

FIRST

New Believer Journal

STEPS



LOAMI
CHRISTIAN

"BUT SEEK FIRST HIS KINGDOM AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND ALL THESE THINGS WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU AS WELL."

MATTHEW 6:33

Introduction

A LIFE-CHANGING RELATIONSHIP

The decision to grow closer to Jesus begins with an initial commitment to surrender your whole life to Jesus. It is the most important commitment you will ever make. There may be a specific time in your life when in a church service, a church camp, in a living room with a friend, or by yourself somewhere that you decided to commit your life to Jesus. Maybe you've never taken that step. Either way, please read through the "Becoming a Follower of Christ" section below. The commitment is much more than just praying a prayer so you can hopefully get to heaven-- it's about entering into a life-long, life-changing personal relationship with Jesus.

BECOMING A FOLLOWER OF CHRIST

The Bible says we all have sinned:

"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23)

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:23)

Thankfully, the Bible says Jesus makes us right with God:

"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. For God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him." (John 3:16-17)

"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

The Bible gives several parts of the salvation process:

CONFESSION - knowing your sin, knowing you're helpless, fully trusting in Jesus as your salvation.

"That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame." (Romans 10:9-11)

"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives." (1 John 1:8-10)

REPENTANCE - fully turning from your sin and turning to Jesus as your new way of life.

"It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. ³²I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." (Luke 31-32)

"I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds." (Acts 26:20)

COMPLETE SURRENDER - We surrender to no longer live according to what we think is right, but according to how God directs us to live.

"Submit yourselves, then, to God." (James 4:7)

BAPTISM - being immersed in water, connecting yourself to the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, for the forgiveness of sins and to receive the Holy Spirit.

"Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call." (Acts 2:38-39)

DAILY PURSUIT OF OBEDIENCE - not perfection, but an honest, fierce, pursuit of doing what Jesus says.

"But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him: ⁶Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did." (1 John 2:5)

The Bible says that we can have an abundant life now and eternal life later:

"He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life." (1 John 5:12-13)

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." (John 10:10)

If you've made the decision to give your life to Christ and want to be baptized, please talk to one of the pastors or one of the elders or deacons. Nothing would bring us greater joy than to celebrate with you through this step of new life.

Take a few moments and write below your story of how you came to know Jesus and give your life to him:

BAPTISM

The Bible very clearly teaches the necessity of baptism of a person giving their life to Jesus.

Why baptism?

FORGIVENESS OF SINS

Jesus made it possible for our sins to be forgiven and wiped clean when He died on the cross. The Bible, in Acts 2:38, says plainly that through the act of baptism we enter into that forgiveness of sins: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins."

NEW LIFE

Romans 6:4 says, "We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life." Following Jesus is all about your old sinful life dying away and you receiving a new life in Christ that can be lived a new and better way. Baptism connects our lives with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ so that as we go under the water our old life dies and as we come out of the water we are raised in new life.

HOLY SPIRIT

One of the greatest parts of baptism is that we are promised that the Holy Spirit of God will live inside of us. Acts 2:38 says, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit will help you become the man or woman of God that you do not have the strength to become.

How and when you should be baptized?

IMMERSION

The Bible was written in ancient Greek. And in Greek the word "Baptize" means to completely dunk something in water. So when we baptize people, we do so by putting people all the way under water. Don't worry, we don't hold you under very long. It's a quick and pain free down and up.

IMMEDIATELY

In the Bible when someone wants to give their life to Jesus, they were baptized immediately on the spot. A great example is in Acts 8:36-38 when an Ethiopian eunuch was just explained the good news of Jesus: "As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the

eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him."

If you've made the decision to give your life to Christ and want to be baptized, please talk to one of the pastors or one of the elders or deacons. Nothing would bring us greater joy than to celebrate with you through this step of new life.

PRAYING

The Bible says we can talk to God at anytime about anything. That's the essence of prayer. We get to talk to God. We get to talk to the Creator of the universe. We cannot underestimate this privilege. Prayer is not something we have to do; it's something we get to do.

