

# How to Live *for* God



A Guide for New Christians

Denzil R. Miller



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A GUIDE FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

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**How to Live for God: A Guide for New Christians.**

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## Introduction

**C**ongratulations on your decision to follow Christ!

This is the wisest and most important decision of your life. You have made Jesus Christ your Lord and Savior. In doing this, you have begun an exciting new journey—a journey that will last through eternity.

The Christian life is more than a decision to receive Christ as Savior. It is a commitment to follow Him all the days of your life. Twenty times in the four gospels, Jesus called on His disciples to follow Him. He once said, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”<sup>1</sup>

The Bible compares the Christian life to a race. It tells us to “run with endurance the race set before us.”<sup>2</sup> It further instructs us to run in such a way that we might win the prize.<sup>3</sup> This book was written to help you start your new life in Christ well.

To get the most benefit from this book, set aside a regular time each day to read each lesson. By doing this, you will complete its seven lessons in one week. Read each lesson prayerfully. Then, after you have read the lesson, take

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time to look up and carefully read the Scripture references footnoted and placed at the end of the lesson.

You will also note a prayer at the close of each day's lesson. Take time to sincerely pray the prayer. Make it your own by directing your prayer to God, and by praying sincerely from your heart.

Jesus once told Simon Peter, "I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail."<sup>4</sup> In similar fashion, I have prayed for you. As I wrote this book, I prayed that your faith would not fail but that it would grow in grace each day. I have prayed the Holy Spirit will fill you and use you for God's glory.

— Denzil R. Miller

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### **Scripture References:**

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 16:24

<sup>2</sup> Hebrews 12:1

<sup>3</sup> 1 Corinthians 9:24

<sup>4</sup> Luke 22:32



## Ensure That You Have Been Truly Saved

**T**he Bible tells us, “Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith.”<sup>1</sup> In other words, we must take time to consider whether we have been truly saved. For no person can genuinely serve God without first experiencing God’s saving grace.<sup>2</sup>

That’s why it is so important that we understand what *does*, and what *does not*, make a person a Christian. The Bible warns, “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.”<sup>3</sup> To trust in anything other than Christ to save us is false hope. Speaking of Jesus, the Bible says, “There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”<sup>4</sup>

### **Things That Cannot Save**

Tragically, many people are trusting in things that have no power to save them. For instance, some are trusting in their own *good works* to save them. While it is true that every Christian does good works, good works can never

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make a person a Christian. The Bible says, “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”<sup>5</sup>

Others are trusting in *water baptism* to save them. Possibly, they were baptized as an infant or some other time in their life. Water baptism, however, can never bring salvation. It is rather a testimony that one has already been saved. The baptism that saves us is a spiritual baptism performed by the Holy Spirit when He baptizes us into the body of Christ.<sup>6</sup> At that moment, we die with Christ and are raised up to a new life in Him.<sup>7</sup>

Still others think they are saved by *joining a church*. It is true; every Christian should join a Spirit-filled church. However, the mere act of joining a church does not make one a Christian. To be truly saved one must be “joined to the Lord.”<sup>8</sup>

### **You Can Know You Are Saved**

How then, you may ask, can I know that I have been truly saved? The Bible speaks of three ways you can know:

First, you can know you have been saved if you have done what the word of God says you must do. If you have sincerely repented of your sins and put your faith in Christ to save you, then you are saved.<sup>9</sup> True repentance means you are genuinely sorry that you have offended God. It further means that you have confessed your sins to God and have turned from your sins to follow Jesus Christ. You put your faith in Christ by placing your full trust in Him alone for

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salvation.<sup>10</sup> Then, by faith you invite Him into your life as your Lord and Savior.<sup>11</sup>

Second, you can know you have been saved because your life has been changed. In the words of Paul, “The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”<sup>12</sup> The Bible says that, when a person is saved, God gives them a new heart,<sup>13</sup> and they step from darkness into light.<sup>14</sup> Jesus called this experience being “born again.”<sup>15</sup> When one is born again, he or she becomes a “new creation” in Christ.<sup>16</sup>

Finally, you can know that you have been saved by the inner witness of the Spirit. The Bible says, “The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.”<sup>17</sup> When a person is truly saved and walking with Jesus, the Holy Spirit lives inside them. He gives them inner peace and an awareness that they are God’s child.

