

Important Steps to Following Jesus

Introduction

God loves you a lot. He demonstrated His love to you by sending His Son Jesus 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 to where you turn from sin, and now turn to following His ways. This is what it should practically look like to follow Jesus by faith. If we believe Him, we will follow His ways.

The Importance of Reading the Bible

The Bible teaches us about who God is and what He desires from us. The Bible teaches us 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's important for us to try and read the Bible every day. So each day, try to set aside a time to spend with God where you pray and read the Bible. Before you read, first pray and ask God to help you understand what you read, and to help you obey His ways. As you read, take notes on what you're learning, and make sure that you try to take away at least one or two things that you want to try and practically 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 in a way that is pleasing to 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. Three chapters is probably a good number to start out with. You may want to increase this number later.

The Importance of Prayer

Prayer is like having a conversation with God. You can pray out loud, or you can pray silently in your mind, because God knows your thoughts. You don't need to try to sound eloquent when you pray (Matt. 6:5-8). If you are following Jesus, you can talk to God as your heavenly Father. Jesus gave us a good model to use in prayer in Matthew 6:9-13. In this prayer, Jesus teaches us to come to God as our Father and praise Him for who He is and all that He has done for us. We are then to pray that His will be done in 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 evil one. You should also seek to continue praying to God throughout the day, thanking Him, praising Him, and asking Him to help you do His will.

How to Study and Apply the Bible

Two of the main goals in reading the Bible are to grow in your faith and love. So as you read the Gospels and learn about Jesus' supernatural birth, His teachings, His miracles, His death, and His resurrection, these truths should help grow your faith in Him. These truths should also lead us to want to love Him and follow His ways. Jesus teaches us in John 14:15 that if we love Him, we will obey Him. So as we study the Bible, one of the main goals is to learn God's commands, and then seek to practically obey them. As you study the Bible, keep in mind that most of the New Testament books are written as letters with flowing thoughts. So to understand individual verses properly, we often need to understand the bigger picture of that letter, and the New Testament as a whole. So try to remember to keep what you read in context, paying attention to who is talking, who they're talking to, and think about how this teaching lines up with the rest of what you read in the New Testament. This is why it can be helpful to read larger sections at one time. To balance this, it is more important to learn and apply what you read than it is to just read a lot at once.