

# Ten Action Steps for a New Christian

## Introduction

<http://www.backtothebible.org/knowgod/introstep.htm>

A prison keeper in the ancient Greek city of Philippi once asked two of his prisoners the most important question in life:

"What must I do to be saved?"

The two prisoners, whose names were Paul and Silas, knew the answer:

**"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved"** ([Acts 16:31](#)).

The prison keeper, who is sometimes called the Philippian jailer, did believe in Jesus and he was saved.

It is probable that he then turned to Paul and Silas and asked, "What shall I do now?" And they must have told him, for within a few hours he had taken several of the most important first steps that a new Christian should take.

Perhaps you, too, have just trusted Jesus Christ as your Saviour and are asking, "What shall I do now?"

If so, take these ten simple first steps and your life will take on new excitement and purpose.

## Step One - Make Sure You Are Saved

<http://www.backtothebible.org/knowgod/step1.htm>

A man named Saul once struggled with the problem of how to please God.

His story is found in the Bible.

Before he became a believer in Jesus, Saul had investigated all the possible "religious" things he might do to please God. He considered himself morally upright. Surely he had done enough "good" things to please Him.

But one day, while traveling on the road from Jerusalem to the Syrian capital of Damascus, Saul heard the voice of Jesus Christ. Suddenly he realized that he was a sinner, and by the power of God he was gloriously saved. His whole outlook on life was turned around. He would never be the same again, and later he became known as the Apostle Paul.

After Paul believed in Jesus, he thought about how a person can be saved. He studied the Scriptures, reviewed his own personal experience and he reached the conclusion that a man is justified by faith alone, not through what he does to keep the law. **"For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law."** ([Romans 3:28](#))

\* There is only one requirement for salvation--faith in Jesus Christ. Just believe in Him. That's all you need to do.

- \* You are not saved by belonging to a particular church or denomination; no church saves you!
- \* You are not saved if the good things you do outweigh your bad things--they never will!
- \* You are saved only by faith in the Saviour--Jesus Christ.

While Jesus was hanging on the cross, a thief hung beside Him on another cross. This thief turned to Jesus and said, "**Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.**" ([Luke 23:42](#))

No one could have spoken those words without real faith. He believed. Jesus responded, "**Today you will be with Me in Paradise.**" ([Luke 23:43](#))

- \* That thief had no opportunity to be baptized.
- \* There was no time to join the rest of the believers (church)
- \* No chance to do good works.
- \* He was dying.
- \* All he had time to do was trust Christ.

Like him all YOU need to do is trust Jesus to be saved

- \* But this faith must be yours alone.
- \* You are not saved because your parents believe.
- \* Your salvation doesn't come through someone else, not even your priest, your pastor or your rabbi.

Once you have taken this step of faith, you are placed into the security of God's hand.

Here is Jesus' promise to you. "**My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand.**" ([John 10:27-29](#))

So ask yourself if you have trusted Christ as your Saviour.

- If so, you are saved, secure in the hand of our Sovereign God. You couldn't be in a better position. You have taken the first step as a new Christian.

### **Step Two - Tell Someone**

<http://www.backtothebible.org/knowgod/step2.htm>

\* Once you have been saved it's important to share your news with someone. Tell them that Jesus has become real to you, that He has come into your life.

\* It means you become a witness for Jesus and Jesus wants us all to be witnesses to His love.

\* You don't have to be able to provide all the right answers, you may not fully understand what has happened yourself but it helps you clarify your thinking and will bring your friends face to face with God's love.

\* Talking about what has happened to you helps you separate the questions you have from the facts you know. It will help you solidify in your own mind what has happened to you.

\* When you tell people you will probably be very excited about what has happened to you. It is important that--however much you feel that they must believe--you are patient and kind with them. Don't start an argument. That is unlikely to bring them to Jesus. A testimony that reflects the great love that brought you to Him is far more likely to help them open their hearts as you have done.

### **Step Three - Establish a Quiet Time**

<http://www.backtothebible.org/knowgod/step3.htm>

\* You need to grow in your new faith in Christ, and to do this it is important for you to establish a quiet time--a time to get alone with God and His Word.

\* The Bible is the revelation of God's mind to us. It's what He wants us to know and do. Not only did God give His Son--the Living Word--to save us, He gave His Book, the Written Word, to guide us.

\* Some sections of the Bible are difficult to understand and some are not as exciting as others. Still, every section of God's Word has something to say to us, and that makes every passage very important.

\* It doesn't matter when your quiet time is, but it is helpful if we set aside a specific time when we can be alone with God.

A six-step plan for what to do when you have your quiet time:

1. Start with prayer. Ask God to prepare you to meet with Him. If there is something in your life that you know displeases Him, confess it. Let Him forgive you so that nothing will hinder your communion together.