### **A Prayer to Pray**

So, ask yourself, have I met God’s requirements for salvation? Have I done what the Bible says I should do? Have I repented of my sins and put my full faith in Christ to save me? Has Christ entered my heart and begun to change me from the inside out? Does His Spirit bear witness with my spirit that I am God’s child? If these things are true in your life, praise God, you are saved. If not, you can be saved right now. Sincerely, offer this prayer to God:

*Lord Jesus, I come to you. I truly believe that You are the Son of God and that You died on the cross and rose again for my salvation. I confess to You that I am a sinner, and ask You to forgive me and make me a new*

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*person. I turn from my sins to follow and serve You every day of my life. Now come into my heart, Lord Jesus, and take Your rightful place as Master of my life. In Your name, I pray. Amen.*

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### **Scripture References:**

- <sup>1</sup> 2 Corinthians 13:5
- <sup>2</sup> Acts 15:11
- <sup>3</sup> Proverbs 16:25
- <sup>4</sup> Acts 4:12
- <sup>5</sup> Ephesians 2:8-9
- <sup>6</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:13
- <sup>7</sup> Romans 6:3-4
- <sup>8</sup> 1 Corinthians 6:17
- <sup>9</sup> Acts 20:21
- <sup>10</sup> Acts 16:31
- <sup>11</sup> Revelation 3:20
- <sup>12</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:17
- <sup>13</sup> Ezekiel 36:26
- <sup>14</sup> Ephesians 5:8; 1 Peter 2:9
- <sup>15</sup> John 3:3, 7
- <sup>16</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:17
- <sup>17</sup> Romans 8:16



## Forsake Everything You Know to Be Sin

**T**he chief duty of every Christian is to love God and obey His word. Jesus said, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”<sup>1</sup> As you begin your walk with the Lord, determine in your heart to forsake everything in your life you know to be sin.

Sin is any attitude, thought, or action that falls short of God’s glory.<sup>2</sup> There are sins of *commission* and sins of *omission*. Sins of commission are acts of disobedience against God’s law as revealed in the Bible. This includes sinful practices and harmful habits. Sins of omission are failure to do good. The Bible says, “Whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.”<sup>3</sup> Sin is further a mindset. It is a rebellious, self-centered attitude that says, “I don’t care what God says; I will do as I please.”

### **Forsake All Sin**

One cannot live for God and deliberately practice sin. Paul once asked, “Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?” He answered his own question: “By no means!

How can we who died to sin still live in it?"<sup>4</sup> Just as one must put down one object to pick up another, the new Christian must lay aside sin to follow Christ.<sup>5</sup>

### **You Are Not Alone**

You may be asking, "But how can I do this? I have tried to overcome my sin before—only to fail." The answer is you can overcome sin in God's strength. Never forget, you are not alone in serving the Lord. When you came to Christ, He entered your life and gave you a new nature. He now promises, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."<sup>6</sup>

Near the end of Jesus' ministry, He told His disciples He would soon leave them and return to heaven. However, He left them with a wonderful promise. "I will not leave you as orphans," He said. He then explained to them what He meant: "I will ask the Father and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth... he dwells with you and will be in you."<sup>7</sup> Jesus was saying that He would come to them in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. He still comes to us in the same way.

Remember, the Holy Spirit now lives inside you. He is ever present to give you the power you need to triumph over sinful practices and habits. The Bible tells us, "Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh."<sup>8</sup> If you will ask Him, the Holy Spirit will fill you and empower you to live for God. (We will talk more about being filled with the Spirit in tomorrow's lesson.)

