

Rooted

How to Begin Following Jesus



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Dedication

To every new believer stepping out in faith—
this book is for you.

And to the faithful saints, friends, and churches
who encouraged me to follow Jesus and keep going—
thank you.

Version 1.3

Foreword

For a long time, I've wanted to write a book to help those who have recently become followers of Jesus understand what it is they've signed up for. When I was first converted, people pointed me to various helpful books, but I couldn't find one place that brought it all together. That's what I set out to write.

Maybe that's too ambitious for a little book like this—after all, if I want to keep it short, how can I possibly cover everything? Of course, I can't. However, I can aim to cover four things that I believe are really important in this journey of following Jesus.

Here's the “menu”: A chapter on what a Christian is (so we can clear up any confusion), a chapter on the Bible, a chapter on the church, a chapter on food, and finally a chapter on prayer. Many excellent things have been written on each of these topics, but the idea is to give them to you simply in one place.

Why those four?

When the church first began to grow in the book of Acts, one of the key descriptions of what they did is found in Acts 2:42:

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer.”

(Acts 2:42, CSB)

It's not everything they did, but it seems to capture the core of their life together. That summary has helped guide me over the years, both personally and in the churches I've had the privilege to serve. It's also the basis for the chapters in this book, and I hope they'll be a blessing to you as you read.

Paul Lintott

Haworth, 2025

Chapter 1 – What Is a Christian?

Recently, a friend of mine preached a sermon and made what seemed like an almost throwaway comment. He said that Romans 10:9 is a great definition of what it means to be a Christian:

"If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

(Romans 10:9, CSB)

In this short sentence, the apostle Paul tells us that two things are necessary for salvation:

1. We must say that Jesus is Lord,
2. And we must believe that God raised him from the dead.

Of course, this is a summary, and each of those words- Jesus, Lord, believe, heart, God, and raised needs unpacking. But the basic message is wonderfully simple. Becoming a Christian means publicly declaring that Jesus is Lord—that he made the universe and is the one we now bow the knee to. And it means believing that his

resurrection really happened—that he defeated death and that his death to pay for our sin was successful.

As one Christian rapper puts it:

“At the resurrection, we all cheered, because that meant the cheque cleared!”

Who is Jesus?

He is the Lord.

Why did he come?

He came to die for our sins and rise again.

The gospel of Mark, to me, seems like a whole book devoted to those two themes: who Jesus is and why he came. Mark shows us that Jesus is Lord, and that he came to die and rise again. Declaring this and believing it in our hearts is what makes someone a Christian.

It's not about which family I come from, what country I'm born in, or what building I go to each week. It's about repentance and faith. It's about saying, “Jesus is Lord” and believing in him. For me, that has always been the heart of Christianity:

Is Jesus God?

Did he die and rise again for sin?

And if so, **what am I going to do with that personally?**

That's the core of it. So here's a bit of self-diagnosis:

- Am I willing to say, "Jesus is Lord"?
- Do I believe that he is the risen Saviour?

That's the super-short version of the good news. But the gospel—this good news about Jesus—is part of a much bigger story that stretches back through time and history.

I'm a bit of a fan of the writings of J.R.R. Tolkien. You may know him from *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*. One of the things I appreciate about his books is how he sets dramatic events within the sweep of a much larger history. The stories of Frodo or Bilbo make sense on their own, but they come alive when you understand where they come from and how much bigger the struggle is than just their part in it.

That reminds me of the good news about Jesus. It's not just about the 33 years from his birth to his resurrection. It's the climax of a long story—a cosmic struggle that comes to a head at the cross. And the main character, Jesus, is eternal, infinitely complex, and more wonderful than we first imagined.

Becoming a Christian means stepping into a story that's much older and much bigger than we realise. The stakes are higher, and the rewards are greater than just my own personal salvation. It is

personal—but it’s also part of a vast painting, a plan that spans all of time and eternity.

So, what is a Christian?

Someone who has been rescued from death and hell by the Son of God and brought to follow him by faith.

It’s part of God’s great plan to show his power and grace. Becoming a Christian is a monumental thing.

So, you’ve asked yourself the question, “Am I a Christian?”

