

Following Christ

How to take the first steps



FOLLOWING CHRIST
DISCIPLES' GUIDE
2 Tim. 2:2

Practical considerations

1. **Following Christ: *How to take the first steps*** Contents:

- The first pages serve as the “**Introduction**”. This section includes the dynamics of the process and the subjects of each of the six lessons in **Following Christ**.
- The following pages include the “**Disciple’s Guide**”.

2. Dynamics for the development of the **Following Christ** lessons

Development dynamics of the 6 lessons are as follows:

- The discipler should familiarize himself with the “Disciple’s Guide”, studying each lesson in preparation of leading the disciple(s).
- The discipler and the disciple(s) should meet at a predetermined time and place.
- The discipler should bring the “Disciple’s Guide” (blank, not filled in), a Bible and if possible a Bible or New Testament for the disciple(s).
- While presenting the lesson, the discipler should encourage the disciple(s) to read the Bible and orally answer the questions in the “Disciple’s Guide”, but not write the answers at this time.
- At the end of each lesson the discipler should assign as homework, the lesson that was just reviewed. This homework will help initiate a daily devotional.
- The disciple(s) brings the completed lesson to the next meeting, along with any questions he/she might have. The completed lessons are turned in each week.
- At the end of the six-lesson study, the discipler returns all the lessons, along with any encouraging comments or suggestions for growth jotted in the margins. The discipler should challenge the disciple(s) in continued spiritual commitment (growth) by the following:
 - ✓ Participate by accompanying in the evangelism visitation of the church
 - ✓ Get baptized, if not already, and become an active member in the church
 - ✓ Participate in the following level of Discipleship – Survival Kit
 - ✓ Serve in one of the existing ministries in the church

FOLLOWING CHRIST

How to take the first steps

LESSON #1:

“Assurance of the Decision”

LESSON #2:

“Assurance of Salvation”

LESSON #3:

“Christian Development and the Word of God”

LESSON #4:

“Prayer”

LESSON #5:

“Confession of Sin and Christian Fellowship”

LESSON #6:

“Living in the Spirit”



FOLLOWING CHRIST

DISCIPLE'S GUIDE

2 Tim. 2:2

FOLLOWING CHRIST

LESSON ONE ASSURANCE OF THE DECISION

1. Security of the presence of Christ in your life.

Read carefully, Revelation 3:20 and answer the following questions:

1.1 Have you invited Christ into your life? _____

1.2 Based on Rev. 3:20, where is Christ? _____

1.3 Why? _____

2. Assurance of eternal life.

Read carefully, 1 John 5:11-15 and answer the following questions:

2.1 According to verses 11-13, what do you have now that you have invited Christ into your life? _____

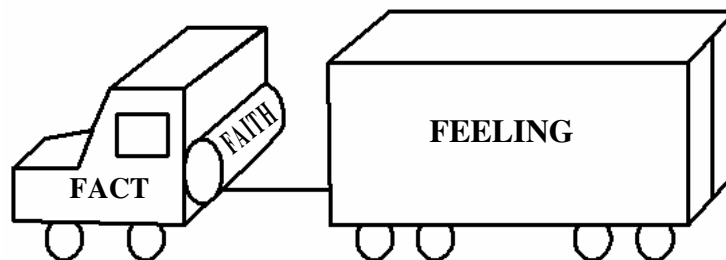
2.2 Based on verses 14 and 15, on what can you base your trust in God?

2.3 Will it be God's will to forgive you and reveal to you the plan that He has for your life? _____

2.4 If after several years someone asks you who Christ is, or if you are a Christian, how would you respond? _____

3. The foundation of Christian assurance is in God and His Word, not in your thoughts or emotional responses. The Word of God does not change. Christians live by faith in the faithfulness of God and His Word.

3.1 According to what was said above, should you trust feelings of spiritual insecurity?



The truck is made up of three parts: The engine, the fuel tank and the trailer. The truck can run with or without the trailer; nevertheless, it would be useless for the trailer to try to run the truck. The engine represents the FACT (God and His Word), the fuel tank represents your FAITH in Jesus and the trailer the FEELING or EMOTION.

Should we as Christians put our faith or trust in the faithfulness of God and His Word or should we depend on our feelings?

4. The exact moment that you accepted Christ into your life, many things took place. Here are four of them.

These four things are identified with a letter in the column on the left. In the right column you will find a word that summarizes each one of these things, but they are not in the correct order. Read the verses from the Bible and identify the letter that corresponds to the word in the right column. Write this letter on the corresponding line.

