

# The Christian Life Series

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## **Beginning the Christian Life**

Philippians 1:21 says, "For me to live is Christ." The Christian life begins with Jesus for He is the source of the eternal life we possess. There is a *pattern* for the Christian life (Christ's life), a *purpose* of the Christian life (to serve our Saviour), and the *power* necessary for our Christian life (the Holy Spirit of God). How do we begin the Christian life?

**I. With A Word From God-** Rom.10:17 states, "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17). His Word comes to us through a preacher, a Sunday School teacher, a Christian witness, or through some literature we read. It is through the confrontation with God's truth that we even realize we need a Saviour to begin the Christian journey.

**II. With A Willingness To Repent-** Jesus said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk.13:3,5). For a person to begin the Christian life, he or she must be willing to allow the Lord to change his or her life. In Luke 24:47 we are told that we are to preach "repentance and remission of sins." In Acts 2:38 Peter told those to whom he preached to repent. The Gk. word comes from a word that speaks of the mind and the will. It suggests one is to turn about or around and think differently about his sin and about God.

**III. With A Working of Faith-** See Eph. 2:8-9. We begin the Christian life by grace through faith. It is faith that connects the heart of man with the heart of God. Faith takes God at His Word and believes that He will do what He says He will do in His Word. Unbelief will cause a person to spend eternity in a lake of fire (Lk. 16). Our faith should be built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness, we dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name.

**V. With A Word of Testimony-** That testimony involves both the lips (Rom. 10:9,10) and the life (Mark 16:15). We start out the Christian life by telling others what the Lord Jesus has done for us in salvation. We manifest that through obedience, beginning with believer's baptism. Baptism speaks of the change that has taken place in us and our identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection.

**VI. With A Wealth to be Realized-** The person who comes to Christ and is united with Him becomes spiritually wealthy. The early verses of the Book of Ephesians convey something to us of the extent of our wealth in Christ. The Christian can live a better Christian life if there is an awareness of how he or she has become an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ (Rom.8:17).

## **Building Your Christian Life**

The Bible says in 2 Pet. 3:18 to "grow in grace." When we speak of growth we have reference to building. When we come to Christ we have a responsibility to work diligently toward spiritual growth. If something is alive it will grow. How can we grow?

**I. Contemplation-** (2 Tim. 2:15). We are to "study" the Word of God. That word means to "labour, do diligence, to be in earnest." We should study it *because of what it is* (the Word of God-2 Tim.3:16) and *because of what it does* (builds us up-Acts 20:32). "Study" in 2 Tim. 2:15 is in the continuous, ongoing verb tense (a practice).

**II. Cooperation-** James 1:22 says "Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only." As we study God's Word, God gives us a desire to do what He says to do. That is what we call cooperation. It is not enough to know what the Bible says, because God wants His truth to get in us and work through us as we live for Him in our daily lives. We should heed his Word *continually* and *undividedly*.

**III. Church Attendance-** Read Heb. 10:25. God puts you in a local church to be a faithful church member. We should be faithful in *attendance, in giving, and in loyalty* to it. Through the ministry of the local church a person is to be equipped to live for and to serve the Lord in this present evil world. How can a person expect to develop spiritually without being in the local church to benefit from it?

**IV. Confession-** The Bible says we are to "confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus" (Rom. 10:9). With our lips we are to bear testimony to what the Bible says about Christ and to what He has done in our lives. Confession brings about *satisfaction in our lives* and also will lead to the *salvation of others*. It is difficult to understand how one can say he loves the Lord and never talks about Him to other people? We should feel like the old song that says, "I love to tell the story, of unseen things above, of Jesus and His glory, of Jesus and His love."

**V. Conversation-** Many times in the Bible we are told to pray (Matt.5:44; 6:9). We need to talk to the Lord about many things as we sojourn through this present world. We need to talk to Him about our problems, our pressures, our plans, our need for power, etc. Sometimes just a little talk with Jesus will make things right. We are to pray *earnestly* and *believingly*.

**VI. Caring-** The way you really grow is to get your mind off of yourself and reach out to help others. In Gal. 6:2 the Bible says we are to "bear one another's burdens." We will grow faster if we will think of others more than we do ourselves. You have burdens but so do others. We do better spiritually when we focus less on ourselves.

## **Beautifying The Christian Life**

Titus 2:10b says, "Adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." In the context Paul has to deal with the subject of slavery. The slave is to be in subjection to his master. The Christian slave had a greater responsibility than the unsaved slave, that being not to argue with his master but to please Him. Slaves were urged not to steal so they must have been open to the temptation to do so. They could commend the Gospel with their life and their attitude. Even so, we beautify the Christian life by our attitude and how we live. How can we beautify what the Christian life really is?

**I. By Our Practice-** We are not just to be hearers of the Word of God but doers also (Ja.1:22). As we read the Word, hear it taught and preached, then put it into shoe leather, we make the Christian life attractive to others. If it can affect us and make us better people, then others can see what the truth can do for them. It pays to practice righteousness. Righteousness is a result of a knowledge of and fellowship with God.