If you have questions about prayer or how to pray, read the following for a short lesson on understanding prayer.

Understanding How to Pray

A key part of our relationship with Jesus is prayer. How do we get started? Jesus' disciples asked the same question. Jesus didn't offer a magical formula for prayer. He didn't say that we must pray with lofty, religious words in order for God to hear us. Instead, He showed us what it means to connect with Him through prayer. Below is a simple way to begin your conversations with Jesus.

Refocus - You can pray anywhere, anytime, but it helps to have a daily time to set aside where you can connect with God in prayer. Start by finding a quiet place without distractions. The Bible says that Jesus often got up early in the morning, while it was still dark outside, and went to a solitary place to pray (Mark 1:35) It doesn't necessarily have to be in the morning, but you should try and find a place where you can be still and refocus your full attention to Jesus.

Recognize - When praying, the best place to start is with recognizing what Jesus has done in your life. Taking time to thank Jesus for your salvation, your family, job, friends, health, finances, church... there is no limit to what He has done. In Colossians 4:2, Paul says one of the most important attitudes to have when praying is thankfulness. This recognition changes our focus from ourselves and our needs, to Jesus and His power. Psalm 146-150 are great examples of how to recognize God for all He's done and doing in your life.

Repent - What is repentance? Acts 3:19 says, "Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord." Repentance is turning from your sin and turning toward Jesus. Ask God to reveal anything in your life that displeases Him. Ask Jesus to forgive you and help you to turn away from those things. 1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

Request - Tell God the desires of your heart. Psalm 37:4 says, "Delight

yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart." Pray for others and for yourself. If it matters to you, it matters to God. Remember that God knows what you need before you even ask, so pray with childlike faith not for childish wants. Pray for Jesus to do big things! 1 John 5:14 says, " This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us."

Take a moment and write below some things that God has done for which you are thankful:

Take a moment and write down some big things you are asking God to do in your life:

READING THE BIBLE

The Bible is the main way in which God speaks to His people. When Christians say that they don't ever feel like they hear God speaking to them, it's because they probably rarely, if ever, read the Bible. If you want to know God's will for your life, then you must develop the daily habit of reading the Bible. Let's talk about a few practical thoughts about reading the Bible:

Translation

There are a lot of different English translations of the Bible. It can be confusing to know which one to pick when buying a Bible. Why are there so many different translations? The Bible was written in 3 ancient languages: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. There are different groups of people that get together to translate the Bible from those ancient languages into English. Each group thus puts forth their particular translation. The two things that are important in picking a translation are faithfulness to the original texts and readability. We want to make sure that the Bible we read sticks as closely as possible to God's original words, but we also want to make sure that it's easy to read so that we can apply God's words to our life. Here's a two translations we recommend: NIV (New International Version) and ESV (English Standard Version). Also, you can check out a Bible for your phone or on your computer at www.youversion.com.

Reading Plans

It's very helpful to have a plan when reading the Bible. This might be a plan that leads you through the Bible in a year or the New Testament in a month. We can provide them to you and, in fact, this book contains a good reading plan to start your walk with Jesus.

Start Small

We firmly believe that Christians should develop the habit of daily Bible reading. But one mistake people make when they try to start reading God's Word is they start by reading too much. They keep it up at first, but eventually it just becomes too much and they quit. This book contains, at most, just a few verses a day. It's important to start small just to develop the habit of daily Bible reading.

Flexibility

One thing that will kill your daily habit of reading the Bible is being too strict with yourself. If you miss a day, don't try and read double the next day. Just start where you left off. If you try to always catch up for what you've missed, at some point, you'll miss 5 days and the catch up reading will be too daunting and you'll just put it off and get out of the habit.

The continued habit of reading God's Word is WAY more important than the amount you read or some reading plan in a certain amount of time.

GOD HAS A PURPOSE FOR YOU

Why are you on this planet? Why do you think Jesus is allowing you to breathe air? Think about it. Are you just going through the motions, or do you believe Jesus has a purpose for your life?

1 Corinthians 12:18 shows that God has placed you where you are within the body of this church for a reason:" But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be."

