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SURVIVAL KIT

Another Shipment of
SURVIVAL KIT
FIVE KEYS TO EFFECTIVE SPIRITUAL GROWTH

TO:

RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED
Warning

Being a Christian Is Far More than Trusting Christ for Salvation

When you read the warning, your reaction probably was something like: “Tell me something new. I found that out within 24 hours of becoming a Christian!” You probably also have discovered the harder you try, the more difficult it becomes to grow spiritually and live your faith. Each day when you walk out to face the world, you put everything but the security of your salvation on the line. Satan will stop at nothing to keep you from growing, serving, ministering, and witnessing effectively. He wants to rob you of your fellowship with the Father and paralyze your life as a disciple. But take heart! Survival is more than just “the name of the game.” It is a promised certainty for you if you want it.

Shortly before Jesus died on the cross, He prayed the most intense prayer recorded in the Bible. Are you ready for this? That prayer was for you. He must have wanted you to know what He said because He left a record of it for you in John 17:1–26. Get your Bible now and read what Jesus said to God about you and what He asked God to do for you.

Now let’s change what Jesus said to the present tense and make it as personal as possible to you. Write your name in each blank and allow yourself to feel the awe and wonder of Jesus the Savior, talking to God the Father about you.

“I pray for __________________. I am not praying for the world, but for _____________ you have given me, for _____________ is yours. All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through ________________. … I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that ________________ may have the full measure of my joy within him/her. I have given ________________ your word and the world has hated ________________, for ________________ are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take ________________ out of the world but that you protect ________________ from the evil one. ________________ are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify ________________ by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent ________________ into the world. For ________________ I sanctify myself, that ________________ too may be truly sanctified. … Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and ________________ know that you have sent me. I have made you known to ________________, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have...
for me may be in _______________ and that I myself may be in _______________” (John 17:9,10,13–19,25,26, NIV).

You can have a fellowship with the Father that grows deeper each day. You can grow spiritually and live victoriously. God wants this for you, Christ died to make it possible, and the power of the Holy Spirit is yours to enable you to have it.

First of all, you should set apart a definite time and place to meet your Lord daily. Call it your quiet time. As much as possible, you should plan to meet Him at the same place and time each day. Decide now and write the time and place in the margin.

For the next six weeks, use the daily exercises in this book as a guide for your quiet time. Do only one day’s work at a time. Your goal is to develop and strengthen new habits in your life; and that takes time. Having a daily quiet time is as important to your survival as anything else you will do.

As you grow spiritually, you will learn many truths. The five you will learn about in this book are critical to your survival. Your hand can help you remember these truths.

Notice how the truths are arranged on the drawing of a hand. Your thumb works with each of the other fingers. Being part of the body of Christ is important to the other truths. Survival depends on your combining the first truth with the others.

Note that the Indwelling Christ, Controlling All is central. For your survival, the beginning point and the power to continue rest in Christ’s lordship over your life.

You know by experience that being a Christian is not easy. As you work through your Survival Kit, you will learn how to deal with key issues that are critical to your survival as a Christian. Each week you will learn about one of the truths on the hand drawing, and you will see how that truth relates to one of the key issues.
Charting Your Course for Survival

You didn’t need long after becoming a Christian to learn that Satan would stop at nothing to defeat your efforts to grow and serve your new Master. Right? And that’s scary! But Christ wants you to know that just as surely as He has saved you and will keep you saved, He can give you the victory over everything Satan can throw at you. You can be a survivor in your Christian life!

The foundation on which your survival depends is your relationship with the Christ who dwells in you. The best way to establish and strengthen that foundation is to spend quality time alone with Him in Bible study, prayer, and meditation. So, the theme for the Foundation Week will be The Indwelling Christ.

After we have established the foundation, we will move on to learn how to handle five key issues that are critical to your survival. The first key issue is your need to learn to live in the new relationship you have with other Christians. So, the theme for Week 1 will be 1 Body—Its Life and Service.

