

**NEXT STEPS OF FAITH
FOR THE NEW BELIEVER**



Table of Contents

| | |
|----------------------------------|----|
| Introduction..... | 3 |
| Congratulations | |
| Athlete's Story..... | 6 |
| Jeff Terrell | |
| Chapter One..... | 10 |
| Study Your Bible | |
| Chapter Two..... | 15 |
| Learn To Pray | |
| Chapter Three | 17 |
| Connect to a Local Church | |
| Chapter Four..... | 19 |
| Be Baptized | |
| Chapter Five..... | 21 |
| Live a Life of Worship | |
| Chapter Six..... | 23 |
| Faith Force Statement of Beliefs | |
| Chapter Seven..... | 26 |
| Who You Are In Christ | |
| Chapter Eight..... | 29 |
| Keep On Growing | |

CONGRATULATIONS

You've just made the most important decision of your life. God created you with a purpose and that purpose begins with knowing Him, through a relationship with His Son, Jesus Christ. You're probably asking yourself, "What happens now that I've decided to follow Jesus?" The purpose of this book is to answer some of the questions you may have and help you get on the right track in your new Christian life.

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

Following Jesus is both a one-time decision and a lifelong process. When you received Christ as your Savior, you took the first step in your walk with Him - a walk that will last the rest of your life. God has a plan for your life. He wants you to experience a meaningful, purposeful life.

"For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope."

Jeremiah 29:11

It's amazing but true that God's grand plan for your life is far greater than you can imagine. Now even though God has a great plan for you, He will not force His goodness upon you. He gives you the power of choice; and it's your choices in life that determine the direction and quality of your life. You can choose to live according to His plan or you can choose to go your own way. Sin at its root is a decision to live independently of God.

Choices matter. They can activate God's empowering or hold it back. If you choose to say "no" to God—if you decide to live life on your own terms—that decision separates you from Him and the grace He offers that would enable you to grow in your relationship with Him. On your own, there is nothing you can do to bring yourself into a right relationship with God...not religion, good works, morality, money, philosophy, knowledge or science. For centuries, seekers have tried all of these paths with little success. But all paths do not lead to God. Jesus Christ is the only way to the Father. When we believe in our hearts in the completed work of Jesus and confess Him as our Lord, the greatest miracle of all occurs—we receive the gift of righteousness (right standing) with God. From the time we accept Jesus as Lord, we should continually grow in awareness that God's favor and grace is upon us.

The following progression of scriptures paints a picture of the condition of humanity and God's plan of rescue.

There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death.

Proverbs 14:12

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Romans 3:23

But God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

Romans 5:8

Christ suffered for our sins once and for all time. He never sinned, but He died for sinners to bring you safely home to God. He suffered physical death, but raised to life in the Spirit.

1 Peter 3:18

For there is only one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and humanity—the man Christ Jesus.

1 Timothy 2:5

If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved.

Romans 10:9-10

Anyone who belongs to Christ is a new person. The past is forgotten, and everything is new.

2 Corinthians 5:17

You have taken your first big step of faith by coming to a place where you realize your need for God. You have prayed to ask Jesus to be the leader and director of your life. You've asked Him to forgive you for all the ways you've sinned against Him while living life on your own terms, and you've committed to becoming more like Him. At the moment you asked Jesus to come into your life, He did. You are now a child of the living God—welcome to the family!

Faith Force is excited about the decision you've made and wants to encourage you to be all you can be in Christ. Did you know that God didn't save you just to keep you from hell and get you into heaven? His top priority while you are here on earth is to shape you into the image of His Son.

For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

Romans 8:29

We've put together some tools to help you on the journey you have begun...tools to help you better understand the decision you've made and to help you grow in your faith. In the following pages, you will find:

- The story of how one of our athletes became a follower of Jesus
- An explanation of your Next Steps of Faith
- Faith Force's Statement of Beliefs
- Who you are in Christ
- Additional resources to help you grow

JEFF TERRELL'S STORY

As a young man, like so many people in our world today, I chased after things that I thought would make me happy. I mean isn't that what we all really want...to be happy? Throughout my high school years, I looked for happiness in relationships with girls and partying with my friends. But I'm sure many people would agree with me when I say, "even your best friends on earth can let you down." So I never found true happiness there.