God has also given us His word to strengthen us. Just as food nourishes and strengthens the natural body, God's word

## Day 2 ~ Forsake Everything You Know to Be Sin

nourishes and strengthens our spiritual lives. David prayed, “I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.”<sup>9</sup> If you want to have victory over sin, prayerfully read your Bible every day. As you read, respond to what it says and allow God’s word to become part of you.

### **If You Stumble**

You may ask, “What should I do if, after trying to live for God, I stumble and commit a sin?” When this happens, you should not despair. Though God is grieved, He does not cast you aside. Nevertheless, your sin has put you in a dangerous place. The Bible describes sin as a wild beast crouching at the door waiting to devour the one who opens it.<sup>10</sup> If not dealt with, your sin can destroy you.

The Bible tells us what we should do when we sin. John wrote, “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”<sup>11</sup> When we sin, the Holy Spirit comes and convicts us.<sup>12</sup> At such times, we should welcome the Spirit’s rebuke, admit our sin, and ask God to forgive us. We should then ask God to fill us again with His Spirit and empower us to live holy lives.

### **A Prayer to Pray**

As you conclude today’s reading, determine in your heart to live a life pleasing to God. Sincerely, pray this prayer:

Day 2 ~ Forsake Everything You Know to Be Sin

*Heavenly Father, I want to please You in all I do. I consciously forsake everything in my life I know to be sin. I know I cannot do this in my own strength. However, in Your strength I can have victory over my sin and old habits.<sup>13</sup> Come Holy Spirit, fill me now, and give me the power I need to live for God.*

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**Scripture References:**

<sup>1</sup> John 14:15

<sup>2</sup> Romans 3:23

<sup>3</sup> James 4:17

<sup>4</sup> Romans 6:1-2

<sup>5</sup> Hebrews 12:1

<sup>6</sup> Hebrews 13:5

<sup>7</sup> John 14:16-18

<sup>8</sup> Galatians 5:16

<sup>9</sup> Psalm 119:11

<sup>10</sup> Genesis 4:7

<sup>11</sup> 1 John 1:8-9

<sup>12</sup> John 16:8

<sup>13</sup> Philippians 4:13



## Be Filled with the Holy Spirit

**A**s you begin your Christian walk, nothing is more important than your being immediately filled with the Holy Spirit. When you repented of your sins, the Holy Spirit came inside you and gave you new life in Christ. Now, He wants to fill you and empower you to serve God better.

### **A Command from God**

The Bible commands us to “be filled with the Spirit.”<sup>1</sup> This was Jesus’ last command to His disciples before He returned to heaven. He ordered them to “wait for the promise of the Father... for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”<sup>2</sup>

The disciples obeyed, and on the Day of Pentecost, “they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.”<sup>3</sup> Peter then stood and explained that the promise of the Spirit is for all God’s people, for “everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.”<sup>4</sup> The promise still holds true today. God will give His Spirit to anyone who repents and follows His Son Jesus.

## **The Purpose of Spirit Baptism**

The main reason you need to be filled with the Holy Spirit is so that you might be empowered as Christ's witness to your lost family and friends. Jesus promises, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses."<sup>5</sup> (We will discuss our responsibility as Christ's witnesses in tomorrow's lesson.)

Along with power to witness, being filled with the Spirit brings other wonderful blessings into the Christian life. These blessings include an increased awareness of Christ's presence, overflowing joy, and a greater love for God and for others.<sup>6</sup> The experience further imparts to the believer greater effectiveness in prayer and the power needed to do the works of Christ, including the manifestation of spiritual gifts.<sup>7</sup> Every believer should earnestly desire to be filled with the Spirit.<sup>8</sup>

## **How to Be Filled**

The gift of the Holy Spirit is received by faith, as is every gift from God.<sup>9</sup> You can be filled with the Holy Spirit today by taking three simple steps of faith:

*1. Ask in faith.* The Bible says that God gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask.<sup>10</sup> So, begin your quest by asking God to fill you with the Holy Spirit. As you do, expect Him to keep His promise and give you the Holy Spirit. You will sense the Spirit's presence coming upon you.

