

# **First Steps With Jesus**

20 reflections to help you grow in your  
new life with Christ

***'Jesus himself came up and walked  
along with them...'***  
(Luke 24:15)

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## Introduction

We often talk about '*free choice*', or '*free will*'. Well, Jesus came and truly gave us a 'choice'.

Jesus – '*God with us*'<sup>1</sup> - would stand and speak to people, offer them hope and healing, and *invite* people to follow him. Some people would listen to him, but not 'follow' him. Others would listen, and choose to actually step towards him, walk with him.

If you are reading this booklet, you are a person who has heard Jesus speak, and chosen to *follow* Jesus.

Let me start by saying this. The very first thing you need to know about following Jesus, the first thing you need to 'do' – is simply receive his peace! Yes, it sounds contradictory, in a way. Surely to start 'following' someone is to get active, to get busy... Well, when it comes to following Jesus, it is the opposite. You step into peace! You rest.

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 1:23

Look carefully at this 'invitation' of Christ, and what is on offer:

***'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.'***

(Matthew 11:28-30)

The first 'step' Jesus wants you to take, is the step into his peace.

He calls you to 'come' – to actually 'follow' and put your faith into action – but this step you take is into a place of rest for your soul.

The Spirit of God, the Spirit of Jesus, is a Spirit of peace. This light on your face will never fade. Even in our journey with Christ, our 'walk' with Jesus, we will never be outside of this Spirit of peace, this light. This doesn't mean things will be easy, but it does mean that you are now safe in your destiny, and every day closer

to heaven itself, and all things 'new' and perfect. So just bask in the peace that Jesus gives you. Enjoy it. It is his presence. Sit with Jesus every day, and enjoy his presence with you by his Spirit. Just whisper to him. Listen to him. Read the bible and think about what it says...

***'Jesus said, 'I am with you always.'***  
(Matthew 28:20)

This short booklet has 20 reflections to help you in your 'walk' with Jesus. There are 'insights', but also practical 'steps' you can take. The 'steps' will help you put your faith into action, and see actual changes in your new life with Jesus.

***'Jesus said, 'He who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.'***  
(Matthew 7:24)

## #1

## The Bible

The Bible is a collection of writings (letters, stories, prayers...), that are inspired by God. It is a collection of 66 writings, or what we call, '*books*'. So we say, there are 66 books in the Bible.

The Bible is also referred to as the '*Scriptures*'.

The Bible was written by different people (prophets, followers of Jesus, etc.), over a period of about 1500 years.

The first part of the Bible has 39 books in it, all written before Jesus was born. This first section of the Bible is called the '*Old Testament*'. The second part of the Bible has 27 books in it, and was written after Jesus was born and had lived his life. This second section of the Bible is called the '*New Testament*'.

The Bible is how we know about God, and his truth. The Bible is how we learn about Jesus.

You have believed in Jesus, and turned

away from your sin, your wrong living. So now Jesus lives in you by his Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will comfort you, and whisper to you, and guide you. Truly, my friend, you know Jesus personally, and that is the whole point of the Bible! The Bible is the '*written*' word of God, but Jesus is called the '*Living Word*'! So in a sense, everything the Bible talks about – which is ultimately Jesus – now lives in you!

But it is really important, my friend, to read and meditate on the writings of the Bible. It is a 'love letter' to you, written by God. It has poetry, stories, teachings, promises, comfort... and it is all true!

Jesus himself would 'quote' the Bible, and he referred to its writings as God's word. So if Jesus read and studied and depended on the Bible, so should we!

Here is what I recommend:

1. **Buy a Bible**: Try to find a version that is 'good' and clear. I recommend the 'NIV' version or the 'ESV' version.

2. **Read 1 chapter a day**: Start with the book of '*Matthew*'. Read one chapter a day, maybe 5 days a week if you can. Try to find a time of the day that works for you (maybe 15 minutes before work, with a nice cup of coffee?), and just read a chapter, and then spend a few minutes sitting quietly, eyes closed, praying. Praying is just 'being' with Jesus, whispering your thoughts to him, and listening to his voice, feeling his comfort.

Here is how you '*look up*' a Bible verse. When you see a 'reference', for example, '**John 3:16**', this is what it means. It means the book of 'John', chapter 3, verse 16.

So you look up '*John*' in the index, and flick to that book. Then just find chapter 3, and look down through that chapter till you see verse number 16!

In this booklet I will include quite a few 'references'. You don't have to look them all up in a Bible. But some days, if you have some extra time, it will really bless

you to spend some time looking up the verses, and maybe writing some of them down. You can write them into the margins or any blank spaces in this booklet. Looking up verses and writing them out, is an incredible exercise and a great use of time!

***‘All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.’***

(2 Timothy 3:16-17)

## #2

## The Gospel

The 'Gospel' means, '*Good News!*'

If you are reading this booklet, you have already believed in Jesus, and committed your life to him. However, it is so important to always keep clear in our minds the most amazing story, the most amazing truth, which is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Let's just look at that here...

The Gospel, the '*good news*' of Jesus, is this:

God – the Creator of all things – stepped into our world, into human form. His name was Jesus. In the book of John it is put like this:

***'In the beginning was the Word... The Word became flesh and lived among us.'*** (John 1:1,14)

Jesus lived among us, and did beautiful, holy things. He was the perfect man, without sin. He was '*God with us*'.  
(Matthew 1:23)

He healed people. He spoke peace to us, in a torn and dark world. He gave us instruction on how to live, how to forgive, how to love, pray and trust.

In a most mysterious, profound way, this holy man took on himself our sin. All the wrong I have done - the lying, cheating, stealing, and more – Jesus took into himself, into his own body, and then died for it. He died ‘with’ it. It is the most spiritual of truths in the whole history of the world.<sup>2</sup>

Jesus then rose from the dead. He defeated death. He died with our sin, then rose again to life – but left the sin paid for, left the sin dead and buried.

Jesus then looks to you, looks to me, and asks for our hearts. He asks for our ‘belief’ in him. He asks us to walk with him.