2. Read a specific passage of Scripture--perhaps a chapter or two. If you are not very familiar with the Bible, you may wish to start with the New Testament. Many people think that the Gospel of John is a good place to start. Perhaps you would enjoy reading one or two of the Psalms every day.

3. Meditate on it for a while after you have read a passage. Think about what you read, and ask yourself what it means. What does God want you to do? Remember, even though you may not understand all you read in the Bible, you can still obey what you do understand.

4. Write down questions about the passage as you read. It is good to write down the things you learn and the questions you have. Later you can search out the answers from someone who knows the subject or Bible commentaries.

5. Then read the passage again. Reading it the second time usually brings to light things you didn't notice the first time. This is a great way to learn on your own; for as you read, you'll have God's Holy Spirit as your teacher. **“But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”** ([John 14:26](#))

6. Finally, pray again. Thank God for sending His Son to die for you. Thank Him for giving you His Word (the Bible) because without it you would have no answers to life's big questions. Thank Him for teaching you from the passage you have just read.

Remember:

\* Many new Christians start a quiet time each day with great enthusiasm, but they soon get too busy and somehow God gets squeezed out.

\* Consistency is the key. The person who merely samples the Word of God never acquires much of a taste for it. You must come back to God's Word daily for Him to feed you, just as you come to a table daily to eat physical food.

\* Once you start, don't quit!

#### **Step Four - Pray**

<http://www.backtothebible.org/knowgod/step4.htm>

\* Getting to know God better means spending time talking with Him just as we would get to know a friend. Prayer is simply talking with Him and enjoying Him.

\* God loves to have intimate and honest conversation with us anytime of the day or night--about anything.

\* Prayer is especially good when we are spending time each day reading the Bible and contemplating the things on God's heart.

\* [Psalm 55:17](#) says "**Evening and morning and at noon I will pray.**" This is not a formula for timing our prayers. God wants to hear from us at anytime. However, if we haven't been in the habit of praying then remembering to pray at these times might be a good place to start. We can tell God how much we love him, talk about the circumstances of our day, thank him for His nearness and His help and confess our failures to Him.

\* Prayers don't need to be eloquent or long--we are talking to a friend who loves us deeply. He knows us and wants our honest thoughts.

\* The great news about prayer is that we aren't on our own with it--Jesus and the Holy Spirit have promised to help us with the whole thing.

\* [Romans 8:26](#) says that even when we don't know what to pray the Spirit prays for us. **In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.**

\* When we've failed, Jesus is there helping us by asking God to forgive us because of His sacrifice ([1 John 2:1](#)) **My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. (1 John 1:8-9) If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

\* We can bring anything to God in prayer and know that He will hear us and answer in the way that is best for us. Prayer is not a "shopping list" of things we want changed; it is a conversation with someone we know we can trust. He may even leave us in the difficult circumstances we ask to be rid of so that we can grow. Whatever He does in answer to our prayers, we can trust Him to make it work in our lives to make us more like Jesus.

\* Even though our prayer life is so much more than God simply acting on the things we have requested, out of 667 prayers recorded in the Bible there are an amazing 454 answers also recorded. What an encouragement! God is truly listening to us and responding in love to his children.

### **Step Five - Make Christian Friends**

<http://www.backtothebible.org/knowgod/step5.htm>

\* After you become a Christian, you may find a need for some new friends. You may find that you are looking for new friends who share your love of the Lord and who will help you through the ups and downs of your new Christian life.

\* This kind of friend will joyfully sing with you when you are on the mountain top and silently walk beside you through the darkest valley.

\* This doesn't mean that you should abandon your old friends. You will want to continue loving them as well as being a witness for them of the Father's love. You may discover some of them find the changes in you hard to accept but you can still try to love and accept them.

\* Your new Christian friends will help you to stay on track with your commitment to look at life from God's perspective now. They will help establish a setting in which you will build your new life.

\* This is a fresh new way of living where love of God and treating others with love are the important things.

\* Your Christian friends will have the added advantage of the same Spirit residing in each of them--the Holy Spirit. **"And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us".** ([1 John 3:24](#))

\* Your new friends can be a blessing and encouragement to you. Their friendship doubles your joy and divides your grief. They can be a support for you; they can share their spiritual wisdom with you. The next best thing to being wise yourself is having a circle of friends who are wise. Ask them to help you understand what you need to know.

\* They can also help you in many other ways. They can help you find answers to your questions. They can help you in your Bible study. They can assist you in locating a church where you can worship and grow in the Lord.

### **Step Six - Find a Christian Church**

<http://www.backtothebible.org/knowgod/step6.htm>

\* After coming to Christ as Savior, as soon as you can, find a good Bible-believing church and become active in it. Do not delay. It's easy to lose interest in the church if you have never made an investment in it.