*2. Receive by faith.* Once you sense God's Spirit *on* you, reach out by faith, and receive Him *inside* you.<sup>11</sup> In faith, pray, "In Jesus' Name, I receive the Holy Spirit!" As you

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pray, remember Jesus' promise: "Whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours."<sup>12</sup> The moment you believe, the Holy Spirit will enter and fill your entire being. You will sense His powerful presence inside.

3. *Speak in faith.* Once you sense the Spirit's presence within, act in faith. Speak from where you sense His presence inside. You will begin to speak words you don't understand. This is what happened to the disciples in the book of Acts.<sup>13</sup> Speaking in tongues is God's sign to you He has filled you with His Spirit and empowered you to be Christ's witness.<sup>14</sup>

The words you speak will not come from your mind, as in natural speech. They will come from deep inside, from your spirit. Jesus said, "Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart [innermost being] will flow rivers of living water."<sup>15</sup> Your speaking will not be forced; it will be a natural flow of supernatural words. You should simply allow it to happen, and cooperate fully with the Spirit by boldly speaking out in faith.

### **A Prayer to Pray**

As we conclude today's lesson, take a moment and ask God to fill you with the Holy Spirit. In faith, pray this prayer:

*Jesus, I come boldly to You to be filled with the Holy Spirit. You promised; if I would ask the heavenly Father, He would give me the Holy Spirit. I truly believe Your promise. So, I ask You, Lord, Fill me with the Holy*

## Day 3 ~ Be Filled with the Holy Spirit

*Spirit. I give myself completely to You—body, soul, and spirit. Come, Holy Spirit, fill me now.*

Once you have prayed, act in faith to receive the Holy Spirit. Pray and believe this prayer:

*In Jesus' name, I receive the Holy Spirit. I believe that I have received!*

Sense the Spirit's presence coming upon you and inside you. Then, begin to *speak from the Presence*. That is, speak from deep inside, where you feel the Spirit moving. You will begin to say words you don't understand. When this happens, rejoice for the Holy Spirit is empowering you to be Christ's witness.

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### **Scripture References:**

<sup>1</sup> Ephesians 5:18

<sup>2</sup> Acts 1:4-5

<sup>3</sup> Acts 2:1-4

<sup>4</sup> Acts 2:38-39

<sup>5</sup> Acts 1:8

<sup>6</sup> Matthew 28:20; Acts 13:52; Romans 5:5

<sup>7</sup> Romans 8:26-27; John 14:14-17; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11

<sup>8</sup> Matthew 5:6; John 7:37

<sup>9</sup> John 7:37; Galatians 3:14

<sup>10</sup> Luke 11:13; Galatians 3:14

<sup>11</sup> Luke 11:10

<sup>12</sup> Mark 11:24

<sup>13</sup> Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6

<sup>14</sup> Acts 1:8

<sup>15</sup> John 7:38



## Witness for Christ

**A**s you follow Christ, you can expect many blessings to come into your life. These blessings include peace, provision, and the hope of heaven. Along with these blessings, however, comes responsibility. A major responsibility of every follower of Jesus is to witness for Him.

### **Called as Witnesses**

You should begin today sharing your faith others. King David encouraged the people of Israel, “Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.”<sup>1</sup> Jesus commands us, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.”<sup>2</sup> He further admonishes, “You will be my witnesses... to the end of the earth.”<sup>3</sup> These are but three examples of many biblical commands to witness.

We witness for Christ when we share the good news of salvation with others. We tell them that Christ is indeed the Savior of the world.<sup>4</sup> He is the Lamb of God who died for the sins of all people then rose from the dead on the third day.<sup>5</sup> Now, if they will put their faith in Him, they can be

saved.<sup>6</sup> Begin immediately to share these wonderful truths with your friends and neighbors.

## **Christ, Our Example**

Christ is our model of how we should witness. He testified, “For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth.”<sup>7</sup> We, like Him, must bear witness to the truth of the gospel.