Here, in turning away from the sin in our life and believing in Jesus, we come into God’s forgiveness, and we receive

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<sup>2</sup> Galatians 3:13; 2 Corinthians 5:21

eternal life! We are made new! We have died to our old self, and become new in Jesus Christ.

This is the Gospel message.

***'Jesus said, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.'***

(John 5:24)

### #3

## Discipline

Have you ever started something 'new', but not been able to carry it through? *Me too!*

New things get us excited! Even new projects, or goals. This is why people make 'new' goals for the New Year, or like talking about the *next* plan or project... But we all know that to '*talk the talk*' is not the same thing as to '*walk the walk*'. It's hard to follow through with new directions.

Jesus told a powerful 'parable' (a short story with a spiritual meaning), about a farmer sowing seed in a field. Take a minute to read this story, straight out of the Bible:

*'A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because*

*they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.*

*Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.’ (Matthew 13:3-8, 18-23)*

This, my friend, is a very important parable to ponder. I often struggle with the '*worries of life*', and the '*deceitfulness of wealth*' (focus on money). And yes, when I focus on these things – worries and wants and finances, etc. – my walk with Jesus is '*choked*'.

As a new follower of Jesus – or 'disciple'<sup>3</sup> – we are very vulnerable to falling away, of not bearing any fruit. If you want to grow up healthy and strong as a follower of Jesus, it is going to take some discipline, and focus. Jesus will help you every step of the way!

Yesterday we looked at the importance of the Bible, and a daily 'discipline' of reading the bible, and spending '*quiet time*' alone with Jesus every day. This is **KEY!** But it is also very important to build relationships with other followers of Jesus – *real* followers of Jesus, not just people who '*talk the talk*'!<sup>4</sup> People who are following Jesus truthfully, morally,

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<sup>3</sup> 'Disciple' means 'follower' or 'student'.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Timothy 2:19,22

sincerely.

Today, pray and ask God to lead you to a good, Christian church. It would be great if you could find a good church 'locally', or relatively close by, because this allows you to connect with some of the people during the week also. You might then see them around outside of church, in the community.

Do you know any Christians who you could ask for a church recommendation?

However, my friend, the most important discipline by far in your walk with Jesus is your daily reading of the bible, and time alone with him in prayer. ***By far!*** This 'instruction' to your mind and heart and spirit, will also help you discern a good church. So please, make your daily quiet time your most protected discipline, and the Lord will build on this...

## #4

## Sharing

When I was a teenager I played soccer. I remember our coach telling us, '*The best defense is offense!*' In other words, your own goal will be most protected, when you are far up the field attacking the other goal.

There is a parallel here for our walk with Jesus. We are called to 'share' Jesus with others. Jesus told us to '*let our light shine*'<sup>5</sup>, and also told us that we needed to '*testify about him*'. This verse is one of many where Jesus points us 'outwards':

***'The Spirit of truth will testify about me... and you also must testify about me, because you have been with me...'***  
(John 15:26-27)

When you believed in Jesus, and started following him, everything began to change in your life. Change for the better! You began to move away from sin and wrong things. You began to feel forgiven,

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<sup>5</sup> 'Jesus said, '*Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*' (Matthew 5:16)

and feel more peace. You began a new life, and had actually become a '*new creation*' in Jesus. You were saved!

And this is why we share Jesus with others. In the same way you needed Jesus, others need him, too. So we walk with Jesus, and we share him with others. The Holy Spirit helps us. Did you see the verse above? The '*Spirit of Truth*' testifies about Jesus, so you are not alone when you are sharing him with others!

And when we are sharing Jesus, it is like we are on the 'offense' instead of on the 'defense'. When we are active in sharing our faith, we tend to be farther away from temptation, farther away from spiritual danger – farther away from falling away, or allowing the enemy to 'score goals' against us.

To share Jesus with people you need to pray and ask God to help you. He will help you! The Holy Spirit testifies about Jesus! So pray and ask God to open doors for you to share about him. Look for opportunities... For example, next time someone asks you what your plans are

for the weekend, tell them: *'Well, I do go to church on Sunday, so that's one thing on the cards... How about you?'*

## #5

## Integrity

***‘They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him.’*** (Titus 1:6)

When we come to know Jesus, something ‘real’ happens in our heart, our spirit, our minds. But here’s the question, and here’s the challenge: *Has something ‘real’ actually happened in your life actions?*

It’s one thing to ‘believe’ something, it’s another to ‘live’ it. I remember once when I was a teen, and I was at a friend’s house for a party. A group gossip broke out about a guy that normally was one of the gang – he just hadn’t arrived yet to the party. As the gossip flowed, I was asked straight and loud by one of the group: *‘Peter, you don’t like him, do you?’* I shook my head, scoffed and said, *‘No!’*

The truth is I *did* like him. He was as much a friend as anyone else in that group. But when my friendship was actually tested, it failed. Whatever I ‘believed’ about this guy, or he about me, with my actions I denied him. I felt like

such a coward. And I can recall many of these moments in my life, where I have not been true to what I believe.

So how can I guard against this in my relationship with Jesus? How can I build my relationship with Christ in a way that when put to the test, I will pass and not fail?

Look at this powerful picture Jesus paints in Matthew chapter 7:

*'Everyone who hears these words of mine and **puts them into practice** is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. (Matthew 7:24-25)*

A relationship with Jesus is a 'lifestyle', not just a creed, a belief. We put into practice what he teaches. We believe in him, we love him, we receive his love, and we '*put into practice*' what he teaches. We get practical! This strengthens us, and prepares us to stand with him when the world tests us!

I sound like a broken record, I know, on this particular point, but it bears repeating: Read the bible daily, and sit quietly with the Lord in prayer. Yes, my friend, this 'togetherness' with Jesus each day, actually being with him, is the life source, the oxygen, of your relationship with him.

Is your '*daily quiet time*' plugged in? Where and when do you have your 'quiet time'? What book of the bible are you now reading?

We'll talk more about 'integrity' in tomorrow's entry...