Jesus has big plans for you. You didn't show up by accident. It's amazing to think that the Creator of the universe cares enough about you to be involved in every aspect of your life. Be assured that His plans are far more incredible than anything you could imagine on your own.

DISCOVERING GOD'S PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE

Matthew 6:33 says, "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." That shows us that whatever path God has for our lives, it all starts with listening and obeying the commands He gives for all Christians.

Discovering Jesus' plan for your life begins with a commitment to seek Jesus with all your heart, soul, mind and body through a relationship with Him.

As for discovering what God has specifically set for you to do, the best place to start is with a daily habit of finding a quiet place and reading the Bible and spending some time talking to God in prayer. This helps you build a strong relationship with Him and puts you in a place to start seeing more like Jesus sees. As you do this, God will help you see the next steps he has set for you.

HOW TO START A DAILY QUIET TIME

Make a commitment to set aside a specific time each day for reading your Bible and praying. You might also find that journaling your thoughts and prayers is very helpful for you. There will be space in this guide for that. Keeping your quiet time at a consistent time each day, makes it more likely that you'll keep the habit.

Find a place that best sets you up for connecting with God. Usually quiet places are best so that you have anything distracting you. You might find that being outdoors in the beauty of nature really helps you connect with God as you read and pray. The best place available to you might be in a spare bedroom with the door locked so the kids can't interrupt.

Read the day's verse(s) slowly. Maybe read them several times to make sure you're taking it all in. You can try rewriting a verse in your own words in the journal to help you really focus on what God is speaking to you.

As you think about those verses, focus on the action you need to take as a result of what you've read. Life-change happens when we apply what we read to our lives. We've included some questions each day to help you begin thinking about what the passage is calling you to do. If you find journaling is your thing, write down any thoughts or actions related to that day's verses.

1 -JESUS GIVES US ETERNAL LIFE

Date _____

The Bible tells us all about the love of Jesus Christ. The heart of salvation is the fact that we can have an eternal relationship with Jesus. Meaning that we get to be with Jesus forever; not 70, 80, or 90 years, but forever. As you read today's verses from the Gospel of John, think of it on a more personal level. This verse talks about God's love for the whole world and that includes you. God loves you and sent His son for you. Jesus came into our world and endured what He did because He wanted to be with you forever.

Read John 3:16-17

Take a few minutes and write down why you are so thankful for Jesus. What has He done in your life?

2 -THE ONE WAY

Date _____

Some believe there are many roads to God, but the Bible is very clear that there is only one way. And that the one way is Jesus himself. There are many people and things that claim to be the way to a better life, and cry out for your attention and devotion, but Jesus says that the only real path to walk in life is the one with Him. Turn in your Bible to John 14:6 and write down your thoughts. What are some of the things that demand your time and energy? What are some of the lifestyles that we call "normal" that would lead us away from Jesus?

Read John 14:6

3 -GOD WANTS TO TALK TO YOU

Date _____

Christians are called to live differently than others. The guide we use to know specifically how we are to live is the Bible. The Bible is the Word of God. Meaning it's the way God speaks to His people. What makes the Bible so unique is that though its words have been written down for 2,000 years, it's commands are still amazingly useful and practical to our lives. God's Word will teach us, correct us, train us, and protect us. The Bible says memorizing scripture is like hiding God's word in your heart. What are some bad mindsets that you need to correct by filling your heart and mind with God's Word?

Read Psalm 119:9-11

4 -AN APPOINTMENT WITH JESUS

Date _____

Making time in your busy day to spend with Jesus is incredibly important to your continual growth in your relationship with your Creator. How else can you stay in tune with God's purpose and incredible plans for your life if you never have a time where you sit down and seek to connect with Him through the reading of His Word and prayer. In today's verse see how Jesus sets the example for us. How can you follow Jesus' example? Why should you? What steps can you take to make sure you have daily time with God?

Read Mark 1:35

One of the most direct commands Jesus ever gave to His closest disciples was the command to take what we now call Communion or The Lord's Supper. Communion is simply a way in which we remember exactly what Jesus has done for us. Jesus set up this time of remembrance to engage our senses in a way that draws us powerfully back to His sacrifice on the cross.

