

Living as a Christian – But how? – A guide

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Introduction:

It was already late on that Sunday afternoon in March 1984:

I, seventeen years old at the time, stood all alone on the avalanche cone. Our ski tour had come to an abrupt end. An eerie silence surrounded me.

I searched with my probe for my friend, who was buried somewhere deep below me in the snow, waiting to be rescued. The avalanche had almost completely filled the narrow V-shaped valley. My brother drove down to the valley to get help. It slowly grew dark, and I longed to finally hear the clatter of an approaching rescue helicopter.

Despair almost overwhelmed me. But a voice spoke to me in my head and said: "You don't have to be afraid: Peter is alive!"

Yes: It was clearly the Holy Spirit who gave me this certainty. I felt the presence of God on the avalanche cone.

So I prayed: "God in heaven: I dedicate my life to you: completely, body and soul, and follow you! If we can dig Peter out alive."

At 7:15 p.m., the first helicopter finally arrived! And at 7:40 p.m., we were able to locate Peter with the avalanche probes.

I can still see the image: One of the rescuers shouting, "I've got him!"

Like pick-up sticks, the thin red avalanche probes flew through the air and formed a pile, just like in the game of Mikado. Everyone grabbed their avalanche shovel and helped to create the huge funnel needed to rescue Peter, who was buried four meters deep in the snow.

At the very bottom, illuminated by the lamps, Peter's head could be seen. And his head was laughing!

It was a true miracle! Peter had been buried in the avalanche for three hours and thirty minutes! He suffered neither frostbite nor hypothermia. Nothing!

The avalanche didn't harm a single hair on his head.

And me? I have pledged to God to belong entirely to Him!

And now my adventure with God begins. With many highs and even more lows. Yes, I had to learn some hard lessons. I simply refused to accept that as a follower of Christ, you can't be in two places at once. I was as stubborn as a mule. But God loved me infinitely all these years and was patient with me. He NEVER gave up on me.

All the insights I share with you in this book were either revealed to me through the Holy Spirit, or I had to learn them the hard way from my own mistakes.

To live as a follower of Christ under God's blessing and guidance, many insights are necessary.

- What is God? - Who is God? - What is God like? - What does God want from me? - Who is Jesus? - And the Holy Spirit? All insights that the Holy Spirit reveals to you gradually. But as I said: This takes time. And that also means making many mistakes at the beginning. Mistakes and detours that I could have avoided if I had had a handbook like the one you're holding here back then. This book would have given me advice and tips that would have helped me reach my goal faster.

This book is not dry theory. It is intended to be a kind of "user manual" for a life with God.

It aims to answer your questions about faith and serve as a guide. But be warned: This book in no way replaces daily reading of the Old and New Testaments and ongoing dialogue with God. These two things form the foundation of a relationship with God.

Bible verses:

The majority of the verses are taken from the "Hope for All" translation. (Hfa)

I wish you many blessings while reading.

1. Life with God

1.1 How I became a child of God

I grew up in a religious household. But that doesn't mean anything. I, too, often argued with my siblings and was by no means a model child.

Sometime around the age of twelve, my mother said to me: "You have to finally repent!

You have to let Jesus forgive your sins and invite Him into your heart. Otherwise, you'll go to hell! You don't want that, do you?"

Yes, in my opinion, she was right. I believed in God, and I believed that Jesus had died for my sins in my place, and that if I wanted assurance of salvation, I would have to repent. I would have to ask Jesus to wash away my sins and ask Him to be my friend, my coach, and my Lord.

At a Christian youth camp, I quietly took this step for myself, without anyone noticing .

It wasn't as if I heard angels rejoicing afterward, or that I was floating on cloud nine. Nothing at all happened.

But deep down inside, I knew that I was now a child of God and that I could count myself among God's family and followers.

And so, during my youth, I lived as a devout Christian. It was beautiful. I felt Jesus, who was always a friend and coach to me, and I heard his voice, or rather, the voice of God speaking to me.

But ultimately, I still lived in this world and was susceptible to its temptations.

And so I constantly wavered between a "worldly" life and a life with God.

Only gradually did I learn that as a devout Christian, I couldn't have my cake and eat it too. Even after I

had dedicated my life to God there on the avalanche cone, I was still torn between God and the world. Everything I've put down on paper for you in this book only became clear to me little by little.

There were moments in my youth when God clearly showed me how I should decide. But I simply didn't want to follow God's path.

I was disobedient, ignored God's admonitions, and went the way of the world. With the corresponding consequences that still resonate now, forty years later.

I don't want you to go through what I did. That's why I'm writing this guide. It's meant to show you what's truly important in the life of a believing Christian and how beautiful and liberating it is to be a child of God.

1.2 For whom I wrote this book:

How are you? - How has YOUR life been so far?

It's actually illogical: every device we buy comes with an instruction manual.

But as a young person, you go out into the world without a plan, without a compass, and without any signposts.

So you try this or that, and you have to find your way in life without guidance.

It's all about **trial and error**.

That's actually a bad thing. No wonder some people get lost. No wonder they become bitterly disappointed and end up in dead ends.

The fact that you've decided to read this "user manual for faith" shows that you're interested in realigning your life.

Somehow you realize: "There has to be more to it!"

You say:

I've lived life to the fullest! I've traveled to every continent on earth. I have a family. I have a house, a job, and a car. Yet, despite all that, everything feels rather meaningless and empty... - Is that it? Is that all there is? What is the meaning of my life? And what is my goal?

This book reveals the true meaning of life: to unite with God and become a follower of Christ. In doing so, you will be deemed "righteous" by God and become a God-confirmed believer. God will fill you with His Spirit. His Spirit (the Holy Spirit) will assure you that you will have eternal life with God.

Perhaps you are one of those people who have already made a fresh start in life. A complete 180-degree turn. And now you are looking for a guide to help you navigate this new life with Jesus by your

side, your new invisible friend and coach.

If so, you've come to the right place. This book is written for you.

It's a roadmap to living a new life in new dimensions.

Perhaps you decided to make this change in your life because you realized that your soul will continue to live after physical death. And you want to spend this eternal life in the glory of God, not with the adversary in damnation.

You have understood that the only way to God is through Jesus Christ.

For the forgiveness of your sins, Jesus gave his life as a sacrifice. You have accepted Jesus' death on the cross as a personal sacrifice for your sins.

You are aware that this is a gift from God. Eternal life cannot be earned through good works.

(Ephesians 2:8-9)

You have invited Jesus to be Lord of your life and to lead you through life by his hand in the future.

Yes! You are certain that God wants to give you a life of security and happiness.

Thus, you have initiated a new beginning in life: a kind of "reset". Through this conversion, you have now become a child of God.

New creature:

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"

2 Corinthians 5:17

Life as a child of God means being born again inside.

God has written your name in his Book of Life! Paradise is assured for you. The place where there will be neither tears nor sorrow, neither despair nor darkness.

Bible passage: Read Revelation chapters 21 and 22. Especially the passages in chapter 21:3-7.

1.3 Life in a new dimension

When we turn our lives upside down and consistently align ourselves with God, many things in life will change.

Enhanced perception: Many Christians describe life with the support of the Holy Spirit as a kind of spiritual perception. One feels guided. One receives impressions that tell one what to do and what not to do.

Living in the power of God: Instead of acting solely from one's own strength, a dimension opens up in which one draws upon God's wisdom and comfort. This changes one's outlook on life and the way one deals with difficulties.

Eternal perspective: A child of God does not live only "in the present," but with the awareness that life continues in God's glory. The perspective shifts from a worm's-eye view to the bigger picture.

Identity instead of searching: Many people are searching for belonging and recognition. As a child of God, one knows: "I am wanted and loved." This provides stability and serenity.

Freedom in love: New dimensions open up when one lives from love and trust.

Responsibility and mission: This new life is not an end in itself! God gives us the mission to be light, salt, and bearers of hope.

In conclusion: Living in new dimensions as a child of God means that one's horizon expands from the purely material to the spiritual. From fear to freedom, from selfishness to love of neighbor. And from mortality to eternity.

1.4 God wants all of you!

And now it's about learning how to live as a child of God. Let me tell you the most important thing right now: "Being *half a Christian is utter nonsense!*"

This proverb sums it up perfectly: Faith and discipleship should not be half-hearted.

They should be lived holistically and consistently.

A "half-Christian" would be someone who accepts the doctrine but doesn't live by it or only partially lives it out. In doing so, faith loses its core. For a life of faith is holistically oriented toward God.

Untrustworthy: Those who only live their faith or values "halfway" often appear untrustworthy. This leads to inner conflict.

Devotion always requires wholeness, otherwise it breaks down due to inconsistency.

And that's why: God isn't satisfied with half measures. Open your heart and make room for Jesus. He wants to dwell in your heart. Jesus Christ wants to take first place in your life.

He wants to change your thinking. He will change your life. He will change your opinions and your perspectives, and he will change your character for the better. Satan wants to convince you: With a life

of faith, you lose your freedom! You can no longer do as you please. But you want to be able to decide your own life!

