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# Believe



*a five part guide to understanding the basics of god*

- one *what is god like?* *god is love, and a lot more....*
- two *god's perfect creation* *what god made, what sin spoiled*
- three *the answer* *thousands of years in the making*
- four *stuff you really need to know* *promises, warnings and hold your breath!*
- five *how to grow* *listen, learn, enjoy*

*name*

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# WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

## CAN EVERYONE BE RIGHT ABOUT THEIR VIEWS OF GOD?

Some people think God is a huge, mysterious life force and does not care about us. Others think God cares about every detail of our lives. Some people think there are many gods with many different names. Some people think God doesn't exist at all. Can all these viewpoints be true? Of course, the answer is no. Sure, there are some questions in life that have several different answers. These are questions like, "Where do you want to eat tonight?" or "Who do you think is the best baseball player ever?" or "What God do you worship?" These questions are speculative, which means the answers are based on opinions. There are, however, other questions that are very definitive. These are questions like "Where did you eat dinner tonight?" or "What did the Atlanta Brave baseball player Jeff Francouer hit in the majors this year?" or "Is there only one God?" This kind of question only has one true answer.



## SO HOW DO WE FIND ANSWERS ABOUT GOD?

Let's say we were trying to discover information about a person we didn't know. We could start by looking for a birth certificate. Maybe we could go to his mom's house and find an old box of love letters he'd written. Or, if it was a famous person, maybe we could read a biography. Documents are a great source of definitive information. The document with the clearest information about God is the Bible. Indeed, since the Bible contains God's story and claims to be written by God himself, we could call it His autobiography.

There are many excellent books that defend the validity of the Bible. There is a list at [lugweb.com](http://lugweb.com) of websites and books to help you find the answers to your questions about the Bible. If you are wondering if you can trust the Bible, I would encourage you to read some of them. For now, I would ask you to read and think about what the Bible says about God. No one can ever force you to believe, I am simply asking you to listen and think.

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY GOD IS LIKE?

Over forty writers contributed to the Bible, but it has just one author—God. In 2 Timothy 3:16 we can read, "All scripture is God breathed." This simply means that the words in the Bible are from God. The Bible includes poetry, history, law and instructions and well as personal letters. Although the Bible was written over a period of 1500 years and has many types of writing, it remarkably tells one major story. That story is about rescuing people in a way that only God could. Why do people need to be rescued? We will study that very soon.

The Bible tells us exactly who God is and what he is like. We call these his attributes. Let's read and discuss what it says.

### THE BIBLE SAYS THAT GOD IS HOLY

The word "holy" means "\_\_\_\_\_ in goodness and righteousness." It also means "totally other". God is very different from us. So how can we be like God when we are so different, we will be getting to that. God never has and never will do anything wrong—he is perfect.

In Leviticus 19:2 we read "Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: 'Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy.'"

Because God is holy, He cannot tolerate any wrong. Because holiness means perfect righteousness then sin cannot be in its presence. They are like light and darkness, they cannot co-exist.

### THE BIBLE SAYS THAT GOD IS SPIRIT

A spirit is a real being who thinks and makes choices, but has no body. At first we think it is hard to believe in something we cannot see but there are many things in life that are real but not seen. What are a few?

John 4:24 tells us “God is spirit, and His worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”

How does John 4:24 say we should worship? We should worship God in \_\_\_\_\_ and in \_\_\_\_\_. This means to honor and enjoy God the way He desires.

### THE BIBLE SAYS THAT GOD IS ETERNAL

It is hard to think of something that has no beginning or end. In geometry terms what has no beginning or end?

Psalm 90:2 tells us that God is just like a line. “Before the mountains were born or You brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting You are God.” God is without beginning or end.

According to the Bible, will God ever end? \_\_\_\_\_

### THE BIBLE SAYS THAT GOD NEVER CHANGES

We live in a world of great change; think about how different the world is from just 100 years ago. What are a few of the differences?

Malachi 3:6 reads “I am the LORD; I do not change.”

We change and grow, but God never changes.

According to the Bible, does God ever change? \_\_\_\_\_

This means that God will not change the rules or plans for our lives. God can be trusted.