Read Matthew 26:26-28

Jesus tells us to eat a piece of bread to remind us of how his body was literally battered and beaten for our sins. Then He tells us to drink wine to remind us of the fact that He bled for our sins. The brutality of Jesus death proves the depths of His great love for us, in that He was willing to die in the most painful and shameful of ways to save us.

That love is the basis for all of Christianity . Thus the reason why we regularly take communion is so that we are continually brought back to the foundation of our faith: that Jesus died for our sins. Every Sunday morning service must be centered around Jesus sacrificial death for the world. Weekly communion helps us to always focus exactly on what we need to. It is also clear from the Bible that communion was intended to be a group endeavor. It binds us in unity by showing us that, regardless of the fact that each person in a church is different, we are all sinners who have been rescued by Jesus. However, communion is exclusive in that only baptized believers in Christ should take it. It doesn't make sense for a nonChristian to celebrate Jesus' death for sinners when they don't believe in it. In fact, 1 Corinthians 11:29 warns, "29 For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself."

The Basics of How We Do Communion

In Christian Churches, we take communion every single week because we believe that was the practice of the early church. To be fair, there is no verse that says, "You will take communion every week," but we put the pieces of the puzzle together from verses like Acts 20:7 which says, "On the first day of the week we came together to break bread." and Acts 2:42 which says, "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." The term "break bread" is used multiple times in the New Testament as a reference for Communion.

The bread and wine has changed over the years. For the sake of ease we use small pieces of bread. For the sake of those who struggle with alcoholism, we use grape juice instead of wine.

We vary the method in which we take Communion. Sometimes as the plates

are passed, we take as the plate is handed to us and pass the plate to the next person. Other times we take the bread and juice and hold it so that we can all take at the same time as a church. Other times we will set the bread and juice up front and have people spend time in prayer and then when they are ready they can come and take.

6 -THE HARDEST WAY TO LOVE

Date _____

"But I just can't forgive that person. You don't know what they did to me."

We've all said it or thought it. Forgiveness is tough. In fact, forgiveness is just plain unfair. But we must remember that Jesus unfairly forgives us. It would be fair for Him to punish our sin, but instead He died so that it could be forgiven. Jesus even asked His Father to forgive the people who killed him. So we should unfairly forgive those who don't deserve it as God has unfairly forgiven us.

Read Matthew 6:14-15

7 - YOU ARE NOT THE POINT

Date _____

You might wonder if your life really makes a difference. Consider that everything you do is for Jesus. Wherever you are, whatever you do, whether at home with your family or at your job, do it all as if you're serving Jesus. This means you work hard not because you love your job, but because Jesus wants His people to be hard workers. You love your kids because Jesus has given you the responsibility of hugely affecting their lives in an amazing way. Practically speaking, how would your life change if you did everything as unto the Lord?

Read Colossians 3:23-24

8 -LIFE IS A SERMON

Date _____

It's crazy how your words and actions can influence the people around you (even when you don't know they're watching). Jesus calls us to use our lives to lead others to Him. Is there anything about how you live that might cause someone to doubt Jesus' life-changing message? Spend some time praying that God would use you to share Jesus with others and that He would open your eyes and help you see any behaviors that might hinder you from doing that. Is there anything in your life you feel convicted to change?

Read Romans 14:13

9 - NEVER TO RETURN

Date _____

The unavoidable truth is that we have all sinned and have chosen to go our way rather than Jesus' perfect way. Every human being falls short of God's standard for their lives. Confession is acknowledging that you have sinned. Repentance is walking away from your sin, never to return. Confession and repentance of sin are necessary to restore your close fellowship with Jesus. But sin that is hidden is difficult (if not impossible) to leave behind. If you want true freedom from sin then you cannot ignore confession and repentance. What does God promise to do when you confess sin? What do you need to confess and repent of?