The Bible teaches that all believers make up the body of Christ, and a church is the local expression of His Body. The place where spiritual growth is easiest and most natural is in the body—the fellowship of believers who make up a local church. As you study about 1 BODY, you will see how continuing growth in your life as a Christian depends strongly on your relationship to the body of Christ.

Every Christian soon learns that life is not always smooth, even though the victory is real. All those things we thought we had victory over keep trying to creep back in. Then you come face-to-face with the fact that the old nature did not go away when you trusted Christ and He gave you a new nature. The old nature is the way Satan tries to get back into your life to defeat you and destroy your fellowship with the Father. As long as you live, the old nature will be locked in conflict with your new nature. The next critical issue you must learn to handle is your inner conflict with sin. So, the theme for Week 2 is 2 Natures—The Old and the New.

Do you remember how quickly Satan used your old nature to try to get back into your life? Suddenly you were filled with doubts and questions. “How can this be happening? It isn’t supposed to be this way! What can I do?” You are embarrassed and ashamed, you don’t want to disappoint friends and relatives. Most of all, you don’t want to disappoint and embarrass God.

Each time you ask yourself, “What am I going to do?” Satan gives you a great option: “Fake it. Cover up all those things that are creeping back into your
life and pretend to be all the things you think God and others expect you to be. Play the part like an actor on a stage."

The only problem with “faking it” is you cannot fool yourself. You soon realize you are living a lie. You have no inner victory. You realize Satan has defeated you, and you feel like a hypocrite. That’s why it is important for you to learn to accept your inner conflict with sin as a reality and deal with it. Failing to understand and handle your inner conflict with sin opens the door for Satan to hit you with doubts about your experience with Christ. He will point at the old nature which is giving you a hard time and whisper: “See that. If you were really saved, you wouldn’t be having those feelings or doing those things.” So, the theme for Week 3 is 3 Aspects of Salvation—Beginning, Process, and Completion.

*Survival Kit for Christians* will help you learn that your salvation has three aspects: it is a point in time when Christ saved you from the condemnation of sin and indwells you as your Lord; it is a process in time as the power of the Holy Spirit helps your new nature gain daily victories over the power and influence of sin; and it is a final point in time when Christ will set you forever free from the very presence of sin.

The fourth key issue is a big one! Until you understand your authority for discovering what is true, you will never feel sure about how to live out your faith in the community of believers and in the world. So, the theme for Week 4 is 4 Sources of Authority—The Inadequate and the Adequate.

You will learn that these three inadequate sources of authority have a certain place in determining truth. But, the true, ultimate source of authority for a Christian is the written Word of God, the Bible.

Have you already met some “silent Christians” who never share their faith with others? If you haven’t, you will. You may wonder why they have no desire to tell others about what Christ has done for them. You need to learn how to avoid being trapped in the “silent Christian syndrome.” So, the theme for Week 5 is The 5-and-5 Principle—Reaching Others Through Prayer and Witnessing.

Christians who do not witness verbally are not sharing the gospel as effectively as they could be. Although they may be busy in the church, their Christian lives will be like a fruit tree without fruit. *Survival Kit* will help you learn how to keep from becoming a “silent Christian” by using the 5-and-5 Principle.

OK, HERE WE GO!
DAY 1
How to Establish a Quiet Time

Read 1 John 4:13-16.

Would you expect to be healthy if the only time you ate a meal was on Sunday? Of course not! You would not survive long. Do you think you will be spiritually healthy if Sunday is the only time you nourish yourself spiritually?

A daily quiet time provides the regular, continuing spiritual nourishment you must have. Each day, you simply must find a time to be alone with Christ. You will be pleased with the results. You will feel the joy and excitement of a healthy relationship between you and your Lord.