There was something else I always felt like I could depend on to make me happy—and that was sports. You see I didn't feel very good about myself when I was young. I was overweight from a very young age and sports helped me to overcome this. I played football in high school and studied martial arts for several years. I started to get in better shape when my father introduced me to lifting weights. By 16, I was driving twenty minutes into town everyday to workout at the best gym ever, Winner's Gym. There were so many incredible athletes training there, especially bodybuilders. I remember telling my mom I just wanted to be as big as the women in that gym.

I decided that was what I wanted to be in life—a professional bodybuilder. So for the next several years I trained extremely hard and began to enter bodybuilding competitions. Three months after my 18th birthday I found myself standing on the stage at the Teenage Mr. North Carolina bodybuilding championship. And at the end of the evening my name was called out as the overall winner. It was an incredible feeling. I felt like my dreams were coming true. I was happy—but there was still something missing. "I just need to train harder and enter more shows", I told myself, "That's all I need." Bodybuilding had become my god.

My next goal was to go to the Teenage National Championships, and then to the Collegiate Nationals. But in order for me to move on to the next level in this sport I had to do what most of the other athletes were doing—take steroids. I had been introduced to this before and I knew it was wrong but I wanted to achieve my goals so bad and “everyone else is doing it”, I reasoned. So I continued training with my future shows in mind, getting bigger and stronger over the next year. But no matter how big I got, no matter how much stronger I was—there was still something missing in my life.

One day I started having some health concerns so I went to the doctor and he ran some tests on me. He said the tests showed that my liver looked like it was in someone who was an alcoholic. He said, “Jeff, if you don’t stop taking these drugs they’re going to kill you.” It was like getting hit with a brick. I thought about it for a minute and then I said, “You don’t understand, I can’t stop now. I’ve got shows I’m getting ready for. People are expecting big things from me. I can’t stop now.” He just looked me in the eye and said, “I’m just telling you, if you don’t stop taking these drugs they are going to kill you.”

That day I went home feeling like all my goals and dreams had just been ripped away from me. You may understand how I felt. Maybe you’ve gone through a similar experience where something you’ve worked so hard for was taken away. I was crushed, but deep down I knew I needed to stop taking the drugs. Over the next several weeks I struggled with my decision. What was I going to do?

One night I was home alone while my parents had gone out to dinner. I was very depressed thinking about my situation. I felt like my world was crashing in on me. I walked into my parent’s bedroom...reached under their bed and pulled out a .357 magnum pistol. I walked back to my bedroom...cocked the hammer back on the gun...put it to my head and was about to pull the trigger, when all of a sudden I heard a voice

saying, “Jeff, call on Me and I will set you free.” I had heard this voice before on many occasions, but I had always avoided listening and turned away from it so many times. But this time I heard it loud and clear. I took my finger off the trigger and laid the gun down on my bed. I cried out, “Lord, Jesus if you don’t help me these drugs are going to kill me or I’m going to kill myself. Please help me Lord. Save me.” All of a sudden, I felt a peace like I’d never felt before. It was like a warm blanket had just been laid over me. I knew Jesus was there with me and I continued talking with Him.

That night I told the Lord if he would help me I would use my talents and abilities for His glory, not mine. I hoped that I could still train and keep some of my size and strength, but I had seen how so many guys lost a lot when they came off the drugs. But something amazing happened. Not only did I keep my size and strength, but I got bigger and stronger than ever before. The Bible tells me that I can do all things through Christ Jesus who gives me strength. I can testify that this is true. I’ve been able to do things I would have never dreamed of. And my goals and dreams—they got bigger too. God showed me I could do so much more with my talents than collect trophies to fill my attic. I could use my strength for His glory and impact the lives of people all over the world.

You may be thinking the sad part of my story is that I almost killed myself...and you’re right. It is still hard for me to think about that night. But the truth is the sad part of that story is that before that night...I knew about Jesus. I grew up in church. My grandfather was a Baptist pastor. I went to church, did the youth group thing and talked the church talk. But I wasn’t walking the walk. I was what I call a counterfeit Christian. And I believe that if I had pulled the trigger that night...I would have spent eternity separated from God in a place called hell.

I wasn't what some people would call a bad person, but up until that night I was a fake. And when Jesus came into my heart He made me the real deal. There are a lot of people who think that going to church makes you a Christian. That's as true as going to McDonald's makes you a hamburger. The only thing that makes you a Christian is a personal relationship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ.