But that is precisely Satan's lie. This freedom leads you back into sin. The freedom God gives you is a freedom you don't perceive as negative. On the contrary! You feel safe, loved, and supported by Him. Very slowly, you realize that this is the better life.

Matthew 11:29-30 (HFA)

Jesus says: *“Trust in my guidance and learn from me, for I treat you gently and do not look down on anyone. If you do this, you will find rest for your lives. The yoke I put on you is easy, and what I require of you is not difficult to do.”*

My advice to you:

It's worth putting Christ first in all aspects of your life.

You won't have to hold back.

On the contrary:

God gives you a different perspective on life. His perspective suddenly becomes your perspective. You will benefit. You will feel supported. And this "being supported" will make you happier than you have ever been.

2. Meaning and purpose of life

I think it makes sense for us to start this book by first considering what the fundamental questions of life actually are.

At the same time, we will work out the answers to this.

2.1 The fundamental questions of life:

As already mentioned, God created us as intelligent beings. One of the reasons was so that we could ask and understand why we exist. **So we ask ourselves :**

1. Why did God create humankind?
2. Why do we live?

3. What is the meaning and purpose of my life?

2.1.1 Why did God create man?

That God created the earth with all its natural elements is beyond doubt. Even the artificial intelligence software "ChatGPT" states that it is pure logic that a God must exist. For there must have been something that initiated everything.

In Genesis 1:26 we read how God says:

"Now let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over all the earth—over the animals of the sea and of the heavens and of the earth."

An interesting detail: God speaks of "we"; so even then, God was not a single person but three persons as one being (the Trinity).

God created us in his image. He has placed much more in us humans than in the animals.

Here are some differences between humans and animals:

Self-confidence and cognitive abilities: We humans possess a strong sense of self-confidence and the ability to reflect and be aware of the consequences of our actions. Animals only show rudimentary forms of this ability.

Language: Animals do communicate with each other, but human language is far more diverse. It allows for nuances, symbolism, but also lies and poetry. A quantum leap compared to animals.

Future planning and time awareness: People can plan for the long term, devise strategies, and reconstruct what has already happened.

There's much more to list...

In conclusion: What ultimately distinguishes us from animals is not just our intellect, but also our capacity for thought. Therefore: the ability to think holistically, to recognize consequences, and to understand symbolism.

2.1.2 The divine within us:

God has endowed every person with something divine: namely, the soul. The soul is placed by Him into our body.

Bible passage : (Genesis 2:7)

"Then God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being."

Therefore: Man consists of matter. But only through God's breath of life does he receive his soul. The soul She is immortal. She is the divine part within us. She is the bearer of consciousness, moral responsibility, and our relationship with God.

Relationship : God created us humans as beings capable of relationships. This is so that we can build a relationship with God. It's like a married couple: The relationship between a man and a woman can only work if each gives themselves completely to their partner.

Therefore: Half-measures between you and God don't work. It is necessary that you surrender yourself to Him completely.

To reveal himself: God created mankind so that he could reveal himself to mankind. He wants to love mankind and care for them.

What is our task? Our task is to reciprocate God's love, to preserve and protect the earth.

Read what Paul wrote to the Ephesians. His statements are still valid today.

Ephesians 2:8-10

"For by grace you have been saved through faith. This is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not your own work. So that no one may boast."

In Christ Jesus we are God's masterpiece. He created us to do what is truly good, good works which he prepared for us, so that we might shape our lives with them.

2.1.2 What is the purpose of our lives?

Paul actually answered this question with the verse you just read:

...That we do what is truly good, the good works he has prepared for us. (Ephesians 2:10)

But there are other reasons:

You live so that you can build a relationship with Him. He wants you! He wants you to become part of His community. He wants to be praised and worshipped by you. We are all meant to serve Him. Here on Earth and especially later in eternal life.

God has therefore given you an immortal soul so that you may live eternally with Him in glory!

You are a divine being. And therefore, your true home is not this earth, but with God.

2.1.4 What is the meaning of my life?

Every person lives on this earth to find God and become a child of God. That is the true meaning of life.

But not everyone finds God.

Many people are not interested in him and say, "God, no thanks. I don't need God."

These people have lived in vain and will not spend their eternal life with God in glory.

You But : You can rejoice! You have found God! You are now a child of God. A citizen of heaven.

Now it's about you learning how to live on this earth as a child of God, in order to bring joy to God.

2.1.5 What is the goal of my life?

I always tell the people I talk to about God the following:

"The goal of life is: **life after life** . "

God created you. You are his creation! He has prepared a wonderful path in life for you. God wants to use you to do good on this earth. But God desires your complete dedication to him.

All the good things you do in this world, you do out of love for God.

Bible passage : Matthew 25:40

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

Being happy : A life with God makes you happy.

You feel his warmth. You sense his security. There is nothing better than an active life with God. Such a life is exciting!

Car keys: You hand Jesus the key to your car and say to him: "Drive my car. I trust you. I know you know the way and that you will make me happy!"

Exciting Life : And that's why a life with God is absolutely exciting! You never know what the future holds. But you can trust! Everything God asks of you is perfectly suited to you. In his great love, God would never overwhelm you. And: He will help you carry out the tasks he gives you.

Paul puts it this way: (Romans 8:28)

"And we know this: In all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been chosen according to his purpose."

To be with God once more :

And so we live our lives, carrying out daily what God shows us. In doing so, we grow older and older. –
And we have no fear of death! **On the contrary** ! We can tell everyone that we look forward to death!
For a moment after our death, we will be with God in glory.

Therefore:

The goal of life is life after life!

3. God's love for you

Have you already read Luke chapter 15?

There, Jesus tells the story of the good shepherd who leaves the ninety-nine sheep to search for the one that was lost.

He finds it , comes home, and tells all his neighbors, “Rejoice with me! My sheep was lost. And now I have found it!” Yes, God loves every single person more than we can imagine.

Indeed, God has always loved you infinitely. Ever since your childhood, God has repeatedly drawn you to Himself.

Being His child : God wants you to sit on His lap and feel His warmth and security. And He does all this because He loves you so much .

He, the infinitely great God and creator of the entire universe! He even cares for YOU! Isn't that wonderful?

You are his idea : You are not an accident. You are a thought of God. And a brilliant one at that! He created you. He has always protected you and watched over you.

Everything you have and are , you owe to God. Your appearance, your intelligence, your personality, your charm... But also the success in your life. God has guided your destiny and made you the person you are.

Are you aware of that?

God has given you everything. Even the will and the ability to do things come from God. (Philippians 2:13)

And so God loves all people. And so God also loves those people who want nothing to do with him.
Yes: God is pure love.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

When we say "God," we might as well say "love." God and love are the same.

Now you might object : But why does God allow such terrible things as war, famine, and misery? Read chapter 21, where I address this topic.

4. Gratitude, grace, humility

The realization that everything you have and everything that makes you who you are depends on God's grace gives you ample reason to be thankful.

Stop being vain : The time has come to stop boasting about your own achievements.

Stop "showing yourself off" on Facebook, Instagram, etc., to demonstrate what a great guy you are.

Stop sending selfies out into the world just to indulge your vanity.

Give God the glory! Of course, you can continue doing such things. But then give God the glory for it. Write on social media so everyone can read it: " **It is God** who made all of this possible for me! Glory and praise be to Him alone!"

It's strange that I've never read anything like this on Facebook or Instagram before...

Seriously: Everything you've achieved in life is only possible because God gave it to you.

Pride and self-promotion are abhorrent to God. It's like taking credit for someone else's work.

Money : Even money doesn't belong to you. It's only borrowed. Specifically, to finance your life and to do good things. But definitely not to boast about it.

Incidentally, God wants you to use at least ten percent of your income for good causes. God made it possible for you to earn money. God gave you the ability to earn money.

Good tip : Become a sponsor of one or two children! For example , you can apply to sponsor a child at the children's aid organization www.compassion.com . **Or do something else good with your money.**

Jesus tells us:

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:40

And your health : Your health is not something to take for granted. Thank God every morning that you get to wake up healthy and that you feel no pain. Visit a hospital. Then you'll see how blessed you are to be healthy.

Nothing is a given: Everything depends on God's grace, which he bestows upon you daily.

Gratitude: Now that this matter has been clarified, it is time to adopt a new attitude to life: Start thanking God today!

However, for that to happen, you must change your thinking and your attitude towards life. Be humble and grateful for everything. It is not something to take for granted.

Gentleness, love, mercy : Gratitude and humility go hand in hand with gentleness, love, and mercy. Destroy your pride, your selfishness, and your narcissism!

Be grateful for the negative too : You should also be grateful for negative things. For things that bother you and that you don't actually want.

For example, a suffering that simply won't go away. Often, God doesn't remove such "thorns" immediately. Sometimes not at all.

Proverb : *"What doesn't kill you makes you stronger."*

Such things serve to educate us and help us to always be aware of how much we depend on God.