- | | | |
|---|-------|------------------------|
| A. Christ came into your life
(Rev. 3:20; Col. 1:27b) | _____ | Power |
| B. Your sins were forgiven
(Col. 1:14) | _____ | Purpose |
| C. You have become a child of God
(John 1:12) | _____ | Presence |
| D. You have started to live the abundant
life, for which God created you
(John 10:10b; 2 Cor. 5:17; 1 Thes. 5:18) | _____ | Pardon/
Forgiveness |

5. After studying these things, take a moment to pray and give thanks to God for what He has done in you. Give thanks to God for what has happened in you (refer to the list). Remember that prayer is talking with God in your own words. God is not as interested in how sophisticated or elaborate your words are, but in the true sincerity of your heart.

6. Homework: Read one chapter of the gospel of John each day. Underline the words BELIEVE and LIFE. Whatever concern or question that you have, you can ask your leader to help you. Remember that you now have the Holy Spirit in your heart and He will help you.

7. The fellowship of other Christians is essential for good spiritual development. You should maintain your fellowship with God in order to do this, it is essential that you maintain fellowship with others who have also received Christ as Lord and Savior, and who have the same assurance you have now.

7.1 If you have received Christ in your heart, what relationship do you have with others that have had the same experience?

7.2 It would be a great benefit for you to attend a Bible study group. Where can you attend? _____

8. Remember that you have a new friend. YOUR BEST FRIEND IS CHRIST, THE LORD.

FOLLOWING CHRIST

LESSON TWO ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

The previous study analyzed the security of the relationship that one has with Christ once they receive Him as their personal Savior and Lord.

1. **Based on this study, if you were to die right now, are you sure that you would go to heaven?**
YES____, NO _____, I DON'T KNOW _____.

2. **The moment that you received Christ as Lord and Savior, many things happened. Mention four of them:**

2.1 _____ (Rev. 3:20; Col. 1-27b)

2.2 _____ (Col. 1:14)

2.3 _____ (John 1:12)

2.4 _____ (John 10:10b; 2 Cor. 5:17)

3. **Read John 14:2-4. Jesus says that where He is, we will be also. Where is this place that He mentions?**

4. **The assurance of salvation depends only on the work of Christ; therefore, we are sure that our salvation is in Christ and by Christ.**

We are secure in Christ. Read John 10:27-30.

4.1 According to verse 27, Christ is talking about His sheep and without a doubt He is referring also to you as one of them. Note three hallmarks of Christ's relationship with His sheep. Read verse 27 again.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

4.2 List three promises in verse 28.

a. What does He give the sheep? _____

b. When will they perish? _____

c. Who will snatch them out of His hand? _____

4.3 According to verses 29 and 30, we are in the hands of His Father and in the hands of:

a. The Shepherd b. Saint Peter c. Christ d. The church

4.4 Therefore, our assurance is found in:

5. The assurance that you have now is in Christ and by Christ. Read Romans 8:35-39.

5.1 Is there anything that can separate us from the love of Christ?

5.2 How are we counted because of Christ?

5.3 We are more than victorious in all things, through whom?

5.4 According to verses 38 and 39, list ten things that cannot separate us from the love of Christ.

1. _____

6. _____

2. _____

7. _____

3. _____

8. _____

4. _____

9. _____

5. _____

10. _____

FOLLOWING CHRIST

LESSON THREE CHRISTIAN DEVELOPEMENT AND THE WORD OF GOD

Receiving Christ as Lord and Savior is the most important decision of your life. That act of faith is the beginning of a new life. As the physical life requires food, air, rest and exercise; so the spiritual life has requirements for your growth and development. Your spiritual wellbeing depends on what you believe about the Word of God and its impact on your spiritual development. This lesson discusses the basic principles for this development and special emphasis on the Word of God.

1. Remember to pray, asking God for His help and direction before beginning each lesson.

Designate a specific place and time for this.

Place _____ Time _____

2. You The following acrostic will help you visualize how Christ is the center of your Christian life. Each statement of the acrostic is upheld by one or two biblical references, which are listed here. **REFERENCES:** John 15:7; Ephesians 5:18; Acts 17:11; John 14:21; 1 Peter 5:7; Matthew 4:19; John 15:8. Read the references and write the reference that matches each statement on the line provided.