## #6

## Integrity (Part 2)

So we've called these last 2 entries, 'Integrity'. In other words, being genuine – inside and out – in your friendship with Jesus. Not believing one thing, but living another – which Jesus called, '*hypocritical*'. And Jesus often called out hypocrisy in people, even religious leaders of the day!<sup>6</sup>

A stirring word of God through the prophet, Isaiah, puts it this way:

***'You people honor me with your lips, but your hearts are far from me!'***  
(Isaiah 29:13)

We don't want to be those people. Jesus himself refers to this type of person as '*lukewarm... neither hot nor cold.*' (Revelation 3:16) So let's keep walking forward...

Practically, my friend, let me put one key thing on the table – namely, sexual immorality. Why? Aren't there lots of 'sins'

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<sup>6</sup> Luke 12:1; Matthew 23 (the whole chapter!)

out there? Yes, there are! But even the Bible sets our 'sexual sin' apart, and refers to it as different, deeper, more impactful.<sup>7</sup> And if we're honest, we know it is!

The consequences of sexual choices destroy relationships, families, and even kingdoms and nations. All through the Bible, from start to finish, many a godly man lost his legacy and inheritance because he fell to sexual sin and temptation. And to this day many a good person – at home, in business or politics – falls and fails due to secret sexual sin. So let's shoot very straight here...

- 1. Do you watch movies or look at pictures/images that are immoral? Like pornography, or pictures with sexual content?***
- 2. Are you in a sexual, romantic relationship, but not married?***
- 3. Are you struggling with homosexuality, or consider yourself homosexual?***

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<sup>7</sup> 1 Corinthians 6:18-20, Matthew 5:27-28, 1 Corinthians 7; 1 Timothy 1:8-10, 1 Corinthians 6:9, Romans 1:26-27

My friend, if you can answer ‘yes’ to any of the above, God calls you to a new path, a new start.

He does not condemn you, or point fingers. But he does call you to come away to a new life. How? Not easy, and you will need support from your Christian friends and the Word of God, and the Spirit of God! But through **repentance, faith and action**, you can break free and move into new spaces of life and identity.

**\*Repentance is acknowledging wrong in your life.**

Here today I just want to encourage you in the right ‘direction’. I want to encourage you how to ‘turn’ and ‘face’ the road of light and healing.

While holding Christ’s hand, and trusting him, **the very first ‘turn’ is a turn of ‘repentance’**. What this means is simply agreeing with God that a thing is wrong, against his will for your life, your soul. Simply saying, ***‘Lord, this area of my life is wrong. I agree with you, and I’m sorry. I want a new life in you.’*** This

simple prayer, my friend, from the heart, is a prayer of repentance.

This moment of trusting God, of turning, is so powerful. Everything 'new' comes from this 'turn'. Jesus forgives, Jesus loves, Jesus walks with you.

God does not want you to fix everything, or change everything. You cannot make these changes in your own strength. God wants you to open your heart to him, and allow Jesus to bring about change in your life. He wants your heart, your humility, and he will open up new paths...

Take some time today. Sit quietly with Jesus. Ask him – whisper to him – ask him about these areas of sexual struggle. Ask Jesus if one of these areas is *your* struggle, and if he is leading you to turn away from it. Dare to listen. Dare to repent. A new destiny awaits you...

***'Jesus said, 'Repent and believe.'***

(Mark 1:15)

***'Jesus said, 'I am the door, and anyone who comes through me will be saved.'***

***They will come in and go out and find pasture... I have come that you might have life to the full.'*** (John 10:9-10)

## #7

## Freedom

The last 2 'entries' have been tough. We talked through 'integrity' and 'repentance'. That is tough stuff! Changes in our heart and life really hurt.

My concern for you at this time, however, is that you do not lose heart! As Christians, we can become *too* focused on 'change' and '*Do's & Don't's*'. And then we become discouraged. Jesus does call us to change, but only so he can set us free, set us soaring! Look at this incredible verse:

***'It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.'*** (Galatians 5:1)

Paul – who wrote this book of the Bible, and verse – is talking to people who got caught up in '*Do's & Don'ts*'. They were too focused on rules, or what we call, 'legalism'. And as a result, they were losing their 'freedom' in Jesus.

So when we talk about 'repenting' of sin,

it is not supposed to be a new 'rule' or chain on you. On the contrary! It is supposed to *break* chains that are on you! True repentance of sin is not to take away your freedom in life, but give you REAL freedom in Jesus.

Sometimes when we have been quite deep in sin, when we 'repent', turn away from it, we can feel a little lost, a little lonely. We can feel a bit depressed. We feel we have 'lost' something, not gained something.

When I first started following Jesus I was a teenager in high school. I had a lot to repent of. I was deep in sexual sin, and lots of foolishness with lots of people. When Jesus called my heart to him, and I decided to sincerely believe in him, and follow him, I found my first real challenge was to let some things go that I knew were wrong. I needed to repent. This was hard. And as I let things go – and let some people go – I was lonely. Can you relate?

I had to change friends, and change behaviors. I needed to stop swearing, and

stop looking at things, and even thinking about things... I felt my whole identity was crumbling. My friends seemed to all disappear overnight, as I stopped going places with them, and starting telling them about my new faith. I was not feeling 'freedom' or feeling good. I was feeling low, lonely and lost.

At this lonely time I felt like I only had Jesus at my side (though there were others), and I looked forward every day to just sitting in my room after school and reading my Bible. Sitting alone with the Spirit of the Lord, and reading – drinking in – his words.

But then something really interesting began to happen. It was truly like seeing the sun rise. The Lord Jesus began bringing me new friends through church. New connections. I was laughing again. I felt like I was venturing out of the darkness, into light. I felt, honestly, like I had died, and was coming into a new life. Is this not the gospel? From death to life?

I share this only to 'cast vision' and encourage you in these first, tough steps

of 'repentance'. Don't get heavy! Don't get discouraged! And don't get focused on rules and 'Do's & Don'ts'! Just repent of your sin, and then walk out of the tomb into your new life of freedom! Walk out of the darkness of your past, into a new, bright, limitless life of Spirit freedom in Christ!