Bible passage : Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10:

There Paul mentions what God said to him: *"My power is made perfect in your weakness."*

Jesus protects you : God always means well for you. Even when you sometimes have to walk through "dark valleys" or over "thorns," Jesus protects you and carries you.

Our greatest advantage as believers:

We feel the infinite love of our God. **Even when we fall, we always fall into God's loving arms.**

Are you aware of the confidence and trust that feeling so supported evokes in you? Nothing, absolutely nothing, can happen to you!

Bible passage : Read Romans 8:28 (HFA):

"But one thing we know: In all things God works for the good of those who love him. This is true for all those whom God has chosen according to his plan for new life."

Task/Tip: Read the entire Epistle to the Romans! **Always Again !** It is one of the most valuable writings in the New Testament.

You will also find precious treasures of knowledge in the other letters of the apostles to the churches! Don't stop until you have read all the letters and highlighted the verses you find important!

Read also the Epistle to the Galatians.

Also read the Epistle to the Ephesians.

Read the Letter to the Philippians too!

Also read the Epistle to the Hebrews.

And so forth...

Seriously:

Read ALL the letters . Again and again! These letters form the foundation of the faith. They are full of divine wisdom.

Specifically : Begin your day with gratitude when you wake up. Thank God that you wake up healthy and without pain. Thank God that He was with you during the night and strengthened your body. Thank Him for His love for you. Thank Him that He loves you today and wants to show you what good you can do today. Thank Him that you are healthy. Thank Him for your partner, your family, your children, your job...

There is so much you can and should thank God for. There are countless Bible verses about it. Humility and gratitude are the right attitudes to approach God.

More specifically: Ask God every day to grant you a humble and grateful outlook on life. Be aware in every moment that everything comes from God. Ask God to take away your pride and your tendency towards self-promotion and to give you a kind, loving, and grateful heart.

Bible verses about gratitude: “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances. For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard

your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6-7

“Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.” 1 Chronicles 16:34

“All your actions – your words and your deeds – should show that Jesus is your Lord.”

Because you are united with him, you can thank God the Father for everything. (Colossians 3:17)

5. Who is God?

The question of the nature of God is very important for your personal relationship with him.

God wants you to be on very close terms with Him . Because God loves you beyond words.

When I talk about " *God* ", I actually mean "*God the Father*".

The one we know from the Old Testament, as well as from films and pictures.

5.1 Trinity:

Fundamentally, "God" is a trinity. Three individual persons, yet one unity. Namely:

- God the Father (Creator God)
- God the Son (Jesus Christ)
- God Holy Spirit (the voice of God)

These three persons are of the same essence. That is to say: not three gods, but one single God in three personal manifestations.

Similar to water: Water can occur in liquid form, as solid ice, or as gaseous water vapor.

Jesus: I will tell you more about Jesus in the next chapter.

The Holy Spirit: Is the " *helper*" whom God sent us at Pentecost and who comes to dwell in your soul when you receive Jesus as your Lord.

Bible verse : Read Ephesians 4:30. Ideally, you should read the whole chapter, because it is absolutely valuable.

It is the Holy Spirit who grants you insights through faith. He is the one who reveals connections to you and allows you to grow in faith.

The Holy Spirit is the voice of God, which speaks to you through conscience, visions, thoughts, and feelings. More about this in chapter 7. This Trinity is a divine unity.

5.2 The Nature of God:

When you read the Old Testament, you gain insight into how God thinks and what he is like. This picture is further completed when you consider Jesus:

Jesus said of himself: *"Whoever has seen me has seen the Father."* (John 14:9)

And: *"I and my Father are one."* (John 10:30)

Thus, it is clear that the character traits of Jesus the Son and God the Father are identical.

My idea: Based on what one can read about God the Father in the Bible, I imagine God as a cloud of light, love, and holiness.

People who have returned after a near-death experience often speak of an intense white light that, despite its intensity, does not dazzle and radiates an intense, all-pervading love.

5.3 The Attributes of God

5.3.1 God is almighty, omniscient, and omnipresent.

Almighty: God has the power to do anything he wants.

Omniscient : He knows the past, present, and future.

He knows every single thought of every single person. God forgets nothing. We cannot hide from Him. He even knows how much hair you have on your head, and He has prepared a perfect plan for your life.

He makes sure it rains and that the sun shines again. And he even adapts the birds' beaks, for example, when the birds' living conditions change and they would otherwise no longer be able to find food. (Microevolution)

Omnipresent : He is everywhere at once. God is not bound by space or time.

God has the **rules and** He made **laws** . He is **a judge** . He is **just** and **holy** and full of **love** .

Rules and laws: God created the universe with all its natural laws. And so, God also defines the rules and laws by which his creatures are to live.

When God says that sin can only be atoned for through the sacrificial death of Jesus, you must ask Jesus to take away your sin. That is God's rule.

Therefore, it is necessary that you accept Jesus' forgiveness and entrust your life to him. Only in this

way will you be righteous before God. Jesus is the door to God through which you must pass . If you reject this, you cannot become a child of God. Only through the forgiveness of Jesus Christ will you be righteous before God.

Don't take God lightly just because you can't see him!

He is all-powerful. He created the entire world. Everything happens as He wants it to.

Judge: God says that every person who has ever lived on this earth will one day be judged. He has given this office of judgment to Jesus.

2 Corinthians 5:1:

“ For we will all have to answer to Christ our Judge . Then each of us will receive what we deserve for what we have done on earth, whether good or bad.”

Just: God judges without regard to the person. Good and evil are not relative to him.

Holiness: God is absolutely pure, without flaws, without sin. His holiness is incompatible with unholiness. All people are unholy before God because of the Fall.

Hence the necessity of redemption.

Love : I've already mentioned that God is pure love. God's love is so great that when you say "God," you might as well say "love."

He loves every person infinitely. He loves you, even if you have caused him grief a thousand times and betrayed him.

This is pure love : God himself ensures that we can be righteous before him again through the forgiveness of sins. He has prepared this path for you by making his Son , sent into this world so that this Jesus Christ, a deity, might die a sacrificial death on the cross.

Warning: You will not be justified before God by doing much good; by living an honest life, donating a lot of money, or constantly praying the rosary!

You cannot be righteous before God through works. Righteousness before God is a gift that God gives you! You will be righteous before God when you accept His gift.

What is His gift?

His gift is Jesus Christ. You accept God's gift by believing in His Son, Jesus Christ, and claiming the forgiveness of sins that Jesus offers you.

When we do good works, we don't do them to buy our salvation, but because we love Jesus and want to give something back to Him. Doing good brings joy!

Key verse: “ For he so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

John 3:16

5.3.2 God is creative and life-giving:

God created the universe out of nothing. Read Genesis 1.

Scientists have now reached this point: they're talking about the Big Bang.

They've always rejected God as the answer to the question of how the universe was created. But now they can no longer avoid God. After all, who, if not God, could have triggered the Big Bang?

God is incredibly creative , witty, and has a penchant for clever design and technical sophistication.

And: God is orderly.

Go out into nature and look around! It's astonishing what God has created. The beauty is simply overwhelming! I recently saw a poster of a lion's head in a shop window. The beauty, grace, and wildness of that animal resonated with me for a long time afterward!

Everything is interconnected. Nothing is superfluous. Everything is necessary. And everything is recycled. Let someone try to tell me that's just coincidence!

God is love: One truly recognizes that God must be love. For who could create such harmony and beauty if this Creator were not full of love?

In nature we can recognize the essence of God very well.

And so it is with us : We humans, created by God, have the ability to create. We, too, want our creations to be beautiful.

This is yet another sign that we are made like God. Everything God created is good. Nothing is superfluous. Everything is recycled. Everything fits together like a machine with millions of gears.

And man:

Man is made in the image of God, as mentioned earlier; with intellect, will, feeling, and responsibility.

5.3.3 God is personal and capable of relationships

Unlike an abstract "world spirit," an impersonal energy, or simply "nature," the Christian God is approachable, listening, speaking, compassionate, and responsive.

God desires a relationship with you!

Concluding remarks : God is not merely a "higher power," but a living, personal, holy, and loving God. God, who revealed himself to us through his Son, Jesus Christ.

6 Who is Jesus?

6.1 Jesus, part of the triune God

Jesus Christ existed in divine form before his incarnation. Christ is the Son of God.

Through Christ, everything was created: the entire earth, with everything on it. Christ is like the "executive person" within the Trinity.

The Apostle John, himself a disciple of Jesus, described it this way:

"In the beginning was the Word. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. From the beginning he was with God. All things were created through him; without him nothing was made."

John 1:1-3 (HFA)

To understand the role of Jesus, this image helped me:

Imagine God the Father represents the sun, the source of warmth, light, and life.

Jesus Christ represents the visible light of the sun, the light that reaches us on Earth.

Just as no one can look directly at the sun without being blinded, we cannot bear God in all his glory.

But through the light (Jesus), the sun becomes visible, recognizable, and life-giving.