Read 1 John 1:8-9

10 -THE MIGHT OF JESUS

Date _____

You may think that miraculous things don't really happen these days. And they especially don't happen to you, right? But the Bible has a lot to say about the power of Jesus for your life now. Today, look around you and try and see evidence of Jesus' tremendous power. Do you see his tremendous creativity in the beauty of the sunset? Do you feel His power in the wind that almost knocks you off your feet? Do you see His grace in the birth of your children? Jesus has an obvious ability to work in your life today. Where in your life do you need Jesus power to work?

Read Ephesians 3:20

11 - THE SOURCE OF STRENGTH

Date _____

These verses are about the secret of contentment in good times and bad. Notice in this passage that contentment is learned. It is not an overnight thing. It is learned as you become more and more aware daily of the sufficiency of Jesus in your life. Contentment is not as simple as you getting used to a worse situation. It is you realizing much Jesus truly is for you. How do the powerful words from Paul's letter to the Philippians speak to your circumstances?

Read Philippians 4:12-13

12 -SIMMER DOWN

Date _____

There are a million things every day that will cause you to worry. It could be anything: an important decision to be made, a bad situation that is out of your control, or something that isn't going as well as you'd hoped. You can constantly be anxious about what you CAN'T DO or what you HAVE TO DO. But Jesus makes it clear that He is in control of all situations and that He wants the best for you. When you learn to truly trust Jesus to take care of you, you can let go of your anxieties and sleep soundly knowing that Jesus has you covered.

Read Matthew 6:31-34

13 - PEACE THAT MAKES NO SENSE

Date _____

Most people worry at some point. In Philippians, the Apostle Paul tells us, "Don't be anxious about anything." How realistic does that sound? But then he goes on to describe how this is possible through an amazing promise of God. What do these verses call you to do when you worry? What do they say about your need for God's protection of your heart and mind when it comes to worry?

Read Philippians 4:6-7

14 -JESUS, HEAL ME

Date _____

The Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) are filled with stories of Jesus healing people of a variety of hurts. What is interesting is that Jesus not only deals with the physical issues of their bodies, but the spiritual and emotional hurts as well. In today's verses, before he heals, he asks these men, "What do you want me to do for you?" If Jesus asked you that question, what would you say?

Read Matthew 20:32-34

15 - A WORTHY LIFE

Date _____

Jesus gives us salvation. That is something we do not deserve. We were so dirty in our sin that we did not possess the ability to get ourselves clean again. Jesus died to make us clean so that we could stand before God spotless and without sin. Because of the work of Jesus, we can now live a better life that is worthy of the new life Jesus provides to us. After reading the passage below, what do humility, gentleness, and patience toward others have to do with living a "worthy" life?

Read Ephesians 4:1-2

16 - THE GENEROSITY OF JESUS

Date _____

Jesus loves to give to His people. But there are plenty of people in our world who are angry because they feel that God is unloving in how He takes care of them. But the Bible is clear that every gift of God is good. Even something we feel is miserable right now, might be something we look back on as a huge blessing of God. What are some of the "good and perfect" gifts God has placed in your life?

Read James 1:17

Jesus makes it clear that our finances will be one of the toughest parts of our lives to submit to God. Money is tied to so many desires and worries that it will be very hard for most people to spend money and give money God's way. The biggest problem will be the fear that if we give the way God calls us to give, that we won't have enough left to live. God knew that we would struggle with this. That's why He said that there was one (and only one) time when it was ok to test Him. Malachi 3:10 says, " 'Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,' says the Lord Almighty, 'and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.' "

What is tithing?

Tithing is giving 10% of our gross income (before taxes income) to His church.

Why should you tithe?

There are several reasons why Christians should tithe. Probably the most important reason is that tithing helps ensure that your heart belongs to Jesus and not your checkbook. In Matthew 6:19, Jesus shows that when you store up stuff for yourself in this world, your heart will be pulled more toward this world than toward Jesus. In Matthew 19:16-22, Jesus tells a rich religious man to sell all that he had because Jesus knew this man loved money more than Him. Another reason you should tithe is out of submission for God's authority in your life. Basically, God tells you to do it, so do it. We call Jesus our Lord and Savior, but too often we'd rather Him just be the Savior. We don't want Him to be the Lord, because then we'd have to do what he says. But God is our ultimate authority and He calls you to obey Him. The final reason you should tithe is because it forces you to step out and trust God. Ten percent is a huge chunk of your income. Simple giving it away will require some change to your lifestyle. Most likely, you will feel fear at first. But over time you will have the wonderful opportunity to see God come through for you in ways you never imagined. You will come to see that God can do more with your finances than you can.