You’ve said, *Yes, I believe Jesus is who he claimed to be. I’m willing to go public and declare it. I’ve repented of my sin and I’m trusting in him.*

Now what?

Summary:

- Am I a Christian?
- Have I asked Christ to forgive me, and am I following him as Lord?
- Do I believe in his death and resurrection?

Chapter 2 – Reading the Bible

Jean-Claude Van Damme was famous in the eighties for action movies. The "Muscles from Brussels," as he was called, stayed super fit thanks to a punishing physical routine he kept every day. I remember watching an interview where he talked about holding a squat position as a way to build strength and burn fat. It looked more like torture than exercise! But he looked good for his age, and his body was impressive.

One of my sons recently joined the Royal Navy. When he came back from training, he looked fit, trim, and strong. That transformation came through a daily routine of physical discipline.

You can probably guess where I'm going with this. In my experience, many people who become Christians find it hard to grow in their faith. They stay at the earliest stage of spiritual life, and without continued nourishment and exercise, their faith can become weak and underdeveloped. So what are the "exercises" that help us grow? What should we do?

From the very beginning, **God's words have been central to faith.** In the story of the Bible, it's how people respond to God's words that shows whether they believe or not. Adam and Eve ignored them. Noah and Abraham trusted them. Jesus, in one of his most famous parables, says that the one who builds their life on sand is like

someone who hears his words but **doesn't** do them. The person who builds on rock is the one who hears and **does** what he says.

So, hearing and responding to God's word is crucial to living a healthy Christian life.

How do I hear God's word?

Some people today are obsessed with dreams and prophecies, as if those were the main ways God speaks. But while God certainly **can** speak in extraordinary ways, the faithful believers throughout history have known the importance of hearing God through the **Bible**. That's why they devoted themselves to reading it, meditating on it, and being taught from it.

Regular exposure to God's word is what makes us spiritually fit—and it's also what protects us from false and crazy ideas that go around under the label "Christian prophecy."

How can I know what I'm supposed to believe and how I'm meant to live?

By reading my Bible and having it faithfully taught to me.

The early church's example

Back in the introduction, we looked at Acts 2:42. The early church devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching. That means they listened carefully to what the apostles taught about Jesus. These men had been set apart by God to be the authorised messengers of Christ. They were promised the Holy Spirit's help to **remember and record** what Jesus taught, so we could have a faithful and life-changing written record.

Peter puts it this way:

"For we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty."

(2 Peter 1:16, NIV)

In other words: "We didn't make it up." This isn't religious myth—it's eyewitness testimony. And the Old Testament authors were also inspired by the Holy Spirit to write. So what we have in the Bible is **God speaking through people**, giving us timeless wisdom.

How to read the Bible: The ABC version

Here's a simple approach for getting started:

1. Find a reliable translation you can understand

While we're grateful for the King James Version, its language can be hard to grasp today. A modern translation makes things clearer.

Here are a few I recommend:

- **New Living Translation (NLT)** – Great for starting out. Very readable.
- **New International Version (NIV)** – Clear and widely used. It's what we use at our church.
- **English Standard Version (ESV)** – More literal. Slightly harder to read, but good for study.

Personally, I use the **NIV** for general reading and the **ESV** when I'm preparing sermons or studying more deeply.

2. Find a private space

Jesus said to go into your room, shut the door, and pray to your Father in secret. I think that's good advice for Bible reading too. Go somewhere quiet and block out distractions. That's why I prefer a **physical Bible** over reading on a phone or tablet. Phones are full of distractions—notifications ping and suddenly we're doing anything but reading the Bible. If you do use your phone, try switching on *Do Not Disturb*.

Some people read on the bus or train because it's the most private space they've got. That's fine! Just aim for a space where interruption is less likely.

3. Pray before you read

I know we'll get to prayer in a later chapter, but here's a quick point: this is **God's book**, and he is the original author. So we need his help to understand and obey it. Try a simple prayer like this:

“Father in heaven, thank you for giving me your words. Help me to read, understand, and obey. Amen.”

4. Work to a plan

Start small. Walk before you run. I've always thought that **two minutes of Bible reading is better than none**. Some people aim too high and end up frustrated. Others read without understanding, like a kind of spiritual autopilot.