6.2 Jesus, who forgives our sins

Biblical basis:

The Old Testament already announces in various places the appearance of a Messiah (a savior sent by God) who will bring salvation and forgiveness of sins to humankind. For example, Isaiah wrote, around 750 years before Christ: Isaiah 53:4-6 (Luther Bible):

"Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities;

the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed."

We all, like sheep, have gone astray; each of us has turned to our own way. And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

All of this came to pass with Jesus exactly as the prophet Isaiah described it in detail in chapter 53: Around 2000 years ago, God-Jesus became man. Jesus was born as the son of Mary in a stable in Bethlehem.

John described it this way: John 1:14 (HFA)

“The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We ourselves have seen his divine glory, the glory of God that belongs to his one and only Son. In him the grace and truth of God have come to us.”

6.3 The Cross: The Vicarious Sacrificial Death

Jesus took the sin of the world upon himself through his death on the cross. All people who believe in Jesus Christ and accept his forgiveness are declared righteous by God.

» For just as sin reigned over all people and brought them death, so now God’s grace reigns, giving us eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 5:21, NIV)

Or in another place: (1 Timothy 2:5-6)

“There is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the one who makes peace, Jesus Christ.” He gave his life as ransom to free us all from the power of evil.

At the heart of God's plan for how we can be justified before Him is the cross of Golgotha. On the cross, Jesus, God Himself, died a substitutionary death – that is, He took upon Himself the punishment we deserved.

Isaiah 53:5: *"He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed."*

Through this sacrifice, God the Father has cleared the way so that people can once again be righteous before Him.

6.4 The Resurrection; Jesus lives!

On the third day after his death, God raised Jesus from the dead. Jesus is risen. Jesus lives! We celebrate his continued life at Easter. Jesus himself had told his disciples several times beforehand that he would be killed, but that he would rise again after three days. (Matthew 16:21 / 17, 22-23 as well as Mark 8:31 or Luke 9:22)

The resurrection of Jesus is the central pillar of the Christian faith. Without the resurrection, our faith in Jesus would be meaningless. If Jesus had remained dead, we would have no mediator to God the Father. We would have no one to forgive our sins. No living Savior.

If Jesus had remained dead, we would have no proof that we too will one day live.

His resurrection shows that Jesus was of a divine nature.

Imagine this:

A king creates a new law guaranteeing freedom to his subjects. If the king were to forget to sign the document, then this law wouldn't be valid.

And so imagine Jesus:

Imagine that the life of Jesus and everything he accomplished in his life were the text of the law:

If Jesus had remained dead, it would be the same as this law, which was never signed. The very best text of the law would be useless. The law would have no validity!

With the resurrection of Jesus, God signed and sealed the document!

Jesus has risen. Therefore, we humans will also rise. Please read 1 Corinthians chapter 15.

Jesus has returned to glory and taken his place at the right hand of God. (Romans 8:34) Because Jesus lives, we can have a relationship with him.

6.5 Jesus as mediator between God and man:

In Jesus, God himself became human. Through this, he bridges the gap between the holy God and sinful humanity. Jesus knows both: the divine aspect and human experience. That is why God appointed Jesus as the mediator between Him and humankind.

High Priest: In the Letter to the Hebrews, Jesus is described as the High Priest who represents us before God. That is why we Christians pray "In the name of Jesus." Jesus is our link to God.

This is important; Jesus is the linchpin of a believing Christian. He is our Lord. He is our Redeemer. He is our friend, our guide, and our comforter.

6.6 The Application: Grace through Faith

Salvation is not automatically granted to everyone. You must believe that Jesus died for your sins and claim his forgiveness for you. Whoever accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior receives forgiveness, is made righteous before God, and becomes a child of God.

Bible passage *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."* (1 John 1:9)

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is the gift of God." (Ephesians 2:8)

6.7 Statements made by Jesus about himself:

"I am the door. Whoever enters through me will be saved." (John 10:9)

"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6)

"I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live." (John 11:25)

7. Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is the third person, alongside God the Father and God the Son (Jesus Christ). The Holy Spirit is a distinct person of divine nature. He is eternal, omnipresent, and omniscient.

The Holy Spirit is a being like God the Father and Jesus. He is the invisible helper, teacher, and the voice of God who speaks to us.

7.1 Biblical Foundations:

The Holy Spirit was present from the very beginning.

Bible passage : *"Now the earth was formless and empty... and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters."*

(Genesis 1:2)

7.2 The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament:

In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit does not play a prominent role. He empowers priests, judges, kings, and prophets to perform supernatural deeds and gain insights (e.g., King David, Moses, Isaiah, Samson, Elijah, Elisha).

7.3 The Holy Spirit in the New Testament

Mary becomes pregnant through the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35).

Baptism of Jesus : The Spirit descends upon Jesus “like a dove” (Matthew 3:16).

Jesus announces to his disciples that he will soon no longer be with them and that the Holy Spirit will come in his place. The Holy Spirit will be a helper and teacher. Please read John 14:16-17.

Pentecost: (Acts 2) The Holy Spirit is poured out on the disciples of Jesus in Jerusalem.

7.4 The Holy Spirit in us believers

The Holy Spirit plays a central and profound role in the life of a believing Christian. Without the Holy Spirit, it is impossible for you to become and be a true follower of Jesus.

At conversion, God gives you the Holy Spirit. He comes and enters your life, even if you don't feel it at the time.

The Seal of God: The Bible states that the Holy Spirit is the seal of God. (Ephesians 4:30)

The fact that God gives you the Holy Spirit is proof that God considers you his child and that you now have eternal life. *You are now "sealed" with God.

“ After you heard the word of truth, the good news of your salvation, and believed, you also were sealed by him with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the down payment on our inheritance and the guarantee of the complete redemption of his property .” Ephesians 1:13-14 (See also 2 Corinthians 1:22 and Ephesians 4:30)

7.5 What does the Holy Spirit do in us?

7.5.1 Inner renewal and rebirth:

The Holy Spirit played a major role in your coming to faith in God and in your now being ready to reorganize your life and walk with Jesus.

The Holy Spirit has spoken to you through your conscience and has brought about in you that you have begun this new beginning. He creates, strengthens, and expands faith within you. True faith is impossible without the work of the Holy Spirit.

7.5.2 Certainty of faith and identity:

Romans 8:16 : *“The Spirit himself testifies that we are children of God.”*

It is the Holy Spirit who gives you the assurance that you are now a child of God and that through your conversion you have been given citizenship in the glory of God. Thus, the Holy Spirit strengthens your identity in Christ and dispels any doubts you may have about your salvation.

Good to know: Satan will constantly try to convince you that you are never a child of God. He will also try to keep you from praying and talking with Jesus!

7.5.3 Management and leadership in everyday life:

Romans 8:14: *"For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God."*

The Holy Spirit acts as a guide. He is the voice of God in your life. God speaks to you through the Holy Spirit.

This kind of speech can manifest itself in many different ways. The Holy Spirit usually speaks to you through the subtle voice of your conscience. For me, it's mostly impulses and flashes of insight out of the blue. Sometimes they're impressions, sometimes ideas or visions that simply appear in my mind. It is also the Holy Spirit who will unlock your understanding of the Bible and give you many insights.

Daily Help: The Holy Spirit is your practical, daily help. He is the gentle voice that always tells you what is needed and what needs to be done.

Thus, the Holy Spirit practically helps you to make the decisions of your life in accordance with God's will.

Wonderfully relieving: The Holy Spirit guides and directs us through our lives by speaking to us and thus leading and directing us. That is wonderfully relieving. He is map, signpost, and compass all in one.

What advice do you have for me?

You can ask him at any time: "Holy Spirit: What should I do now? What do you advise me to do? Please help me!" Living this way only works if you are truly filled with the Holy Spirit and He has grown strong within you. Ultimately, it doesn't matter whether you turn to Jesus or to the Holy Spirit. Your prayers will be heard.

WARNING! If you grieve the Holy Spirit through sin, which you may still allow in your life, then he will withdraw and will no longer be your helper in everyday life.

On the contrary : Satan tries to exploit the vacuum that is created in this way to regain a foothold in your soul and draw you back into his sphere of influence.

Do you want to start your life anew and from now on give God first place in your life ? Then start now by throwing overboard everything in your life that hinders your new life with God.

Don't worry: The Holy Spirit will show you what you need to let go of.

Stay connected: Always remain in the presence of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. This is your new everyday life. Try to always remember your two helpers and be connected to Jesus. Always stay connected in faith!

Here is an image that illustrates this:

The disciples were rowing across the Sea of Galilee at night. At dawn, they suddenly saw a figure walking on the water.

They were frightened and thought it was a ghost. But as the figure drew nearer, they saw that it was Jesus. Peter was thrilled and called out to Jesus, telling him to come to him! Jesus called back, "Yes, come!" Peter got out of the boat and was actually able to walk on the water!

But when he turned his gaze away from Jesus and was frightened by the wind, he began to sink! "Lord, save me!" Peter cried. Jesus reached out his hand and held him fast so that he could no longer sink.

This should be a picture for us: ALWAYS keep JESUS in FOCUS. Uninterrupted! Then nothing can happen to us.