**II. By Our Persuasion-** Six times Paul said, "I am persuaded" (Acts 20:26; Rom 8:18; Rom. 14:14; Rom. 15:14; 2 Tim. 1:5; 2 Tim. 1:12). Paul was persuaded that the things of God are true, dependable and faithful. As he manifested that to others, he beautified the Christian life and Christian doctrine to others. It makes our belief and way of life more desirable to those around us.

**III. By Our Proclamation-** As we give out the Gospel, it beautifies the Christian life (I Cor. 9:16). If what we have is not worth talking about to others, then it would not be worth much. But, since we are saved, I do not see how we can keep from telling the story of Jesus and His love. If it is worth having, it is worth seeking to get others to see how much they need the Lord Jesus Christ.

**IV. By Our Production-** 1 Peter 1:15 says, "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." It is the presence of Holy God that brings about holy living in our lives. So many today will not do like the old song says--"take time to be holy, speak oft with thy Lord." When a holy nature is in control, a holy life is the result. Fellowship with God produces holiness.

**V. By Our Peace-** Jesus said, "My peace I give unto you" (Jn.14:27). As people see us peaceful when we by all rights should be panicking, it beautifies our faith and the teachings of the Lord Jesus. There is so much going on to disturb us today and rob us of our peace. Let's do all we can do to beautify our Christian faith and Christian doctrine. "Adorn" is a present tense verb, thus, this adorning should be a continual lifestyle or way of life.

## **Blessed In The Christian Life**

Ephesians 1:3 says, "*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.*" There is no doubt we are blessed from the heavenly realm because by faith we are in the Lord Jesus Christ. Because we are a part of the spiritual kingdom of Christ, we are tremendously blessed.

In what ways are we blessed as God's children? Let me break it down into five various areas.

**I. We Are Blessed Spiritually-** That is evident from our text above. Of all the types of blessings we could list, the spiritual ones are the greatest. There are so many spiritual blessings we could not list them all. There are two I am going to point out to you. First, *we are forgiven*. Read Romans 4:7. The one whose sins are forgiven is a truly blessed person. To "forgive" means to "dismiss the charges." In addition, *we are fortified*. God promises to us in Isaiah 41:10, "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." God fortifies or strengthens those whom He forgives.

**II. We Are Blessed Domestically-** The home and marriage was established by God in Genesis (the book of beginnings). Adam and Eve were the first husband and wife (Gen.3). What a blessing to have a good home! In the home *there is a mate to love*. Husbands are told to love their wives (Eph. 5:25). The wife is to obey and submit to her husband (Eph.5:22). Often *there are children to train* (Prov. 22:6). It is a blessing to have children. Life could be very lonely and empty without them.

**III. We Are Blessed Physically-** Acts 17:28 says, "For in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring." *There is a degree of health*. No matter what your state of health or degree of health, we can all say we are blessed physically. No matter what kind of condition in which you find yourself, there is someone else who has things much worse than you do. There is a day of activity. If you can be active at all, it is something which God has blessed you with in life. No matter what your physical condition, the Lord is good and loves you.

**IV. We Are Blessed Materially-** We all have more than we deserve. Read Matt.6 and remember Philippians 4:19. We don't have all of our wants, but we do have our needs met. What a blessing to have clothes on our backs, shoes on our feet, food on our tables, a roof over our heads, electricity in our outlets, etc. How blessed we are in the Christian life! As the song says, "We are so blessed...so blessed."

## **Beyond the Christian Life**

In Rev. 4:1 Jesus says, "I will shew thee things which must be hear-after." Thank God for the here-after that awaits all of God's born again, blood washed children. I am glad that what this present world holds is not the sum total of what we have to enjoy as believers. What about the here-after? It is when our faith will become sight.

**I. We Will See Our Blessed Saviour-** What a joy when we see Jesus. The Bible says "we shall see Him as He is" (I Jn. 3:2). It has been a joy to serve Christ by faith, but it will be much better when we see the one who gave Himself for us. Seeing our Heavenly Bridegroom is a future event the bride of Christ (the church) longs for intensely and constantly.

**II. We Will See Complete Satisfaction-** In Psalm 17:15 the Psalmist said, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." There is a degree of satisfaction we enjoy in this life because we are God's children but it is not complete. We get tired of the sin and debauchery in this world and are not fully satisfied with our pilgrim and stranger status in this world. When we get our glorified bodies and are present with the Lord in Heaven, we will be fully, completely and wholly satisfied.

**III. We Will See A Perfect Environment-** When you read about what will not be present in Heaven you come to realize where we are going is a perfect place. Rev. 21:4 says, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." With evil people in the lake of fire and former things passed away we will realize a perfect environment.

**IV. We Will See A Magnificent City (Rev.21-22)** According to the Book of the Revelation, the city has measurements, being a 1500 mile cube. It will be the capital city of the eternal order. It has streets of gold, walls of jasper and gates of pearl. The foundations of it are of precious stones and gems. It will have the glory of the brightness of God permeating its atmosphere. There will be no need of the power companies over there because Jesus is the light of it.

**V. We Will See Waiting Saints-** The reuniting with saved loved ones is something to look forward to in the here-after. The Bible says we will know as we are known (I Cor. 13:12). There are so many I am looking forward to seeing who have gone on ahead of us to be with Christ.

**VI. We Will See Holy Angels-** We have angels with us but we will see them in the glory world in their brilliance and splendor.