Does the idea of giving 10% of your income to the church scare you? What does that tell you about your heart?

Read Matthew 6:19

Read Matthew 19:16-22

Read 2 Corinthians 8:7

18 - RESTING IN JESUS

Date _____

Life is hard. That's no surprise to anyone. Life can leave you drained, exhausted, weary, and beaten down. Jesus promises that true rest is found in Him. Where do you feel life weighing on you? Where in your life do you need Jesus to give you rest?

Read Matthew 11:28-30

19 - DO MORE GOOD

Date _____

Sometimes being a servant to people in the name of Jesus can get discouraging. After a while, it can seem that you give and give without seeing much reward. God's Word encourages us to have a heavenly focus not an earthly focus because the benefit of doing God's work often comes in the next life. So don't be discouraged, but keep your focus on the great promises of God. Do you need to be more persistent in doing good? Are you wasting opportunities to serve people the way Jesus has called you to serve?

Read Galatians 6:9

20 - JESUS IS OUR GREAT SHEPHERD

Date _____

The Bible calls Jesus a shepherd to His people. That would make Christians His sheep. Sheep are known for being dumb, but they are also known for following their shepherd closely. Sheep listen to the voice of their shepherd to guide and direct them. The main way Jesus will speak to us will be through His Word. What are some of the biggest ways Jesus has been speaking to you in the last 20 days? What do these verses say about your security in Him when you follow His voice?

Read John 10:27-28

The greatest pursuit of your life is to grow and be like Jesus. Truly following Him means imitating Him in every aspect of your life. Jesus lived free of sin so copying Him will often mean that your life will look very different than those around you. So if people call you weird, take heart, they called Jesus a lot worse. After reading today's passage, what behaviors do you need to change so that you can be more like Jesus?

Read Ephesians 5:1-6

22 - JESUS IS OUR SECURITY

Date _____

Far too many Christians have a regular fear that if they don't live a good enough life, that Jesus will take their salvation away. But the Bible is clear that we can have assurance in the salvation we have in Jesus. Our assurance is not in the fact that we live a good life, but in the fact that Jesus has died and rose on our behalf. It is in Him and Him alone that we have salvation, not in living a good enough life to earn it. The Apostle John states that he wrote one of His letters to help believers have security in their faith. Do you ever worry about your salvation? Perhaps you need to pray and ask God to help you grow in faith that Jesus is all you need.

Read 1 John 5:13

23 - THE STRAIGHT PATH

Date _____

God has laid a path that He wants all of us to follow in life. Sin takes us off the road of God's will. As in real life going off road is always the much rougher way to drive. The life of sin causes huge levels of destruction to you and those around you. The path of God will not always be pain free and easy, but when we listen to His directions instead of our own, we walk a better path. How do you need to lean more on God and less on your own way of thinking?

Read Proverbs 3:5-6

24 - WHAT PLANK?

Date _____

It's fun to point out the faults in others. It makes us feel good about ourselves as if we are so much better than they are. As a Christian it's easy to slip into the trap of thinking you are very holy and that all those sinners out there are going to Hell because they're so evil. Jesus offers a big warning about judging others in such a way. He reminds of the grace God showed us and that we need to pass that same grace on to others. How does this apply to you today? How will you check yourself for planks in the future?

Read Matthew 7:1-3

25 - LOVIN' AIN'T EASY

Date _____

Some people are really easy to love. But what about people who are mean, hateful, annoying, overly critical, or just plain difficult to be around? Jesus raises the bar on who Christians should love. He wants us to have a love that isn't based on performance, but a love that is based on grace and mercy like His own. When you think of difficult people, who comes to mind? What actions can you take to love them and show love to them?

