

*"This means that anyone  
who belongs to Christ  
has become a new person.  
The old life is gone;  
a new life has begun!"*

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17



DEDICATED TO:

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# 30 Devotions *for* NEW BELIEVERS

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# WELCOME *to the family!*

When you said “yes” to Jesus you also said “yes” to...us.  
We’re the other 2.5 billion believers who’ve just become your new brothers and sisters.

We’re every color, age, nationality and political persuasion. We’re tall, short, thick and thin. But with all our differences, there are two things we have in common: We’re all imperfect, and we all need Jesus.

Which means you’ll fit right in.

By way of welcoming you, a few of us who’ve walked with Jesus awhile have a bit of advice and encouragement for you. We want you to know what to expect, what’s coming next, and who you’ll be becoming.

We’ve tucked all that into the following pages, along with a few key Scripture passages you’ll want to see.

So, welcome to the family. We’re delighted you’re here!

**P.S.** No, you don’t need to send birthday cards to all 2.5 billion new relatives...but wouldn’t it be fun to try?





## *It's all about* **RELATIONSHIP**

**M**aybe you've always thought of God as a scorekeeper. You do something kind and get a point, say something mean and lose one.

Or you've thought of God as distant, an absentee authority who only shows up on Judgment Day to deliver a verdict.

If any of that is true, it's time you two get better acquainted.

As you read through the Gospels, notice how Jesus describes God. There's deep affection there, ongoing communication, a relationship. That's the same sort of open, ongoing friendship God wants with you, too.

Approach God with friendship in mind. Be respectful, yes, awestruck even—God rightly inspires awe. But God is looking for far more than you simply following the rules and being good.

He's after your heart.  
He's after relationship.  
Are you willing to give Him one?



## Get **CONNECTED**

**T**he Christian life was never meant to be a solo endeavor. Now that you're following Jesus, it's important to plug into a faith community.

Which means it's time to find a church.

Maybe you're wondering why getting up early on Sunday to sit through a sermon is worth the effort. After all, it's not like anyone will miss you if you don't show up, right?

Wrong.

We'll miss you because we need you. Church isn't something you do, it's something you are. You're part of the Body of Christ, and whether you're an eyeball or an elbow, you're uniquely gifted to do something important that glorifies God and serves others.

So don't just attend services. Scout around and see if there's a ministry in your church where you can serve alongside others. Build relationships through a small group or ministry team. Experience the satisfaction of seeing God work in and through you.

We need you. You need us.  
What will you do  
to help us connect?



## Meet your **NEW BOSS**

**N**ow that you're following Jesus, it's time for an inventory.

Not necessarily of what you're doing—but how you're doing it.

Some careers Jesus-followers should avoid. Mafia hit man. Car thief. Pickpocket. If any of those are how you pay rent, start looking for a new line of work.

But if you're like most of us, you have a regular job. Whether you're an accountant, firefighter or farmer, see it for what it is: a place to do your work as if God is your manager.

That means no cutting corners. No shading the truth. Just work that's as excellent as possible, so your actions reflect the love and respect you have for God.

When that happens people will ask why you're bucking for Employee of the Month. Tell them getting your name on the plaque isn't important, but honoring your new Supervisor is.

Don't worry—they'll ask who that is.

And then you can explain.

*"So whether you eat or drink,  
or whatever you do, do it all  
for the glory of God."*

1 CORINTHIANS 10:7



## ASK *your* QUESTIONS

**M**aybe you have questions about God, Jesus and your new faith. Don't worry if that's the case—people who've believed for decades may well share the same questions.

Unfortunately, it doesn't always feel safe to ask our questions. We fear they signal our faith is faltering, or we're not good believers.

So we stay quiet...sit on our questions...and they fester.

Consider yourself deputized to ask whatever questions are nagging at you. Why there's evil in the world. How a good God allows cancer. Whether creation really only took six days.