\* Not only will this help you make Christian friends, but it will help you grow by leaps and bounds in your new Christian faith.

\* Being part of a good church enables you to worship God, to honor Him and His Word. The Bible cautions us not to fail to assemble together with other believers. ([Hebrews 10:25](#)) **Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another and all the more as you see the Day approaching.**

\* A church exists for the double purpose of gathering in and sending out.

When we gather together in the church, we are blessed. But we don't go for a blessing. We go because we have a sense of calling, a sense of need--a need for God and for others who have trusted Christ.

While we are in the church, our spiritual batteries are recharged so that we can be sent into the world to let our lights shine before men.

\* The true believers make up Christ's Church ([Matthew 16:18](#)) **And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.** He is the head of the Church ([Colossians 1:18](#)) **And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.** The Church is His body ([Ephesians 1:22-23](#)) **And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.** When we attend a local church, we know that the people there are not perfect; but they are forgiven, and that's important.

\* Look for a church where the Bible is treated as God's Word--His authoritative Word--where people express a loving concern for those who are still lost in their sins and where the people worship God with deep respect.

\* Avoid a church where you do not need a Bible during the service, where you never hear the name of Jesus Christ elevated and where no concern for those who don't know Him is ever expressed.

## **Step Seven - Be Baptized**

<http://www.backtothebible.org/knowgod/step7.htm>

\* There are some fine people who believe that baptism is necessary for salvation; another point of view is that baptism is necessary for obedience, but not for salvation. Again and again faith is stated as the requirement for salvation, with no mention of baptism ([John 3:16-18](#)) **For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son; ([John 5:24](#)) I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life; ([Acts 16:31](#)) They replied,**

**"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved you and your household."; ([Romans 10:9-14](#)) That 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. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the Scripture says, Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame. For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?**

\* Water baptism identifies our desire to obey Christ ([Matthew 28:19-20](#)) **Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in[a] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.** If you know that Christ wants you to be baptized and you refuse, you are being disobedient to your Master, the One who died for you.

\* Water baptism identifies our desire to be joined to Christ ([Romans 6:1-4](#)) **What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.** We have no way to show to others how we are placed into the body of Christ when we are saved, except through the symbolism of water baptism. Being baptized shows that when Christ died, we died. When He was buried, we were buried. And when He rose from the dead, we rose from the dead--to walk in newness of life.

\* Water baptism indicates our desire to follow Christ ([Romans 6:4](#)). It symbolizes our final break with our old life, with the past and its sin. And although we will sin even after we are saved, being baptized tells the world we are headed in a new direction; we are on a new road, and we are taking the first steps on that road.

\* Following the Lord in baptism means doing what He did ([Matthew 3:16-17](#)) **As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.**

\* Following the Lord in baptism means telling the world you're under new management ([1 Corinthians 6:19-20](#)) **Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.**

\* Following the Lord in baptism means following Jesus and forsaking the way you used to live before you were saved ([II Corinthians 5:17](#)) **Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!** It is a way of telling everyone, "I'm a new person, a new creation in Christ. Old things have passed away; all things in my life have become new. I'm off to a brand new start."

\* Baptism is going public for God. It is saying to the world, "I have decided to follow Jesus, no turning back, no turning back."

## Step Eight - Learn to Give

<http://www.backtothebible.org/knowgod/step8.htm>

\* Learning to give is one of the first lessons God teaches new believers. There is good reason for it too! Giving is important to God. In fact, one-sixth of the Books of Matthew, Mark and Luke and 12 of Jesus' 38 parables have to do with money.

\* Learning to give is important because of a divine pattern. God wants us to be like Him. He said, **"Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am the Lord your God"** ([Leviticus 20:7](#); [1 Peter 1:13-16](#)). And since God is a giver by nature, He wants us to learn to be givers as well. **"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son"** ([John 3:16](#)). Giving glorifies God because it makes us more like God.

\* Giving is a biblical principle. Throughout the Bible we read about the principles of giving. Giving is to be systematic; it is to be proportionate to your ability to give ([1 Corinthians 16:1-2](#)) **Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made;** it is to be sacrificial ([Mark 12:43-44](#)) **Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything all she had to live on;** it is to be spontaneous ([Acts 2:45](#)) **Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.** Early in our Christian lives we should learn the biblical principles about giving.

\* Learning to give is important because of thankful praise. Heart and hand go together. When your heart is filled with praise to God, your hand will express that praise by giving.

\* Who is more deserving of our thanks than God? He loved us; He sent His Son to die for us; He saved us. Now we are taking steps to be conformed to the image of His dear Son, Jesus, and one of those steps is learning to give. After all, isn't "giving" the last half of the word "thanksgiving"?