Jesus witnessed in three ways: with His grace-filled words, with his beautiful life, and with His powerful works. Concerning His words, Jesus testified, “The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.”<sup>8</sup> Concerning His life, the people declared, “He has done all things well.”<sup>9</sup> And concerning His works, Matthew writes, “He went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.”<sup>10</sup>

You should determine to witness for Christ in the same three ways:

*1. Witness with your words.* Tell your family, friends, and neighbors about Jesus. Tell them who He is—He is the Son of God and Savior of the world. Tell them what He has done—He has made the way of salvation for anyone who will repent of their sins and put their faith in Him.

As you witness, don’t forget to tell them what He has done for you personally. Tell them how you met Christ, how He has changed your life, and what He means in your life today. Your personal testimony can be a powerful means of winning others to Christ.

## Day 4 ~ Witness for Christ

2. *Witness with your life.* Not only should you witness with your words, like Jesus, you should also witness with your life. Your way of living should testify to what God has done in your life. As people observe your pure life and your lovingkindness toward others, they will be drawn to Christ.

3. *Witness with your works.* You can also witness for Christ with your good works. These works include acts of compassion and demonstrations of God's power. They testify to Christ's great love and mighty power.

### **Power to Witness**

As we discussed yesterday, Christ has promised the Spirit's power to enable us to fulfill our responsibility as witnesses. Jesus promised to send the promise of the Spirit upon those who would be His witnesses. He told them that they would be "clothed with power from on high."<sup>11</sup> That same power is available to us today through the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

### **A Prayer to Pray**

As you conclude this lesson, take a moment to commit yourself to Christ as His Spirit-empowered witness. Pray this prayer:

*Lord Jesus, I commit myself to You as Your witness. I will share the good news with my lost friends and neighbors. I will testify for You with my words, my life, and my works. However, to do this, I need Your help. Send your Holy Spirit to anoint me as Your Spirit-empowered witness. In Your name, I pray. Amen.*

**Scripture References:**

<sup>1</sup> Psalm 107:2

<sup>2</sup> Mark 16:15

<sup>3</sup> Acts 1:8

<sup>4</sup> John 4:42; 1 John 4:14

<sup>5</sup> John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

<sup>6</sup> Acts 16:31

<sup>7</sup> John 18:37

<sup>8</sup> John 6:63

<sup>9</sup> Mark 7:37

<sup>10</sup> Matthew 4:23

<sup>11</sup> Luke 24:49



## Give to God's Work

**A**t the heart of the Christian faith is the grace of giving. God himself is first and greatest of all givers. Think about it; everything we possess in this life—and everything we will possess in eternity—comes from the hand of God. James tells us, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights.”<sup>1</sup> God’s greatest gift to humanity was the gift of His Son.<sup>2</sup> And Jesus himself willingly gave all for us.<sup>3</sup> He said, “Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.”<sup>4</sup>

If we are to be like God, we too must become generous givers. Today we will learn about the Christian grace of giving.

### **Every Christian's Responsibility**

Every child of God should give generously to God's work. Paul taught that God enriches us so that we might enrich others.<sup>5</sup> There are many reasons every Christian must be a generous giver. Let's look at four:

## Day 5 ~ Give to God's Work

1. *We give to acknowledge God's ownership.* By giving back to God, we acknowledge that He is Lord of our lives and owner of all.<sup>6</sup> We are mere managers of His wealth, and one day we will give account to God as to how we managed His gifts to us.<sup>7</sup>

2. *We give because God requires our obedience.* God has commanded us to give.<sup>8</sup> Jesus said, "Freely you have received, freely give."<sup>9</sup> He added, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments."<sup>10</sup>

3. *We give because God's work needs our support.* The church cannot function without the faithful giving of God's people. If every believer gave as God commands, the need would be met, and the work of God would prosper.

4. *We give to advance God's mission in the earth.* Jesus has commanded us to "make disciples of all nations."<sup>11</sup> By giving to God's work, we join with God and other Christians in fulfilling God's redemptive mission.