I hope that, if you are reading this, you have made a decision to give your life to Jesus at one of our Faith Force crusades. I'm so excited for you! You've got an exciting journey ahead of you. Remember you are never alone. God promises to never leave you or forsake you.

If for some reason, you have never asked Jesus into your life, let me encourage you to pray a very simple prayer. If it truly is the desire of your heart, Jesus will come in. The prayer below is a good example of what you can pray:

Dear God, I open my heart to you right now. I confess that I am a sinner and need your forgiveness for all the wrong I have done. Thank you for sending your Son, Jesus, who died for me and gives me the opportunity to know you. Help me to live a life that honors you. Thank you for accepting me. In Jesus name I pray, Amen.

Next Step of Faith #1

STUDY YOUR BIBLE

If you made a decision for Christ at one of our Faith Force Crusades—at the end of the program one of our athletes mentioned five steps that all new believers should follow. The first is study your' Bible. But how much do you really know about the Bible? Maybe you've read bits and pieces of it, but never understood it as a cohesive unit. As followers of Jesus, we believe that the Bible is the inspired, inerrant word of God. "All scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true..." (2 Timothy 3:16)

We often tell people that B.I.B.L.E. stands for Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth. If you want to know God's plan for your life—read His instruction manual. It is designed by God to produce fulfillment and peace in every area of your life as you learn to integrate God's Word in practical ways.

Just a few facts to consider about the Bible:

- It is comprised of sixty-six books
- Written over a period of 1500 years
- Over forty different authors from different places, with different life experiences
- Authors did not collaborate with one another—in many instances, they didn't even speak the same language
- Authors work was passed down through many generations and translated many times
- These books were inspired by God's Spirit

God communicates with us through His Word. There are several methods for making that communication a daily part of your experience with God.

THE BIBLE

HEAR READ STUDY MEMORIZE MEDITATE

You lose grip on something easily if you only hold on with two or three fingers. God wants you to get a good grasp on what is written in the Bible and how you can apply it to your life. Think of holding on to the Bible with all five of these fingers:

- **Hear:** Listen to good Bible teaching, and take notes on what you hear.

- **Read:** You will get to know God better by spending time reading His Word. Set a goal to read the Bible for at least twenty to thirty minutes every day. Turn the cell phone off—read in a quiet setting and if possible, read at the same time daily. Regiment is not required, but is helpful and rewarding.

- **Study:** Read—make sure you contemplate the truths you read. As you dig into the Bible, ask yourself these questions:
 1. What promise is there to claim?
 2. What example is there to follow?
 3. What command is there to obey?
 4. What sin is there to confess?
 5. What adjustments do I need to make in my life?

One of the best ways to study your Bible effectively is to get involved in what we call Small Groups. Small Groups are groups of people that meet to study the Bible, pray for one another, and enjoy life together. Many of your local churches offer these.

- **Memorize:** God wants us to hold scripture close to our hearts and to be able to call on it when it is needed. Memorization of God’s Word is also one the greatest weapons we will ever have against temptation and understanding God rightly. Right now is the best time to start to memorize at least one verse weekly. Memorization makes us —smarter against the enemy and more likely to be reminded of God’s will in day-to-day life.
- **Meditate:** Meditation involves thinking about a verse, and then re-thinking about it. And then thinking about it again until you begin to —get it on a deeper level. It is becoming a part of your subconscious. You’re realizing more of the places you could be actively believing the truth it declares, or obeying the command it describes. Incidentally, this is how most people begin to hear God through His Word on a more consistent basis. As they meditate on His Word, He speaks volumes to their soul about them...about life, about Himself. I believe meditation is the best way to cure—dryness and progress in your walk with God. Let me challenge you to invest some time thinking about how that verse or passage applies to your life. **Analyze** and dwell on its truth as you jog, walk, ride the bus, cook or play. **Recite** the Word aloud. **Consider** how each principle makes a difference in your life.

The Bible is useful and helpful in all situations. The following verses give us insight to the power of the Word in our lives.

For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.

Hebrews 4:12

All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. ¹⁷ God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do.

Joshua 1:8

Notice that last verse especially. Do you want to have good success? Meditate on God's Word.

Choosing A Bible Translation

We're often asked—"What is the best translation of the Bible?" We believe the best translation of the Bible for new readers may be the one that you understand the most. Although there are many worthwhile versions of the Bible, here are four that are both very accurate in content and easy to read.

