

New Creation Bible Fellowship



Therefore if anyone is in Christ, {he is} a new creature;
the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

II Corinthians 5:17

YOUR NEW LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS

I. Welcome to the family

...You are part of God's family

My friend, I want to welcome you into the family of GOD! Because of your decision to believe in Jesus Christ as your Savior, you have become one of GOD's dear children and grafted into God's own family tree. This is a distinct privilege GOD allows all those who believe in His precious Son, Jesus Christ. The word of GOD states that it is difficult for us to comprehend how fully GOD's love has been poured out on us, that we should be privileged enough to be called God's children (1 John 3:1). What a beautiful statement of GOD's love to us. Now that you are in GOD's family, I would like to review the decision you have made and what has actually taken place in your life.

II. What you have done...

...A Brief Review

Salvation Needed

You have acknowledged that you have no righteous, of your own (Romans 3:10) and that you fall short of GOD's glorious righteousness (Rom.3:23) and are in desperate need of salvation. You have come to the realization that you are fully deserving to receive GOD's judgment for your sinful life. You have also recognized that you are absolutely helpless in yourself and that your only hope is in the Lord Jesus Christ and His forgiveness and grace (Eph.2:8).

Salvation Provided

While the penalty for sin is death, GOD did provide a way for your sin to be paid for by the death of Jesus Christ on the cross and the shedding of His innocent blood (Rom.6:23). Yes GOD loves us so much that even though we were sinners, He allowed His only Son to die for us (Rom.5:8). He allowed His only Son to take responsibility for our sins (I Peter 2:24).

Salvation Received

Jesus Christ has done so much for us. He loves us. He died for us. He paid the penalty of sin which we should have had to pay. He took the responsibility of our sins upon Himself. Even though He had no sin, He became sin for us (2 Cor.5:21). It is all so wonderful. However, it is of no use to us until (1) we accept it as truth, (2) we believe He is the Christ, the Son of the Living GOD, our Savior Who died and rose again from the dead (Rom.10:9), (3) we believe that He is our only hope for salvation (John 3:16) and (4) that we personally and individually live out this trust in Christ in our everyday lives.

Salvation Assured

One of the ways in which we can be assured of our salvation is to believe that the Bible is the word of GOD and that His word is absolutely true, without error or mistake. He tells us in His word that we can be sure that we are saved and have eternal life by simply believing. Therefore, since His word is true and it says that we can have eternal life by trusting in Christ as our Savior, then that settles the issue. We must believe His word and we can be assured of our salvation on that basis (I John 5:13). This is a promise that you can stake your very life on.

Your can also receive assurance of your salvation as you become more and more like Jesus Christ in your character. When you begin to evidence a lifestyle and character traits

which are given to you by GOD's Holy Spirit, you can be sure that you are a Christian (Gal.5:22). As you mature as a Christian, the greatest character trait you could ever exemplify is love (I Cor.13). A growing, godly love is a sure evidence of your salvation and that Christ is working actively in your life.

CAUTION:

Do not expect all this to take place overnight. This is just the beginning of a life-long process of changing into what GOD wants you to be.

Be patient with GOD and be patient with yourself. I believe you will find GOD to be very patient with you!

III. What you have become...

... A New Creation

As a new Christian, there will be many changes which will begin occurring in your life. These are proof that you have become "A New Creation" (II Cor. 5:17). What does it really mean to be a new creation? the Bible says that when a person becomes a believer in Jesus Christ, they are a new creation; their old life passes away and a completely new and fresh life begins. No matter what your past life has been like, GOD can make all things new. You can actually start your life over.

Let me give you an example of this. When you become a new creation, people will look at you and see the same old physical you. But now when GOD looks at you, because the old you has passed away, He sees a new heart and a completely new creation. What once was an unrighteous sinner, is now a precious saint. The part of you which was once detestable in the sight of GOD, is now pleasing to Him, because of the work of Christ in your life. It is as though you were a cat before, but now that you have become a Christian, you are a rhinoceros. In GOD's sight, Christ has changed your life so much, that He indeed sees you as "A New Creation", and the old you with your old desires and your old ways no longer exist!

