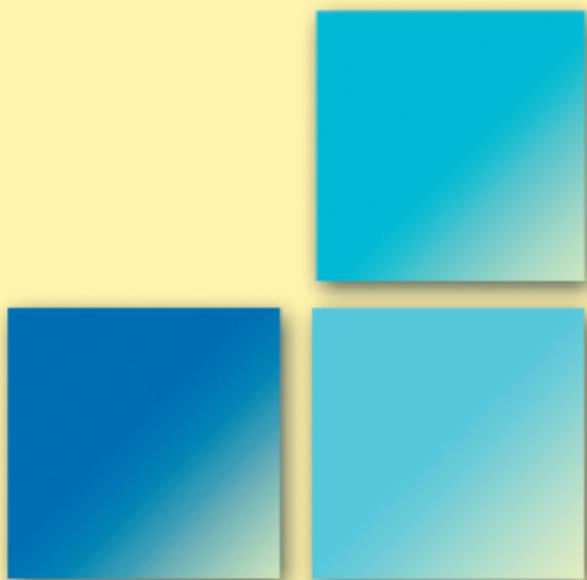


Beginning Steps

**A Growth Guide For
New Believers**

NIV



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MY SPIRITUAL BIRTH CERTIFICATE

Name _____

Date of New Birth _____

Place of New Birth _____

Date Baptized _____

Name of person who shared Christ with me _____

Street address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

Telephone number of witness _____

Church _____ Telephone _____

Street address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

CONGRATULATIONS

You have just made the most important commitment a person can make in life. As a result of receiving Jesus as your Savior and Lord, you have experienced what the Bible calls a new birth. In your physical life, you entered the world as a baby and then grew to maturity. The same is true in your spiritual experience. Now that you have experienced a spiritual birth, you need to grow into a mature follower of Jesus (read 1 Peter 2:2).*

Just as an infant needs help to grow physically, a new believer needs help to grow spiritually. It is our desire to assist you in growing spiritually.

This book will help you get started in your spiritual growth. Seven brief Bible studies are included. It is important to complete all seven. Beware: Satan will seek to halt your daily study. Ask God to give you strength to continue and complete the study. You might want to pray a prayer like the one below.

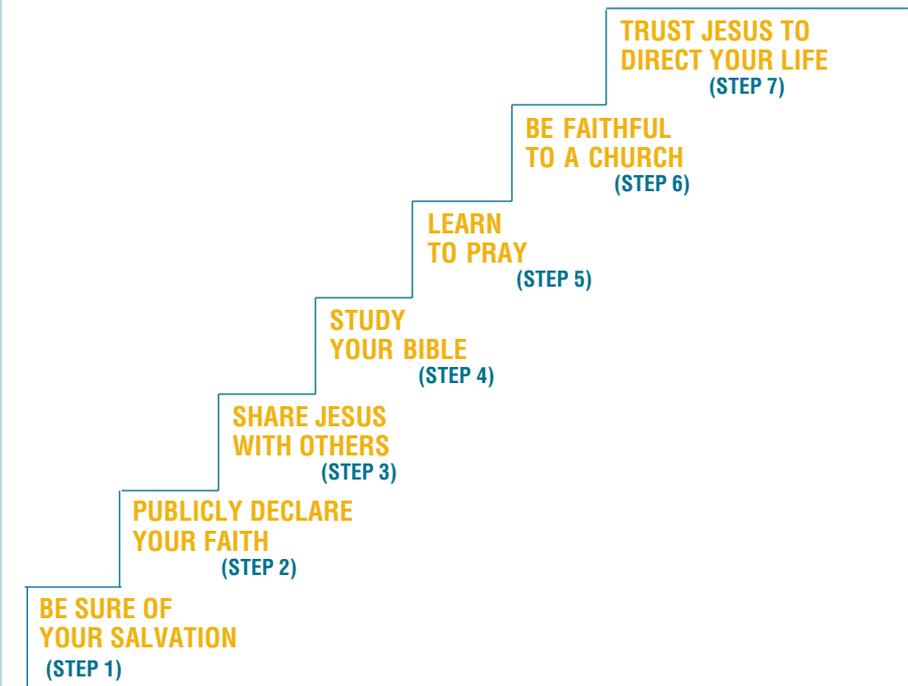
“Dear God, I know I am going to need Your help in working through this booklet and understanding what You are trying to teach me. I want to grow spiritually. Help me be faithful in completing this booklet. In the name of Jesus I pray. Amen.”