- The New International Version (NIV)
- The New Living Translation (NLT)
- The New King James Version (NKJV)
- The English Standard Version (ESV)

Try going to a bookstore (online or physical) to see which translation that you are most comfortable reading. One wonderful study resource is the Amplified Bible. When reading through parts of the Old Testament, many people find the Message Bible to be a helpful resource.

As you take the step to integrate the Bible into your daily life, you will see how it is relevant to everything that you face. God will use your time in the Bible to teach you about His truths and draw you closer to Him.

Next Step of Faith #2

LEARN TO PRAY

The best way to build a relationship with someone is to spend time talking together. You wouldn't have many friends if you never talked to them, would you? How would your relationship with your family suffer if you never made time for them, or never let them speak to you? The same principle is true in your relationship with God. Just as reading your Bible helps you know God more intimately, so does spending time with Him in prayer. Prayer is your way of communicating with God and should be very conversational. Remember—seven days without prayer makes one *week*.

Here are some tips for developing a strong prayer life:

- Make prayer a priority. You're not going to find time. Set aside time every day for prayer. Don't be tempted to push or force your conversations with God into the leftover pieces of your busy day. Combining your prayer time and your Bible reading time into a morning devotional is a great idea.
- Pray specifically. Use prayer cards or a software program to remind yourself of the specific things you're asking God for.

Before daybreak the next morning Jesus got up and went to an isolated place to pray.

Mark 1:35

- Just be yourself and talk to Him. You don't have to use fancy words or change the tone of your voice. Don't try to impress Him. Just come to God as simply and honestly as you can. Speak from your heart. He is now your Father.

I will give them hearts that recognize me as the LORD. They will be my people, and I will be their God, for they will return to me wholeheartedly.

Jeremiah 24:7

Now that you know you need to spend time in honest, open conversation with God every day, you may be wondering what that looks like. Consider this scripture.

Don't worry about anything; instead pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done.

Philippians 4:6

“How should I pray?” There are a number of ways.

- Spend some time praising and thanking God for the good things in your life.
- Confess any sin that you may be struggling with.
- Tell Him what is worrying you, and learn to release the anxiety to Him.
- Pray that God will guide and direct your life in the way it is supposed to go.
- Keep a journal where you can write down your prayers
- Confess Scripture promises; for example, speak aloud scriptures such as...

I can do all things through Christ, who gives me strength.

Philippians 4:13

Remember, prayer is a conversation...not a monologue. As you develop your prayer life, you will get more comfortable both speaking to and hearing from God. God speaks primarily to us through His Word. So, go ahead and talk to God. Ask Him to reveal Himself to you. He is your guide on this journey.

Next Step of Faith #3

CONNECT TO A LOCAL CHURCH & SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

God created us for connection. No one ever succeeds alone. As a new follower of Jesus, it is critically important that you get plugged in with a thriving healthy church. The best place to learn about God and grow in your faith is around other people who want to do the same.

Making the commitment to get involved in church gives you many great opportunities to grow in your faith. You get the opportunity to...

- Worship through music
- Hear anointed (God-filled and empowered) messages
- Meet new friends
- Use your gifts and talents to serve other people and expand God's Kingdom.

Actually, getting involved in church is not optional. God commands us to gather together as a spiritual family. He wants us to understand the importance of meeting together regularly with other people who are passionate about following after Him. If we don't, we will naturally begin to get discouraged and pulled down by the everyday concerns of life. We have to have set-apart times to come together with other believers for worship and teaching.

Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another...

Hebrews 10:24-25

God wants us to do life with others who are on a journey similar to our own. We were built for relationships with one another, and those relationships are best developed in small group environments. There may be other names for these groups but they are generally 10-15 people who get together to learn about God, develop friendships with each other and have a great time.

There is no such thing as a healthy, growing lone-ranger Christian. Lone-rangers are dead rangers. As you plug into the church and join a small group, you will learn more about God, develop relationships with other believers, and have the chance to serve other people through volunteering from time to time. All of these things, combined with your faithful prayer and Bible study, will work together to help you become a fully developing follower of Jesus Christ.

I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord."

Psalms 122:1

Next Step of Faith #4

BE BAPTIZED

Baptism is a confusing concept to many people. Initially it's not easy to understand the significance of being immersed in water after becoming a Christian. Much of the confusion centers on questions like, —I was sprinkled as a child, so I don't have to be baptized, right? or —If I don't get baptized, does that mean I'm not saved?