A Christ Follower

You have also become a follower of Christ. A follower of Christ is someone who has trusted Jesus Christ as their Savior and out of the gratitude of their heart for their salvation, they have committed their lives to follow Christ. A Christ follower has two major goals, (1) to become like Christ morally (II Peter 1:3-11), and (2) to follow Christ obediently (Mat.8:22/16:24/ Jn.10:4).

To become like Christ morally means that our moral decisions and lifestyle begins to show similar actions and decisions that Jesus would make. Moral means what we perceive as being right and pleasing before GOD. When our decisions are similar to Christ's decisions, then we are pleasing to GOD, because Christ is pleasing to GOD.

To follow Christ obediently means that whatever we read in the Bible that GOD

commands us to do, we obey. Likewise, whenever we read in the Bible that GOD forbids something, then we obey GOD and refrain from doing it. Essentially, to follow Christ obediently means to obey the Bible which is GOD's word of instruction for our lives today.

A Part of the Body of Christ

Another thing you become is a part of the body of Jesus Christ. At the time of our salvation, every believer is baptized (introduced) into the body of Christ (I Cor.12:1-27). As a part of the body of Christ, every believer has an important purpose. Just as every part of our human body has a specific and distinct activity which allows the body to function properly, so does each part of the body of Christ have a specific function and because of that, you are extremely important and valuable to GOD. This is why it is so crucial for you to find a church (local body of Christ) and attend regularly, in order to become involved in serving within the church. This is a key element in the growth of every believer.

A Child of GOD

When we are brought into the body of Christ, we become children of GOD. This is one of the most awesome aspects of becoming a Christian - we are able to call GOD, our Heavenly Father. I don't know what your past family experience has been, whether it has been good or bad. I don't know what you think of when you hear the word "father", but try to imagine an ideal father. He would be loving, forgiving, providing, caring, interested in us, concerned for our welfare and protective against the forces which may try to destroy us. An ideal father would also be one who disciplined his children when they did wrong. He would allow us to make mistakes and yet still accept us and pick us up when we fall. He would comfort us when we hurt - He would be someone we could talk to about anything that concerned us.

My friend, that is exactly the type of Heavenly Father we have. GOD is all of these things - He is our loving Heavenly Father. Rest...relax as you get to know and love Him. Don't fear His wrath or His judgment, but enjoy your time with Him. He deeply desires to spend time with you. You are His new child and He is now your proud Father (Gal.4:4-7).

A Home for GOD's Spirit

One final thing that you become is a home for the Holy Spirit of GOD (ICor.3:16/II Cor.6:16). In the Old Testament, before Christ, the Holy Spirit of GOD dwelled in very extravagant manmade temples which were constructed especially to house GOD's spirit. However, today GOD gives every one of His children His Holy Spirit to live in them as holy temples. The result is that the Holy Spirit of GOD lives in you! His word promises that He will always be with us and will never leave us or abandon us, but will be present with us in every situation (Heb.13:5-6).

IV. What have you gotten into...

...something new, yet something old

A Quick Summary

Now, I would like to quickly summarize the Christian faith. Jesus Christ is the Son of GOD! He was the only One who could pay for our sins, because He is the only person who ever lived who was without sin (Heb.7:26). In paying for our sins, Christ died on the cross and was raised from the dead 3 days later (Rom.10:9). About 40 days after Christ's resurrection, He ascended into heaven (Acts 1:9) and was seated at the right hand of the throne of the majesty on high (Heb.1:3), where He now resides in His place of ultimate authority.

When you made the decision to place your faith in Jesus Christ and believed that He died on the cross to deliver you from the penalty of your sins, many things transpired. You were bought and became the property of GOD (I Cor.6:20). The price with which you were purchased was the precious blood of Jesus, Himself (I Peter 1:18-19). You were delivered out of the dark kingdom of the Devil and placed into the glorious kingdom of Jesus Christ (Col.1:13). You have been placed into the body of Christ and the family of GOD (I Jn.3:1 / I Cor.12:13). What an encouragement it is to know what GOD has accomplished in our lives through the work of His Son. As a result, you are now part of the body of Christ, the church.