* Scripture references are located by chapter and verse. For example:

1 Peter 2:2 means the first book of Peter, chapter two, verse two.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

1. *Secure an easy-to-read Bible to use with this booklet. Also, keep a pencil or pen handy for notes and to answer the questions.*
2. *Choose a time and a place to have your daily study (e.g., before breakfast in the kitchen.)*
3. *The purpose of this booklet is to help you discover the truth in Scripture. Read the questions carefully, turn to the Scripture references, and read them.*
4. *Think about the answers and write them down. Remember, there are no trick questions. This is strictly a personal learning tool.*

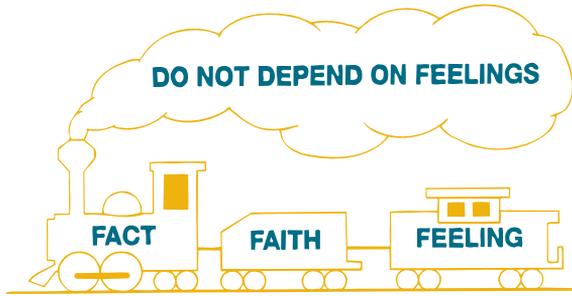


Beginning Steps ... for New Believers

STEP 1

BE SURE OF YOUR SALVATION

God wants you to know for sure that you have eternal life. Eternal life is not based on your feelings, but on the facts found in the Bible.



Used by permission from the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

- 1. Your Assurance Is Based on the Word of God.** The Bible states in John 3:16 and 1 John 5:11-13 that God wants you to know that you have eternal life. Read the verses and underline them in your Bible.
- 2. Your Assurance Is Based on the Promises of God.** What are the promises found in the following two verses?

“That if you _____ with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and _____ in your heart that God raised him from the dead, _____” (Romans 10:9).

“I tell you the truth, whoever hears my _____ and _____ him who sent me has _____ and will not be _____” (John 5:24).

- 3. Your Assurance Is Based on the Character of God.** A promise is only as reliable as the person who makes it. That is why the assurance of your salvation rests on God’s character. What do these verses teach about His character?

“God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is _____” (1 Corinthians 1:9).

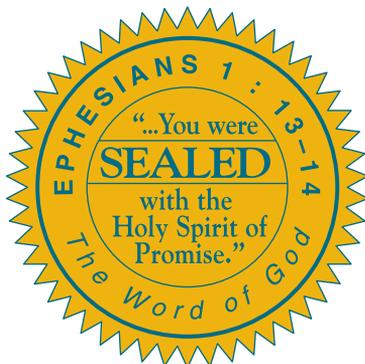
“The one who calls you is _____ and he will do it” (1 Thessalonians 5:24).

“Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is _____” (Hebrews 10:23).

The Bible teaches that God is faithful (reliable, steadfast, trustworthy, and stable). You can believe the promises because you know the Promisor. God, your loving Father, is absolutely faithful. Nothing will change His mind about your salvation. Nothing will separate you from His love. Your relationship to God through Jesus is secure.

- What does God’s Word say about the security of your salvation? Read Romans 8:38-39. Can any circumstance separate you from God?

4. Your Assurance Is Based on the Spirit of God.



To further assure you of your salvation, God has sent living, daily proof of your relationship. As an official seal is placed on a contract between two individuals to guarantee the contract’s validity, so God has given a seal (guarantee) of His promise to you.

- Read Ephesians 1:13-14. What is the seal given by God as a guarantee of His promise?

The Holy Spirit at work within you is indisputable proof of your salvation. The Holy Spirit’s work in your life will bring changes. Some changes will be gradual; some will be instant. The inward and outward changes that result are the final proof of your salvation.

REVIEW

- ◆ Read 2 Corinthians 5:17 and fill in the missing words.

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a _____; the old has _____, the new has _____!”

- ◆ What changes have you seen in your life since you committed it to Jesus Christ?