Read Matthew 5:43-47

Jesus does amazing things for people. He not only saves us from Hell and changes our eternity, He sends us the Holy Spirit to help us have transformation here and now. When you give your life to Jesus, you will be changed. People will notice the change taking place in your life. Every Christian should feel so blessed by the salvation we have been freely given that we want others to experience the same joy. Sharing your story of what Jesus has done for you is something that you need to be prepared and eager to do when presented with the opportunity. It could be as simple as saying what your life was like before Jesus, how Jesus came into your life, and how Jesus has changed you. Take some time and write down your story so that you can tell people why you have hope in Jesus.

Read 1 Peter 3:15

27 - A SPIRIT OF POWER

Date _____

One thing about fear is that it paralyzes us. Fear leaves us so frozen that often we can't do what we need to do. Fear of rejection can keep us from sharing Christ with others. Fear of getting fired can lead us to do that shady deal at work that our boss tells us to. Fear of financial insecurity can prevent us from giving generously to our church and those in need. When you became a Christian, you were empowered with the Holy Spirit. That Spirit should empower you to do greater things. But you've got to follow His lead. Don't let fear keep you from living the life Jesus calls you to. What fears are holding you back? Remember God is WAY bigger than anything you fear.

Read 2 Timothy 1:7

28 - GOD WITH YOU

Date _____

Christians will often feel the Holy Spirit calling us to do things that, at first glance, seem impossible. However, when God calls you to do something, He also equips and empowers you to carry it out. On top of that, He goes with you. You will never be alone when you walk the path God has set before you. He is always with you. Have you ever felt as if God was prompting you to move in a certain direction or accomplish a certain task? What was it? How have you seen Him prepare and equip you for it?

Read 1 Chronicles 28:20

29 - HEART OF GRATITUDE

Date _____

One of the biggest things that will help you stay committed to being a follower of Jesus is a heart of thanksgiving. God is a giving God; a gracious God; a loving God. We will never be able to repay Him for all He's done for us. How when we were dirty, rotten sinners, He loved us and saved us through His son Jesus. The Bible says that we should come into God's presence overflowing with gratitude. That's true, because He has done much more for us than we will ever comprehend. Do you struggle to be thankful toward God? Make a list of the blessings that God has placed in your life.

Read Psalm 100:4

30- BY GOD'S GRACE

Date _____

It's nice to work hard at life, see the benefit of your labor, and think, "Look at all I've done with my life. Good for me." But have you really done anything? If you've done well at work, God gave you the body and ability to work. If you've loved your family well, God made you capable of sharing love. Even more, when it comes to our spiritual lives. So many people believe that being a "good person" makes them deserving of God's salvation. But as you've learned over the last 30 days, it's not your good works that saves you.

1 Corinthians 15:10 - "But by the grace of God I am what I am"

Let that verse speak volumes to you as you always remember that Jesus is the reason that you are what you are.

WHAT'S NEXT?

You've just finished 30 days of spending daily time reading the Bible and meditating on Jesus' saving work in your life. First off, good for you, for completing these thoughts and readings. Though you complete this booklet, your daily journey must continue walk with Jesus. Here's a few things to help you do that:

Daily Bible Reading and Prayer

Few things will bless your life like continuing to spend time daily reading the Bible and talking to God in prayer. In the following pages you will find several reading plans. Feel free to try them all. If they are not a good fit, try www.youversion.com. It's a tremendous resource with many different reading plans. After you read each day, simply ask yourself the question, "How can I be more like Jesus?" Answering this question will help you make the most of the passages you just read and shine light onto some changes you need to make in your life.

Regular Church Attendance

Spending time with other believers is essential. Coming together to listen as a group to God's Word preached gives you unity with other believers as you are all spiritually fed together. To get the most out of church, you must be a regular attendee. Going to church only once or twice a month is not consistent enough to be an active part of what God is doing at your church.

Growth Group

To pursue God on a deeper level, community is essential. We provide growth groups so that you can sit and discuss the Bible and your life with other believers. Groups provide you with an opportunity to ask questions, receive encouragement and accountability from other Christians who deeply care about you and your walk with Jesus, and build relationships with other people who are on the same journey as you. To get more info on Growth Groups, just ask a pastor.

