

tabernacle : penarth

purpose: to reflect God's love in our church,
community and world.

now that you believe

your first steps as a new follower of jesus

How wonderful that you have become a Christian by receiving Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour! This is the most important decision of your entire life. Now that you are a believer in Jesus Christ, here are some important guidelines on how to live the Christian life. Keep this guide right beside your Bible and check against it regularly to see how you are doing in your new life. Our prayer for you is that now you are a born again believer, you will grow and mature into the person Christ has called you to be.

1. Realise What Happened

Placing your faith in Jesus Christ means that several things are now true of you. You now have spiritual life. You were spiritually dead, but now you are "born again." The day you received Jesus as your Saviour is your spiritual birthday. You are a child of God, a member of His "family."

"To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12).

You are now 'saved', that is, you have been set free from the guilt and penalty of sin. You are on your way to heaven! Also the Bible says you have been "redeemed," which means you have been freed from the slavery of sin.

"In him [Jesus] we have redemption through his blood" (Ephesians 1: 7).

You have also been "justified through faith" (Romans 5:1). This means that God has forgiven you your sins and He views you as righteous in His sight. All these promises are cast-iron guarantees in the Bible. If ever you begin to doubt, go back to these verses in the Bible and remind yourself of what God has said.

2. Rest Assured in Your Salvation

You became a Christian simply by placing your faith in Jesus Christ. You were not able to save yourself. Only God could save you. And neither can you keep yourself saved. Only God can do that. You can rest in the fact that God will not forsake you, now that you are His child. As Jesus said,

"Whoever hears my word and believes in him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has passed from death to life" (John 5:24).

"Whoever comes to me I will never drive away" (John 6:37). Jesus also said, "I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand" (John 10:28).

3. Share the Good News

Suppose a family is starving. And then the father learns where he can get free meals. Does he keep this a secret? No, he gladly shares the food with his family. So it is with salvation. In saving you, Jesus has nourished your starving soul. Now you can tell others how they too can find peace and joy in Christ. As Jesus said, "You shall be witnesses of me" (Acts 1:8). One of a Christian's greatest joys is leading another person to Christ.

4. Read the Bible

To grow in your Christian life you need to get in the habit of reading the Bible every day. The Bible is like food for your soul. It is God's way of speaking to you. Through it He tells us what He expects of us, what He is like, and what He can do for us. The Bible, God's Word, is a source of comfort and a guide for us. "Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path" (Psalm 119:105). Also choose some verses that are meaningful to you and memorize them. "I have hidden your Word in my heart that I might not sin against you" (Psalm 119:11).

5. Pray

Develop the habit of praying every day. Prayer is the way we both speak to God, but also hear what he has to say to us. Set a little time aside each day to pray and read your Bible. "Pray continually" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). In prayer you can worship God, thank Him for all He has done for you, tell Him your problems, and pray for others. Each time you pray, also spend a little time pausing and listening to what God has to say to you. In time you will come to recognise God's voice as he directs and leads you in your prayer life.

6. Find a Church

Like members of a family, Christians can support, encourage, and enjoy each other. And a Bible-believing church is a place where you can fellowship with others and others can fellowship with you. In the Church family you will find encouragement, teaching, support and love which will help you to grow as a believer. The Bible also tells us that "Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." (1 Peter 5:8) It is easier for the devil to pick us off if we are alone, but in the body of the Church we are protected and surrounded by brothers and sisters in Christ. We understand that Tabernacle is not the right Church for everyone, and if you need help in finding another Church to call your home we would be delighted to assist in any way we can.

7. Be Baptised

On the day of Pentecost the crowds asked Peter "What must we do to be saved?" The apostle 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." (Acts 2:38) We are baptised in order to follow Jesus example (Mark 1:9), to follow Jesus command (Mark 16:16) and to demonstrate publically that we have been saved through Jesus' death and resurrection (Romans 6:4). Being baptised as a believer by immersion is the Biblical standard and pattern, and we urge you to consider being baptised at the earliest opportunity. Even if you were 'christened' as a baby, you should be baptised now that you are a believer and able to make the decision for yourself.

8. Serve the Lord

Find ways to serve the Lord in return for all He has done for you. Seek to help others in your local church. Look for occasions when you can help meet the needs of your neighbours, family members, or your friends. Find out what your ministry is: there are always plenty of areas that you can serve in the Church. "Anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God" (Romans 14:18).

9. Be Victorious over Sin

Though your sins are forgiven, you will still be tempted to sin. Each believer has three enemies—the ungodly world, our sinful nature, and the devil. But you can defeat them by depending on the Lord and resisting the devil. "Be self-controlled and alert. Resist him [the devil], standing firm in the faith" (1 Peter 5:8–9). As you "live by the Spirit," that is, as you depend on Him, "you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature" (Galatians 5:16). Seek to develop Christ like qualities, including "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (Galatians 5:22–23). Avoid old patterns in your life which you know are not pleasing to God.

10. Look Forward to Jesus' Return

Before Jesus went to the cross and was raised from the dead and ascended to heaven, He said, "I will come back" (John 14:3). We do not know when He will return, but He could come back at any time. Therefore Christians should live each day as if that were the day Jesus will return. "When He appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see him as He is" (1 John 3:2). And this should affect how we live. "Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure" (1 John 3:30). Because of this "blessed hope" we should "say no to ungodliness and worldly passions and live self-controlled, upright and godly lives" (Titus 2:12).

Follow these ten steps and you will grow as a Christian and you will please the Lord.

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