Therefore, your assurance is based on:

1. The _____ of God
2. The _____ of God
3. The _____ of God
4. The _____ of God

CONGRATULATIONS!
YOU HAVE TAKEN THE FIRST STEP.

STEP 2

PUBLICLY DECLARE YOUR FAITH

1. Jesus Wants New Believers to Declare Publicly Their Faith in Him.

Jesus said, "Whoever _____ me before men, I will also _____ him before my Father in heaven. But whoever _____ me before men, I will _____ him before my Father in heaven" (Matthew 10:32-33).



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Have you ever heard of a carpenter's practice of clinching a nail? Clinching a nail is driving it into a board and bending the extended portion of it down on the other side. The nail cannot be pulled from the board.

Professing Jesus publicly is like clinching a nail. Faith and assurance of salvation are strengthened.

Most churches provide opportunities, at the conclusion of the worship services, for people to make public their commitments to Jesus. If you have not publicly declared your faith, you should do so at the next public worship service you attend. Upon making this commitment, you should be baptized.



2. Baptism Is an Act of Obedience That Declares One's Faith.

A test of whether a person is a true follower of Jesus is his or her obedience to Jesus' commands.

Write 1 John 2:3 in the space below.

3. Jesus Commanded Baptism (read Matthew 28:19-20).

This was not a suggestion or an option for His followers. If we are not baptized, we are disobedient. Jesus set the example by being baptized. Read the account of Jesus' baptism in Matthew 3:13-17.

4. In the New Testament, New Believers Were Baptized (read Acts 2:37-38, 41, 47).

The verses clearly indicate that new believers followed Jesus by being baptized. Now read Acts 8:35-38. After the Ethiopian believed, he was baptized.

5. Baptism Expresses Your Love for Jesus (read John 14:21).

Write the verse in your own words below.

6. Baptism Pictures Two Things:

- (1) What Jesus did for you—He died for your sins, was buried, and came back to life (read 1 Corinthians 15:3-4).
- (2) What has happened to you—You died to an old way of life and have been raised to live a new life in Jesus (read Romans 6:3-4)

The Bible teaches that the method of baptism was immersion (completely placing a person under water and immediately bringing him or her back up). Immersion is the only form of baptism that adequately pictures this meaning.

REVIEW

◆ Scripture reveals that baptism involves four things:

1. The right person—a believer
2. The right reasons—obedience and declaration of your new faith
3. The right method—immersion
4. The right authority—a local New Testament church (read Acts 2:41-47)

◆ The essentials of baptism are:

1. Believe in Jesus for salvation.
2. Make your commitment public.
3. Request to be baptized by immersion.

**YOU'RE DOING GREAT.
DON'T STOP NOW!**

STEP 3

SHARE JESUS WITH OTHERS

People love to share good news. We announce marriages and births. When something good happens, we rush to tell someone. The more exciting the news, the harder it is to be silent.

A Christian has the most exciting news—the life-changing news of eternal life. It is natural for a Christian to want to share this good news. Think for a moment about the various people God used to bring you to the place where you were willing to receive Jesus.

Now God wants you to be part of helping others come to know Jesus.

When Andrew met Jesus, his first inclination was to bring _____ to meet Him (read John 1:40-42).

For a Christian, witnessing is not an option. Jesus commanded His followers to witness.

There are two things you should use when sharing Jesus:

- Your personal testimony
- Scripture

1. Your Personal Testimony Is Your Own Account of: (1) Your Life Before Receiving Jesus, (2) How You Received Jesus, and (3) How Jesus Makes Your Life More Meaningful.

Read Paul's testimony in Acts 22:3-21. Write out the three parts of your testimony in the spaces provided.

My life before receiving Jesus:

How I received Jesus:

How Jesus makes my life more meaningful:

2. Scripture Is the Second Part of Sharing Jesus with Others.

The following verses will help you explain to unbelievers the good news of eternal life. Take time now to read them and underline them in your Bible.

- Romans 15:13
- Romans 1:16
- Romans 2:4
- Romans 3:23
- Romans 5:8
- Romans 6:23
- Romans 10:9, 13

The “*Here’s Hope Roman Road*” tract contains these verses and will help you share Jesus with others. To get a copy of this tract or one similar to it, contact a local church or the friend who shared Jesus with you.