A new outlook on life : Living by faith is a way of life. It's not simply a new hobby. It's not like you can say, "Now I feel like living a Christian life again; open the drawer and take Jesus out."

Faith is not a musical instrument that you can sometimes play and sometimes not. Go all in with Jesus every day! Always lead a holy, God-pleasing life. **Big ears:** Get big ears! Get used to listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Ask the Holy Spirit daily to grow within you. Ask Him to give you the ability to hear Him.

7.5.4 Sanctification and character transformation:

Galatians 5:22-23: *"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control."*

If you live as I have previously shown you, the Holy Spirit will transform your character. He will bring about spiritual maturity in you and cause the fruits of the Spirit to grow within you, just as described above in Paul's letter to the Galatians.

He shapes and strengthens good character traits within you, which come from God and constitute divinity.

7.5.5 Strength for Service! (The Great Secret!)

Acts 1:8 : *"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit descends upon you; and you will be my witnesses."*

The Holy Spirit empowers you to bear effective witness and serve. He gives you courage and perseverance and grants you spiritual authority. He does this by helping us to trust in God and His Word, and not in ourselves or in other people.

He gives you energy for your service. He will fill your heart with love and joy. Read Romans 14:17 and 15:13, as well as 1 Thessalonians 1:6!

Have you figured it out yet?

...The more you decide to follow Jesus, the greater the Holy Spirit becomes within you.

HE IS THE ONE WHO gives you the strength to resist temptation.

HE IS the one who strengthens your faith, so that you can tell others about your faith with courage and conviction.

HE IS THE ONE WHO puts love in your heart for your fellow human beings.

Therefore, the most important tip:

Always remain with Jesus and the Holy Spirit! Your home is not more the world with its desires and temptations. Your true home is with God, for your soul comes from God. If you turn away from God, Satan will very quickly overtake you again. For without the support of the Holy Spirit, you cannot withstand worldly temptations. **As I've already mentioned:** Don't do things halfway with God!
Don't become a Sunday Christian. Don't become lukewarm in your discipleship.

Revelation 3:15-16 >> Warning:

*"I know what you do and I know that you are neither hot nor cold. If only you were one or the other!"
But you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold. Therefore I will spit you out of my mouth.*

7.5.6 Spiritual Gifts

Read 1 Corinthians 12 : The Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to certain people. For example, the gift of knowledge or wisdom. Or the gift of being able to heal others through prayer and the laying on of hands. God gives other believers the gift of prophecy or speaking in tongues. These spiritual gifts are intended to serve the well-being of others and are to be used exclusively within the community of believers.

Summary:

The Holy Spirit is not just an abstract “force”, but a divine person.

He is comforter, teacher, advocate, source of holiness and strength. He lives within you as a believer.

He transforms your innermost being (your thinking) and works from the inside out.

Close connection ; your life in the Spirit is a life in close connection with God, characterized by trust and transformation. The more you surrender to Him, the more He fills you. The more you feel His guidance and hear His voice.

8. Who is Satan?

8.1 Glossary

The word "**Satan**" comes from Hebrew, which literally means "*adversary* , " "*opponent*," or "*accuser* ."

The terms "devil" (*diabolos* = *slanderer*) and "Satan" are two different concepts that refer to the same person.

Satan (the Devil) is the **personified embodiment of evil** and therefore the enemy of God. For God is love and the embodiment of good.

8.2 Lucifer, the fallen angel

It is said that Satan was the highest angel of God. His name was Lucifer (bearer of light).

8.2.1 Lucifer's Rebellion

Lucifer was considered the most powerful, beautiful, and intelligent of all the angels. However, Lucifer was arrogant and wanted to place himself above God. Lucifer refused to serve the triune God. His pride and his refusal to submit to God led to rebellion. He transformed himself into Satan – the adversary.

8.2.2 Lucifer's reasons for rebellion

The reasons for the rebellion were:

Pride, power, the unwillingness to submit – to be like God, the yearning for freedom, the ability to rule oneself...

Cosmic battle : Lucifer persuaded some of the angels to join him. He called for a heavenly rebellion against God's order. The rebellion escalated into a cosmic battle: Read Revelation 12:7-12

Note : The idea that Lucifer was a powerful angel who rebelled against God is not directly based on a single biblical text, but is the result of a later compilation of various statements from biblical writings.

8.3 The Devil, Prince of this World

The devil is described in John 22:31 as the "**prince of this world** ." Yes, Satan is active everywhere in this world. But that doesn't mean he has complete control over the world; God is still sovereign.

Satan blinds unbelievers so that they cannot see, or rather refuse to see, the bright light of the Gospel. Satan's cunning also includes promoting false ideas and philosophies in the world—philosophies that blind unbelievers to the truth of the Gospel.

They reject faith in Christ because they believe their philosophy is the truth.

Christianity is the only religion in the world where one cannot earn God's favor through works, but where salvation is a gift. A gift from God that one may claim for oneself. See Ephesians 2:8-10

8.4 Satan, who wants to seduce us:

8.4.1 Why does Satan want to seduce us?

Here are some possible interpretations:

A:) Out of hatred for God : Satan cannot attack God directly – so he targets what God loves: mankind.

"If I cannot destroy God, then at least I will destroy his most beloved creation, mankind." Satan thus seduces in order to sabotage God's work by leading people to sin and self-destruction.

B:) Out of delusion: Satan knows that he has lost against God and will one day end up in the damnation that God explicitly created for Satan. And now he wants to drag as many human souls as possible down with him into the abyss.

8.2 How does Satan try to seduce?

A) The devil is not a brutal destroyer but a subtle manipulator, just as he did with Eve in the Garden of Eden, disguised as a serpent.

B) He questions what is good, relativizes the truth, and twists the word of God.

C) He convinces you that self-determination is better than submitting to a divine being.

D) He convinces you that disobedience is liberation.

E) He convinces you that you don't need God.

F:) He'll convince you that the devil and hell are just fairy tales. That they don't exist at all.

G:) Satan tries to twist everything.

H:) He keeps you from following Christ by telling you: “You’re missing out – Everything is forbidden by God! God is a spoilsport!”

I:) Satan promises you money, power, prestige, gratification of desires...

J:) Satan tries to make good things seem ridiculous or boring.

Sin is like a plague. Once established, it wants to spread like fire. That is a spiritual principle.

8.3 Your spiritual battle

Make this clear! As a follower of Christ, you are constantly engaged in a spiritual battle against the evil that seeks to tempt you !

Important to know: THE SPIRITUAL WAR IS A REALITY!

“ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil.” Ephesians 6:11-12

Therefore, always be prepared for Satan to launch another attack against you. His attacks can take many forms: health problems, marital problems, problems at work...

5.3.1 How can you resist Satan?

Satanic influences are subtle, rarely spectacular. They mostly involve sowing discord, envy, and deception.

Humility is the strongest antidote to the devil! **“God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”** James 4:6

If you are humble, then you will be supported by God. Humility protects against temptation because it bestows inner contentment and wisdom.

First protection: Vigilance; Recognize the mechanisms behind which Satan might be hiding!

Second protection: Live a holy life! From now on, your life should be focused on God! Live a life without shadows. Live a life where Satan can find no crack to cling to.

The more you focus on Jesus and the Holy Spirit, the better you will succeed.

The Holy Spirit helps you so that Satan cannot find any point of attack within you.

Third protection: Prayer. In the morning, before you begin your day's work, focus your attention on Jesus. Talk to him! Pray to him! **Tell him everything that touches you or causes you sorrow and worry**. Ask him to be with you throughout the day.

In the evening: Only go to sleep after you have put the day back into your hands.

Fourth protection: Read Regularly in the Bible. Especially in the New Testament. Particularly the four Gospels and the various letters to the churches.

Principle : Every day a Chapter 1. Reading God's Word strengthens the presence of the Holy Spirit within you and strengthens your resistance to evil.

Fifth protection: Be mindful of what you consume. Break free from any addictions that have enslaved you. Forbid yourself from consuming any pornographic material. Also, pay attention to the films you watch and the music you listen to. Even your choice of colleagues can influence you.

Sixth protection: Question thoughts that certainly cannot come from God and that want to grow strong within you. Thoughts that might accuse, discourage, or confuse you? Discuss your thoughts with Jesus in prayer and/or talk to a friend who is also a believer about them.

Seventh protection: Find a religious community where you feel a connection and integrate yourself into that community. Having fellowship with other believers is beneficial. Together you are stronger against the arrows of the adversary. Together you strengthen each other in faith.
A coal can only glow if it is repeatedly brought to the fire.

Eighth protection: Always look to Jesus. Do not turn your gaze away. (Think of Peter walking on water).

Ninth protection: Keep Satan away from you! I will describe how to do this in the next chapter. See 9.3.4.

5.4 In conclusion:

Satan needs open doors: hatred, bitterness, unforgiveness, anger, strife. Lust, greed, envy, pride, self-glorification...