A Brief History

The church of the LORD Jesus Christ is made up of every believer anywhere in the world that has ever believed in Jesus as their Savior. The church is made up of people from different races, languages, nationalities, denominations, as well as various religious backgrounds. The church initially started as a group of disciples or those who originally followed Jesus and began to believe and obey His teachings. During its inception in Jerusalem, it began with just a few and has expanded all across the earth and its members are now innumerable.

*The family of God is one that reaches
around the globe - to every nation and
every people group - excluding none, but
including
all who believe in Jesus.*

Over the years the church has undergone intense persecution and opposition. The first person ever to die for standing up for his beliefs as a follower of Jesus was a man named Stephen (Acts 7). With his death, began persecution against Christians which forced them to flee for their lives. Yet even in this horrible treatment, GOD's purposes were

being accomplished. It was this fleeing from persecution which helped to spread the good news about salvation in Christ (we call this the gospel), all across the continent and ultimately around the world.

Throughout history, the more the church has been persecuted, the stronger and larger it has grown. A great lesson which we learn from this is that, man's natural ability will never defeat GOD's supernatural ability. Man has continued to attempt to stop the growth of Christianity, yet he has never been able to cause GOD's purposes to fail and never will.

My friend, do you want to be involved in something you know will succeed? Do you want to be a part of something you know GOD is doing? Then the church is for you. The church is far from perfect, because it is filled with people just like me and like you. However, Jesus has promised to build His church and the gates of hell will never prevail against it (Mat.16:18). GOD's church will always succeed! You can be sure of that!

V. What you are in for...

...excitement and challenges

Opposition

The Devil also tries to defeat GOD. He attempts this by trying to defeat each of us. As the believers in the past have encountered opposition, so will you in your new life with Christ. People will make fun of you, they will say that your beliefs are in silly, unverifiable myths and they will try to make you feel foolish and doubt your faith in Jesus Christ.

The Bible tells us that when this happens, we are to be firm in our faith, as others all over the world are remaining firm in the faith. And regardless of the opposition we face, it is possible to endure it all (I Peter 5:8-9). Also, as we are remaining firm in our faith, we are to be able to give a good reason to others why we believe in Jesus (I Peter 3:15).

In order for us to be able to give a good explanation to others regarding our beliefs, we must study the Bible in order to know what it contains and what it says about life issues. As we know the Bible, it not only allows us to give a good defense for our faith, but it will be a great encouragement to us as it teaches us about GOD, His Son and about us as His children (II Tim.3:15).

Another method of defending our beliefs, is to tell them what has happened to you when you trusted Christ, and the forgiveness which you have received. The Bible describes this as our testimony. It states that as we struggle against the Devil, one way in which we as Christians may overcome his evil power is through the giving of our testimony to others. More practically, it is knowing what GOD has done for us and being able to tell others about it (Rev.12:11).

*The Christian life is not one of boredom.
Fighting the good fight of faith
is as exciting an adventure
as any person could ever
hope to experience.*

The most difficult aspect of opposition is when it comes from our own family. When our new faith is not shared or understood by our family, it may seem that they think you are crazy or that these new ideas will pass with time. The Bible says that there may come a time when our opposition will be from those of our own household (Mat.10:36). This occurs because they do not fully understand your newly found faith. When this happens we must be loving and understanding towards them, while remaining true to our decision to follow Jesus. We must remember to always pray for our family, that GOD would work in their lives just as He has worked in your own. He is able!

Temptations

Another difficulty you will face is temptation. This is one of the most common tactics the Devil uses to devastate our faith. Everyone is tempted at one time or another, but temptation is not necessarily a sin (I Cor.10:13). Jesus, Himself, was tempted just as we are tempted, yet He was completely sinless (Heb.4:15). However, we do have the ability to overcome temptation. The Bible states that if we draw near to GOD, He will draw near to us. So that when this temptation comes into our minds we will be so close to GOD and so filled with His thoughts that we will then be able to resist these temptations - the Devil will flee from us and we will not fall into sin (James 4:7).