REVIEW

◆ Why should you share Jesus with others?

◆ Whom do you know who needs to receive Jesus?

◆ Share your testimony with someone this week.



STEP 4

STUDY YOUR BIBLE

God wants an intimate, personal relationship with you. You are not just an acquaintance or a distant relative—you are His child. This relationship can be strengthened by studying the Bible—His revelation to you.

Hebrews 4:12 says that God’s Word is living and active. This means the Bible is more than a book, more than words on a page. It is more than words spoken in ancient times. The Bible is relevant; it addresses the needs of today.

1. God’s Word Has Specific Purposes (read 2 Timothy 3:16).

*“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for _____,
_____, _____ and _____
_____.”*

- **God’s Word Is Useful for Teaching.** Read these verses and write what they teach us about God.

Jeremiah 31:3 _____

Romans 5:8 _____

- **God’s Word Is Useful for Rebuking (to point out a fault) and Convicting of Sin.**

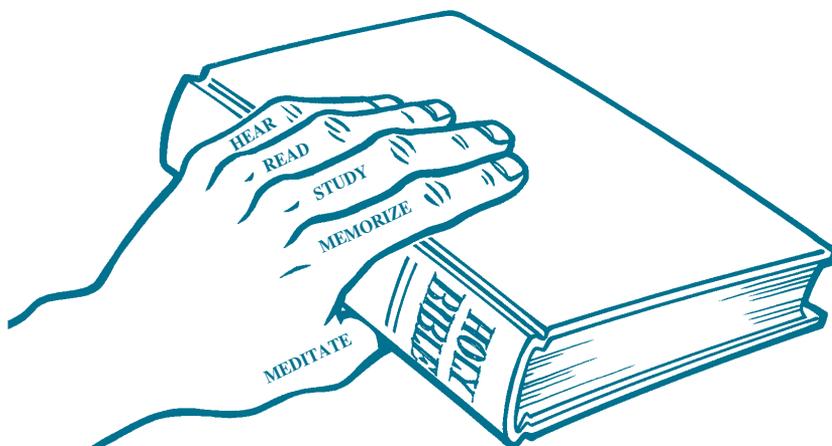
Read Ephesians 4:26-31 and list some areas where God’s Word points out faults in our lives.

- **God’s Word is Useful for Correction of Error.** Not only does the Bible convict, but it also corrects. Psalm 119 points out the psalmist’s experiences with God’s Word. This psalm teaches that God’s Word gives directions for living. Verse 9 asks, “How can a young man keep his way pure?” Read Psalm 119:9 and write the answer to this question.
-

As God’s Word takes root in your heart, your faults and defects will be corrected by the Bible’s influence.

- **God’s Word Is Useful for Training in Righteousness** (godly behavior). Bible study is your spiritual food. Just as your physical body benefits from nutrients in the food you eat, your spiritual life benefits from consistent Bible study. Jeremiah 15:16 says, “When your words came, I ate them.”

2. There Are Several Methods of Learning God’s Word. One of these can be compared to the fingers of your hand. It is easy to lose your grip if you hold something with only one or two fingers. If you hear, read, study, memorize, and meditate on God’s Word, your grasp of its truth will become a firm part of your life.



- **Hear**—Write Romans 10:17 below.

Listen to your pastor’s sermons and to Bible studies. Take notes on what you hear.

- **Read**—Write 1 Timothy 4:13 below.

Set a goal to read a certain amount from the Bible each day. For example, read one chapter daily from the Gospel of John.

- **Study**—Write 2 Timothy 2:15 below.

When you study, ask the following questions:

- What promise is there to claim?
- What example is there to follow?
- What command is there to obey?
- What sin is there to confess and forsake?

If you haven't done so already, enroll and faithfully attend your church's Bible study.

- **Memorize**—Write Psalm 119:11 below

Memorizing Scripture gives you the opportunity to share God's Word and assists you in overcoming sin. Seek to memorize at least one Scripture verse every week.

- **Meditate**—Write Joshua 1:8 below.