Live a holy life! Keep the door closed! *Give the devil no room* . (Ephesians 4:27)

Train yourself to be humble! Put on the garment of humility! Let humility be your new adornment. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you transform your pride into humility.

9. Being separated from God

9.1 How it all began

Let's go back together to the Garden of Eden, visit Adam and Eve and see what happened there:

God created Adam and Eve to have fellowship with them.

He brought them to the Garden of Eden, which He had created for them.

God gave them the task of cultivating and caring for the garden and also told them what they were not allowed to do and what they were not.

We read in Genesis chapter 2 that He came to the Garden of Eden in the evening and visited His people. I imagine He did this regularly.

God created His people to have fellowship with them and to take joy in them.

But back then, the two were not yet as humanity is today. Adam and Eve were naked. We read in the Bible: *"They were not afraid."* They lacked the knowledge of shame.

Adam and Eve were like small children. They didn't yet know the concepts of good and evil. Evil hadn't even appeared in their environment. There was only good; namely, God.

Therefore, neither of them was yet capable of distinguishing between good and evil. The knowledge of good and evil only came to them with the Fall of Man, or rather, afterward.

Genesis 3:1-5: Read what Moses left us in the Bible regarding this:

"The serpent was more crafty than any of the other animals that the Lord God had made."

"Did God really say that you must not eat the fruit of any tree?" she asked the woman. "Of course we may," the woman replied, "except for the tree in the middle of the garden. God said: 'You must not eat its fruit, or even touch it, or you will die!'"

"Nonsense! You will not die," the snake countered. "But God knows that if you eat of it, your eyes will be opened— you will be like God and know good and evil. "

Become like God!

Evil once appeared in the Garden of Eden. Specifically, in the form of a serpent, in which Satan visited Adam and Eve.

Just as today, Satan lured them by awakening desire within them. Desire for more, better, greater... Moreover, he tempted them by twisting the truth and sowing doubt. (...could God really have said...) and: "You will be like God!"

So the two ate of the forbidden fruit, even though they knew they would be breaking God's law. The temptation to become like God was simply too great.

God had even told them that they would die if they ate the fruit. But here, too, they trusted the serpent. In that sense, what the serpent (Satan) said was correct. They would not die (at least not a physical death).

What God meant by "Otherwise you will die" referred to spiritual death. Spiritual death is synonymous with *"separation from God"*. Disobedience led to alienation from God. Shame, guilt, suffering, and death entered the world.

As a consequence of being "separated from God", Adam and Eve had to leave paradise and henceforth earn their food through hard work, sweat and deprivation.

9.2 Original Sin

This "separation from God" also applies to us, the descendants of Adam and Eve. Through Adam's disobedience, we are, in a sense, "hereditarily predisposed." This hereditary predisposition is called **original sin**. Adam's guilt is automatically passed on to his descendants.

Adam was not only found guilty of sinning, but his punishment (separation from God) was also passed on to us, his descendants.

Original sin, therefore, is the consequence that we, too, are separated from God from the womb.

Baptism: This is why the Christian Church, in its various denominations, has its children baptized as early as possible. According to Christian doctrine, the separation from God is only overcome through baptism.

Susceptibility to evil: Original sin goes so far that we are by nature susceptible to evil.

There is some truth to this! Even the Apostle Paul laments: (Romans 7:18-20) *"I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do."*

Therefore, the statement that humankind possesses a sinful nature is correct.

Responsible for the sin of another? How can God hold us responsible for sins we have not committed?

There comes a time in our lives when we become aware of our own sinfulness. At this point, we should

resist our sinful nature and repent.

But instead, we confirm our sinful nature by sinning like Adam (and even partly enjoying it). By confirming our sin, we express our approval of what Adam did in the Garden of Eden. Therefore, we are just as guilty of this sin, without having committed it ourselves.

Back to Adam and Eve:

No sooner had they eaten the fruit than they suddenly realized they were naked.

Their childlike naivety was gone. All at once they could distinguish between good and evil.

The knowledge of good and evil elevated Adam and Eve to a higher level. Satan didn't overpromise!

It's important to know: Before eating the fruit of knowledge, Adam and Eve could not be found guilty. But now they can!

It's like a law: if there were no speed limits, you could drive as fast as you wanted. No judge could accuse you of speeding.

A judge can only convict you based on a law, a rule. And it's the same with the distinction between good and evil.

The understanding of good and evil is like a law written in our soul. When we lie or steal, we automatically know that we have broken this law.

Written on our hearts: Read Romans 2:14! Paul says there verbatim: *His law is written on every person's heart.*

Conclusion: If we violate God's law, then we become guilty.

Running a red light: It's like running a red light. There's a law that says it's forbidden. So the judge has the right to sue you and fine you for it.

Missing the mark : To violate God's law is called "sin." Literally translated: "missing the mark." By sinning, you incur guilt. With sin on your back, you can no longer be holy.

But to stand before God, you must be "holy," therefore "righteous." **No human being can live up to God's standards.** It is as Paul wrote to the Romans:

Romans 3:10-12: *"The Holy Scriptures say the same: 'There is no one, not even one, who is without sin. There is no one who understands and seeks God.'"*

They have all turned away from him and have therefore become useless to God. There is truly no one who does good, not a single one.

9.3 Why do we constantly sin?

9.3.1 Our sinful nature:

Original sin, as explained above, weakens our moral nature. The consequence is an inclination towards sin—a constant inner drive towards selfishness, towards self-realization without regard for God or others.

Through sin, you are separated from God. It is as if there is an abyss between you and God.

It is our fault. You may see God on the other side, but you cannot cross over. We can certainly recognize and see God, but that does us no good.

Because we are separated from God, we cannot be his children. Only through Jesus Christ, who built the bridge to God,

can your sin be forgiven, so that God can accept you again.

The Church Father Augustine formulated it this way:

"We are no longer capable of not sinning."
People recognize the good, but often choose the worse because it seems more pleasant, convenient, or tempting.



9.3.2 The invisible dimension

The invisible dimension, which we are denied the ability to see, is structured in a remarkably simple way:

The spiritual world consists of only two camps: namely, good and evil .

From **God and the Devil**.

The final resting place of souls will be: It's either heaven or hell.

Every human soul belongs to a camp. Whether I like it or not! People are n't even aware of that!

But it's still true: if you are not a child of God, then you are automatically a child of the devil.

If you are guilty before God, and you are as long as you haven't received forgiveness, you belong to the devil's camp. You are his slave. Satan wants you to sin! Sin enslaves. The more you sin, the more you become a slave to sin!

It is Satan who is telling you the following:

- I deserve this!
- I have a right to that!

- Once is not enough.
- I'll take what's rightfully mine!
- I want power!
- I won't let anyone tell me that!
- He only has himself to blame!
- I want to become rich!

Egoism : The buzzwords mentioned above are all egoistic ways of thinking.

The ego seeks justification, power, and recognition. Those who live in the ego are incapable of true love and are therefore prone to sin.

The Little Devil: Such attitudes are whispered into our ear by a little red devil. If we are susceptible to its whispers, we are doomed.

Read the letter of Peter! 1 Peter 5.8

“Be sober-minded; be alert! For your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”

9.3.3. Newly converted Christians are especially at risk!

Imagine you recently decided to follow Jesus and thus started your life anew:

Of course! The devil wants you back ! From now on, you no longer belong to the enemy's camp, where the majority of people reside. No! You have now switched sides.

What a disgrace for the devil! He has lost your soul to God! His pride, of course, won't let that stand!

That's why the devil fights all the harder with diligence and cunning to steal you back from God!

Good to know: As a human soul who has made a new beginning with God, you are especially at risk of being pushed out of God's sphere of influence by Satan!

9.3.4 Send Satan away from you!

If, as a new convert, you notice that Satan is harassing you—for example, that you can never manage to read the Bible (especially the New Testament), or that an addiction is becoming overwhelming and you simply can't break free from it—then drive the devil away from you!

As a child of God, you have authority. With Jesus by your side, you even have authority over evil! For Satan is never as powerful as God.

In such a case: Go to your room, take a Bible or a cross in your hand and pray aloud with authority:

In the name of Jesus Christ! Satan: Get away from me! Satan: You have no right to my soul! GET OUT OF HERE!!

And I tell you: The devil disappears. **As a believer, you even have power over Satan!**

10. Why sin?

Preface to the chapter;

In the previous chapter, I spoke about original sin and why we sin again and again. To understand why sin must be the very worst thing for God, it helps us to realize how holy God is:

10.1 Jesus as Mediator

God's omnipotence, his love, and his light are pure holiness. He says of himself that one must not look upon his face because of his holiness.

In Exodus 33:20 it says:

"For no one who sees me will live." We humans have burdened ourselves with sin. Our guilt would bring about our immediate death.

Jesus as mediator : The separation between humans and God is absolute.

It shows how desperately we need a mediator. A mediator between us and the holy God the Father.

Someone who can bridge this gap. Jesus Christ is that mediator. Through Jesus, we have access to God again. He is the door to God.

10.2 What does sin mean to God?

God speaks very clearly about sin in the Bible: it is one of the central themes of the Bible.