### **Tithes and Offerings**

The Bible speaks of two kinds of giving, tithes and offerings. Every Christian must do both.

A tithe is 10% of one's income. The Bible says, "Every tithe...is the Lord's; it is holy to the Lord."<sup>12</sup> God further charges us to "bring the full tithe into the storehouse."<sup>13</sup> Tithes are the foundation of support for the ongoing ministry of the church.

Offerings are gifts given beyond the tithe. They are often received for special needs in the church. These needs may include funds need to build and maintain the church

buildings, missions support, money to help the poor and needy, and other special needs.

### **Giving Brings Blessing**

The Bible promises, if we will tithe God will “open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.”<sup>14</sup> Jesus further promises, “Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap.”<sup>15</sup> He further taught, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”<sup>16</sup>

In addition to financial blessing, generous giving brings inner satisfaction and spiritual growth. Paul taught that as we give to God we are “enriched in every way” that we might in turn become “generous in every way.”<sup>17</sup>

Decide today that you will be generous with God's work. Start tithing this Sunday. Then, when asked, contribute generously in special offerings. Solomon wrote, “One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want.”<sup>18</sup>

### **A Prayer to Pray**

As you conclude today's lesson, make this commitment to God:

*Lord, I acknowledge that You are the true owner of everything—including all I possess. I commit myself to You to faithfully give tithes and offerings to Your work. Create in me a generous spirit. And grant to me the faith I need to do this. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.*

**Scripture References:**

- <sup>1</sup> James 1:17
- <sup>2</sup> John 3:16
- <sup>3</sup> John 10:15
- <sup>4</sup> John 15:13
- <sup>5</sup> 2 Corinthians 9:11-12
- <sup>6</sup> Psalm 24:1
- <sup>7</sup> Luke 16:2; Romans 14:12
- <sup>8</sup> Deuteronomy 16:17; Malachi 3:10
- <sup>9</sup> Luke 6:38
- <sup>10</sup> John 14:15
- <sup>11</sup> Matthew 28:19
- <sup>12</sup> Leviticus 27:30
- <sup>13</sup> Malachi 3:10
- <sup>14</sup> Malachi 3:10
- <sup>15</sup> Luke 6:38
- <sup>16</sup> Acts 20:35
- <sup>17</sup> 2 Corinthians 9:11
- <sup>18</sup> Proverbs 11:24



## Attend to the “Means of Grace”

**T**he goal of the Christian life is not simply to escape hell and attain heaven. It is rather to become like Jesus in spirit, character, and conduct. John wrote that anyone who belongs to Christ should walk as He walked.<sup>1</sup> Paul adds that God has chosen us to become like His Son.<sup>2</sup> Our primary goal of Christ’s disciples is to become like our Teacher.<sup>3</sup>

In this lesson, we will learn what we must do to grow in grace and become more like Christ. We grow in grace as we attend to the *means of grace*. Means of grace are those spiritual practices that strengthen our faith and cause us to mature in Christ.

### **Observe the Ordinances**

Every Christian should observe the ordinances of the church. An ordinance is a religious ceremony with deep spiritual meaning and power. The two ordinances Jesus left with the church are water baptism<sup>4</sup> and Holy Communion.<sup>5</sup> They are more than religious rituals; they are acts of obedience and means of grace.

## Day 6 ~ Attend to the “Means of Grace”

Water baptism occurs once at the beginning of the Christian life. By being immersed in water, you proclaim to the world that you have died to sin and you have been resurrected to a new life in Christ. If you have not been baptized in water, talk with your pastor to arrange for him to baptize you soon.

Holy Communion is sometimes called the Lord’s Supper.<sup>6</sup> It is a repeated rite and should occur regularly in the church. During communion, we eat bread and drink of the fruit of the vine together. In doing this, we are reminded of Christ’s death on the cross, and we look forward to His coming again. We also recommit ourselves to serving God.

