises, blessings, and wisdom right here and now in Christ.

Also, since salvation literally means to be delivered from enemies, we can be delivered from everything that is contrary to God’s Kingdom here on earth. We have been set free from all of His enemies such as pain, sickness, poverty, hurt and fear, etc.

We can also be assured that Jesus is always here to help us and will never leave or forsake us.

Once we surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, we can tap into God’s resources here on earth through faith. When we are facing an enemy, we can call upon the name of the Lord because He has promised to never leave us and that He will deliver us. **Psalm 91: 15**

Jesus appeared to His disciples shortly after He rose from the dead, and during that encounter, He breathed the Holy Spirit into them and they became the first people to be born again, or saved.

Here's the account from **John 20: 19 – 23**: Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you." 20. When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. 21. So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." 22. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

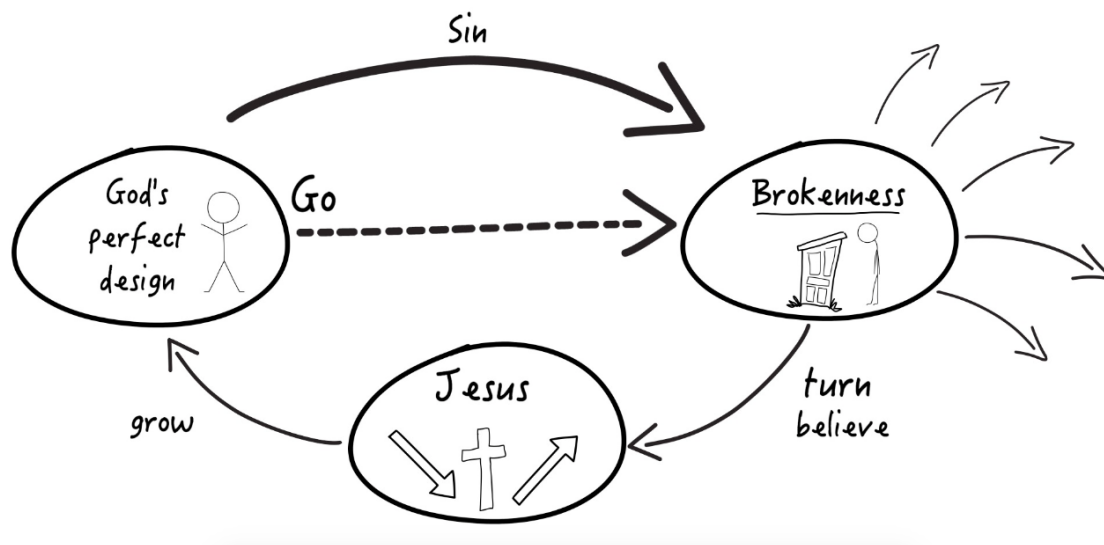
When Jesus breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit", in that moment their spirits were recreated in Christ through His Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God brought the Spirit of Jesus into their hearts and they became new creatures. If you have surrendered your life to the Lord Jesus, then just like His first disciples you, too, are a new creature in Christ.

Therefore, just as Jesus sent them into the world to tell others about what Jesus did for them, He's also sending us. He sends everyone who has received Him back into the world to tell people about what has happened to us so that they might also believe in Jesus.

We tell people our testimony. We tell them what our life was like before we met Jesus. We tell them about how we met Jesus, and finally we tell them what a difference having Jesus in our lives has made for us. We explain how knowing Jesus gives our lives so much more meaning and how we have a joy and peace that we never had before.

We also share Jesus's story, which is also called the Gospel. We find it helpful to use the following diagram and narrative we call the "3 Circles":

The 3 Circles Evangelism Method



Here's what to say when drawing out the 3 circles:

So, we live in this world, and it is characterized by brokenness. We don't have to look very hard to see that there are things like disease, disasters, war, broken families...there's a lot of pain in this world. But this is not God's original design. God has a perfect design for our lives. The way that we have gotten ourselves into brokenness is through something the Bible calls sin. Sin is turning away from God's design and pursuing our own way, and that leads us to brokenness. Brokenness eventually leads us to death, and that death will separate us from God forever.

But God doesn't want us to stay in brokenness, so He has made a way out, and that way is Jesus. Jesus comes and enters into our brokenness, and the death that we deserve for pursuing brokenness, Jesus takes upon Himself and dies on a cross, His body being broken for us. Three days after He died, He rose from the dead and made a way out of brokenness. People try many things to get out of brokenness, such as religion, success, money, relationships, education, or drugs and alcohol; but none of these things work. The only way out is Jesus. If we turn from our sin and believe that Jesus died for us and rose from the dead, we can leave brokenness and grow in a relationship with God and pursue His perfect design for our lives. And more than that, we can go back into this broken world and through the life of Jesus in us, help others come to Him and experience His peace, no matter what kind of situation they may find themselves in.

Now there are two types of people in the world - there are people with God's peace, and there are people that are still in brokenness. We have to ask ourselves, "Where are we?" So, where do you think you are?

The next thing is prayer, which is very important as the Bible says in **Luke 11: 1**: Jesus was praying in a certain place and as He finished one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord teach us to pray as John taught his disciples".