### THE BIBLE SAYS THAT GOD IS ALL-POWERFUL

There are comic book and movie characters that are portrayed as powerful. God is not simply powerful, He is all-powerful. That means He can do whatever he thinks best. Let's see what the Bible says.

Genesis 17:1 “I am God Almighty.”

Matthew 19:26 “Jesus looked at them and said, ‘With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.’”

What do these two verses tell you about God? \_\_\_\_\_



## THE BIBLE SAYS THAT GOD KNOWS EVERYTHING

Who is your smartest teacher or friend? It is great to have them around you when you need something. God knows everything about everything and all that knowledge is focused on us.

In Psalm 139:1-4 we can read about how much God knows about us: "O Lord, You have searched me and You know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; You perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; You are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue You know it completely, O Lord."

What do those verses tell you about God's knowledge and who it is focused on?

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## THE BIBLE SAYS THAT GOD IS EVERYWHERE

Everywhere at the same time. WOW. That would be a helpful skill. You could do math, play X Box, and call your grandmother all at once. God could do all that, but he chooses to use His abilities to be available to us 24-7. Jeremiah 23:24 tells us about it: "Can anyone hide in secret places so that I cannot see him?" declares the Lord. "Do I not fill heaven and earth?" declares the Lord."

God is everywhere, which means that God is with you \_\_\_\_\_ the time!

## THE BIBLE SAYS THAT GOD IS FAITHFUL

A faithful friend is a great gift. The Bible tells us that God is faithful! You can read it in I Corinthians 1:9, "God, who has called you into fellowship with His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful."

What do these verses tell us about God's promises. (I John 1:9; Philippians 4:19; Romans 8:28; John 14:2; Psalm 91:14)

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## THE BIBLE SAYS THAT GOD IS FAIR AND JUST

We all know people in our lives that are not fair. God is not like that. God is always fair.

Deuteronomy 32:4 tells us, "He is the Rock, His words are perfect, and all His ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is He."

We know that God will always be fair...according to His rules. Everything God does is \_\_\_\_\_.

## THE BIBLE SAYS THAT GOD IS LOVE

This is the quality of God that most people like to talk about. Love is something that everyone wants but if we were honest our type of love is not what we would want. One day someone is your best friend and the next day they will not talk to you. God's love is very different from that! Let's check it out.

I John 4:8 remind us how important love is to God. "Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love."

Most people know John 3:16, and it tells us several things about God's love. John 3:16 says "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."

In this verse, how does God show His love? \_\_\_\_\_

In this verse, who does God show love to? \_\_\_\_\_

In this verse who is "the world"? \_\_\_\_\_

## SO WHAT IS GOD REALLY LIKE?

Many people's ideas about God rest on only one or two of His qualities. That is not an accurate picture of God; to truly understand God we must understand Him in all of His attributes. Some of the attributes do not seem to fit together. How can God be both fair and loving? That is one thing that makes God so amazing; He is totally just and totally loving at the same time. Look back at the things you just read and answer the following questions.

Which attributes of God did you understand before this study?

Which attributes are new to you?

Which attributes are difficult to understand?

## 2. GOD'S PERFECT CREATION

Some believe that we are here because of random chance or a process that does not involve a creator. Yet the greatest minds in the world cannot answer how original matter got here and why the systems of life work like they do. The Bible is very clear in its teachings. The Bible says that God is the author of all things. We can read about it in Genesis 1:1. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."



Everything God created was good and perfect because God is good and perfect.

Who was there when the world was made? \_\_\_\_\_

### GOD HAS A PLAN IN WHAT HE MAKES

God made the entire world, \_\_\_\_\_ environments and then \_\_\_\_\_ them. Look for the pattern in God's creation.

On day **one** God made light. Then he filled it on day **four** by creating the sun, the moon, and the stars.

On day **two** God made seas and sky. On day **five**, he filled them with fish and birds.

On day **three** God made land and plants, and on day **six** He filled them in by creating all the land animals.

did you see the pattern? God created and then filled the environments. Finally, after the perfect place was prepared He filled the environment with His ultimate creation man and woman.

### GOD'S PERFECT CREATION WAS RUINED

The world that God made was without sin but not without \_\_\_\_\_.

**Genesis 2: 15-17** "The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. <sup>16</sup> And the LORD God commanded the man, 'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; <sup>17</sup> but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.'"