***'Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy.'*** (Psalm 126:5)

***'...weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.'***  
(Psalm 30:5)

***'Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. The old has gone, the new has come!'*** (2 Corinthians 5:17)

## #8

## Oasis

***'Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me.'*** (Psalm 42:7)

I love this verse! I love the 'quiet' or the 'peace' that is actually in the 'roar' of waters. I lived on ships as a kid, for 4 years. There was a constant humming sound of the ship generators, necessary for power on the ship. It was a type of 'white noise' in the background, blocking out other sounds and lulling me to sleep at night...<sup>8</sup>

My friend, the ultimate reality of your relationship with Jesus, is peace. You have stepped out of the world of sorrow, sadness and death, into a place of peace, perfection and beauty. It is like a dream come true, or jumping into a picture. And Jesus himself spoke of this magical 'pass' into the other world...

***'Jesus said, 'I am the door, and***

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<sup>8</sup> For more on my adventurous upbringing on ships, visit the 'About' tab at: [www.1peter1three.weebly.com](http://www.1peter1three.weebly.com)

***whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture.*** (John 10:9)

Yes, this life is still dark, challenging, dangerous. But the truth is – the ultimate truth – is that you are safe and ‘banked’ for all eternity. You are actually a ‘*citizen of heaven*’ (Phil 3:20), and you are ‘*hidden with Christ in God.*’ (Col 3:3)

We need to regularly think on this. Even Jesus did. We’re told that Jesus was able to get through his own suffering and mission here on earth, because of the ‘*joy set before him*’, his focus on his heavenly destiny. (Heb 12:2)

Truly, I love to just ‘dream’ about heaven. I think on walking quiet streets of gold, feasting with friends, delighting in waters that are ‘*crystal clear*’ and ‘*flow through the streets of the city.*’ (Rev 22:1-2) When you have some time, look up and read these 2 scriptures: Revelation 21:1-5, and Revelation 22:1-5.

I leave you with this verse, which is not about the future only, but about our lives

here and now. When we believe in Jesus, he puts his Spirit in us, and this reality is at work in us now, and forevermore:

***‘The fruit of God’s righteousness is peace; its effect are quietness and confidence forever.’*** (Isaiah 32:17)

***‘When... the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears... it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you.’*** (John 16:13-14)

When you believed in Jesus, Jesus poured out his Spirit into you. The Holy Spirit is one with God, one with Jesus, and is in you.

***‘When you believed, you were marked in Christ with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance...’***  
(Ephesians 1:13-14)

In the same way you can be closer to a friend, you can also be more sensitive to the Holy Spirit. In the same way there are times when you need a friend to be ‘nearer’ to you, you can also pray and ask God for ‘more’ of the Holy Spirit. It is a little difficult to understand, and the Holy Spirit is not measured out like we measure *things* out. **Remember, with**

**God it is all about relationship, your heart, your faith.** As you grow in your relationship with Jesus, you will draw nearer to him. This is natural. This is childlike truth – which is God’s favorite kind of truth! (see Matthew 18:3)

We are taught in Scripture (as you’ve just read above) that when you believed in Jesus Christ ‘truly’, the Holy Spirit is poured in you, lives in you. Christ lives in you by His Spirit. ***There is no ‘extra’ step of faith you need to take to have the Holy Spirit.***<sup>9</sup>

My friend, it is important to know that Father God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are all separate beings, but they are all **ONE** God. This is not difficult to understand, it is *impossible* to understand! It is a God-truth, which is far above us. But it is the undeniable truth about His identity that God reveals in the Bible. **Separate, but ONE!**

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<sup>9</sup> Colossians 1:6 refers to when we ‘truly’ understood the gospel. Also, important to note, the passage in Acts 19:1-6 makes clear that these people had not yet even heard of Jesus, and therefore had not yet believed in them. When they did hear, believe, they received the Holy Spirit.

Now, some people try to tell you that because the Holy Spirit is a 'separate' being, you might not have received the Holy Spirit when you truly believed in Jesus. They tell you that you need a separate, new 'baptism' in the Holy Spirit. My friend, just smile, and leave. That's all I can tell you. This is a deception. It is subtle, and on one level it seems to make sense, but it is not consistent with the truth of the Bible and the Spirit of God. ***Smile, be kind, and be gone!:)*** Seriously, find another church.

I'll leave it there for now about the Holy Spirit. Just know that as a true believer in Jesus, the Holy Spirit lives in you. You are safe, you are sealed, you are filled with God's Spirit. Don't question it further, just keep building on this new relationship...

## #10

## GOD'S TEACHING

(Part 1 – ‘*Instruction*’)

How’s your daily ‘quiet time’ going? Have you managed to get that discipline going? Do you have a favorite time, place and treat? For me, the treat is always a hot cup of coffee, and my favorite time is early in the morning, before the day begins, before the sun comes up.

In the Bible we receive God’s ‘teaching’. This is actual ‘words’ and instruction. Now, we also receive God’s ‘actions’ and attitudes, which teach us more than just His words. But we’ll look at that aspect tomorrow, in the section called, ‘*God’s Actions*’.

But today, let’s look at a passage from the book of Mark, and note what Jesus actually said, what he instructed this man. First, let’s read the passage:

*‘As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. ‘Good teacher,’ he asked, ‘what must I do to inherit eternal life?’*

*'Why do you call me good?' Jesus answered. 'No one is good—except God alone. You know the commandments: 'You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.'*

*'Teacher,' he declared, 'all these I have kept since I was a boy.'*

*Jesus looked at him and loved him. 'One thing you lack,' he said. 'Go, sell everything you have and **give to the poor**, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then **come, follow me.**'*

*At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.*

*Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, 'How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!'*

*(Mark 10:17-23)*

There is lots to 'see' and think about in this passage, but for today I just want to focus on 2 things Jesus said to this man.