You are saved by grace...not by baptism. But when you make the decision to commit your life to Jesus Christ, the Bible teaches that you then should be baptized by immersion, following Jesus' example. Baptism is an act of obedience and a public declaration of faith. In fact, when Jesus was ready to begin His earthly ministry, He showed His devotion to the Father by being baptized.

Then Jesus went from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. But John tried to talk him out of it. "I am the one who needs to be baptized by you, „he said so why are you coming to me?" But Jesus said, "It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires." So John agreed to baptize him. After his baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy."

Matthew 3:13-16

Later the apostles taught that all who accept Jesus Christ should follow His example of baptism.

Peter replied “Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins...” Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day— about 3000 in all.

Acts 2:38-41

Baptism is symbolic of two essential truths of your faith:

1. **What Jesus did for you:** —He died for your sins, was buried and came back to life. (I Corinthians 15:3-4)
2. **That you’re different now as a result of accepting Jesus:** —You died to your old life, are buried in baptism and raised to live a new life in Jesus Christ. (Romans 6:3-4)

Never get tricked into thinking that baptism saves you. The work of your salvation was done the moment that you believed in your heart that Jesus is Lord and professed that belief with your mouth by asking Him to come into your life and forgive you of your sins. Baptism is a step of obedience—the outward symbol of the work that God has done within you. You have been raised to walk in newness of life. *That’s definitely something to celebrate!* Your previous life is washed away...forever buried...and you are raised up with Christ.

Baptism is not ceremonial. To the contrary, something deep and meaningful happens to you when you are baptized in water—the sense of guilt, shame and inferiority from the past will often diminish greatly or even disappear when you publicly proclaim your faith before others through this next step of obedience.

Tell a leader in the church that you need to be baptized and you can get signed up to take part in our next baptism celebration.

Next Step of Faith #5

LIVE A LIFE OF WORSHIP

You and I were made to worship God. Worship is not just something that happens in a church service. Your daily life is an act of worship as you live in a way that brings pleasure to God.

You are worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power. For you created all things, and they exist because you created what you pleased.

Revelation 4:11

You bring pleasure to God when you:

- Love Him supremely
- Trust Him completely
- Obey Him wholeheartedly
- Praise Him continually
- Use your abilities for Him

Every aspect of your life can be an expression of worship when you live in the realization and recognition of who God is and what He has done. Every task takes on significance and nobility when you connect it to the Kingdom of God. In fact, we exist to bring glory and pleasure to God. We honor God by cultivating ongoing communication with Him while employed in any endeavor. There are no insignificant acts of service when you connect them to the Kingdom of God. Whether you are cleaning bathrooms at the church or designing the church's website...everything takes on significance when you connect it to expanding the Kingdom of God, and perform tasks with a servant's heart to God and His people.

Worship can happen anytime and anywhere. In fact, God calls us to live a lifestyle of worship.

So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going to work, and walking around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him.

Romans 12:1

Here are a few ways in which you can worship God:

- Attend a weekly service
- Volunteer to help in some capacity
- Give financially(tithe)
- Join a Small Group
- Share your faith in Jesus Christ with others

WHAT'S YOUR STORY...?

One of the best ways to help you start to share Christ with others is to write out your story. This is also called your “Testimony”. It’s important that you take time to do this. It will be a blessing to you and others.

FAITH FORCE

STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

Faith Force's purpose is to follow Christ's command, "to go" and His example of serving others. Our mission is to be an instrument of Christ used in winning the lost, building the local church and encouraging its leaders.

1. About God

There is one holy, everlasting and almighty God existing in the three persons of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Genesis 1:1; Leviticus 19:2; Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 1:18-20; 1 Peter 1:2

2. About Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man, was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, died on a cross for the sins of humanity, was physically resurrected from the dead, reigns now at the right hand of God the Father, and will return to claim his people and judge the world. Matthew 24:29-31; Luke 1:26-38, 57-80; John 20:1-18; Romans 1:4-5; Romans 6:5; Ephesians 1:20-22; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6; 1 Peter 2:22

3. About The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is equal to the Father and the Son as God. He is present in the world to make people aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right.