One pastor said he read through the Bible but would stop whenever something struck him. Some days it was three chapters. Other days, just a verse or two.

You might find daily reading notes helpful. Try something like *Our Daily Bread* or *Explore*. My wife and I have used Spurgeon's *Morning and Evening* and Billy Graham's *Unto the Hills*—both are good. But

don't become dependent on the notes. The Bible itself is the main event.

Maybe start with a Gospel (Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John) and read one chapter a day. Then try a short letter like Philippians or Ephesians. At some point, aim to read the whole Bible. I've done this many times and always found it helpful. Robert Murray M'Cheyne's Bible-in-a-year plan (adapted into a two-year version by D.A. Carson) is included in **Appendix B**.

The key idea is this:

Make a habit of regularly feeding on God's word, and you'll grow.

"A Bible that's falling apart usually belongs to someone who isn't."

—Charles H. Spurgeon

What else can help?

Commentaries

These are books that help explain the Bible. They're not infallible, but many are helpful. For example:

- **The New Bible Commentary** (IVP) – A good one-volume overview.
- **The Bible Speaks Today** or the **Welwyn Commentary Series** – Helpful for going deeper.

Sermons

This might seem out of place in a chapter about reading the Bible, but most Christians over the past 2,000 years didn't own a Bible—and many couldn't read. God used **preaching** to bring his word to people's hearts.

There is still something powerful about **faithful, Spirit-filled preaching**, and it's worth finding a church where the Bible is preached, explained, and applied.

Summary:

- Get a Bible
- Read it each day
- Find a way to make it part of your spiritual routine

Chapter 3 – Church

When people are proud of something they've created, they want to show it off. Walk into a school, and you'll see artwork and projects pinned up to display what the children have made. Go to an art gallery or a music concert, and you're there to experience someone's work—something they're eager to share.

In Ephesians 2, the apostle Paul gives an unexpected description of the church:

*"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."
(Ephesians 2:10, NIV)*

Paul isn't talking about a building—he's talking about people. The "we" refers to Christians, and the word translated as "handiwork" means something like *masterpiece*. The Greek word is *poiēma*, from which we get the word *poem*. In other words, the church is **God's poem**, his artwork, his display of grace and power to the world.

God loves the church. He sent his Son to die for the church. So it's not just a human idea we can take or leave—it's an expression of his deep love and eternal purpose.

Now, you might already be thinking: “But churches aren’t that great. They’re full of messed-up people.” Fair point. Churches are filled with broken people—and that’s kind of the point.

That’s why some people describe the church as a **lifeboat** or a **military field hospital**. I like both metaphors. A lifeboat is meant to rescue people who are in trouble. A field hospital exists because people are injured and need care. You expect to find hurting people in both places—and the church is no different.

But the church isn’t only about rescue and recovery. As we gather together, we **celebrate**, **worship**, **get fed**, and **get equipped** for the good works God has planned for us.

Finding a church

There are so many churches today—different styles, different denominations, different emphases. So, how do you find the right one? Is it just a matter of preference? And is every place that calls itself a church really a church?

Let me offer a simple, time-tested answer.

About 400 years ago, during the Reformation, many Christians were deeply concerned that the church had lost its way. It had become

about power, money, and organisation, rather than Jesus and his people. So they tried to get back to the basics.

They defined a true church as:

A group of believers gathered together, where God's word is preached, and where baptism, communion, and church discipline are faithfully practised.

I've found that really helpful. When I'm on holiday or looking to visit a new place, I ask:

- Is Jesus loved here?
- Is the Bible taught faithfully?
- Are they serious about doing what Jesus says?

Broadly speaking, that's what an **evangelical** church is. The word *evangelical* can describe a variety of churches—Anglican, Baptist, Methodist, and more. The label isn't the most important thing, but here's what it usually means.

Evangelical churches typically hold to:

- A **high view of Scripture** – The Bible is fully inspired by God and is the final authority for faith and practice.
- **Salvation by grace through faith** – We're saved only by trusting in Jesus' death and resurrection.

