

**The necessary things  
for Jesus' followers**



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Hear the good news of God's salvation. God's plan from the beginning was for us to be holy and walk with Him, and this holy life is still within our reach if we listen to God. God's help came to us in Jesus Christ. Even though He was God He became a man of flesh to live among us to die the death we deserve for our sin, so we could be forgiven in order to live with Him.

Jesus is the promised Messiah, the Christ, the anointed One. *'Jesus is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.'* Col 1:15-16

And this is God's amazing offer, *'As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.'*

John 1:12

Jesus shows us how to live as children of God who are reborn in His image. Jesus is the perfect image

of God. Jesus said, “*whoever sees Me sees God who sent Me.*” (John 12:45) “*Whoever has seen Me has seen the Father.*” (John 14:9) Jesus is the fullness of God who lived in bodily form. (Col 1:19) Jesus Christ lived as God intended us to live. So if we want to know how we should live we look to Jesus.

Without Jesus, our good works won't save us, Without Jesus, being religious won't help, Without Jesus, praying all day will not work, because God doesn't hear sinners. Our only hope is in Jesus Christ who said, “*I am the way the truth and the life, no one can come to the Father but through Me.*” (John 14:6) Jesus is God's promised Messiah. God has said, “*This is My Son, My Chosen One; listen to Him!*” Luke 9:35

Let us listen to what Jesus says believing in Him really means if we are to enter the Kingdom of God.

## **1 Jesus says anyone who wants to follow Him must count the cost**

Jesus counted the cost as He laid aside the Glory He had with the Father in heaven to be born a man like us to die for our sins, now Jesus calls us to lay

aside our life as ordinary people to share in His glory.

Jesus knew many people want the benefit of what He did, but were not interested in whom He was and the life He was calling them to live. So He tells us what it takes to be His follower: *“Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’* (Luke 14:27-28) Failing to count the cost will lead to disappointment and failure. The cost of entering the Kingdom of God is all we have, everything, especially our lives in the world.

## **2 Jesus tells us we need a new life**

Jesus was God man born of the flesh; He says the man of flesh must be reborn of God. In order to be reborn, the flesh nature has to be put away if believers are to live a new life with God, no one can have two natures and live for two kingdoms.

Believers must put to death daily their life in flesh to be born of God to live in the kingdom of God.

Jesus said, *“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless they are born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”*

*“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless they are born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”*

John 3:3, 5-7

Remember, being born again means we first have to die to the old life if we are to live a new life.

To be born again is to receive God’s divine nature as our nature, this is the Christ life made alive within the Christian. The new life means we have God’s seed working in us and not the seed of Adam. The Bible says *‘If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.’* (2 Cor 5:7) The old life is no longer our reason for living; now we are to live for God. Jesus came that we might be set free from the power of sin with God’s life reborn in us. As it is written: *‘No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in*

*them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God.*’

1 John 3:9

Believing what God says He can do is very important, if we don't believe God can do what He says, nothing will change, but if we do believe, God will change our nature, how we speak and how we behave.

### **3 Jesus tells us we must live under the control of God's Spirit**

Jesus lived His life full of the Spirit of God in order to do the work of God; He calls on us to be also filled with the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit pours out all the loving qualities of God into the hearts of God's children so they can love as Jesus loves.

Jesus knows we need help to live a godly life. Believers are not left to remain as they were before they knew the Saviour. So Jesus promised the Spirit of God would come and live in the believer to comfort, teach and lead them into all righteousness. *“I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be*

*in you. "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you."*

John 14:16-17

So believers are not to try to be good in their own strength. The more we die daily to the flesh life of natural man, the more we live the life of Jesus under the control of the Holy Spirit. *'For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.'*

Rom 8:5

So then, as the Spirit of God raised Christ from the dead, He will also give spiritual life to believers as He dwells in them. *'You are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.'*

Rom 8:9

Those born of God's Spirit can live without sin controlling them. The Bible says, *'Walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.'* (Gal 5:16) As we receive God's Spiritual power, we have victory over our human nature by the powerful working of God in us.

## **4 Jesus says we must be separated from the world**

Jesus kept Himself separate from the ways of men who live for themselves, and He calls on us to separate ourselves from the world's was to live for God. Jesus prayed to God; *“I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.”* John 17:15-16

Separation from the world means we are set aside for God's use; this makes the believer holy so they live for the purpose of God. In being separated from the world Jesus lived according to the culture of the Kingdom of God; now He calls everyone to turn their back on the culture of the world to live according to the culture of God. In the world people have their own opinion about everything. But in the Kingdom of God there is only God's word and what God wills, will be done; to have another opinion is to be an enemy of God.