Look again at the hand drawing on page 4. Remember that the central part of the hand represents “The Indwelling Christ, Controlling All.” A daily quiet time is all-important because it is regular contact with Jesus Christ, your source of spiritual life.

Do an honest evaluation now. Check the statement that best describes your quiet time.

❑ My quiet time is a daily practice in my life and I feel good about it just as it is.
❑ My quiet time is a daily practice in my life but it does not seem to be as meaningful as I think it should be.
❑ My quiet times are irregular and not as meaningful as I think they should be.
❑ I do not practice a quiet time, but feel the need to do so.

If you checked any of the last three statements, the following guidelines will help you know how to establish or strengthen your own quiet time.

1. Have a specific time and place for your quiet time. Consider your quiet time an appointment with Christ. You need to be at a specific place at a specific time for that appointment just as you would for an appointment with your doctor. Remember, you have an appointment with Christ. He will be waiting there for you. That puts your quiet time in a different light, doesn’t it? Giving first priority to your quiet time is easier when you remember that Jesus is waiting for you at the appointed place and time. If possible, that time should be at the beginning of your day. Your entire day will be different if you begin it with Christ.

2. Be consistent. Ask yourself if you are really being serious about spending time alone with Him if you meet with Him only on a hit-and-miss basis. People who work with computers use the expression, “Garbage in, garbage out.” This means that giving your computer wrong information to work with keeps it from doing what it is supposed to do. In a very real way, the same is true of your life in
the world. A quiet time at the beginning of your day is the way you “program” yourself to let Christ be Lord of your life that day.

3. **Have a Bible and a pencil handy.** Five days of each week, you will need these two tools to do your work in *Survival Kit*. The other two days you should use your Bible and any other materials (Sunday School quarterlies, study guides, etc.) you use on Sunday to participate in all your church does to help you learn and grow spiritually. As you mature in your quiet time practice, you probably will want to add a small notebook for keeping a spiritual diary and for making notes about what you have learned and experienced.

4. **Begin your quiet time with prayer.** Open your heart to Christ. Offer Him the right to teach, to discipline, and to direct you as you study and meditate. Tell Christ how much you love Him. Share your concerns with Him.

5. **Take time to let Christ speak to you.** Bible reading will always be the central part of your quiet time. But praying and quickly reading the Bible are not enough. You must pause and allow Christ to speak to you as you meditate upon His words.

6. **End your quiet time with a definite commitment for the day.** Decide how you can live out what Christ has revealed to you during your quiet time. This is a practical way to extend your faith into the way you live your life.

**Have today’s quiet time right now.**

7. **Pray.** Express your love for God. Thank Him for giving you His life through Christ. Share with God the special ways you need His power in your life today. Ask Him to live through you as you walk in the world today.

8. **Read 1 John 4:13-16.** You may read from your own Bible or read the following quotation from the *New International Version*: “We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God. And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.”

Now, allow God to nourish you as you meditate upon what you have read. One way to “digest” the thoughts in a passage you have read is to rewrite that passage in your own words. Doing this lets you know quickly whether you understand what you read. Take time now to rewrite 1 John 4:13-16 in your own words.

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worry if answers are not readily apparent to some of the questions. These are general questions to guide your meditation. Different passages have different truths to teach you. So, there may not always be an answer to every question. Remember, also, that God may not reveal all the answers to a question at this time. He may reveal only the part He wants you to know right now. Simply open your heart and trust the Holy Spirit to teach you as you look for answers to:

Is there a truth that should influence (1) what I believe, (2) how I feel, or (3) the way I behave?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Is there an example to follow or avoid?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Is there a command to obey?

________________________________________________________________________

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________________________________________________________________________

Is there a promise to claim?

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As a Christian you have experienced personally that God the Father sent Jesus Christ to be Lord as well as your Savior. Now, in what ways can you obey His lordship by living out the truths He has taught you from 1 John 4:13-16? End today’s quiet time by writing at least one specific way you will try to put what you have learned to work in your life today.

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