Sin is any action or word that **contradicts God's will** .

The word "sin" means " **missing the mark** ."

Bible verse : *"Everyone who sins also breaks the law, for sin is lawlessness."*

(1 John 3:4).

Sin is therefore not only moral wrongdoing, but a breach of the relationship with God.

10.3 Consequences of Sin

The consequence is death. Whoever sins must die (in a spiritual sense). As already explained, sin is so terrible for God that it is tantamount to a death sentence. Before God, we are spiritually dead. The Bible says: "*For the wages of sin is death.*" Romans 6:23

10.4 God's attitude towards sin

God is holy and just, therefore he can neither ignore nor tolerate sin.

It's important to know: Sin can only be atoned for with blood. To remove sin, blood must be shed.

Read Leviticus 17:11 in this regard: There, God says that blood symbolizes life. If someone sins, then this sin can only be washed away with blood, that is, life.

In early times, the Israelites, at God's command, had to sacrifice a male lamb once a year, a flawless lamb without blemish.

The lamb's blood had to be shed in place of the death of the person who had sinned. But God had already announced to Moses that one day a special prophet would come, one who would be especially close to God. Read Deuteronomy 18:15-18.

God also announced

to the prophet Isaiah that He would one day send a savior. Be sure to read Isaiah chapter 53. It contains all the details about Jesus. And this was 750 years in advance!

God's ultimate answer to the problem of sin is not punishment, but salvation. **Salvation through Jesus Christ:**

Bible verse: John 3:16 "*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.*"

10.5 God's Salvation

God has given salvation!

One needs to realize this: God He Himself ensured that we could be righteous before Him and free from sin. God Himself cleared the way for our salvation!

In His infinite love, God sent His Son, Himself a God, to earth with the mission to give His life as a spotless sacrifice for all the sins of all people throughout the world; as a scapegoat, so to speak. He

was the only person on earth who never committed a sin. He could do this because He is God. Jesus was crucified. This death was the sacrificial death for the sin of the world.

Gospel = "Good News": That is precisely what the Gospel, the good news, is: that God himself has made it possible for us humans to be reconciled to God through the mediator Jesus Christ. We simply need to claim his forgiveness of sins for ourselves personally.

In other words, believe in the forgiveness of sins through Jesus. And thus, believe in Jesus.

By converting, you have done exactly that! Therefore, you are now freed from all the burden of sin! You are freed from the sins you have committed and also from the sins you will commit. Jesus would now say: **Your faith has saved you!**

Key verse 1 John 1:9: *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."*

11. Does hell really exist?

11.1 Introduction

a prevailing trend in society today to deny the existence of hell. It's an old trick of Satan's: to whisper in people's ears:

"No. That can't be true! 'God' couldn't have created something like that. It must be a fairy tale!"

I can assure you: Hell exists. If it didn't, the Bible would be wrong. The Bible's accuracy has been proven many times over. If you read the Bible, you'll encounter dozens of prophecies, all of which have come true in detail. Therefore, the Bible is absolutely unique.

The Bible is God's word. That's why it's reasonable to assume that Hell and the realm of the dead (the temporary abode of souls until the final judgment) exist.

11.2 Mention of Hell in the Bible:

It is interesting to know that the topic of hell and the mention of hell (or the realm of the dead) appear most frequently in the Gospels.

Jesus Christ often addressed and spoke about hell. For example, the story of Lazarus and the rich man.

Luke 16:19-31 **very important!**

on to describe to his disciples how terrible it was there. And that it would be better to gouge out an eye or cut off a hand than to arrive in hell unscathed. These statements are shocking! They show that under no circumstances should one "end up" in hell.

Why does Jesus know this? Jesus knows this because he himself created hell.

All things in this cosmos were made through Jesus. God the Father spoke, and God Jesus carried out his command.

John writes in his Gospel: (John 1:3)

"All things were made through him (Jesus), and without him (Jesus) nothing was made that has been made."

11.3 Near-death experiences; accounts from people

The internet and YouTube are full of accounts from people who were clinically dead and, during that time, found themselves in heaven or hell.

During medical treatment, these people were brought back to life through the activation of their hearts. Many of these people report that they met Jesus and that Jesus sent them back to earthly life, with the task of sharing what they saw in the afterlife.

Internet links :

I would gladly provide links here. However, links can change quickly. Just search for them yourself using your internet browser or on YouTube.

11.4 Difference between Hell and the Realm of the Dead

The Bible distinguishes between hell (eternal damnation) and the realm of the dead (the place of the dead after their death).

In the Bible, hell is called "Gehenna." Hence, the definitive abode of human souls after God's final judgment. >> Hence: "Eternal damnation"

After the human body dies, the soul does not immediately go to eternal damnation (hell) or to glory (paradise) , but to an intermediate stage, namely the "realm of the dead." In Hebrew, "Sheol"; in Greek, "Hades."

As we can see from the story of Jesus and Lazarus in Luke 16, the realm of the dead is divided into two parts. There is, on the one hand, the "Hades of Comfort" (in Abraham's bosom), and on the other

hand, the "Hades of Torment" (the antechamber to Hell), where the rich man ended up.

11.5 I can't believe that!

Now you might say, *"What? A loving God could bring such terrible torment upon people (souls), as hell is described in the Bible?"* (Lake of molten sulfur that burns eternally; Revelation 19:20 // 20:10-15)

You cry out, *"I can't believe that! That can't be!"*

Answer : God is not only loving, but also holy and just. Since God created mankind in freedom, he respects this freedom – even if it means that a person chooses freedom and rejects fellowship with God.

Hell is therefore not a sadistic project of God, but the logical consequence of a final decision against God.

C.S. Lewis (20th century) said: *"In the end, there are only two kinds of people:*

those who say to God, 'Thy will be done,'

and those to whom God says, 'Thy will be done.'"

Be aware: Sin against the infinite God has infinite weight!

Only in this way can the holiness of God be taken seriously. The existence of hell shows that God's love is not cheap, but a serious invitation to repentance.

Conclusion:

The Bible portrays God as perfectly loving, but also perfectly just. Hell is not understood as "God's sadism," but as a consequence of human freedom and sin.

How one interprets this consequence (eternal torment, destruction or purification) is a matter of theological orientation.

12. Why read the Bible?

12.1 Basics

For devout Christians, reading the Bible is as essential as sleeping and eating. Christians understand the Bible not simply as a book, but as a revelation from God.

Bible passage: 2 Timothy 3:16

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is used to teach us, to correct our sins, to restore us to righteousness and to live in a way that pleases God.”

God speaks to us through the Bible, whether through stories, prophecies, or through Jesus Christ in the New Testament. Reading the Bible, therefore, means **hearing God's voice in written form**.

12.2 Reasons to Read the Bible

The Bible is a guide for life. As already mentioned, through reading the Bible, God speaks to you. The Holy Spirit is near to you and thereby grants you insights into matters of faith.

- The Bible provides moral and ethical guidance. For example, the Sermon on the Mount, the Ten Commandments, or the writings of the apostles in their letters; "How Christians should live".
- The Bible helps us examine life decisions in the light of faith.
Good to know : Never make decisions in life **that contradict biblical principles and teachings**. You will fail ! Because God will not bless your decision!
- Reading the Bible is spiritual nourishment. Through reading, trust in God's promises grows.
- By reading the Bible, you come to know God's nature better: His love, justice, faithfulness, and patience. This strengthens your faith and allows it to grow steadily.
- Many Bible verses offer you support and comfort in times of distress and sorrow. **Read the Proverbs and the Psalms!**
- Reading the Bible strengthens the presence of the Holy Spirit within you. This will transform you inwardly and deepen your connection to Christ.
Furthermore, the Holy Spirit will reveal fascinating insights to you.
- By reading the Bible, you strengthen yourself against the attacks of the adversary who wants to bring you down.

12.3 Where should I read?

The Bible consists of two parts:

The thicker, more comprehensive part, the Old Testament, and the narrower part, the New Testament.

The Old Testament comprises the writings that were written before the birth of Jesus.

The New Testament comprises the writings that were composed after Jesus' death.

For you as a young person of faith, it is important first to become familiar with the writings of the New Testament. (Only then should you study the Old Testament.)

Therefore: *I recommend that you read a chapter from a book in the New Testament every day.*

The first four books in the New Testament are the four Gospels. These depict the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. Each of the four authors does so in his own way, creating a comprehensive picture of Jesus.

In some respects, they recount the same events. However, each author writes it as he experienced it or as it was told to him.

The Gospels of **Matthew** and **John** are eyewitness accounts. These two authors were disciples of Jesus and were with him throughout his three-year ministry. The other two authors, **Luke** and **Mark**, wrote down what they were told.

The fifth book to be mentioned here is the Acts of the Apostles. It is the account of how the Gospel spread throughout the world after the Ascension of Jesus and how new churches arose in the Near East and as far as Rome.

The letters to the churches : The other books of the New Testament are the letters which the apostles (leaders in the faith) sent to the various churches for instruction and spiritual growth.