Acceptance in Christ

Besides all the difficulties and struggles that we encounter as Christians, there are many very positive and encouraging things that take place in our lives. One is that Christ accepts us just as we are when we come to Him (Rom.15:7). We don't have to perform a certain way or look a certain way or even act a certain way in order to be accepted by GOD. We are accepted because we are believers in GOD's Son, Jesus Christ and we are made acceptable by His sacrifice for us. So we do not need to clean up our lives before we come to GOD, because sinners are who Jesus died for in the first place (Rom.5:8). It is after our salvation experience that GOD begins cleaning up our lives. He first begins to change our minds, which affects our desires, which affects our choices, which affects the eventual outcome of our daily lives (Rom.12:2). And so it is our faith in Christ, which causes us to be accepted.

Eternal and Abundant Life

In becoming a believer, we receive eternal life as a gift from Christ. The Bible says that the believer is a gift from GOD to Christ and eternal life is a gift from Christ to the believer (Jn.17:2). Our punishment for sin is something that we earn and we deserve, because we are sinners. But eternal life cannot be earned and is not deserved, due to the fact that sinners have done nothing worthy of this gift of life. Yet, through faith in Christ we receive the gift of eternal life, which no one can take away and not one can give but Christ (Rom.6:23).

Yet, not only do we receive a quantity of life which is eternal, but we also receive a quality of life which is abundant. In our new life in Christ, we are given joy, peace and a great hope that only the believer can possess (Rom.5:1-5). It is not merely the promise of our future in heaven (I Peter 1:4), but it is the promise of our present existence in GOD's presence (Heb.13:5). It is in GOD's presence that we will continually praise and worship Him and in a state of eternal pleasures (Psalm 16:11).

Privilege of sharing

As Jesus has saved us from an eternity in hell, we have been given the privilege of telling others also about their need for the same salvation. Perhaps the reason you trusted Jesus Christ is that you had someone who was concerned enough about your eternal destiny that they were bold enough to share with you eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ. We must pass that message along. Mat.28:16-20 says that Jesus has given His followers a great commission. We are to teach the world about the person and work of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. This is no doubt a large task, but the Lord has many, many followers who are able to spread this message and you and I must be part of those messengers. The message is basically this:

- (1) GOD loves everyone (Jn.3:16)
- (2) Man is sinful, unrighteous and spiritually dead (Rom.3:23/6:23)
- (3) Man can receive eternal life (Jn.3:16/Rom/6:23)
- (4) Only faith in Jesus brings life (Jn.3:16/Jn.1:10-13)
- (5) We must believe and receive Jesus and His sacrifice for us (John 1:12; 3:16)

VI. What you are you missing out on...

... nothing good

God's Wrath

Along with the things you gain as a believer in Christ, there are also some things that you miss out on. One is that you miss out on GOD's wrath. His wrath is His emotion of anger and detest against all those who have rejected Him as their GOD and are living wickedly in opposition to His desire for them (Is.13:13/Rom.1:18-20). His wrath is also exhibited towards those who have rejected His Son as their Savior. However, those who have trusted Jesus as their Savior and believed on Him as the only One who can deliver them from their sins, escape GOD's wrath.

Now you may ask, "what is so terrible about GOD's wrath? Why would it be so bad to have GOD angry with you?" Well my friend, the reason GOD's wrath is so terrible and so fearful is because, following GOD's wrath is GOD's eternal judgment.

GOD's judgment

GOD's wrath is His emotion over the sinfulness and wickedness of mankind. The expression of this emotion comes in the form of His divine judgment. This divine judgment is GOD merely taking action on His divine wrath. His wrath is His feelings toward something and His judgment is how He acts in regard to how He feels. GOD has promised that because of His wrath, He will one day release His judgment upon all the earth for its evil and sinful deeds (II Peter 3:7).

All of GOD's judgments are holy and right and He makes no mistakes in regard to carrying it all out (Rom.11:33). Those who receive GOD's judgment are well deserving of it (Jere.25:31). GOD does not mistakenly leave unjudged those who deserve it. Likewise, He does not judge those who do not deserve it. The only ones who are exempt from GOD's judgment are those who have placed their faith in the LORD Jesus Christ (Jn.3:16-18). The reason for this is that GOD's wrath and judgment is always against the wickedness and sinfulness of mankind who have rejected Him. The reason the believer does not receive this judgment is that Jesus Christ has already received our judgment for our sins and wickedness while He was on the cross. Therefore, now there is no more condemnation (or judgment) for those who are in (that is, believes in) Jesus Christ (Rom.8:1,2). Because of this the unbeliever should fear standing before the LORD on the day of judgment, but the Christian need never dread the day when he or she stands before the LORD. That day will be a day of rejoicing and eternal reward for the ones who have given their lives to follow Christ

No child of God will ever receive the wrath of God. The cross of Jesus has intercepted God's judgment on behalf of all believing Christians.