Why did God allow choices? Because love without choice is not love, it is slavery. God's desire was for people to love Him because of his attributes, not because the people were programmed like robots to love Him. This freedom to choose love or rebellion extends to the angels as well. Angels are created beings that serve God. In heaven, a third of the angels rebelled against God to follow their leader Lucifer (also know as Satan or the Devil). The devil hates man, because man is God's creation. In an attempt to have man rebel, the devil took the form of a serpent and spoke lies to Eve.

**Genesis 3: 1-5** "Now the serpent was craftier than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'"

<sup>2</sup> The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup> but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" <sup>4</sup> "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. <sup>5</sup> "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

**What are the differences in what God actually said and what the devil said about what God said? (Look back at Genesis 2:15-17)**

Eve was presented with a choice. Let's see what she did.

Genesis 3:6 "When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it."

Did Adam and Eve obey or disobey God? \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 5:12 "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned –"

According to Romans 5:12, what two things entered the world because of their disobedience? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

So sin and death entered the world. Sin leads to three types of death.

1. Physical death
2. Death to the relationship between people and God
3. Eternal death and separation from God

Death is ultimately about \_\_\_\_\_. God had to be separated from sin because He is holy.

## WHAT IS THE PROBLEM WITH SIN?

The Bible says that God is **holy and perfect** Remember when we learned this about God? He never sins, in fact, He can't even stand to be around sin.

The Bible says that we must be holy in Lev 20:26, "You must be holy because I, the LORD, am holy."

But we are sinners, not \_\_\_\_\_.

## THE BIBLE SAYS SIN IS DISOBEYING GOD AND SIN HAS REAL PENALTIES

God gave us many commands in the Bible. These commands are not a set of useless rules. They actually have two functions. First, they show us we are sinners. Do you think you would feel guilty about coming home at 3:00 am if your parents never gave you a midnight curfew? The rule must be in place for us to know we've done something wrong. Rules also give us a way to protect and build a relationship. But remember that once we sin we have broken our relationship with God the rules do not correct what we have done, they only show we are disobedient. If you were to be driving a car and a police officer pulled you over and said "you ran a stop sign" what could you do about the violation. The answer is simple, pay the penalty. You could not say "officer I have never ran a sign before and will never run one again, so I should not be charged with this crime." You also could not say "officer everyone does this so what is the big deal?" No, you broke the law you must pay the penalty.

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

Who has sinned? \_\_\_\_\_

☑ James 2:10 “For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.”

☑ What part of God’s law have you broken? \_\_\_\_\_

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

☑ What is the result of sin to your life? \_\_\_\_\_ This is a tough penalty. Remember that breaking God’s law is like cosmic treason.



God is just, and God is loving. Like two sides of a coin, God is not in conflict with himself. On one side, He is just and because of our sin, He must separate from us. On the other side, He is loving and wants us to be with Him. This is a great dilemma. From the beginning of time man has tried to answer the problem of sin by doing good things. Remember that doing good things does not correct the problem. The penalty must be paid to correct the problem. Only God can provide the solution!

### 3. THE ANSWER

#### SO WHAT CAN PAY THE DEBT OF SIN?

In the Old Testament God provided a temporary way to atone, or cover, our sins. A perfect male lamb had to be offered as an atonement for \_\_\_\_\_. The person who sinned would place his hand on the lamb’s head. This was a symbol that all of his sin was being transferred to the lamb.

☑ Had the lamb sinned? \_\_\_\_\_. The lamb was the SUBSTITUTE; the lamb was killed in place of the person. Over time, many, many lambs were sacrificed. The people looked forward to the day when the Final LAMB would come not only to cover their sin, but actually take it away!



**The Bible teaches there is one way to cover sin.** In Hebrews 9:22 it says, “Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins.”

There are many examples of this temporary sacrificial atonement in the Old Testament.

☑ In Genesis 4 we read about Cain and Abel. God accepted Abel’s sacrifice of a perfect lamb and rejected Cain’s sacrifice—he brought some of the agricultural crops he had grown—because it did not involve perfect blood.

☑ In Genesis 6 we can read the story of Noah and the Ark. In this story God tells Noah to take extra animals on board the ark for sacrifices.