- The **need for personal conversion** – Each person must turn to Christ in repentance and faith. (This is often called being “born again.”)
- A focus on **Christ’s death and resurrection** – His death paid for sin, and his resurrection confirmed his victory.
- The **ongoing work of the Holy Spirit** – In salvation, sanctification, and gifting.
- A commitment to **evangelism** – Sharing the good news and calling people to follow Jesus.

Practically, this means doing a little homework. Read a church’s statement of faith. Talk to a trusted Christian friend or pastor. Ask questions.

Sticking with a church

Once you’ve found a good church, the next challenge is staying committed to it. In the New Testament, the letter to the Hebrews was written to Christians who were under pressure to give up. Here’s the encouragement they received:

“...not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you

see the Day approaching."

(Hebrews 10:25)

I've met many people who have given up on church. Some have walked away from the faith. Others were deeply hurt by power struggles, poor leadership, or even abuse. Some still believe but hop from one church to another, never settling. There are lots of reasons people move on.

But I've also experienced the joy of being in a church where people love Jesus, want to grow in him, and serve one another. And I can say from experience: **there's nothing better.**

No church is perfect. But if we love God, we'll love his people. And if we love his people, we'll persevere. We'll forgive. We'll stay. Unless a church is seriously drifting from the Bible, leaving shouldn't be our first instinct.

Get stuck in

The New Testament teaches that every Christian has been gifted by God **for the benefit of others**. You've been given gifts—skills, talents, spiritual capacities—not for yourself, but for the building up of the church.

“God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.”

(1 Peter 4:10, NLT)

This truth was a breakthrough for me. Realising that God gives gifts for the sake of **others** shifted my perspective. It meant that serving in church wasn't about how I felt—it was about how others might be blessed through me.

Not all spiritual gifts are public or dramatic. Most are not. Scripture lists gifts like:

- Prophecy
- Service
- Teaching
- Encouragement
- Giving
- Leadership
- Mercy
- Wisdom
- Knowledge
- Faith
- Healing
- Discernment
- Speaking other languages
- Interpretation
- Helps
- Administration

Part of the joy of belonging to a church is discovering how God has gifted you and using those gifts to build others up.

One of my friends has the gift of encouragement. They love getting alongside people, lifting them up, and strengthening them. Every time I see them doing that, I thank God and rejoice that their gift is being used to bless the church.

Summary:

- **Find** a Bible-believing church
- **Stick** with it—even when it's hard
- **Serve** others using the gifts God has given you

Chapter 4 – Food

You might be surprised that I've included a chapter on food. If you know me, you won't be surprised for two reasons.

First, I love food. Really, I do. What a gift! Food is a daily reminder that I'm dependent on God. I need to eat to live, and that points me back to my Creator. But it's more than survival—it's also a rich way to enjoy the variety of tastes, textures, and pleasures God has built into the world.

Second, the early Christians made food a huge part of their life together.

Communion: the spiritual meal

Jesus told his followers to share a meal together. We call it **Communion**, or **the Lord's Supper**. Some Christians do this every week, some once a month, and some only a few times a year. The frequency isn't the big issue. What matters is that we take time together to remember **that Jesus died for us**.

But it's more than just a memorial. When we break bread and drink the cup, we're not just remembering Jesus—we're **drawing near to**

him. In a mysterious and spiritual way, we are joined to Christ and to each other by faith. This isn't just ceremony or a membership requirement. It's an intimate moment where the physical symbols remind us of deep spiritual truths: his body, broken for us. His blood, shed for us.

That verse from Acts we looked at earlier says:

"They devoted themselves to the breaking of bread..."

(Acts 2:42, NIV)

I believe that refers first to **Communion**. But I also think it means more.

Hospitality: the shared meal

Just a few verses later, Luke writes:

"Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts."

(Acts 2:46, NIV)

So it wasn't just a church service thing. They also ate in each other's homes. They showed—and received—hospitality.

When I was courting my wife, we would sometimes go round to my brother-in-law Steve's house for a meal. He had a gift for hospitality. He'd fill the evening with good food, good music, and great conversation. His tactic, he later told me, was always to invite a few people to help the conversation flow. He created an atmosphere where people felt welcome, and that made a huge impact on me.