-- unknown

The end result of GOD's judgment is not merely physical punishment, but His judgment and punishment is as eternal as the life He gives to the believer. This eternal state of punishment is called HELL! Hell is the place of eternal torment and punishment for the wicked and their unforgiven sins. It was originally prepared by GOD for the Devil and his angels who rebelled against GOD and rejected Him (Mt.25:41). It is a place where the burning flame is never extinguished. Yet even more tormenting, it is a place where there will be eternal separation from the presence of the LORD (II Thes. 1:8-9). That will be the most torturous punishment one could ever imagine. Here the person will spend an eternity paying for their own sins. How horrible to think that anybody would have to endure all this, when there is deliverance from this fate through faith in Christ and His forgiving grace (Eph.2:8). Yet, the believer misses out on eternal punishment, simply because of his or her faith in Jesus as the One who has already paid for their sins and suffered their punishment.

VII. What it comes down to...

...brief, but oh so important

Conclusion

Before I share with you the next step, I would like to briefly summarize our thoughts so far. You and I were born into this world as sinners (Ps.51:5), yet GOD still loved us (Jn.3:16). In GOD's perfect timing, He sent His Son into the world to save us from our sins and to bring us into His family (Gal.4:4). His Son, Jesus, was born and was crucified on a cross and died for our sins - the sins of the ungodly (Rom.5:8). He then rose from the dead and continued to live on the earth for about 40 days. Therefore, you and I and anybody else who believes that Jesus is LORD and that GOD has indeed raised Him from the dead, will be saved (Jn.1:12/I Jn3:1) and that is where you are today - in GOD's family. Praise the LORD!

Important concepts

The Bible uses the term "in Christ" quite often in the New Testament. "*In Christ*" is a term that reflects our position in the Christian faith. When we place our faith in Christ as Savior, we are then covered by His righteousness and when GOD looks at us, He sees

Christ's sacrifice and payment for our sins, as well as seeing Christ's righteousness as our righteousness (Phil.3:8,9).

We also have an *eternal inheritance* with GOD which is stored in heaven waiting for us to receive it (I Peter 1:4). It cannot be removed or taken away from us. It is something GOD has laid up for us and will one day give us when we stand before Him. What an encouragement to know that GOD has our inheritance waiting for us in His possession.

As *GOD's children*, we have the privilege of asking in the name of Jesus, things we need and He will give it. He tells us to ask and it will be given to us. For what father knows the needs of his children and instead of supplying their needs, gives them something to harm them? No good father, of course. And as our Heavenly Father, GOD knows just what we need and is happy to supply our needs when we ask Him (Mat.7:7-11).

*He is no fool who gives what he cannot
keep, to gain what he cannot lose.*
-- Jim Elliott

Another important concept which involves you is referred to as *following Christ*. Because sheep follow the shepherd, the Christian is often referred to in the Bible as a sheep. John 10 refers to Jesus Christ as the Good Shepherd who cares deeply for His sheep. It goes on to state that Jesus as our Good Shepherd is in control of His sheep and protects His sheep, so that no person or thing can ever remove them from His guidance and watch care (Jn.10:28,29).

Psalm 23 is also a passage which speaks of the follower of GOD as sheep and GOD as the Shepherd. As the Shepherd is leading his sheep, it is the responsibility of the sheep to obey the leadership of the shepherd and trusting that he knows what is best for the sheep. Of course the LORD is worthy to be obeyed as well as trusted.

Finally, there is *pleasure* in your relationship with God, through faith in Jesus Christ and that pleasure goes 2 ways.

First, we find great pleasure in *Him*. Consider the promise below

*"You will show me the path of life:
in Your presence is fulness of joy;
at Your right hand there are pleasures for evermore."*
-- Psalm 16:11

Finally, He finds pleasure in *us*. Consider this statement.