In both water baptism and Holy Communion we identify with Christ’s mission. Both should be done in a spirit of prayer and consecration, and both bring blessing and grace into the Christian life.

### **Other Means of Grace**

Three other important means of grace are Bible study, prayer, and church attendance.

*1. Bible study.* What food is to the body, Bible study is to the spirit. Jesus explained, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”<sup>7</sup> Peter exhorted, “Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk [of God’s word], that by it you may grow up into salvation”<sup>8</sup>

You should read the Bible every day. As you do, meditate on what it says, and apply its teachings to your life. You may also join a Bible study group where you can study

the Bible with other Christians. Job said, “I have treasured the words of his (God’s) mouth more than my portion of food.”<sup>9</sup>

2. *Prayer.* The Bible encourages us to live prayer-filled lives.<sup>10</sup> Prayer is simply conversation with God. Through prayer, we get to know Him better. We enter into God’s presence where His Spirit molds us into the image of Christ.<sup>11</sup> Begin now developing an active, ongoing prayer life. Pray daily, and regularly attend prayer meetings at the church.

3. *Church attendance.* The Christian life is not meant to be lived alone. It is to be lived in fellowship with other committed disciples of Christ. To grow in your Christian life, it is essential that you attend church at every opportunity. The Bible warns against neglecting church attendance.<sup>12</sup>

Many benefits come from of regular church attendance. You hear the word taught and the gospel proclaimed. You join with others to pray and worship God. You are given opportunity to encounter God’s Spirit and receive healing, encouragement, and direction from Him. At church, you are also given opportunities to share what you have learned with others, and to hear what God has done for them. It is essential that every Christian become an active member of a local Spirit-filled church.

## **A Prayer to Pray**

Now, take a few moments to pray this prayer and to commit yourself to doing those things that will cause you to grow in grace.

*Lord Jesus, I want to become a mature Christian and an effective servant of God. I commit myself to employ those means of grace that God has given me to make me strong in You. I will read my Bible daily and apply its teachings to my life. I will develop an active prayer life, and I will not neglect church attendance. In Your name I pray, Amen.*

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## **Scripture References:**

- <sup>1</sup> 1 John 2:6
- <sup>2</sup> Romans 8:29
- <sup>3</sup> Luke 6:40
- <sup>4</sup> Matthew 28:19
- <sup>5</sup> Luke 22:19-20
- <sup>6</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:20-26
- <sup>7</sup> Matthew 4:4
- <sup>8</sup> 1 Peter 2:2
- <sup>9</sup> Job 23:12
- <sup>10</sup> 1 Thessalonians 5:17
- <sup>11</sup> 2 Corinthians 3:18
- <sup>12</sup> Hebrews 10:25



## Find Your Place of Service

**S**ome Christians have a wrong idea about serving God. They believe that God's work is to be done only by the professional clergy. These misguided Christians believe their job is simply to go to church each Sunday and listen to what the preacher has to say. "After all," they say, "that's what we pay him for." The Bible, however, teaches that every Christian is called to a life of faithful service to God and others. Today, we will discuss this important subject.

### **Every Christian a Minister**

The Bible compares the church to the human body, referring to it as "the body of Christ."<sup>1</sup> Just as our bodies have many members and each member has its own important function, so is it with the church. Paul wrote, "For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another."<sup>2</sup>

The church functions best "when each part is working properly."<sup>3</sup> When even the slightest member of the body does not function as it should, the entire body is affected. For

instance, one sore toe can cause the entire body to limp. It is the same with the church. If any member refuses to do his or her part, the entire church is weakened. It is therefore important that every Christian find his or her place in the body of Christ. God is depending on each of us.

### **Many Ways to Serve**

One can serve the church in various ways. Some things Christ has called every Christian to do. For instance, He has called us all to pray and to share our faith with others. And He has called us all to give to God's work and to lovingly care for one another. There are, however, special tasks that He has especially gifted each of us to do.