☑ In Genesis 22 there is a great story of a man, Abraham, who is willing to sacrifice his own son because God has asked him to do it. But at the last minute, God sends an angel to stop Abraham. Instead, the angel tells him to use the ram that just happens to be caught by its horns in a nearby bush. (There really are no coincidences when God is involved...) Why was it caught by its horns? Because that is the only way it would remain unblemished and perfect. Through Abraham God promised that He would create a nation of people who would love Him. God also promised through that very special group of people, the Jews, to provide a lamb for the entire world.

In Exodus 12 we read an amazing story about God rescuing his people from slavery in Egypt. To save the people from the Egyptian leaders, God sent an angel of death into the land. Only having the blood of a perfect lamb on the doorposts would protect the people from death. After the Jewish people left Egypt they worshipped God in a Tabernacle. The Tabernacle was the place where people would go to worship God, but first a blood sacrifice had to be made.

There are many other stories of God allowing a covering of sin by sacrifice. Most of these were done in the Tabernacle or the Temple, which was built by King Solomon. These were places where God's Spirit would receive the offerings of the people for their sins.

## A PERFECT PLAN

Although the blood of a perfect lamb covered sin, it did not remove the sin. God had a perfect solution in mind for that. Throughout the Old Testament we can read about what God's perfect solution would be like—these are what we call prophecies. The prophecies were hints of what was to happen later and how God would ultimately deal with sin. All of these prophecies point to a specific person. His name is Jesus Christ. Jesus was born in the area of the world we call the Middle East, specifically in a town called Bethlehem in the land of Israel. Jesus was born a Jew. The Jews were the people through which God had promised to bring a Savior. Jesus was no ordinary man. The Bible teaches that He was not only the Savior but that he was the only son of God. In John 10:30 Jesus said "I and the Father are one."

In John 14:6 Jesus said that He is "the \_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_, and the \_\_\_\_\_." According to that verse..... Can anyone come to the Father apart from Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

God had a plan to save people from the curse of sin and death. The Bible describes that plan in Hebrews 10:4-5, "For it is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. 5 That is why Christ, when he came into the world" What was needed was a perfect lamb, without sin and with the power to forgive sin. That "lamb" would not be an animal; it would be God's son. That is why John the Baptist on seeing Jesus said in John 1:29-30, "Look! There is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" God loved us so much that He provided His own Son to be a perfect sacrifice that would remove our sins FOREVER!



## HOW DID JESUS DO THAT FOR US?

There are crosses everywhere. On churches, necklaces and even on graves. You've probably heard the story of the crucifixion on Easter Sunday, and you may have even seen the movie **The Passion**. So what's the deal with the cross? Well, when Jesus died, he was perfect. After all, he was the son of God—holy just like his father. Once and for all, he paid the penalty for the sin of all mankind. Remember, sin leads to death. Jesus died and paid the price. But the best part is that three days later, on what we call Easter Jesus rose from the dead. He had won the victory over death! The Bible teaches that Jesus spent 40 more days after the resurrection with his disciples and his countrymen so that they would know and see that death had been conquered.

Corinthians 15:3-4 "For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." According to the Bible, Who died for your sins? \_\_\_\_\_. Whose perfect blood took away your sin? \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 16:38 “Therefore, my brothers, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you.” Who does forgiveness come from? \_\_\_\_\_

To forgive is very different than to cover something. To cover means that you are simply ignoring something, to forgive is to make something new. In 2 Corinthians. 5:17 it says this “What this means is that those who become Christians become new persons. They are not the same anymore, for the old life is gone. A new life has begun!”

## SO HOW DO YOU GET TO SHARE IN THAT VICTORY?

The Bible is clear: we cannot save ourselves. There is something required of us. It is belief. If you were drowning and someone threw you a life jacket, you must believe the life jacket can save you and grab it. You would not say “I saved myself when I grabbed the jacket.”

Acts 16:31 “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved.”

John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

According to these verses, what did Jesus do for you? \_\_\_\_\_

According to these verses, what do you have to do? \_\_\_\_\_

Does salvation depend on God, or does it depend on you? \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus part was to live a perfect life and to die for us, in our place, as a substitute. Our part is much easier. It is to believe. Some people may have told you that to be saved from the penalty of sin you must confess all of your sins. Good luck! I personally cannot remember all my sins. Some people will tell you that what is required is to be baptized, or to walk down an aisle and pray at an altar. Some people will even say that you must tell others about God and serve God to be saved. The problem is that is not what God says you must do. He simply says you must believe. If it is up to us doing something then that places us in the role of God.

