

Important Steps to Following Jesus

Introduction

God loves you a lot. He demonstrated His love to us by sending His Son Jesus the Christ to come to earth and live a perfect life and then He died on a cross as a sacrifice for your sins. God then raised Jesus from the dead on the third day. And what Jesus calls you to do now is repent and believe in Him. To repent means to change your mind about sin and about who you want to live for. Jesus wants us to turn away from living for ourselves and living in sin and now turn to loving Him with all of our heart and living according to His ways. This is what it should practically look like to follow Jesus by faith. If we believe Him, we will follow Him.

The Importance of Reading the Bible

The Bible is God's word to us. It teaches us about who God is and what He desires from us. God's word is the truth that will set us free from the lies that Satan has been using to deceive us and lead us into sin (John 8:31-36). This is why it is so important for us to try and read the Bible every day. We need to fill our mind and our heart with God's truth. So each day, try to set aside a time to read the Bible, starting in the book of Matthew in the New Testament. Before you read, first pray and ask God to help you understand His word and to help you change to be like Him. As you read, take notes on what you are learning and make sure that you try to take away at least one or two things that you want to try and apply to your life each day. Keep in mind that the goal of reading the Bible is to get to know God and learn to live a life that is pleasing to Him. We should read because we love Him and desire to become like Him. It can be helpful to have a goal when reading the Bible. So set a goal for the minimum number of chapters you want read each day. Seven chapters is probably a good number to start out with.

The Importance of Prayer

Prayer is having a conversation with God. You can pray silently in your mind or you can talk out loud. God knows you very well and He knows your thoughts as well. You don't need to try and sound eloquent when you pray. If you are following Jesus, God is now your Father and you can talk to Him as you would in normal conversation. Jesus gave us a great model to use in prayer in Matthew 6:9-13. In this prayer, Jesus teaches us to come to God as our Heavenly Father and praise Him for who He is and all that He has done for us. We are then to pray that His will is done in all areas of our life as it is in Heaven. As you pray this, think about what you need to do today to do God's will. Then ask God to provide for your daily needs and thank Him for the many blessings He has given you. Then ask for forgiveness of any sins and forgive anyone who has sinned against you. Also, ask God to lead you away from temptations and keep you safe from the devil. You should also seek to continue praying to God throughout the day.

The Importance of Fellowship/Discipleship

Christianity is a team sport. God gives each believer unique gifts and abilities so that we can help each other follow Jesus and do His will. So try to find a group of believers who take following Jesus serious and who study the Bible together and are seeking to apply the Bible to their life. Christianity isn't about just going church. It's about working together as a team to help each other to grow closer to Jesus and do His will. So ideally you should find a small group where they get together and study the Bible. If you go to a church or small group where they don't really study the Bible much, then you should find somewhere else to go. Christianity needs to be based around God's word, not just telling stories. Jesus' model for His followers was discipleship. Discipleship is where someone who is more mature in their faith comes along side you and helps you learn to follow Jesus and His ways. Much of Christianity today has neglected this important part of Jesus' Mission (Matt. 28:18-20). So it may be challenging to find someone who will disciple you. If you can't find discipleship, at least try to find some other Christians you can meet together with on a consistent basis and talk about how to grow in your faith and who can hold you accountable with any struggles you may have and can help you overcome these struggles.