Meditation is spiritual digestion. It is analyzing and dwelling on a verse over and over. Meditate on a Scripture verse during the day as you drive, rest, walk, jog, or play.

REVIEW

◆ List the four purposes of God's Word.

1. God's Word is useful for _____.
2. God's Word is useful for _____.
3. God's Word is useful for _____.
4. God's Word is useful for _____.

◆ Using the hand illustration, fill in the five methods of Bible study.



◆ When would be a good time each day for you to spend in Bible study?

◆ Approach Bible study expectantly. Use the prayer of Psalm 119:18, "Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law."

STEP 5

LEARN TO PRAY



The best way to get to know someone is to talk with that person often. God longs for you to know Him. The Bible is full of invitations to enter into a deep, personal relationship with God the Father.

“If you seek him, he will be found by you” (1 Chronicles 28:9).

In Jeremiah 24:7, speaking of those who would become followers of Jesus Christ, God says, “I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord.” Conversing with God is called prayer. Prayer is a conversation, not a monologue. It includes speaking to God and hearing from God.

- **Jesus Set the Example for Us** (read Mark 1:35).

What does this passage say about Jesus’ prayer life?

- **Jesus Taught the Necessity of Prayer** (read Luke 18:1).

- **What did the disciples ask Jesus to teach them** (read Luke 11:1)?

- **Why should we pray continually** (read 1 Thessalonians 5:17)?

The acrostic **ACTS** will help you to begin developing your prayer life.

Adoration
Confession
Thanksgiving
Supplication

1. Adoration is praise focusing on who God is. Look up the following Scriptures. Write in the blanks what the verses say about God.

Psalm 145:3

Psalm 147:1, 5

Spend time now in praise. Read Psalm 100 or 150 and use it as a prayer back to God.

2. Confession is acknowledging your sins before God in order to receive forgiveness. When you received eternal life, a relationship with God was established, which will never be broken, but our daily fellowship with God can be hindered by unconfessed sin. Psalm 66:18 says, “If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.”

Therefore, when you sin:

- (1) Confess the sin when you realize you’ve committed it (read John 1:9a).
- (2) Receive His promise of cleansing (read 1 John 1:9b).
- (3) Claim victory over temptation (read 1 Corinthians 10:13).

Take time now to ask God to reveal any unconfessed sins. Write them down, ask for God’s forgiveness, and claim His promise of forgiveness.

3. Thanksgiving is expressing gratitude to God for specific acts. When does God say we should give thanks (read 1 Thessalonians 5:18)?

List things in the following areas that you can give thanks for; then spend time thanking Him.

Spiritual Blessings _____

People _____

Physical Blessings _____

Material Blessings _____

4. Supplication is making requests and expressing desires to God. They may take the form of personal petitions or intercession.

(1) Petition is asking God for your needs (read John 15:7 and Philippians 4:6-7).

List three personal requests, and present them to God in prayer.

(2) Intercession is praying for the needs of others (read Exodus 32:30-34 and Romans 10:1). Write the requests that are found in these verses.

List people you know with specific needs in their lives; pray for them.

REVIEW

◆ Prayer is communication with God. It has to be learned, and it must be practiced.

◆ Without looking back, what are the elements of prayer?

A _____

C _____

T _____

S _____

◆ It is important for you to spend time each day in prayer. When would be the best time for you to pray?

STEP 6

BE FAITHFUL TO A CHURCH

Jesus personally established the church while He was on earth to unite Christians as a spiritual family (read Matthew 16:17-18). Who was speaking when the words “I will build my church” were spoken?

The word church means “called out ones.” The church is made up of people who have been called out to follow Jesus. The term church is used to refer to all believers but is more often used to denote a local group of believers.

Why Be Faithful to a Church?

A church is a group of baptized believers voluntarily joining for instruction, fellowship, worship, and service (read Acts 2:42-47).

1. Through Your Local Church You Receive Instruction. Jesus has given spiritual leaders to the church (read Ephesians 4:11). According to Ephesians 4:12-14, why has God given leaders to the church?

2. Through Your Local Church You Have the Privilege of Fellowship. God has placed individuals in families for their care, protection, fellowship, and development. You need the church for all the reasons you need a family and many more. According to Hebrews 10:24-25, why do you need the fellowship of the church?