Jesus challenged people in different ways at different times. With this man, called the 'rich young ruler', Jesus could see

that his love of money and wealth was a problem in his spiritual life, in his willingness to follow Jesus. So Jesus instructed him to sell his possessions and give to the poor. Secondly, Jesus instructed him to actually come and follow him, day to day. This was going to mark a change in his routine, his commitments. But it seems that the real 'issue' for this man – the challenge that made him sad – was to give away money.

OK, so today I just wanted to focus on 'instruction', the actual teaching Jesus gives people through his words. The specific guidance, the commands.

When you read the bible there is going to be lots of actual instruction – commands to love, to forgive, to share, to rest, etc. **Not all commands are for everyone, every day.** The Holy Spirit will bring to your mind what He is highlighting to *you* at a given time, or for a given season or hour. But note the 'instruction' of Scripture as you read.

## #11

## GOD'S TEACHING

(Part 2 – ‘God’s Actions’)

OK, yesterday (*or the day you did the previous entry, #10*), we looked at the ‘instruction’ teaching of God. Do you remember? Jesus gave the ‘rich young ruler’ actual steps to take for his personal life and spiritual journey. These were practical, direct instructions.

We also noted that Jesus gives us all many of these instructions through the Bible – direct instructions about loving, forgiving, moral purity, resting, etc. The Holy Spirit will press on your heart when and how to obey and grow in these areas of guidance.

***‘Jesus said, ‘The Holy Spirit... will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.’***  
(John 14:26)

Now, today I want you to read again the same passage, but we’re going to focus not on the ‘instruction’ of Jesus, but what we can learn about God from the

'actions' or behavior of Jesus. We learn truth from God's instruction, but we also learn truth from God's actions – not just what he does, but what he does not do! So why don't you read through the story one more time:

*'As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. 'Good teacher,' he asked, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?'*

*'Why do you call me good?' Jesus answered. 'No one is good—except God alone. You know the commandments: 'You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.'*

*'Teacher,' he declared, 'all these I have kept since I was a boy.'*

**Jesus looked at him and loved**

**him**. *'One thing you lack,' he said. 'Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.'*

*At this the man's face fell. **He went away sad**, because he had great wealth.*

*Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, 'How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!'*

(Mark 10:17-23)

OK, so we're just looking at the behaviors of Christ, the actions. What can we learn? Firstly, we're told that Jesus '*looked and loved*'. This attitude of Christ towards this man is deeply challenging, and deeply 'instructing'. We learn about Christ, and we learn about how we should be disposed towards people who do not know Jesus. We should have a soft heart towards these people. We should have a heart of love towards them.

In this passage we are not *told* by Jesus to have a heart of love towards people who do not know Jesus. We simply learn this by 'reading between the lines', so to speak, by actually studying how Jesus acted, what was at work in his heart.

Another thing to note is not what Jesus did, but what he did not do. The man declined the offer of Jesus, was sad about it, and walked away. Jesus did not walk after him. Jesus did not call after

him, negotiating a new offer. No, Jesus – full of love for this man – allowed him to choose otherwise, and leave. Jesus then continued to teach those that were present...

There will be times, my friend, that you need to hold your ground. You will love someone, you will share with them the way of truth, but they may choose otherwise. There may be a time when you need to let them leave, and not go after them. We learn this from God's teaching in this passage – not with words of instruction, but through the actions of Jesus Christ. Is this the case every time? No. But the Holy Spirit may one day call this to your mind, to prompt you to hold your ground, as Jesus did.

#12

## Worship

***'I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them... I, the LORD your God... show love to those who love me and keep my commandments.'***

(Exodus 20:2-6)

The verse above is called the *'First Commandment'*. You may have heard of the 10 Commandments? God gave the prophet, Moses, 10 Commandments, and the above verse is the first one. The other 9 are about not lying, murdering, etc. They are important, but the very first one is about God being God, and that we must worship only Him.

So what is worship? What is worship of God?

Well, let's keep it very simple. We can see from the first Commandment, that worship of God is really about having God as our number 1 in life, loving him and keeping his commandments. It is not about falling on our faces and singing in adoration. It is about a heart that recognizes God as King of all, and following after him.

It's not about '*talk*' (or '*song*'), but about the walk, a heart surrendered to God.

Jesus constantly looked for people to fall in with him, walk with him. He did not run around looking for people to praise him with words and tee-shirts and social media posts and bumper stickers... Nothing wrong with 'words' (and stickers), but true 'worship' of God, is quietly, honestly, faithfully, walking with Jesus.

My friend, I love 'worship music', and I love singing to God, and gazing on his beauty and whispering his name. I love to 'worship' God. But true worship is from the heart, and in the heart. I'll leave today's reflection with this teaching from Jesus:

***'When you pray, go into your room,  
close the door and pray to your  
Father, who is unseen. Then your  
Father, who sees what is done in  
secret, will reward you.'*** (Matthew 6:6)

**#13**

**FEAR**

I remember one time I had a near miss. I was cycling my bike through a foggy, dark night in Dublin, Ireland. A big, double-decker bus was coming up behind me on the road – very tight, small road. And as the bus neared me, my bike actually wiped out, slipped out from under me, and I spilled across the middle of the road. I turned my head in panic as I watched this bus with beaming lights coming to a stop about one yard from me. I picked myself up and dragged the bike off the road, and watched the bus drive off.

I was staying at a friend's house that night, but I was so late that I had to let myself in, and just creep upstairs to the bedroom they had given me to use for a few days. It was cold, unfamiliar, and a fear from that 'near miss' began to crawl over my soul. I felt it was spiritual, dark. I felt I had been distant from the Lord for a while, not really seeking him, or walking with Him, and this experience triggered in me a sense of danger, darkness.

All I could do as I lay there, was whisper the name of Jesus. '*Jesus. Jesus. Jesus.*' As I whispered the name, a peace began to build up in my spirit, in my heart, and I fell fast asleep.

That experience has stayed with me a long time. Not the fear, but the power in the name of Jesus. His name, you see, in faith, is access to Him personally. It's not a magic name. It is 'His' name. So to whisper the name of Jesus, is to allow Him in.