*"You are worthy, O Lord,
to receive glory and honour and power:
for You have created all things,
and for Your pleasure they are and were created."*
-- Revelation 4:11

Did you get that? Your Heavenly Father finds pleasure in you!

What do you think about your new Father in heaven and your new family in the church? Are these positive thoughts for you? Why?

VIII. What next...

...this is not the end but the beginning

Church fellowship

One thing that you need to do immediately is to begin looking for a church that upholds the Bible as GOD's word and start to attend on a regular basis. Attending church will not get you saved, but it is something that saved people need to be involved in. The Bible says that we are not to stop meeting together as believers (Heb.10:25), because the church is the place where we can come and be encouraged in our daily lives and in our faith (Heb.10:22-24). Also, the scriptures tell us to bear one another's burdens (Gal.6:2). Where else can that take place if not at the church - at the gathering together of GOD's people. This is one of the purposes of the church, to encourage each other in our faith.

Another significant purpose of the church is to come together as a group of GOD's people to praise and worship GOD. The creature worshipping the Creator, that is the highest privilege of any human being (Rev.4:11).

Baptism & Communion

Believer's baptism and communion are 2 very special commands the Lord initiated for the church. We refer to the first as "believer's baptism" due to the fact that we believe scripture clearly teaches that water baptism is for those who have believed in Jesus and trusted Him as their Lord and Savior. Water baptism symbolizes the death and resurrection of the believing Christian that has trusted in Jesus. As Jesus died, for our sins, baptism symbolizes our death. As baptism symbolizes Christ's resurrection, it also symbolizes our resurrection. Baptism signifies that Jesus' death and resurrection life are ours when we believe in Him (Acts 2:41; 8:12; Romans 6:4).

The second is Christian communion. Again, I refer to this as "believer's" communion, because the Bible depicts only those who are already believers in Jesus as taking part in this command. During the Lord's last supper with His disciples, they took part in the last Jewish Passover feast together. In this meal, Jesus took the bread and said, "this is my body broken for you, as often as you eat this, do this in remembrance of me". He spoke this to His closest disciples. He then took the cup and said, "This is the new covenant in my blood, do this in remembrance of me." The bread represents Jesus broken body and the juice or wine represents Jesus' blood which was shed for the

forgiveness of sins to all who believe in Him.

The Apostle Paul states, "As often as you do this, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes." (1 Corinthians 11:26). Water baptism and Christian communion is specifically for those who have trusted in Jesus, and found forgiveness through faith in His name (John 2:23).

Prayer - ACTS

Not only is Church attendance important, but so is your own tie of personal prayer and devotion to the LORD. Some call this their quiet time. There are many styles or types of devotional times. I will present you with just an example to help get you started. This is called the "ACTS" method.

With this method, each letter stands for a different area of devotion, or a different attitude in communicating with GOD. You may take all four in one quiet time or you may want to focus on one letter a day. Either way, do not feel the need to hurry through or even to finish at a given time. Some of your best quiet times may last all day as you go about your routine with the LORD in mind.

Prayer does not prepare us for the greater work: Prayer is the greater work.
-- Oswald Chambers

The first area of prayer in "Acts" is **A**. **A** stands for **A**doration. This is not necessarily thanksgiving. This may be a time of praising GOD and adoring Him for who He is. During this time it is good to focus on an aspect of who GOD is, generally in regard to His character or an attribute. You might begin by praising GOD for His holiness and that He is separated far from sin. Praise Him that He is sinless and righteous and worthy to deal justly with the wicked, because He Himself, is pure, holy and just.

You might also worship Him as Creator of the world and for His infinite power. It is the same power of creation that raised Jesus Christ from the dead and the same power that saves us from our sins. Express to Him how very worthy He is to be worshiped (Rev.4:11/5:12).