C onverse with God daily in prayer: _____

H onor God by studying His Word daily: _____

R emember to trust God for every aspect of your life:

I nsist on asking God to fill you with His Spirit: _____

S hare your faith with others with both your words and actions: _____

T rust and obey God every moment: _____

3. Obey God through the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

3.1 The ordinance of Baptism. There are three biblical reasons to be baptized by immersion after receiving Christ as your Savior and Lord:

Obedience - Read Matthew 28:19 (Commandment)

Example - Read Mark 1:9 (Example – Jesus was baptized)

Testimony - Read Rom. 6:3-4 (Testimony – publicly demonstrate our faith that we are dead to sin and raised with a new life in Christ)

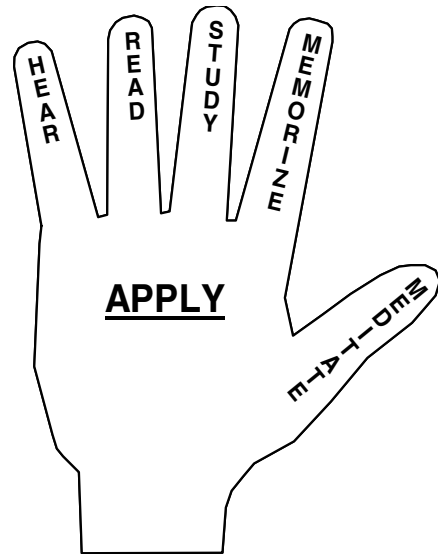
Have you already obeyed the Lord in baptism? If not, are you ready to obey now? _____

3.2 The ordinance of the Lord's Supper. Read Matthew 26:26-28 and 1 Cor. 11: 23-27.

- When we celebrate it, we are remembering the suffering and the death of Christ for us, as well as our hope of His return for his people (us).
- The bread does not become the body of Christ, instead, it represents the body of Christ.
- The wine does not become the blood of Christ, instead, it represents the blood of Christ.

4. Use the hand illustration to help you visualize how to apply God's Word:

the little finger represents: TO HEAR IT
the ring finger represents: TO READ IT
the middle finger represents: TO STUDY IT
the index finger represents: TO MEMORIZE IT
the thumb represents: TO MEDITATE ON IT



Meditation (thumb) should be done with any of the others to try to APPLY God's Word.

4.1 Which fingers have the weakest grasp?

4.2 Which fingers have the strongest grasp?

4.3 According to Matthew 7:24-27, what happens when a person listens to God's Word and does not apply it?

4.4 According to James 1:22-25, how do you describe a person who disobeys the Bible?

5. It will be a great help in your spiritual life to establish a schedule for your devotional time.

5.1 What happens to our physical strength when we stop eating for a few days?

5.2 What happens to our spiritual strength, if we stop nourishing it by studying God's Word and praying?

5.3 When was Jesus accustomed to praying? (Mark 1:35)

ILLUSTRATION: Naturally, it is good to read the Bible before going to sleep, but if this is the only time that you have to read it, remember that it is better to live under the Bible than to sleep over it.

FOLLOWING CHRIST

LESSON FOUR PRAYER

Prayer is the practice of talking and sharing everything with God, our living Heavenly Father. Nothing can be substituted for PRAYER. Through prayer a Christian can resolve his/her problems and defeat the enemy. The absence of prayer can often explain character failures. When it is more difficult for us to pray, we should persevere with more fervor and consistency.

1. Read and meditate on Romans 8:34.

Who will intercede for us?

ILLUSTRATION:

One time a man was trying to speak with the President of the Republic concerning a very grave situation that had affected his small hometown. When he tried to enter the Presidential Palace, the palace guards stopped him and they sent him back to the street. The man was saddened by his failure. He left the palace and went to a nearby place to sit down and think about his problem. Suddenly, a little boy approached him and asked him, "Why are you so worried?" The man explained to the boy what had happened to him and the boy told him, "Take my hand and come with me." The man followed the boy, believing that he was playing a game, but he was surprised to see the reverence that the palace guards had for him and the palace doors opened right before the boy. They walked right into the palace until they were directly in front of the President. How was this possible? Very simple, the boy was the President's son!

Likewise, when we pray we gain access to God by means of his Son, Jesus Christ. We are in the presence of God by means of his Son.

2. Read and meditate on Romans 8:32. From reading this verse, do you think God refuses to give us something if we ask according to His will?

3. Read and meditate on John 16:24. According to this verse, in whose name should we ask?

4. When we ask in this way, what will be completed in us?

5. According to Philippians 4:6-7 there is something that we should not do. What is it?

6. The passage says there is something we should do. What is it?

7. What did Jesus say to do in Matthew 26:41? Why?

8. According to 1 Thessalonians 5:17, how often should we pray?

To pray without ceasing is to talk with God in a simple and free way all day long. Our prayer life should help us to know the Lord in a more intimate way.