Another powerful tool in the face of fear, is to recite verses. I memorized Psalm 23 at a young age, and many, many times, when facing fear, have recited this scripture. I would like to write it here, and challenge you to memorize it.

How do you *memorize* it? Well, very simply, you will need to tackle one verse at a time. You could write down the first verse today, and take it with you everywhere you go. Read it... then try to say it without looking. Read it... try to say it without looking. Put it away. Try to say it quietly throughout the day. Then

tomorrow, pencil in the next verse, and add it on to what you've learnt... Until you can say the whole Psalm, start to finish, very well. Keep this one turning in your heart and mind your whole life. You won't regret it!

### **Psalm 23**

- (1) *The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.*
- (2) *He makes me lie down in green pastures,  
he leads me beside quiet waters,*
- (3) *he refreshes my soul.  
He guides me along the right paths  
for his name's sake.*
- (4) *Even though I walk  
through the darkest valley,  
I will fear no evil,  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff,  
they comfort me.*
- (5) *You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies.  
You anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.*
- (6) *Surely your goodness and love will  
follow me*

*all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of  
the LORD forever.*

**#14**

**Identity – The ‘True’ You!**

The ‘truest’ you is found in following Jesus. Let’s consider this carefully...

We are very insecure people. We live in an unsafe world, and from a young age we are trying to get a grip on our own identity, our own destiny. Someone can say unkind words, and it changes our view of ourselves, and the world around us. Someone can be mean or hurt us physically, and it changes our view of ourselves and the world around us... Our sense of identity is so important to us, and yet so brittle. It cracks and changes all the time. Can you relate?

What happens is we can come to hate ourselves and never ‘look’ at ourselves or consider ourselves, or we can go the other route and almost obsess about ourselves, gazing in the mirror – and the mirror of life – to try to know ourselves. Exhausting. This focus on ourselves – hating or obsessing – never brings us peace or security.

My friend, lift your tired eyes to the Lord.

Just look on him. Just follow him. If you entrust yourself to him, and just follow his lead, your *'truest'* self will be in motion. Your heart will rest, and your path will have deep meaning. *Your unique and special identity will begin to show itself in a way that the world cannot change or influence.*

This is God's way. We take our eyes *off* ourselves, and then we truly see ourselves. Look at this amazing verse, which shows the order in which God does things:

***'... whoever loses their life for me and the gospel, will find it.'*** (Mark 8:35)

Also, Jesus taught us to seek *first* His Kingdom, and he would *'add to us'* what we need. (Matthew 6:33) Do you see the *'exchange'* here? He calls us to seek *His* priorities and truth, and He will seek our wellbeing. This is not the world's way! The world tells us to scramble, to worry, and pursue what we need. God says, *'No, rather, pursue what I need, and I will provide you with what you need.'* It is a trust exercise. And it is the same about

our identity. **Instead of striving to know ourselves, we need to strive to know Him.** And as we 'seek' to know Him better, we will come to know ourselves and our truest identity, better. God will pour it into us.

I leave you with this verse to ponder. This would be a great one to memorize, and try to actually 'reside' in.

***'All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ.'***  
(Colossians 2:3)

#15

## Purpose

Rain coming down on the window pane. Can be such a lonely experience. I often feel winds of loneliness or hopelessness. And it's OK. We live in a broken world, and the 'story' of this life is a sad one. It's OK to sometimes feel the winds of this broken life, and let its reality touch us. Not break us. Not hold us down. But remind us that we need – we desperately need – the '**light that shines in the darkness.**' (John 1:5)

You may have a job, or be looking for a job. And that's good, that's right! We're even told in the Bible, '**You should work... so that you are not dependent on others.**' (1 Thess 4:11-12) You may have a family, or looking to get married. This is also a high calling, a high priority for your time and energy. But, my friend, under it all, we feel a '*call*' or a '*question*' about our ultimate purpose. Many, many things we do and invest in are just about *us*, our *survival*, our experiences, our own relationships. **But do we have another purpose in this life, other than just 'living'?**

The answer, my friend, is '**Yes!**' And it is a serious purpose! Jesus – God in the form of man – came to earth, walked, talked, loved and suffered, to open this purpose to us. It is this: ***To know Jesus Christ, and to make him known.***

Remember, Jesus is the Spirit of God and eternal life. He gives us life, and holds the keys to eternal life. He is the '*Power of God*'. Everyone, everywhere, must eat, must stay warm, must work and live... but everyone, everywhere, must hear about Jesus Christ, and have their sins forgiven, and their souls saved for all eternity.

So, very simply, my friend, rather than just working to earn, you can ask God to help you share Jesus with your work colleagues. Rather than just spending time with your kids, you can ask Jesus to help you instruct them in reading the Bible and having faith. Rather than just being a kind person to your friends and neighbors, you can be an 'ambassador' of Jesus Christ and his Gospel to your friends and neighbors. This is the ultimate purpose of living – to come to know Jesus

Christ, and believe in him. You can help people with this. ***You can make God's 'purpose' your ultimate purpose.*** This is true purpose for living, and an amazing, eternal adventure here on earth, here and now!

OK, practically speaking, what steps can I take to make this purpose of God – to reach people with Jesus Christ – my purpose for living? Here are 3 practical steps:

1. **Pray** – *Pray and ask God to take this 'purpose' deeper into your heart.*
2. **Believe** – *Believe that knowing Jesus is the most important thing to God.*
3. **Act** – *Ask God (so this step involves prayer again!) to help you share with somebody about Jesus this week. You could ask God to 'open a door' for you to chat to someone about your faith. The Lord can do this! You will be surprised, if you truly pray and ask God for this opportunity to 'act'. Someone might ask you what you're doing on the*

*weekend, and you might be able to say you're going to church on Sunday, and this may lead to a very meaningful conversation. Or someone might mention to you something hard they are going through, and you might be able to say you will pray for them this week, or even you might be able to find a meaningful verse to write down and give them to encourage them. Lastly, maybe you can 'do' something that puts your faith on display a little. For example, writing out a nice scripture, and even framing it, and putting it in on your desk at work, or maybe posting a scripture on your social media. This can be a way to send forth a word of Christ – and he never lets these acts of faith fall to the ground!*

***'The Spirit of truth... will testify about me. And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.'*** (John 15:26-27)<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> A few more scriptures you can look up some time about God's purpose, and your 'purpose', are: 2 Corinthians 5:20; Mark 16:15; John 6:40; Matthew 18:12-14

#16

## Checking in...

We have covered a lot of ground! I realized, looking back over the last few entries, that we probably would do well to '*check in*' on where we are at...