3. Through Your Local Church You Meet to Worship. What are some of the things that happen when you worship (read Colossians 3:16)?

4. Through Your Local Church You Have Opportunities for Service. The church is the proper avenue to serve God. God has given you special gifts and abilities in order to serve (read Romans 12:6-8).

Jesus taught in Matthew 28:19 that the church's mission is to: "Therefore go and _____ of all nations."

This involves:

- (1) Sharing eternal life with the world
- (2) Baptizing new believers
- (3) Teaching the Bible
- (4) The joy of ministering in Christ's name
- (5) Giving your money, time, and talents

Your Church Name _____

Pastor _____

Sunday School Teacher _____

REVIEW

◆ The word “church” means

◆ Name four reasons to be faithful to your church.

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

(4) _____

◆ The mission of the church is to _____

**YOU'RE DOING GREAT.
THE BEST IS YET TO COME!**

“I rejoiced with those who said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of the Lord’”
(Psalm 122:1).



STEP 7

TRUST JESUS TO DIRECT YOUR LIFE

Now that you have received eternal life, Jesus wants to guide you daily in your new spiritual adventure. It is important to realize that He should do more than just reside in your life. He should be the Lord of all of your life.

Confessing Jesus as the Lord of your life means that you trust Him to direct your life. Trusting Jesus to direct your life is similar to driving down the highway with another person. While you are driving, you are in control of the vehicle. But, when you realize that you do not know the right way to go and the other person does, you allow the other person to take the control of the vehicle. As a result, you take the route he or she chooses. Trusting Jesus is like saying to Him: “You direct my life and I will go with You!” A life directed by Jesus in this way will be spiritually fruitful and filled with joy (read John 15:4).

1. Jesus Christ Is Lord.

Jesus claimed to be our Lord in John 13:13 when He said, “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘_____,’ and rightly so, _____

_____.”

How did Thomas describe Jesus in John 20:28? _____

Fill in the blanks to discover how the apostle Paul in his writings described Jesus.

- (1) The Lord of _____ (read 1 Corinthians 2:8).
- (2) The Lord of _____ (read 2 Thessalonians 3:16).
- (3) Only _____, the King of _____
and Lord of _____ (read 1 Timothy 6:15).

2. Jesus Christ Has Earned the Right to Direct Your Life.

Philippians 2:8-11 states: Jesus “humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God _____ him to the _____ and _____ him the name that is above every name, that at the name of _____ every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that _____ is _____, to the glory of God the Father.”

Paul, in the book of Philippians, understood that Jesus was worthy to direct his life.

What did Paul challenge other believers to do with their lives in Romans 12:1-2?

3. Jesus Christ Desires to Direct Your Life. His direction can be experienced on a daily basis as you:

- (1) Recognize daily His right to direct your life (read Luke 9:23)
- (2) Confess your sins consistently and accept His promise of forgiveness (read 1 John 1:9).
- (3) Trust Him completely as you allow Him to direct your:
 - Time (read Ephesians 5:15-16)
 - Money (read 1 Corinthians 16:2)
 - Abilities (read Colossians 3:17)
 - Relationships (read Matthew 22:34-40)
 - Mind (read Romans 12:1-2)
 - Ambitions (read Matthew 6:33)
 - Morality (read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

What areas in your life need to be placed under the direction of Jesus? List them and allow Jesus to begin to direct each area now.

Time _____

Money _____

Abilities _____

Relationships _____

Mind _____

Ambitions _____

Morality _____

REVIEW

◆ Jesus Christ is _____

◆ Jesus Christ has _____

_____ to direct
your life.

**CONGRATULATIONS!
NOW THAT YOU HAVE COMPLETED
THE SEVEN BEGINNING STEPS,
YOU ARE READY TO CONTINUE YOUR WALK WITH CHRIST
FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE AND FOREVER.**

◆ Be sure to renew your commitment daily to allow Jesus to direct your life in order to experience the abundant life He promises.

- Spend time in prayer and Bible study daily.
- Be faithful in Bible study and worship at church.
- Serve the Lord with gladness.
- Be a good manager of your possessions.
- Share Christ with others.



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