*Whatever you ask in My name,
I will do it,
so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.
If you ask Me anything in My name,
I will do it.*

John 14:13-14

FOLLOWING CHRIST

LESSON FIVE CONFESION OF SIN AND CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

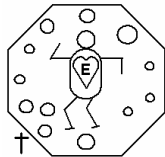
1. From the moment you received Christ as your Lord and Savior He has promised you His continuous presence and companionship. Write the promise you find in Hebrews 13:5.

2. According to Romans 8:38-39, what can separate us from the love of God manifested in Jesus Christ, His Son?

3. Now that I am a Christian, what happens when I commit a sin?
Read 1 Corinthians 2:14-15 and 1 Corinthians 3:1-3. Look at the following circles and compare them.

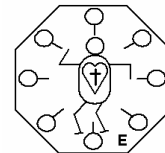
A) NATURAL MAN

- Fear
- Worry
- Sin



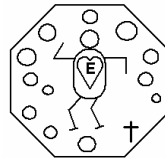
B) SPIRITUAL CHRISTIAN

- Peace
- Power
- Joy
- Purpose



C) CARNAL CHRISTIAN

- Fear
- Worry
- Sin



- 3.1 Which circle represents your life before you received Christ as Lord and Savior?
-

- 3.2 Where was Christ before you invited Him into your life?
-

Now that Christ lives in you, He may or may not control your life. This depends on you. Christ wants to control your life and wants you to experience peace, power, joy and purpose.

- 3.3 The ego, or the I, also tries to control your life at times, and when this happens, many old characteristics return and manifest themselves, according to the third circle (C). Has this been your experience? The result of our sin brings us to the state "C". How do we return to the state of "B"? Continue reading.

4. Analyze the following questions:

- 4.1 What does 1 John 1:9 say that God does for us when we confess our sins?
-

- 4.2 Who is seated on the throne in the third circle (C)? _____
- 4.3 According to 1 John 1:9, what do you think a person should do in order to return to the state of “B”, who finds himself/herself in the third circle (C)?

- 4.4 If you find yourself now in the state of “C”, take 5 or 10 minutes to talk with God. On a sheet of paper make a list of your sins and write 1 John 1:9, word for word, over your list. Thank God for fulfilling His Word and forgiving your sins. Then destroy the list to demonstrate the reality that God has also forgiven and forgotten your sins.

5. Carefully analyze the three pairs that are represented below.

- Pair A** – Is made up of two natural men (the EGO is seated on the THRONE of their lives and Christ is outside of their lives).
- Pair B** – Is made up of two spiritual Christians (Christ is seated on the THRONE of their lives).
- Pair C** – Is made up of a spiritual Christian and a carnal Christian (Although both have received Christ as Lord and Savior; in the first one, Christ is seated on the THRONE of his life and in the second, the EGO is seated on the THRONE of his life).

- 5.1 In your opinion which of the three pairs has the best relationship? _____
- 5.2 Why? _____
- 5.3 Which pair do you believe is the next one who could be heading toward a better relationship?

- 5.4 How would you describe the relationship of pair C? _____
- 5.5 Why do spiritual Christians fully enjoy their social relationships?

6. Read Hebrews 10:22-25. Note both the admonition to Christian fellowship and benefits of that fellowship.

- 6.1 What type of Christian are we talking about here? Those who have Christ or the ego on the throne of their lives?

- 6.2 What does verse 25 exhort us to do?

- 6.3 According to Matthew 18:20, how important is fellowship to Christ?

FOLLOWING CHRIST

LESSON SIX LIVING IN THE SPIRIT

Every day can be a great adventure for the Christian is filled with the Holy Spirit and lives consistently, moment by moment, under His control.

The Bible tells us that there are three spiritual states in which a person can find himself:

- The Natural Man
- The Carnal Christian
- The Spiritual Christian

It is necessary to know the following four principles in order to live a life filled and controlled by the Holy Spirit and to be a spiritual Christian.

1. GOD HAS GIVEN US A FULL AND ABUNDANT LIFE.

The spiritual Christian (Gal. 2:20; Gal. 5:22-23) – some personal characteristics that result in trust in God (controlled by Christ):

- | | | |
|------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| ✓ Love | ✓ Life controlled by Christ | ✓ Obedience to God |
| ✓ Joy | ✓ Trust in God | ✓ Full of the Holy Spirit |
| ✓ Peace | ✓ Shares Christ with others | ✓ Understands God's Word |
| ✓ Patience | ✓ Goodness | ✓ Effective prayer life |
| ✓ Kindness | ✓ Faithfulness | |

The degree to which these characteristics are manifested depends on how much that person trusts the Lord with each detail of his/her life. Such trust produces maturity in Christ. We should remember the principles that we find in John 10:10 and Acts 1:8

Why are the majority of Christians not experiencing abundant life?