\* God loves a cheerful giver--one who has learned to give thankfully and with joy. ([2 Corinthians 9:7](#)) **Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.** Each week set aside some of your time for God. You may do that through your quiet time or through service to Him in your local church. And each week set aside some of your income for God. You may then give it to your church and other ministries that have blessed you.

\* Whatever you do, get into the habit of giving back to God a portion of what He has generously given to you. Giving is one of the delights of being a Christian and one of the important first steps in the journey of your Christian life.

## Step Nine - Memorize God's Word

<http://www.backtothebible.org/knowgod/step9.htm>

\* Memorizing God's Word is a privilege, not a duty. The benefit is all ours, but the pleasure is all His.

\* Memorizing God's Word honors Him. Read [Psalm 119](#) and notice the honor the writer heaps on God and His Word.

- o Verse 89: **"Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven."**
- o Verse 105: **"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."**
- o Verse 140: **"Your word is very pure; therefore, Your servant loves it."**
- o Verse 162: **"I rejoice at Your word as one who finds great treasure."**

\* The reason the writer values God's Word so much is that He values God. God's Word is a reflection of Himself. It is a revelation of His mind.

\* Memorizing Scripture is sometimes called "hiding God's word in your heart." When you do that, you are also hiding God there. Remember, God wrote only one book and you honor Him when you show respect for that Book (the Bible) by hiding it in your heart. **"Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day"** (Psalm 119:97).

\* Another good reason for hiding God's Word is to keep you from sin. The psalmist said it this way: **"Your word have I hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You"** (Psalm 119:11). When you are tempted to sin, you need a strong defense. God has provided that defense in His Word. If you have memorized portions of God's Word, you will be ready for the Tempter. When he badgers you and tries to get you to fall into sin, you will need your arsenal of Scripture.

\* To memorize Scripture is to prepare yourself to answer those who challenge your faith in Christ. Not everyone may be happy that you have become a Christian. Some of your old friends may be confused and upset by the changes in you. If they come to you with questions, if they make fun of your faith, if they challenge your trust in the Saviour, you will be glad you have memorized God's Word. We should always be ready to give a gentle answer as to why we live as we do in Christ. ([1 Peter 3:15-16](#)) **But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.**

### **Step Ten - Find an Accountability Friend**

<http://www.backtothebible.org/knowgod/step10.htm>

\* You increase your ability, stability and responsibility when you increase your sense of accountability to God. One way you can do this is to find another believer who will be your accountability friend.

\* What is an accountability friend? It is a mature Christian who agrees to disciple you, to help you grow and mature in your new faith in Christ. It is someone who agrees to hold you accountable, someone who will help you carry through on what you determine to do.

\* If you tell your accountability friend that you are going to have a quiet time every morning for half an hour, he or she will call you later in the day and ask if you did. An accountability friend makes sure that you do all that you told God you would do.

\* But the accountability street goes both ways. Frequently two people will be accountability friends for each other. They will hold each other up and lift each other up when they need a lift. And if one should fall, the other will help him or her up.

\* There is a striking image of this in [Ecclesiastes 4:9-10](#): "**Two are better than one . . . For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up.**"

\* This principle works not only when you take a physical tumble but also when you have a weakness in the spiritual realm.

\* If you have an accountability friend, you know that someone is there for you when you stumble, someone who will help you to keep from falling. For example, if you lose your enthusiasm in your walk with the Lord and become lukewarm, your accountability friend can take you aside and kindly, sincerely warn you that you are in spiritual danger.

\* An ancient proverb from the Near East says, "A friend is one who warns you." But an accountability friend, a true friend, never stops with a warning. He will also pray with you, encourage you and guide you back on the right track. That's what accountability friends are for.

\* Friends don't just criticize, they help. A true friend doesn't sympathize with your weakness; he helps you summon your strength. When you and another Christian make a commitment to be accountable to each other, the best will be brought out in both of you.

## A FINAL WORD

Have you recently come to Christ as your Saviour? If so, it is important for you to start your Christian life right. Now that you have new life, you need to grow--for growth is as important as birth. What a tragedy it would be if a tiny baby were to remain small all of his life. It would be equally tragic if you had been born again but never grew spiritually.

These ten action steps for the new Christian do not constitute a magical formula, but they are derived from God's Word and have been successfully practiced by mature Christians for generations.

If you follow these steps on the road to heaven, you'll find the journey to be a challenge and a blessing. God bless you as you step out for Him!

### **Remember Step 2? Tell someone...**

[Pocket Testament League](#) Free Gospel of John which you can give to someone you are sharing with.

### **For Steps 3 and 9**

For study and to memorize start with the verses on these pages.