The early church knew that meals weren't just about food. They were about **fellowship**. Sharing food meant sharing life.

Summary:

- **Become part of a church family**, and share in Communion
- **Open your home** and your table to others—and receive their hospitality too

Chapter 5 – Prayer

As I mentioned earlier, there are plenty of good books on prayer—so many, in fact, that it might seem unnecessary to write more. But my aim here is simple: to give you some **practical pointers** that might actually help you **start praying**.

Sometimes the problem isn't that we don't know enough about prayer—it's that we just don't do it.

Practical Help for praying

1. Get alone

Let's start with Jesus' words:

“But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen...”

(Matthew 6:6, NIV)

My life is full of distractions—some good, some not so good. And those distractions often crowd out the essential things. Prayer can feel hard to prioritise. There's always something else calling for our

attention: the ding of a phone, family responsibilities, deadlines, pressure.

But interestingly, when Jesus tells us to go into our room and shut the door, his main point isn't about avoiding distraction—it's about avoiding **pride**.

In his day, some religious people liked to pray in public, so everyone could hear how “spiritual” they were. They wanted to be seen. They were praying for the applause of others.

Jesus says: *Don't do that. Go somewhere private, where only your heavenly Father sees.*

In other words, prayer is meant to be **real** and **relational**. It's not a performance. It's communion with God when no one is watching.

“What we are in the eyes of God, that we are and nothing more.”

—John Calvin

That's a sobering thought. But here's the encouragement: when we're alone and cry out to God, we're doing so in the **most intimate** way possible.

Paul writes in Galatians that because we are now God's children, we can cry out: “*Abba, Father.*” That's the language of relationship. The kind of closeness you'd expect between a child and their loving dad.

So—get alone. Get with your Father. And talk to him.

2. Have a form or structure

Right after Jesus tells us to go and pray in private, he gives us a model to follow. It's one of the most well-known passages in the Bible:

“Therefore, you should pray like this:

Our Father in heaven,
your name be honored as holy.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And do not bring us into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.”

(Matthew 6:9–13, CSB)

This is often called *The Lord's Prayer*, though it might better be named *The Disciples' Prayer*, since it was given to us—Jesus' followers.

There are good reasons this prayer is so well known:

- It's **structured** – It keeps us from vague or repetitive prayers.
- It's **thematic** – It leads us through worship, surrender, daily needs, forgiveness, and spiritual protection.
- It's **expandable** – You can pray each line and pause to add your own thoughts.
- It's **personal** – We come to *our Father*, not a distant deity.
- And it's **bigger than we naturally pray** – It lifts our vision beyond ourselves to God's will, God's kingdom, and the needs of others.

Sometimes, when I feel low or at a loss for words, I just pray this word for word—and hang on to the truth it teaches me.

It's not the only way to pray, but it's a wonderful place to start.

Some people also use:

- **Prayer lists** – to help remember who or what to pray for.
- **Lectionaries** – structured prayers and readings for each day.
- **Journals** – to reflect or track answers to prayer.

Another Simple Pattern: T.S.P.

If you're looking for another really easy way to pray, here's one I've found helpful—and have taught to kids and adults alike. It's simple enough to remember, but rich enough to grow with you.

T – Thank You

Start by thanking God for something—anything! It might be something big, like salvation, or something small, like a sunny day or a good meal. Gratitude shifts our perspective.

S – Sorry

Take time to say sorry to God for the things you've done wrong. Confession isn't about beating ourselves up—it's about being honest, receiving forgiveness, and receiving God's grace.

P – Please

Finally, ask God for what you need—for yourself and for others. This could include help, strength, healing, guidance, or anything else that's on your heart.

It's not a magic formula. But it gives shape to your prayers and helps you stay real and balanced. Even just saying a sentence or two in each area is a great way to begin.

The key is to find something that helps you actually **pray**.

3. Be real

One of the best tools for real, heartfelt prayer is the **book of Psalms**. Jews, Christians—and even some atheists—have appreciated the Psalms for their depth, honesty, and beauty.

David, who wrote many of the psalms, was a shepherd, warrior, king, and poet. His relationship with God spilled out in song and prayer in every season of life.