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU BELIEVE?

**Once you believe, God promises that He will always be your Savior.**

Hebrews 13:5 “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” Will God ever leave you? \_\_\_\_\_

Will God ever stop being your Savior and Friend? \_\_\_\_\_

## WHAT DOES GOD DO WITH YOUR SIN?

Remember earlier when we looked at God’s holiness and how God cannot tolerate sin? The Bible tells us we must be holy, and that is just what God makes possible through Jesus. Check out 1 Corinthians 1:2, “He made you holy by means of Christ Jesus, just as he did all Christians everywhere — whoever calls upon the name of Jesus Christ”

Here are some more verses that talk about our new, redeemed lives.

Psalm 103:12 God takes our sins from us as far as the \_\_\_\_\_ is from the \_\_\_\_\_

Micah 7:19 God casts all our sins into the \_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 44:22 He blots out our sins like a thick \_\_\_\_\_

You are no longer a helpless sinner. You are a child of God, made holy because of what Jesus has done. Because you are a child of God, you have several benefits in addition to no longer being under the curse of sin.

## 4 STUFF YOU REALLY NEED TO KNOW

After you believe there are some things to know about. Let's start with a promise God has made for us, the promise of heaven.

Read John 14:1-5 What does Jesus say He is going to build?

That very special place is called \_\_\_\_\_.

Instead of eternal separation from God, the Bible promises that we will be with God forever in heaven. Let's look at what Heaven is like.

(Matthew 6:9) Who lives in heaven? \_\_\_\_\_

(John 14:2) Jesus called heaven His Father's \_\_\_\_\_

(John 14:2) In heaven there are many \_\_\_\_\_

(Acts 1:11; Mark 13:32) Who is in heaven? \_\_\_\_\_

(John 14:3) For whom is Jesus preparing a place? \_\_\_\_\_

(John 14:6) Who is the only way to heaven? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Will we know each other in heaven?**

The disciples knew Jesus after He rose from the grave. YES, Christians WILL know one another in heaven. We will even know people we have never seen on earth like Abraham, Moses, and Elijah. Check out Luke 16:19-31; and Matthew 17:3-4

### **Will we have bodies in heaven? \_\_\_\_\_**

Jesus had a body when He rose from the grave. God will change our bodies and make them like Jesus' glorious body. Read Philippians 3:21 and Luke 24:39

### **What will we do in heaven?**

I Corinthians 6:2 tells us that we will worship God! Worshipping God is not just about going to church and listening to a sermon. Maybe an easier way to understand worship is to see it as being with someone you love and enjoying life with them. That is what true worship is. The One you love is God and the life you enjoy with Him is eternal. WOW!

## SO WHAT DO WE DO WHILE WE ARE WAITING FOR HEAVEN?

### OBEY

Well first off we begin to obey God. Obedience shows our desire to keep our relationship pure.

Deuteronomy 11:1 "Love the LORD your God and keep his requirements."

Deuteronomy 11: 8 "Observe therefore all the commands I am giving you today."

Ecclesiastes 12:13 "...Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

Psalm 119:14 "I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches."

Before you were a believer it was impossible to do what God wanted, as a sinner we were in rebellion. As a Christian you have a secret weapon in the fight against sin. That weapon is the Spirit of God. As a christina the very Spirit of God now lives inside of you. Though very real you will not see Him on an Xray, remember that a spirit is not something you can see but rather the essence of someone. God's Spirit will begin working within you to give you the strength to live as God wants.

Ezekiel 36:26-27 "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws."

Galatians 3: 2 Let me ask you this one question: Did you receive the Holy Spirit by keeping the law? Of course not, for the Holy Spirit came upon you only after you believed the message you heard about Christ. 3 Have you lost your senses? After starting your Christian lives in the Spirit, why are you now trying to become perfect by your own human effort?

As you walk with God you will learn how to all the Holy Spirit to change you, to make you more like Him than you. That will take some time but He will teach you.