2 Corinthians 3:17; John 16:7-13; 14:16-17; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 2:12; 3:16; Ephesians 1:13; Galatians 5:25; Ephesians 5:18

4. About The Bible

The Bible is inspired by God and, as it was originally written, is completely true and error-free. It is a fully sufficient and effective guide to how we should live and is the authoritative standard for all beliefs, values and practices. Deuteronomy 4:2; Joshua 1:6-8; Matthew 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 4:11

5. About You

Humans are God's prized earthly creation. God designed them in His own image and made them to live in a perfect, harmonious relationship with Him and to reign over the rest of nature. Genesis 1:26-31; Genesis 2:16-17; Genesis 3:8

6. About Sin

Humans chose to abandon God and rebel against God's values and authority. As a result, creation was plunged into a state of separation from God, resulting in strife, suffering, death and hell. Isaiah 59:2; Romans 3:23; Romans 5:12; Romans 8:20-22; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9; 1 John 1:8

7. About Salvation

Salvation is a gift from God. The only way for humans to be saved from the consequences of their rebellion against God is to lay aside any claims to self-righteousness or self-sufficiency and to place their trust fully in the sacrifice Jesus made by willingly submitting to Jesus as their Lord and Savior forever. Luke 9:23-26; John 1:12; John 3:16; John 12:32; John 14:6; Romans 1:16-20; Ephesians 2:8-9; 1 Timothy 4:10; James 2:14, 17, 19, 20

8. About Eternity

Humans were created to live forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin or in union with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life. Heaven and hell are places of eternal existence. John 3:16; 1 John 2:25; 5:11-13; Romans 6:23; Revelation 20:15

WHO YOU ARE IN CHRIST

Knowing who you are in Jesus is the key to a successful Christian life. The more you agree with God about your identity in Christ, the more your behavior will reflect your God given identity. Learn to see yourself as God sees you. God's opinion is the one that counts. Your true identity is who you are in Christ. The following scriptures describe who you really are:

I am God's child.

John 1:12

As a disciple, I am a friend of Jesus Christ.

John 15:15

I have been made right before God.

Romans 5:1

I am united with the Lord, and I am one with Him in spirit.

1 Corinthians 6:17

I have been bought with a price and I belong to God.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

I am a member of Christ's body.

1 Corinthians 12:27

I have been chosen by God and adopted as His child. Ephesians 1:3-8

I have been redeemed and forgiven of all my sins. Colossians 1:13-14

I am complete in Christ. Colossians 2:9-10

I have direct access to the throne of grace through Jesus Christ.
Hebrews 4:14-16

I am free from condemnation. Romans 8:1-2

I am assured that God works for my good in all circumstances.
Romans 8:28

I am free from any condemnation brought against me and I cannot be separated from the love of God. Romans 8:31-39

I have been established, anointed and sealed by God.
2 Corinthians 1:21-22

I am hidden with Christ in God. Colossians 3:1-4

I am confident that God will complete the good work He started in me.
Philippians 1:6

I am a citizen of heaven. Philippians 3:20

I have not been given a spirit of fear but of power, love and a sound
mind. 2 Timothy 1:7

I am born of God and the evil one cannot touch me. 1 John 5:18

I am a branch of Jesus Christ, the true vine, and a channel of His life.
John 15:5

I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit. John 15:16

I am God's temple. 1 Corinthians 3:16

I am a minister of reconciliation for God. 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

I am seated with Jesus Christ in the heavenly realm. Ephesians 2:6

I am God's workmanship. Ephesians 2:10

I may approach God with freedom and confidence. Ephesians 3:12

I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me.
Philippians 4:13

KEEP ON GROWING

As we mentioned earlier, following Jesus is both a one-time decision and a lifelong process. God desires for you to experience a meaningful, purposeful life. Faith Force hopes you will take the five steps we've discussed to heart. Take time to write out your story, thinking about what God has brought you through. As you become a Christian by faith, you should do all you can to seek, study, and learn about the life that is now yours through Christ.

I hope that this information has been helpful to you as you start your journey as a new Christian. You'll probably have many questions along the way, but that's ok. Below is a list of additional resources that you might find helpful. God bless you—and keep on growing!

BOOKS

The Purpose Driven Life by Rick Warren
Experiencing God by Henry Blackaby
God's Promises for You by Max Lucado
So, You Want to be Like Christ by Chuck Swindoll

WEBSITES

www.biblegateway.com - Read the Bible online
www.youversion.com - Read the Bible online
www.peacewithgod.jesus.net - Inspirational videos
www.iamsecond.com - Informational videos
www.oddb.org - Daily devotions