There are many types of psalms, I include the list to help you find something that might fit your current situation:

- **Laments** – grief, sorrow, distress (Psalms 3, 22, 51, 130)
- **Thanksgiving** – joy and praise (Psalms 8, 30, 100, 118)
- **History psalms** – God’s mighty acts (Psalms 78, 105, 106)
- **Celebration** – worship, coronations, harvests (Psalms 24, 75, 121)
- **Pilgrimage** – travel songs (Psalms 120–134)
- **Royal psalms** – God and the king (Psalms 2, 18, 20)
- **Wisdom** – reflections and teaching (Psalms 1, 37, 73)
- **Imprecatory** – calling out injustice and evil (Psalms 35, 55, 137)
- **Trust** – confidence in God (Psalms 11, 16, 23, 62)
- **Penitential** – confession and repentance (Psalms 6, 32, 51, 130)

The Psalms teach us that prayer can be joyful or desperate, ordered or messy, poetic or blunt. They give us permission to **feel**, to be honest, to rejoice, to weep, and to worship—all in God’s presence.

Try praying through a psalm. Let its words guide your own.

4. Pray with others

While private prayer is vital, **praying with others** is also biblical—and powerful.

In the book of Acts, believers prayed **together**—in homes, in public, and as a gathered church. They prayed before decisions, during crises, and in worship.

I've been so encouraged by praying with others—one-to-one, in small groups, or with the whole church.

Praying with others deepens our fellowship and unites us in purpose. It also helps us keep going when our own strength feels low.

Summary:

- **Get alone** with your heavenly Father
- **Use Jesus' prayer** as a structure
- **Pray the Psalms** to be real and honest
- **Pray with others** to be strengthened and united

Chapter 6 – Keep Going

The Christian life isn't a sprint—it's a long walk with Jesus. Sometimes it's uphill, sometimes the path is smooth, sometimes it's hard to see where the road is going. But the important thing is this: keep going.

When you first become a Christian, everything can feel new and exciting. But it's normal for that excitement to rise and fall. You'll have days when prayer feels dry, when the Bible feels hard to understand, when church feels difficult. Don't panic. That doesn't mean something's gone wrong. It means you're growing.

Faith is not about never struggling. It's about keeping your eyes on Jesus in the struggle.

“Let us run with endurance the race that lies before us, keeping our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.”
(Hebrews 12:1–2)

Keep rooted in Christ

The name of this book—*Rooted*—comes from a deep truth. In Christ, your roots are secure. As you grow in him, your life begins to bear

fruit—not all at once, but over time. You become more like Jesus. You love what he loves. You hate what he hates. You lean on his strength and trust in his promises.

Keep listening to his voice in Scripture.

Keep talking to your Father in prayer.

Keep showing up at church, even when it's hard.

Keep loving others. Keep serving. Keep repenting. Keep believing.

You are not alone

Jesus said he would never leave us—and he hasn't. You are now part of a global family that stretches across time and culture. You belong to him. And he has given you his Spirit to live in you, strengthen you, and guide you.

When you stumble (and you will), remember this: his grace is greater than your failures.

When you're tired, remember this: he is strong when you are weak.

When you doubt, remember this: he is faithful, even when you are not.

So whatever comes next—keep going.

You belong to Jesus.

And he will never let you go.

“Now to him who is able to protect you from stumbling and to make you stand in the presence of his glory, without blemish and with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power, and authority before all time, now and forever. Amen.”

(Jude 24–25)

Conclusion

Clearly, this little book hasn't covered everything there is to say about being a Christian.

For that, we have the **Bible**—the living and active word of God. It's the book you'll keep returning to as you walk with Jesus. Everything in the Christian life flows from him—his love, his grace, his call to follow.

My hope is that what you've read here gives you a clear and encouraging place to start:

- Knowing **who you are** in Christ
- Beginning to listen to **God's voice** in Scripture
- Learning to live out your faith in **community**
- Remembering Jesus as you **eat and gather**
- And walking with your Father in **prayer**

You are not alone on this journey. Jesus has promised to be with you always—and he's also given you a church family to help you grow.