These giftings include both natural abilities and spiritual gifts. We should regard both as sacred gifts from God. Paul says that we each have "gifts that differ according to the grace given to us."<sup>4</sup> These gifts include prophecy, service, teaching, exhorting, giving, leading, showing mercy, and many others. Other areas of service include practical things such as helping with projects, ushering, building maintenance, and other practical chores.

### **Find Your Place**

Christ has a place of service for you in His church. It is important that you find that place. You may be wondering, how can I find my place of service in the church? You can begin by being available to help out wherever needed. When the pastor asks for volunteers, be the first to step up. He may need help in Sunday school, in an evangelistic outreach, or in planting a new church. Whatever the need, do your best to

help. The Bible says, “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might.”<sup>5</sup>

### **Call of God**

While every Christian is called to serve God, you should know that God places a special call on some. For instance, God called Samuel to be a judge,<sup>6</sup> and He called Isaiah to be a prophet.<sup>7</sup> Paul testified that he was “called to be an apostle.”<sup>8</sup> He further wrote that that Jesus “gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.”<sup>9</sup> Possibly Christ will call you to be a pastor, evangelist, missionary, or church planter. Time will tell. What is important now is that you remain full of the Spirit and keep your heart open to the Lord. Then, if He should speak, be like Isaiah who answered, “Here am I! Send me.”<sup>10</sup>

### **A Prayer to Pray**

As you conclude this lesson, make the following commitment to the Lord:

*Lord, I again commit myself to you and to your work. I am ready to do whatever You ask. Fill me again with Your Holy Spirit, and direct me into the ministry You have for me. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.*

**Scripture References:**

<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:27

<sup>2</sup> Romans 12:4-5

<sup>3</sup> Ephesians 4:16

<sup>4</sup> Romans 12:6

<sup>5</sup> Ecclesiastes 9:10

<sup>6</sup> 1 Samuel 3:1-14

<sup>7</sup> Isaiah 6:8-10

<sup>8</sup> Romans 1:1; 1 Corinthians 1:1

<sup>9</sup> Ephesians 4:11-12

<sup>10</sup> Isaiah 6:8



## A Parting Word

**W**ell done! You have successfully completed your study of “How to Live for God.” I hope you have enjoyed the journey, and that you have applied each lesson to your life. The Bible tells us to “be doers of the word, and not hearers only.”<sup>1</sup> If you have applied the lessons, take a moment to look back and notice how your life has begun to change. Remember, however, this is just beginning. You now have your whole life to live for God.

You would do well to keep this book handy and to occasionally review its lessons. You will also want to share what you have learned with others. Most of all, however, you should keep your Bible near, and read it every day. And stay full of the Holy Spirit by remaining constant in prayer and in your commitment to God’s will.

As we close our study, allow me to pray a final prayer for you:

## A Parting Word

*Dear Lord, I pray for my friends who have studied this book. I thank You for saving them and making them Your children. I pray that they will continue to apply the lessons they have learned in this study, and that they will become strong in You. Walk with my friends and continue to work in their lives so that, one day, when they stand before You, You may be able to say to them, "Well done, good and faithful servants."<sup>2</sup> In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.*

—Denzil R. Miller

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### Scripture Reference:

<sup>1</sup> James 1:22

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 25:21

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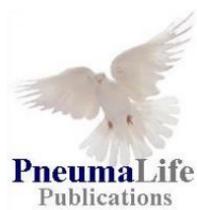
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# How to Live *for* God

A Guide for New Christians

The Christian life is more than a decision to receive Christ as Savior. It is a commitment to follow Jesus all the days of one's life. Twenty times in the four gospels Jesus called on His disciples to follow Him. He once said, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." This book was written to help you fulfill your commitment to follow Christ. It is designed to help you start your new life in Him well.



## About the Author

Denzil R. Miller is director of the Acts in Africa Initiative, a ministry aimed at helping the African church mobilize for Spirit-empowered mission. He holds a doctor of ministry degree from the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary. Miller has written several books on the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer and in the work of missions.



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