How to pray was the only thing that Jesus' disciples ever asked Him to teach them! They must have seen that everything in Jesus' life grew out of prayer. Jesus' relationship with God the Father was the source of His power here on earth, and that connection was strengthened through prayer and His quiet time with His Father. Our quiet time and prayer in God's presence will deepen the reality of the Holy Spirit in our lives here on earth, as well.

We need to pray frequently, every day. Prayer is like talking to God like a friend, and sometimes prayer is us just listening. Sometimes we pray by ourselves, and other times we pray with others in our family or community. Jesus wanted us to pray as a group because He said, "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them." **Matthew 18: 20**

There is a special blessing and anointing when we pray with others. Prayer is important in building our relationship with God and with His people. Jesus taught a specific model for prayer, which is now called "The Lord's Prayer" **Matthew 6: 9 - 13.**

Jesus' model of prayer begins with our addressing the Person we are praying to, God, our Father, in heaven, then the prayer model moves to praise, next is asking for His Kingdom to come and His will to be done in earth, then praying for our needs, forgiveness, protection from temptation and evil, and ends with praise. This is a very effective model for prayer.

In Colossians chapter 1, the Apostle Paul writes; "We give thanks to God the Father our Lord Jesus Christ praying always for you". We can see from this that Paul had a practice of praying all the time for the people that he was discipling.

We should follow his example and pray for our families and others often. We should pray for our national and local civic and church leaders. Jesus and the Apostle Paul showed us that prayer is key to living a Godly life, and we would be wise to follow their example.

We all know that it's important to feed our bodies regularly with healthy food and water. It is equally important to feed our souls. Reading and meditating the Bible is like eating and drinking for our souls. Many Christians are living defeated lives because their souls are starving for nutrition. As it says in **John 8: 31 - 32**, Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him, "If you abide in my words you are truly my disciples and you will know the truth and the truth will set you free".

Sometimes you hear people say the truth will set you free. That's actually not true because Jesus said that it is only the truth that we know that sets us free. We first have to know the truth before it can set us free.

We first have to be in God's Word and know what it says before the power in these Biblical truths can be released in us, setting us free. The Bible is the written representation of the living Word of God, the very person of Jesus Christ. When

we read and meditate the Word of God, His Holy Spirit gives life to us through the Word as it comes alive in our hearts. That life and power literally set us free.

If you are wrestling with something in your life, throw yourself into the Word. Read it and meditate on it until the words comes alive in your heart, and you will be amazed how the problem you are facing will begin to fade.

Meditating on the Word is dwelling on it, running the verses over and over in your mind, and chewing on what it says. It's like eating food. What we eat actually becomes part of us. If you want the truths and power of God's Word to become part of you, meditation is key.

I highly recommend you choose a Bible verse and think about it all day long. As you meditate on those verses every day, they will change your life. This is how we become transformed by the Word of God.

It's like what King David said he did in **Psalms 1**: "I delight in the Word of the Lord and I meditate in His Word day and night. Therefore, I will be like a tree planted by the rivers of water. Whose leaf will not wither and will bear fruit in season and whatever I do will prosper."

Biblical meditation is so important because the practice can contribute to greater prosperity in every area of our lives.

As a new believer in Jesus, finding a good Bible-believing church is important. Every follower of Jesus needs to be around other people who also know Him.

So, He (Jesus) came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. **Luke 4: 16** As we can see, Jesus had a custom of regularly attending the synagogue, the place of worship in His village, so He was part of a family of believers who at that time were the Jewish people.

The Church is not a building. The Church is the local gathering of the people of God. The Bible also calls this group of people the body of Christ. When we became believers in Jesus, we became part of God's body on earth. Just like our bodies have a need for the different parts, arms, legs eyes and mouth, etc., we all need each other to be complete as the Church.

We need to have relationships with others in the Church because they will become our brothers and sisters in Christ. It is very helpful to have other people to lean on, to talk to, to visit with that also know Jesus.

We all need to know beyond a shadow of doubt that God the Father is our Father and that He loves and accepts us completely and unconditionally.

In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. **I John 4: 10**

God loved us so much that He sent His Son Jesus to pay the penalty for our sin. We can now love God in return because He first loved us and demonstrated His love by His free gift of forgiveness for our sins.

We all need a revelation about how much God loves and accepts us. He is our Heavenly Father who cares for us, and He sent Jesus to die for us so that we could come back to Him to receive His eternal life.

The next step is to ask God to lead you to a mentor. This should be someone who has been walking with the Lord longer than you have, who can disciple you and help train you to disciple others.

You need to share your story about what Jesus has done for you with others as soon as possible. You will want to make sharing your testimony of the love of Jesus a daily habit. Some of those you share with may eventually become followers of Jesus, as well.

Every follower of Jesus needs to be discipled and to also make disciples. Jesus had 12 disciples, and those disciples eventually made disciples, who made other disciples all over the world.

We are called to share what Jesus has done for us so that other people can come to know the joy, the peace and the love of God that we have come to know.

Finally, it is good to take part in a weekly Bible discussion group. Jesus spent most of His time in ministry life with His 12 disciples. He got to know them, and they got to know Him. They lived a life together and became an intimate group, much like a family. We all need to be part of a group of fellow believers who become our spiritual family.

Welcome to the family of God in Christ Jesus our Lord!