So keep going. Keep trusting. Keep following.

Appendix A - Next Steps

You've started the most important journey of your life. Following Jesus is not always easy, but it is always worth it.

Here are some simple next steps to help you keep growing:

1. Tell Someone

Jesus said we shouldn't keep our faith a secret. If you've trusted in him, tell someone. Maybe a Christian friend, a church leader, or someone who's helped you along the way. Talking about your faith strengthens it.

"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

(Romans 10:9)

2. Get Baptised

If you haven't been baptised yet, talk to your church about it. Baptism doesn't save you—but it's a powerful sign of your

commitment to follow Jesus, and it's something Jesus commands for every believer.

3. Read a Gospel

If you're wondering where to start in the Bible, try the Gospel of Mark or John. Read a little each day and think about what it shows you about Jesus.

4. Join a Church

You were never meant to follow Jesus alone. Find a local church that loves the Bible and will help you grow. Get to know people. Ask questions. Listen. Worship. Serve. Stick with it.

5. Keep Praying

Prayer doesn't have to be fancy. Just talk to God. He's your Father now. Bring him your worries, your thanks, your doubts, your joys. He listens—and he cares.

6. Expect Struggles—and Trust God

The Christian life isn't always smooth. You'll still face temptation, doubt, and difficulty. But God is faithful. He will never leave you. And he promises to finish the good work he has started in you.

“I am sure of this, that he who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”
(*Philippians 1:6*)

Keep going. You're not alone. Jesus walks with you—and so does his church.

Appendix B – Bible Reading Plans

If you're looking for help getting started with regular Bible reading, here are a few suggestions.

Daily Devotional Tools:

- **Our Daily Bread** – Easy-to-read reflections and short passages

www.odb.org

- **Morning and Evening by C.H. Spurgeon** – Classic devotionals, still deeply relevant

<https://www.crosswalk.com/devotionals/morningandevening/>

M'Cheyne Bible Reading Plan (Adapted)

Originally created by Robert Murray M'Cheyne, this plan helps you read through the Bible in one year. D.A. Carson has adapted it into a **two-year version** for a more manageable pace. You'll read from four different parts of the Bible each day, giving you variety and depth.

- Download here (PDF):

http://www.edginet.org/mcheyne/year_carson_a4.pdf

12-Month Whole Book Bible Reading Plan

Month 1 – Beginnings

- Genesis
- Exodus
- Psalms 1–10
- Matthew

Month 2 – Wilderness & Gospel

- Leviticus
- Numbers
- Psalms 11–20
- Mark

Month 3 – Covenant & Kingdom

- Deuteronomy
- Joshua
- Judges
- Ruth
- Psalms 21–30
- Luke

Month 4 – Kings and Kingdom

- 1 Samuel
- 2 Samuel
- Psalms 31–40
- Acts

Month 5 – Glory and Division

- 1 Kings
- 2 Kings
- Psalms 41–50
- Romans
- Galatians

Month 6 – Exile and Return

- 1 Chronicles
- 2 Chronicles
- Ezra
- Nehemiah
- Esther
- Psalms 51–60
- Ephesians
- Philipians

Month 7 – Wisdom and Worship

- Job
- Psalms 61–80
- Proverbs
- Ecclesiastes
- Song of Songs
- James

Month 8 – Major Prophets & Gospel

- Isaiah
- Psalms 81–90
- John

Month 9 – Prophets Continued

- Jeremiah
- Lamentations
- Ezekiel
- Psalms 91–100

Month 10 – Hope and Judgment

- Daniel
- Hosea
- Joel

- Amos
- Obadiah
- Jonah
- Micah
- Nahum
- Habakkuk
- Zephaniah
- Psalms 101–110
- Hebrews

Month 11 – Restoration and Renewal

- Haggai
- Zechariah
- Malachi
- Psalms 111–120
- 1 Thessalonians
- 2 Thessalonians
- 1 Timothy
- 2 Timothy
- Titus
- Philemon
- 1 Peter
- 2 Peter

Month 12 – Fulfilment and Eternity

- Psalms 121–150
- 1 John
- 2 John
- 3 John
- Jude
- Revelation