2. CARNAL CHRISTIANS CANNOT EXPERIENCE A FULL AND ABUNDANT LIFE.

The carnal Christian (1 Cor. 3:1-3) – some or all of the following flaws can be characterized by the Christian who does not fully trust in God:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| ✓ Legalistic attitude | ✓ Ignorance of spiritual inheritance | ✓ Lack of purpose |
| ✓ Impure thoughts | ✓ Skepticism | ✓ Fear |
| ✓ Jealousy | ✓ Disobedience | ✓ Critical spirit |
| ✓ Guilty feelings | ✓ Lack of love for God and toward others | ✓ Lack of interest in studying the Bible |
| ✓ Worry | ✓ Poor prayer life | ✓ Despondency |

The carnal Christian trusts in his own strength in order to live the Christian life:

- ◆ Unaware or has forgotten the love of God, His forgiveness and power
- ◆ Experiences “ups and downs”
- ◆ Has difficulty understanding himself; wants to do good, but does not.
- ◆ Does not rest in the power of the Holy Spirit to live the Christian life.

The third truth gives us the only solution to this problem.

3. JESUS CHRIST PROMISED A FULL AND ABUNDANT LIFE AS A RESULT OF BEING FILLED (CONTROLLED AND LED) BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.

The Spirit-filled life is a life controlled by Christ, in which He lives His life in and through us by the power of the Holy Spirit. (John 15:1-5)

- ◆ From the time of spiritual birth the Christian is filled by the Holy Spirit all the time. (1 Cor. 6:19-20)
Although all Christians are inhabited by the Holy Spirit not all are filled (controlled) by the Holy Spirit.
- ◆ The Holy Spirit is the source of abundant life. (John 7:37-39)
- ◆ The Holy Spirit came to glorify Christ. (John 16:1-15) When a person is filled and controlled by the Holy Spirit, he/she also glorifies Christ.
- ◆ In his last commandment the Lord Jesus Christ promised that the Holy Spirit would train us to be witnesses with power. (Acts 1:1-9)

So, how can one be filled with and controlled by the Holy Spirit?

4. WE ARE FILLED (CONTROLLED) BY THE HOLY SPIRIT BY FAITH. WE CAN ONLY EXPERIENCE THE FULL AND ABUNDANT LIFE THAT CHRIST PROMISED TO EACH CHRISTIAN.

You can experience the filling of the Holy Spirit right now if you:

- ◆ Sincerely desire to be controlled by the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 5:6, John 7:37-39)
- ◆ Confess your sins. By faith give thanks to God for He has forgiven all your sins - past, present and future - because Christ died for you. (Col. 2:13-15; Acts 10:1-17)
- ◆ Bring every aspect of your life to God. (Romans 12:1,2)
- ◆ By faith ask to be filled with the Holy Spirit according to:

HIS COMMAND - Be filled with the Holy Spirit. (Eph. 5:18)

HIS PROMISE - God always responds when we pray according to His will. (1 John 5:14, 15)

Faith can be expressed through prayer.

Do not rely on feelings. Our authority comes from a promise in God's Word and not our feelings. A Christian lives by faith, trusting in the faithfulness of God himself and His Word.

SPIRITUAL BREATHING

By faith you can continue to experience the love and forgiveness of God. When you are aware of some area of your life (an attitude or action), that is dishonorable to the Lord, even when you are walking with Him and desiring to sincerely serve him, simply give thanks to God because He has forgiven your sins -past, present and future – by the death of Christ on the cross. By faith accept the love and forgiveness of God and continue in communion with Him. If you return to take the throne of your life because of sin –an act defined by disobedience- breathe spiritually. Physical breathing (exhaling the impure and inhaling the pure) is a necessary exercise for our physical lives; spiritual breathing is equally necessary for our spiritual lives, an exercise of faith that encourages us to continue experiencing the love and forgiveness of God.

1. Exhale - Confess your sin –share your sin with God and give Him thanks because has forgiven you
1 John 1:9 and Hebrews 10:1-25. A remorseful confession – a change in attitude and action.

2. Inhale - Turn the control of your life over to Christ, and receive the filling of the Holy Spirit by faith.
Trust that now He is in control, according to the order of Eph. 5:18; and the promise of 1 John 5:14,15.

Congratulations! You have completed this initial discipleship process. But, this is just the beginning of your growth in Christ. We grow until we are just like He is. Gal. 4:19.

Survival Kit I is a resource that you can use to help you in your next step as a growing believer. Ask your discipler for it or look for it in your favorite Christian bookstore.