Here's how we'll do this. I'll put 3 questions to you about some themes we've covered – specifically themes covered in entries number 1, 3 and 6. So if you need to, you can revisit these entries later.

These 3 questions are not meant to make you feel bad. They are simply meant to help you ***think, ponder, pray***. Maybe after you read each one, sit back for a minute and think about it. Talk to yourself out loud about each point - even if you have to whisper or talk quietly!

**Daily Quiet Time**: *Are you having a daily 'quiet time'? Where and when do you have this time, and what part of the bible are you reading?*

**Church**: *Have you got some advice on a good church to visit? Have you actually*

*visited yet?*

**Repentance:** *Is there an area of sin in your life (a lifestyle choice, pornography, or other) that you need to repent of? What steps have you taken to repent of this sin?*

Let's go a little deeper with each one of these 3 themes:

Regarding the 'Quiet Time': There was an amazing moment when some people asked Jesus a 'trick question', thinking they were clever. Honestly, the content of their question is not important here. (*But you can look it up and read about it sometime – Matthew 22:23-33*) What really caught my attention is what Jesus said to them:

***'You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God.'*** (Matthew 22:29)

Jesus was directly telling them that they needed to know the Bible. They needed to read it, and know it. Yes, knowledge of the Bible alone, without a living faith in

Jesus (the '*power of God*') is not enough. We need to know both. And your '*quiet time*' every day is your special time to get to know *both* the Scriptures and the power of God, the presence of Jesus! If you need to revisit Entry number 1, this speaks about the 'quiet time'.

Church? It is really important, if you can, to be brave and venture out to a real church. It is too easy for us now to think we can just watch sermons online, etc. Online church involvement can be encouraging, and a good stop-gap if you are in transition at this time. But be careful to not 'hide' at home or behind your computer. Pray and ask God for a good church you can actually go to. We talked about church in Entry number 3.

Repentance. This is where the rubber hits the road. My friend, if there is an area of sin in your life, you truly cannot get around it without repentance. There is no way to 'cover it up', or just get busy with other 'Christian' activity, music, projects, study... If you are struggling at this point, don't despair. The power of Jesus upon you, and behind you, and before you, is

eternal! Please do, however, revisit Entry number 6, if you feel you still need breakthrough in this area.

#17

'Acts'

There's an amazing book in the Bible called, 'Acts'. It comes right after the four Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts.

So in the 4 Gospels, we have 4 different 'accounts' of Jesus' life – through the eyes of 4 different disciples, namely, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. But at the end of Jesus' life here on earth, He ascended into heaven. He literally rose up off the earth and disappeared into the clouds. Look at this verse:

***'...he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going...'***

(Acts 1:9-10)

So, after Jesus left the earth, a new chapter began. And we are all still in that chapter. It is the mission of Jesus through His believers here on earth. We no longer see and touch Jesus in the flesh, but rather we have His presence through the Holy Spirit. And we work together,

bringing the message and power of Jesus across the earth, until He comes again. We are told he will come again, just as he left. Look at this verse:

***‘The Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.’***

(1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)

Jesus himself also said that His return would be *‘on the clouds’*, as clear as *‘lightening in the sky’*, impossible to miss. He said the **‘whole world’** would know when it happens! (Matthew 24:27,30) So, my friend, let no one tell you it has already happened, or make you think you will somehow miss it!

OK, moving on here... So Jesus came, lived his life, and we have 4 books of the Bible that tell us about His life here on earth – the 4 Gospels. But then we have

an incredible book called, 'Acts'. These are the 'acts' of the first Christians, after Jesus had left the earth. This is one of the most exciting 'books' you'll ever read! And it is the foundation of *your* story in Jesus, and my story in Jesus. Why? Well, because we, too, are part of this group of people!

I'm just going to leave it here for today. I just wanted you to know about this 'book', and maybe after you have finished reading the 'Gospel' you are now reading in your '*quiet time*', you can go to the book of 'Acts', and make that your next book of the Bible to read...

#18

Caution

***'Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them.'*** (Matthew 7:15-16)

There is some false stuff, some bad stuff, in the mix of true Christianity. I hate this aspect of our path in Jesus. The fact is, however, as believers in Jesus we are in a 'spiritual battle'. And from the beginning of time, and all through Jesus' own life, there were enemies very close by.

This should not worry us. This should not make us afraid. But it is important to understand that in walking with Jesus, we are in a battle of Truth vs. Lies, Light vs. Darkness, *Good vs. Evil*. We are soldiers.

In Jesus we have a '*peace that passes understanding*.' (Philippians 4:7) Even though we are in a battle, we have peace. The ultimate battle has been won. That is why, when Jesus was on the cross dying for our sin, he said, '*It is finished!*' (John 19:30)

So we don't have to fear the enemy, the devil, but we do need to be aware of his 'schemes'. (2 Corinthians 2:11)

Let me make this very simple today, just touching on the 'surface'. Beware of 'false Christianity'. These are called 'cults'.

What cults do is either deny something very 'central' to the identity of Jesus (like the fact that he is 'God', one with the Father), or they add to his Gospel message. For example they may insist that you are a member of their church, or you are baptized by their organization.

*(By the way, 'Baptism' – i.e. being submerged in water as a sign of your faith – is a symbolic act. Nothing more. It does nothing for your soul, or your salvation. It is a significant act, and please do consider participating in it some time, but never, never think it is part of the Gospel message, the saving of your soul!)*<sup>11</sup>

OK, back to 'cults'. Two very large

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<sup>11</sup> 1 Corinthians 1:17

organizations that fall into this category are the 'Jehovah Witnesses' and the 'Mormons' (called the 'Church of Latter Day Saints'). Both of these organizations really do *both* of what I've mentioned above – 'deny' something essential about the identity of Jesus, and 'add' to His message.