Separation from the world means believers are to walk a narrow way of holiness. Jesus said; *“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and*

*there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.”* Matt 7:13-14

## **5 Jesus says we must depend on God in order to live with God**

Jesus lived His life on earth as a man totally dependent on the Father for all He needed; He calls on us to be completely dependent on Him. Jesus said, *“I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.”* John 5:30

Jesus makes our need to depend on God very clear. *“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.”* (John 15:4-5) If the branch of a fruit tree or a vine is to have life and produce fruit, it must remain attached to the branch or vine which is its source of life; otherwise it will dry up and be burnt in the fire.

This abiding life means, *'It is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.'*  
Phil 2:23

## **6 Jesus says we must carry a cross to follow Him**

Jesus could only save the world by taking up His cross; now He calls on all who will follow Him to also take up their cross daily.

Jesus has declared clearly *"If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. For what will a man give in exchange for his soul"?*

Luke 9:23

Believers are to take up their cross of self denial daily by following His example; otherwise we cannot follow Him and enter into His life. If we don't take up our cross we will attempt to carry out our own plan, and we will fail. Jesus showed us the way of the Cross of self denial for our good and for the good of others. So just as He laid down His life for us, He calls us to lay down our life to live and do the work of God.

## 7 Jesus says we must obey all His commandments

Jesus lived in absolute obedience to God our Father, and now He commands us to obey Him absolutely so we can be united with the Father and the Son. Jesus showed us that obedience requires humility and submission, so we must be humble and submissive.

Saying we believe in Jesus is not the same as doing all He commands. He calls us to believe and obey. We need to give up our plans, and we need to surrender to God's plan if we are to have His life. Jesus said, "*Blessed are those who hear the word of God and obey it.*" (Luke 11:28) Jesus also said, "*My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice.*" Luke 8:21

"*Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?*" Luke 6:46

Jesus said, "*If you love me, keep my commands.*" (John 14:15) "*Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.*" (John 14:23) "*If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's*

*commands and remain in his love.” (John 15:10)  
“You are my friends if you do what I command.”  
John 15:14*

A religious live is not enough. Jesus said, *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.’”* Matt 7:21-23

This is God’s will *“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.”* Therefore to walk with God and enjoy His love we need to do what Jesus says we should do.

## **8 Jesus says we are to grow up to be like Him**

Jesus grew up from a boy into a mighty man of God doing the works of the Father: now He calls on those who follow Him to grow up to be like Him. Jesus said, *“A pupil is not above his teacher; but*

*everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher.”* Luke 6:40

All who receive the divine nature from God are predestined to become like Jesus. The Bible says; *‘As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ.’* Eph 4:14-15

## **9 Jesus tells us we must persevere in holiness**

Jesus persevered in suffering on a cross for us; now He tells us we need to persevere with our cross with Him. Jesus said to those who wanted to follow Him, *“No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”* (Luke 9:62) He also said *“The one who endures to the end, he will be saved.”* Matt 24:13

The Bible says, *‘let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.’* Heb 12:1-2

The aim of spiritual growth is for believers to be fully moulded into Jesus' image by a process of continual change under the control of the Holy Spirit. And spiritual growth takes time; wheat doesn't grow to maturity in a day, our children do not become adults overnight. Spiritual growth only takes place by the correction of our thinking as the Spirit of God gives us understanding according to God's word. In order to grow we must understand what the Bible teaches about Jesus commandments and the will of God, so we need to learn what Jesus teaches us. Learning to do what Jesus commands means we will overcome the world and sin.

Jesus warned the disciples that they would face many challengers and temptations to compromise His teaching by people who walked on the broad way to destruction. Those who don't follow Him will want His followers to follow them instead. But a true disciple will stay true to Jesus even if they face hardship, persecution, and isolation.

Hear the Lord Jesus, *"He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne."*

Rev 3:21

Jesus wants us to persevere with Him as He perseveres with us. Will we do what He has commanded that we might be able to follow Him in order to live forever with God?

Have you counted the cost? Will you follow Jesus example and lay down your life to live with Him?

Will you come to Jesus and die to your old life so you can live in Him?

For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?

Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

Matthew 16:25-26