## MESSING UP

Even with God's Spirit inside us there are times that we will choose to follow our old desires and not seek Gods. The Bible teaches that we can resist the Holy Spirit. So what happens if we mess up? Does that mean you are no longer a christian? NO! There are two parts of any relationship, quality and status. Status is about whose you are, like a son or daughter. Quality is about how close you are to someone. You can have lousy quality and not lose your status. Sin hurts everyone, but it does not change whose you are. When you sin ..

1. **Confess** you sins to God and ask for help.
2. **Examine** why you are sinning and change things in your life that cause this. It may be something you are doing but it is most likely a wrong way of thinking. To go in the opposite direction of choosing sin is what Christians call repentance.
3. Get someone in your life you can talk to about this problem, we call this being **discipled**.

## BAPTISM

Have you ever seen someone get baptized? Maybe you wondered why they did that. Well baptism is a lot like a wedding ring. Most people who are married wear a ring. This ring shows everyone that they are married. There are some people who are married who do not wear a ring. Are they still married? Yes. Still, there are others who are not married, but pretend that they are by wearing a wedding ring. Are they married just because they wear a ring? No. The wedding ring doesn't make someone married. It's just a symbol.



**Baptism is a symbol to show others that you belong to God.**

Baptism can't save you from your sin. Only Jesus can do that.

Baptism doesn't "wash away" your sin. Only the blood of Jesus can take away your sin.

**Baptism is a symbol of Jesus' death and resurrection.**

When you go under the water, that is a symbol of Jesus' death. When you come up out of the water, that is a symbol of Jesus' resurrection.

## **Baptism shows that you want to be identified with God.**

Matthew 28:19 "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

Matthew 10:32 "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven."

## **GO TO A GOOD BIBLE-TEACHING CHURCH.**

Some people think they do not need other Christians to help them grow. The truth is you need a good church.

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



Acts 2:42 "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."

Why should you go to church?

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A church is not a building but rather a group of people that you can talk with and learn from to help you grow. Write down in the notes section of your journal (we will explain this in lesson 5), notes from church.

## **WHAT IS COMMUNION?**

**Communion** is a time when true believers remember the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. When believers get together to worship, pray, and read the Bible, they also often take Communion. Communion is also called: The "Lord's Supper" (1 Corinthians. 11:20), "the Lord's table" (10:21), "cup of blessing" (10:16), and "breaking of bread" (Acts 2:42). Accounts of communion are given in Matt. 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:19,20 and 1 Corinthians 11:24-26.



In the Bible, Jesus tells us to eat and drink to remember Him.

**Crackers or Bread** is a **symbol** of Jesus' body that was crucified on the cross for our sin.

**The Wine or Juice** is a **symbol** of Jesus' blood that was shed to pay for our sin.

When believers take communion today, someone will distribute bread and drink. Then the believers eat and drink in order **to remember Jesus and His gift of salvation.**

**The Lord's Supper (Communion) is to be observed until Jesus comes back to earth again.**

What is the purpose of taking Communion? \_\_\_\_\_

## 5. HOW TO GROW AS A BELIEVER

In the New Testament the pharisees were people who did everything the best they could according to the law. They even wrote down ways to keep people from coming close to breaking the law. The Pharisees were people who did a lot of good things. They were just often doing them for the wrong reasons. In this lesson we are going to talk about some things that Christians, otherwise known as believers, do. These things do not make God love or accept you. They are what people who love and accept God do.

A lot of people are frustrated because they feel they do not grow after they are believers. In this lesson we are going to discuss some very practical ways to grow in your relationship with God. One thing that is very helpful is to get a journal. A journal is a notebook to write down the things that are going on in your walk with God. A great way to set up a journal is: (in a 50 page notebook)

Pages 1-3 A place to write down verses that you want to memorize from the Bible.

Pages 4-25 My daily time with God, many people call this “devotions.”

Pages 26-32 A prayer section

Pages 33-45 A section to write down notes from messages you hear or books you read.

Pages 46-49 A section for your testimony and addresses, emails and phone numbers of people you might need to contact and your ministry activities.

Page 50- Write down some of your favorite songs



### PAGES 1-3- SCRIPTURE MEMORY

MEMORIZE KEY VERSES IN SCRIPTURE.