They deny that Jesus is the same God as Father God. They deny this mystery of his identity. They do it in a very subtle way, a very deceptive way, but you do need to know that by doing this they are denying the very essence of who Jesus is, and they are denying very clear revelation that is given in the Bible.

And, in both of these cults, they 'add' to the message of Jesus. They require that you join *their* organization. They believe only people who are members of their organizations are 'saved'. This is completely unbiblical, and goes against the message of Jesus – His Gospel of repentance and faith for salvation.

There are many more things we could discuss about these cults, and others. But

the key is simply to know that they are out there, they are 'tricky', and you need to avoid them. Try to avoid getting in arguments with them. Just smile, be kind, and close the door!:) Maybe in the future the Lord will lead you to reach out to people in the cults, when he has built you up, and equipped you with the right understanding and 'power', but for now I would strongly encourage you to simply avoid them. As Jesus himself said, they can appear as 'sheep', but be as dangerous to you and your faith as 'ferocious wolves'.

Simply hold to the truth of knowing Jesus as Lord, '*God in the flesh*', and worship him. Bow down to Jesus, as the disciples did<sup>12</sup>, and worship him, walk with him. Be childlike in knowing him, without having all the answers to 'explain' him. He is God. He is one with the Father, the Creator of Heaven and Earth. This is the clear revelation of the Bible, taught from the beginning to end. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise!

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<sup>12</sup> Matthew 14:33; John 9:38

***‘ Philip said, ‘Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.’***

***Jesus answered: ‘Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.’***

***(John 14:8-9)***

***‘Our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ.’*** (Philippians 3:20)

Following on from the previous section on ‘Caution’, it is so important to know that you are complete in Christ! Yes, we are in a battle. Yes, as Jesus himself said, *‘in this life you will have trouble...’* (John 16:30) But the ultimate truth is that you are passing through here. You are a citizen of heaven. You are from there, and you are heading back there. It’s a done deal!

Now, I just want to focus your attention on 2 aspects of your identity in Jesus:

1. **You’re not of this world!**

So, if you look at the verse above, it refers to you as a citizen of heaven. Jesus tells us that when we believe in him, we pass through a ‘door’ (which is Jesus!), into a new life. (John 10:9) You have entered a new ‘reality’, a new universe, so to speak, in Jesus. We are told that

we are in Christ a '*new creation*'. (2 Corinthians 5:17) You might look like just an ordinary mortal, but you're not. You're from a different planet!:) You have been '*born from above*' (John 3:3), you're not of this world. This should help explain some feelings of 'separation' that you will feel as a Christian in a sinful world. You may feel lonely sometimes, like a 'foreigner' in a foreign land. That's because you are! So relax, and just know, this is OK!

## **2. *You are on mission!***

Now, related to above, it is important to know that you are building – or investing – in 2 different worlds at the same time. It is like you have one foot on earth, and one foot in heaven. You are not just doing nice things in life to make the world a nicer place. Some people are doing that, but not you. You are trying to build the Kingdom of Jesus here in this life. Jesus taught us to pray to God, '*Your Kingdom come, your will be done,*

*on earth as it is in heaven.'*  
(Matthew 6:10) So your 'mission'  
here is different from other people.  
You are doing things *'in the name of  
Jesus'*, and trying to usher in a new  
Spirit, a new King, pure light, and  
ultimately God's Gospel of  
salvation. You are on mission!

***'This is what we speak, not in words  
taught us by human wisdom but in  
words taught by the Spirit, explaining  
spiritual realities with Spirit-taught  
words. The person without the Spirit  
does not accept the things that come  
from the Spirit of God but considers  
them foolishness, and cannot  
understand them because they are  
discerned only through the Spirit.'***  
(1 Corinthians 2:13-14)

#20

**Be With Me!**

***‘Jesus said to his disciples, ‘Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.’ (Mark 6:31)***

God loves you. And He came in the person of Jesus to be near us, be with us. And now, by His Spirit, He is with us, and *in* us. The whole purpose of Jesus Christ is to be with you.

We must never lose sight of this. The love relationship between you and God is everything. If your personal love relationship with Jesus grows cold, your faith really loses its value, its power. Jesus himself said this to a whole church. He said,

***‘I see your good works... but I hold this against you: You have lost your first love.’ (Revelation 2:4)***

In a way, my friend, when it comes to walking with Jesus, the real challenge is to stay faithful. We grow in Jesus by remaining humble, and staying true. We don't grow by adding training, study, Bible

trivia and mission trips to our resume. No. We grow by remaining humble, like a child, and walking with him always like we did when we first met. This is to hold on our *'first love'*.

***'Jesus said, 'Unless you become like a child you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven.'*** (Matthew 18:3)

The humble heart of a child delights in just being with you. They don't need a lot of activity or toys, just your attention and sincere 'presence' with them. If you are present with them – emotionally and spiritually – they delight!

The same is true of God. Jesus wants your heart, your soul. He wants to be with you. One of the best ways to really stitch this into our lives is to keep that daily 'quiet time' rolling. With the discipline of your quiet time, you will find over time that Jesus is more present in your mind and activity throughout the rest of the day.

Let's finish this booklet with these words of Jesus below. They reinforce this point,

this ultimate purpose of love between you and the Lord.

***'The man asked Jesus, 'What is the most important command of God? Jesus answered, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind...'***  
(Matthew 22:36-37)

I hope you have enjoyed this booklet! I hope it has been useful to you in taking 'first steps' with Jesus.

The most important aspect of your walk with Christ, is your personal time with Him each day – in the Word, and in Spirit.

The Lord bless and keep you, in Jesus' name! The Lord establish you in your walk of faith!

For more encouraging resources - videos, devotionals, etc. - please visit my website:

[www.1peter1three.weebly.com](http://www.1peter1three.weebly.com)