Go to www.loamicc.com for more resources and information about the church.

READING PLANS

Exploring Jesus in 21 Days*

Day 1: Luke 1-2	Day 12: John 1-2
Day 2: Luke 3-4	Day 13: John 3-4
Day 3: Luke 5-6	Day 14: John 5-6
Day 4: Luke 7-8	Day 15: John 7-8
Day 5: Luke 9-10	Day 16: John 9-10
Day 6: Luke 11-12	Day 17: John 11-12
Day 7: Luke 13-15	Day 18: John 13-15
Day 8: Luke 16-18	Day 19: John 16-17
Day 9: Luke 19-20	Day 20: John 18-19
Day 10: Luke 21-22	Day 21: John 20-21
Day 11: Luke 23-24	

Sampling Scripture in 10 Weeks*

Week 1: Genesis 1-25
Week 2: Exodus 1-20, Ruth
Week 3: 1 Samuel 16-31, 2 Samuel 1-7
Week 4: Psalm 1-41
Week 5: Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah
Week 6: Esther, Ezra
Week 7: Mark
Week 8: Acts 1-12, 1 Peter
Week 9: Acts 13-28
Week 10: Romans, Ephesians

Proverbs in 1 Month

This plan is by far the most simple. The book of Proverbs has 31 chapters. Just read one chapter per day. If it's April 1st, just read Proverbs 1.

Reading the Bible in 1 Year*

Week 1: Genesis 1-25
Week 2: Genesis 26-50
Week 3: Job 1-24
Week 4: Job 25-42, Exodus 1-10
Week 5: Exodus 11-34
Week 6: Exodus 35-40, Leviticus 1-15
Week 7: Leviticus 16-27, Numbers 1-4
Week 8: Numbers 5-21
Week 9: Numbers 22-36, Psalms 1-17
Week 10: Psalms 18-55
Week 11: Psalms 56-94
Week 12: Psalms 95-150
Week 13: Deuteronomy 1-19
Week 14: Deuteronomy 20-34, Proverbs 1-7

Week 15: Proverbs 8-31
Week 16: Ecclesiastes, Joshua 1-10
Week 17: Joshua 11-24, Judges 1-5
Week 18: Judges 6-21, Ruth
Week 19: Songs of Songs, 1 Samuel 1-16
Week 20: 1 Samuel 17-31, 2 Samuel 1-7
Week 21: 2 Samuel 8-24
Week 22: 1 Kings 1-18
Week 23: 1 Kings 19-22, 2 Kings 1-16
Week 24: 2 Kings 17-25, Isaiah 1-11
Week 25: Isaiah 12-37
Week 26: Isaiah 38-59
Week 27: Isaiah 60-66, Jeremiah 1-14
Week 28: Jeremiah 15-36
Week 29: Jeremiah 37-52
Week 30: Lamentations, 1 Chronicles 1-12
Week 31: 1 Chronicles 13-29, 2 Chronicles 1-7
Week 32: 2 Chronicles 8-38
Week 33: Ezekiel 1-20
Week 34: Ezekiel 21-38
Week 35: Ezekiel 39-48, Daniel
Week 36: Hosea, Joel, Amos
Week 37: Ezra, Nehemiah
Week 38: Esther, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah
Week 39: Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
Week 40: Matthew 1-17
Week 41: Matthew 18-28, Hebrews 1-8
Week 42: Hebrews 9-13, James, Mark 1-9
Week 43: Mark 10-16, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, Jude
Week 44: Luke 1-15
Week 45: Luke 16-24, Acts 1-7
Week 46: Acts 8-21
Week 47: Acts 22-28, Romans
Week 48: 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians
Week 49: Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians
Week 50: 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, John 1-10
Week 51: John 11-21; 1, 2, and 3 John
Week 52: Revelation

* These reading plans were taken from the [Starting Point Bible](#) courtesy of North Point Ministries, Inc.

www.loamicc.com