Ask your pastor, your small group leader, an established believer you know. They might not have answers but you'll discover two truths:

1. God is trustworthy even if you haven't figured Him out, and...
2. See No. 1.

Are there some things  
you won't know  
this side of heaven?  
Yes—but you'll have plenty of time  
there to satisfy your curiosity.





## You have a **NEW JOB**

**W**ell, an additional job at least. Along with whatever else you do in life, you're now also an ambassador for the kingdom of God.

You're to live in a way that shows what life's like in your home country—and that's heaven. You're to reflect the values, culture and behaviors that let people catch a glimpse of what it looks like when God's in charge.

Will you get it right all the time?

No. But you have the job anyway, and the Holy Spirit is ready and able to help you grow into it.

Go add "ambassador" to your résumé and see what happens.

*"So we are  
Christ's ambassadors;  
God is making His appeal  
through us."*

1 CORINTHIANS 5:20A





# GRACE MAKES NO SENSE

*—get used to it*

**T**heologians say grace is the “unmerited favor of God.”  
It’s a gift. We can’t earn it, pay for it, or find a back door into it. It’s all God, none of us.

And that can drive us crazy.

Why? Because we live in a transactional world. We’re used to paying for what we get. We want things to make logical sense, and that’s not how grace works.

Maybe you’re struggling with grace because it seems too good to be true. You want to somehow prove you’re worthy of it, but you aren’t. None of us are.

No, it doesn’t make sense for the God of the universe to know and love us, let alone rescue us from sin. But that’s what God does because that’s who God is.

And since when does love make sense?

*“For it is by grace  
you have been saved,  
through faith—and this is not  
from yourselves, it is the gift of God—  
not by works, so that no one can boast.”*

EPHESIANS 2:8



## Find a **DISCIPLER**

**A** “discipler” is a more seasoned believer who’s willing to help you get grounded in your faith.

That person can help you learn to pray. To find your way around the Bible. To discover and use the spiritual gift or gifts God has given you. To lean on God in practical ways. A discipler can offer encouragement and guidance if you ask for it.

Your church may have a formal process for pairing you with a discipler. If not, look for someone who’ll help you build a firm faith foundation. It will help you stand stronger when storms blow in...and they’re coming.

There are dozens of discipling resources (Google knows all about them) and you could work through one on your own. But nothing replaces what God can accomplish through spiritual mentorship in the context of an open, caring relationship.

Ask another believer to help you by sharing the basics of the faith.

And when the time comes,  
be willing to do the same  
for others.





## *You can pray with* **YOUR EYES OPEN**

**I**f you were raised to believe the only prayers that count require you to bow your head and close your eyes, here's some news.

That's not true.

Prayer is simply a conversation with God, an awareness of His presence and willingness to communicate with Him. To say what's happening in your life and hear what He has to say to you.

And that can happen any time, any place—no closed eyes required.

So, get in the habit of praying throughout the day. At work, at home, when you need to make a decision, when you're just enjoying life. There's great value in setting aside time to be alone and focus on prayer, but also value in a moment-by-moment sharing of life with a friend.

Besides, if you're driving a car and decide to pray, closing your eyes is just going to give you a great deal more to pray about.

Try praying now—  
eyes wide open.



## *Expect to see* **SOME CHANGES**

Once you've followed Jesus awhile, you'll start to see some changes.

You'll find you're slower to anger. Quicker to listen. Kinder and calmer. Joyful, even.

No, you're not going crazy. You're experiencing transformation as, through the Holy Spirit, God works in and through you.

The "fruit of the Spirit" (see next page) are what grows in a life given to God. The changes aren't often immediate, but in time they come. And when they do you'll have yet another reason to praise God.

*"But the Holy Spirit produces  
this kind of fruit in our lives:  
love, joy, peace, patience, kindness,  
goodness, faithfulness, gentleness,  
and self-control."*

GALATIANS 5:22-23