The next letter in "ACTS" is **C**. **C** stands for **C**onfession. This is the time when you come before GOD to confess all your sins and failures. Confess means to tell what is already known. GOD already knows what we have done and what we need to be forgiven of. For us, this is a time of honesty and humility before the Almighty, All-knowing GOD. We come to Him and tell Him of our sins and how we have failed to keep His commandments and carry out His will. Our sins can be sins which we have committed on purpose or things which we have omitted without knowing it at the time. It may be deliberate or accidental. Nevertheless, we must confess everything before our all knowing GOD. When we confess our sins, GOD faithfully forgives our sins and washes away all our unrighteousness (I Jn.1:9). **JUST BE HONEST!**

Next is the letter **T**. The **T** stands for **T**hanksgiving. This is a time when we come to GOD with hearts full of gratitude and thank Him for the things which He has done in our lives. We might thank Him for the precious gift of His Son. We might thank Him for our salvation which we could never have gained on our own. Thank Him for His watch care

over you and for carefully leading you in your life and bringing you to the point where you are now. You could also thank Him for what He has taught you through His word and how He is making you more like His dear Son each day. Also give thanks to GOD for making us heirs to His kingdom of light and delivering us from the kingdom of darkness (Col.1:12-13).

Lastly in our "ACTS" prayer time is the letter **S**. **S** stands for **S**upplications. These are prayers which we make either on our own behalf or on the behalf of others. Our prayers for ourselves, we call petitions. Our prayers for others we call intercessions. You might pray for someone's health or family situation. You might pray for GOD's will to be done in someone's life. You might even pray for GOD to save a friend of yours and that they might come to place their trust in Christ, just as you have.

You might also pray for yourself. You could pray for your own strength to live out your daily life as a Christian and that your life would bring honor to Jesus. You may pray that GOD would give you wisdom in telling a friend about Jesus. You might even pray that GOD would help you find a job, a home, a husband or a wife. Most of all, it is important to pray that above all else, that GOD's perfect will would be done, even over your own (Phil.4:6).

Bible Study

In conjunction with prayer, one of the most important things you could do as a believer is to begin disciplined Bible study practices. The Bible contains all we need in order to live a quality Christian life. It is how GOD speaks to us. It has instruction concerning GOD's desires for His people. It has instruction concerning most of the issues we face in our society today. But even more than that, it reveals to us who GOD is and what He is like. The Bible is like a love letter to humanity to explain to them who GOD is. It tells us of His character, His attributes, His likes, His dislikes, His commandments and His expectations.

The Bible is also a history book explaining the creation of man, man's falling away from a relationship with GOD, His forgiveness, His provision for man's salvation, as well as GOD's plan for the ages to come. With such wealth of information concerning GOD and man, studying the Bible is of utmost importance for the believer regardless of how old he or she may be.

Also it is important that prayer is a part of your Bible study. It is only by God's giving us the spiritual ability, that we can understand His word. As we pray we must always be open to what GOD would teach us through studying it (Eph.1:18).

One of the best ways to study the Bible is by reading it over and over again. Choose a book of the Bible and read it. Then go back to the beginning and read one chapter a couple of times. As you are reading through it, take notes and write down any questions or ideas that come to your mind. Then attempt to answer those questions. As you read through the chapters, ask yourself these questions.

- (1) What does this teach me about people?
- (2) What does this teach me about GOD?
- (3) What sin do I need to ask forgiveness for?
- (4) What command do I need to obey?
- (5) What promise do I have to believe in?

- (6) Is there something that speaks to my specific situation?
- (7) What encouragement can I receive from this?

Enjoying GOD

Finally, one thing we must always remember to do is to enjoy GOD! The Christian faith is not merely a lot of negative commands. It does contain some of that, but we can also focus our attention on the LORD and we can actually enjoy our relationship with Him. We can enjoy His love for us, His watch care for us as His children and we can enjoy our journey along as a new believer and our time of spiritual growth.

I John 3:1 states just how awesome it is to be so privileged that we are called God's children. This is such a great truth of scripture that we can enjoy this wonderful privilege- the privilege that we are the children of the GOD of all creation and the entire universe! What joy! What an incredible honor! And like a sheep enjoys its caring shepherd, like a child enjoys its loving father, we can enjoy our great and awesome GOD (Ps.111:1/5:11/Lk.6:23;10:20/Rom.5:2/Phil.4:4). And this is due to the fact that your faith is now in God's Son, Jesus Christ.

Now be encouraged! You will never be alone again. Your Heavenly Father is always with you and although you cannot see them all, you are joined with many believers in Jesus Christ, who together with you, are on the joyful journey of grace (2 Pet.3:18).