The best way to memorize Scripture is..

1. Write the verse in your journal
2. Write the verse on a 3X5 card and put it where you will see it
3. Write the verse on your mirror with a dry erase marker.
4. Practice them on a daily basis.

### PAGES 4-25- DAILY TIME

READ AND STUDY THE BIBLE

A daily time of Bible study is perhaps the most important thing you will do in your walk with Christ. Why study the Bible? Let's see what the Bible says?

2 Timothy 3:15-16 “...and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup>All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.”



Joshua 1:8 “Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.”

2 Timothy 2:15 “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.”

According to 2 Timothy 3:16 How is the Bible useful?

**A good method of Bible study is the LUG method. It has three parts.**

**Look-** write in your daily journal section of your journal where you are and what you did yesterday. Ask God to teach you as read a passage of scripture. Circle the main person in the passage. Write down in your journal the things that happened or what was said.

**Understand** - ask God to show you something about what you have read that you did not know. Write down in your journal what the main point is and underline that point in your Bible.

**Grow-** ask God to show you what you can learn, do, memorize or repent of in response to what you read. Write, in the key verses section of your journal, any verse you want to memorize.

**Journal-** It is also a great idea each day to write down the best and hardest parts of your day along with anyone you talked to about God and how it went.

## PAGES 26-32 PRAYER

Prayer does not have to be a complicated thing, it is simply talking to God. It is something that Jesus did and tells us we should do as well. Prayer takes some time to get use to, at first it can even feel awkward. Prayer takes time but it is definitely worth the time.

Philippians 4:6-7 “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

I Thessalonians 5:16-18 “Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

What is God’s will for you? \_\_\_\_\_

**A great way to pray is to use the PRAY method.**

**P** is for praise- thank God for who he is and what he wants to do.

- In the daily section of your journal write down praises.

**R** is for repent, ask forgiveness for the things that hurt the quality of your relationship with God and others.

- In daily section of your journal write down things you need to work on.

**A-** Ask for God to help you with your needs and others as well.

setup in your journal in the prayer section pages for ....

1. a list of people you pray for every day (like parents, best friends)
2. a list of people you pray for weekly (like your pastor, teachers, other family members)
3. a list of people you pray for monthly (like missionaries and people from teams or church that you know)
4. a list to write down people who have requests that you can write down as needs arise great idea is to contact a person from your prayer list every day and see how they are doing

**Y** is for yield. Ask God to help you live the day for Him and then just be quiet for while asking God to speak to you about what He wants. A great thing to do at the end of each prayer is to say the Lord's prayer. This is a prayer model that Jesus taught.

Matthew 6:9 "Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. 10 'Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. 11 'Give us this day our daily bread. 12 'And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.' (From The New American Standard Bible)

## PAGES 33-45- NOTES

In this section write down notes from sermons and books you read. You might want to get a pocket folder to keep handouts in also.

## PAGES 46-49 MINISTRY

The Bible is clear that we should tell others about him, but how can you begin to tell others about the God of the universe? It is really not that hard. the most obvious thing is to begin to live your life as God desires. Living a life of love for God and others is the way to start. But let's say you have done that and you are ready to truly share what you believe with a friend or someone in your family.

There are three main things to do.

**1. Pray-** keep a page in the prayer section of your journal of people that you are praying for that they would believe. Ask God to give you an opportunity to talk to them about God.

**2 Invite-** one simple way to tell others about God is to invite them to church or even to your home for dinner. Some things are better to invite people to than others. Talk with your pastor, youth leader or parents about what the best thing to invite some to might be.

**3. Tell-** There are times that you need to talk about what you believe. An important part of that is sharing your testimony.

There are three main parts of a "testimony".

1. What you were like before you knew Jesus.
2. How you came to know Jesus.
3. How life has been like since you have known Jesus.

It would be great to write your testimony out in your journal.

One way to tell others about God is get involved in helping out at your church, you can help in the nursery, set up chairs or even help teach. Another great thing to do is to go on a missions trip. Talk to the pastor at your church about how to get involved. Write down on a page in your journal the times you serve others.

As a regular part of your time with God write notes of encouragement to pastors, teachers, friends, parents and others. Include a Bible verse that speaks to what you want to say.