Important: Reading these letters is fundamental and absolutely essential. From them we learn what constitutes faith and how a follower of Christ should live.

The last book in the New Testament is the Revelation of John. Therefore, it is the written record of what God showed the Apostle John as a vision about the end of the world.

Books worth reading in the Old Testament : The Psalms, the Proverbs of Solomon, the Five Books of Moses, the Prophets Isaiah, and various others. The Holy Spirit will show you what to read.

[12.4 How should I read?](#)

I recommend you read the Bible on your mobile phone. That way you always have the Holy Scriptures with you. You can read the Bible on trains or buses, during your lunch break, or in the morning and evening before going to bed.

12.5 Which Bible app should I use?

installing

the Bible app **"YouVersion" on your mobile phone.** YouVersion is the world's leading online Bible with millions of daily users.

12.5.1 Advantages of the YouVersion:

- Available in dozens of languages.
- Several different Bible translations are available in various languages.
- The Bible translations can be downloaded so they can be read offline.
- There are also various audio Bibles where you can listen to the texts.
- Very efficient and smooth Bible verse search.
- The Bible passages can be highlighted in color.
- Quick switching from one Bible translation to another.
- An efficient way to compare verses. You can then see the identical verse in the different translations according to your preference.
- You can easily copy verses into other applications or share them with other people.
- You can take notes and save them.
- Many Bible reading plans and Bible studies are available.
- You will receive a verse of the day each day, which is intended to be a help and guidance for you throughout the day.
- A large Bible community where you can share insights and opinions with friends. Compatible with Facebook and your mobile phone's address book.
- And then this app has dozens of other gadgets such as Christian videos and films, in-depth topics, devotions, or the verse image editor, etc.

12.6 The Adversary

Just as God exists in this world, so too does Satan!

He is the opposite of God. Before your conversion, your soul belonged to him (Satan). You probably weren't even aware at the time that you were living under Satan's influence.

Now, however, your soul belongs to God. But the devil wants to win your soul back!

So be prepared for temptations from the devil.

You will experience Satan trying to prevent you from reading the Bible. He will try to disrupt you or, for

example, send you physical discomfort...

But don't be afraid! The devil no longer has power over you. With the help of Jesus, you can drive the devil away. You can read how to do this in chapter 9, section 2.4, "Drive Satan Away."

I wish you many blessings as you read the Bible.

13. Be holy!

Guiding principle: *A holy life changes its environment for the better without allowing itself to be adapted to it.*

13.1 Basics

1. God wants us to be holy. In **Leviticus 19:2**, God calls out to his people:

"You shall be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy."

This quality is given to us by God if we always remain in his ray of light and do not grieve the Holy Spirit through sinfulness.

Example:

A bale of straw has the property of burning. It will never lose this property.

It can try as hard as it wants, it's no use. Only when the bale of straw is submerged in water can it no longer burn.

Only when it loses contact with the water and dries out can it burn again.

Never on their own : Thus, people can never be holy on their own.

They always remain susceptible to all sin and guilt. But if these people remain in Jesus Christ, then they are sanctified through him. Jesus preserves and sanctifies our lives. He surrounds us with his holiness.

Key verse: 1 John 2:15-17

"Do not love this world and do not set your heart on anything that belongs to this world. For whoever loves the world cannot love God the Father."

What, then, is the essence of this world? Selfish desires, the greed for everything that catches the eye, the boasting of wealth and power. All this does not come from God, our Father, but belongs to the world. And the world, with its insatiable appetite, will pass away. Only those who do what God wills

will live eternally.

God wants to tell us that we shouldn't do things halfway in our relationship with Him.

We can only lead a holy life if we are connected to Christ in every moment. Indeed: The straw must always be soaked with water!

The Hereafter : Believing Christians who lead a sanctified life do indeed live in this world, but their spiritual home, which occupies and shapes their thinking, is with Christ. In this way, the earthly world with all its desires can no longer tempt us.

13.2 What does "being holy" mean in practical terms?

- Holiness means: Jesus has first place in life. Our focus is directed towards God.
 - A holy person does not live for their own sake, but for God.
 - Jesus wants to be our coach and friend and carry us through life.
 - It's about a life that consciously distinguishes itself from worldly things.
-
- ✓ Love instead lovelessness
 - ✓ Reconciliation instead of resentment.
 - ✓ Forgiveness instead of revenge.
 - ✓ Purity instead of licentiousness.
 - ✓ Truthfulness instead of deception.
 - ✓ Humility instead of pride.
 - ✓ Mercy instead of arrogance.

Jesus says to us:

"You are the salt of the earth and the light of the world." (Matthew 5:13–14)

Key verse: *"All your actions – your words and your deeds – should show that Jesus is your Lord.*

Because you are united with him, you can thank God the Father for everything."

Colossians 3:17 (HFA)

13.3 How can we become holy people?

Living a sanctified life is a process that doesn't happen overnight.

One's way of life changes gradually.

This is the secret:

The more one grows in faith and the greater one's love for Jesus and God the Father becomes, the more one is filled with the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit transforms our thinking and thus helps us to lead an increasingly sanctified life.

The following elements should be taken into account:

- Putting God first in life.
- Focus on God. Time with God. (Bible, prayer)
- Conscious living in his presence.
- Always be online with Jesus
- Not to be influenced by worldly things.
- Everything one undertakes, should be done consciously for one's own honor.

Holiness also means: constantly realigning oneself: Holiness is not a state of perfection, but a path of devotion. It is not about being without flaws, but about always living in God's ray of blessing, in his light.

Holiness also means:

- ✓ Stay humble
- ✓ Remain open to learning
- ✓ Making peace
- ✓ practicing love
- ✓ Living by God's grace
- ✓ Allowing oneself to be transformed by God
- ✓ Learning wisdom and patience

Holiness is shown in how we treat others. True holiness is not shown in religious displays, but **in love, patience, and mercy:**

"For without love I am nothing." 1 Corinthians 13:2

Holy people are often unassuming, yet profound, warm-hearted, clear-headed, and inwardly connected to God. Holiness is not a special religious status, but rather the natural way of life of someone who knows and loves God and lives in His presence. It is not revealed through withdrawal, but through lived love, truthfulness, purity, and devotion – right in the midst of everyday life.

14. How can you grow in the Holy Spirit?

Or to put it another way: What are the signs that you can use to recognize your growth in the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit within us seems to me like a snail: it takes possession of you very slowly and continuously.

Good to know; (You need to be aware of this) : A life with God, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is a completely different life than the one you lived before.

It's about your willingness to CHANGE your life .

You can only grow in the Holy Spirit if you are fully ready to let the Holy Spirit into your life.

For the Holy Spirit wants to move into a freshly cleaned and purified house within you.

The Spirit of God wants to truly dwell within you. He wants entry into every room of your life. You can't hide anything from God anyway. This is only possible if you declutter your life and let light into the musty corners of your life.

Reconcile with people with whom you are in conflict and have negative relationships.

Free yourself from addictions. Remove everything in your life that the Holy Spirit shows you is not good!

14.1 To grieve the Holy Spirit

What happens when you touch a snail? It immediately retreats! The Holy Spirit does the same: Read Paul in Ephesians 4:30-33.

If you offend him with one of your favorite sins, he will inevitably withdraw into you. And this creates a vacuum that your adversary will gladly fill.

The danger! Because in this way you will always go around in circles and make no progress in your growth in the Holy Spirit.

But you want to grow in the Holy Spirit and in faith:

You see, that's only possible if you consistently surrender even your favorite sin to Jesus.

There's no way around it!

The secret is this : the more the Holy Spirit permeates you, the more you can resist Satan's temptations. This also makes it much less difficult to give up your favorite sins or addictions like smoking or similar things.

14.2 Keep the door closed !

If you give the devil space, the Holy Spirit withdraws, and Satan powerfully enters through the crack in the door you left open. The point is to offer the devil no opportunity to attack in your life and, with God's help, to keep "the door" closed. Then Satan cannot gain a foothold within you.

Therefore, God calls you **to pursue a sanctified lifestyle!**

Only when you turn completely to God, stand in his ray of blessing, and lead a holy life can you keep Satan out of your life in this way.

Thus, it proves true once again: **Being a half-Christian is complete nonsense.**

14.3 The Fruit of the Holy Spirit

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.” Galatians 5:22–23)

You want to progress in your faith, don't you?

Everyone around you should see how you have allowed God to positively transform you .

If you give the Holy Spirit the space within you that He demands and you live a sanctified life, then these fruits will automatically appear within you. But you must be willing to let God transform your being.

Not all fruits appear immediately. However, their growth is a clear sign that God's Spirit is working within you and transforming you. The more of the Holy Spirit, the more these fruits will grow within you.

14.4 Signs of the growth of the spirit within you

How can you tell if the Holy Spirit is growing within you and increasing in intensity?

Here are some characteristics that can help you assess this.

- The more you are filled with the Holy Spirit, the more he creates in you the desire for Bible study, prayer, and fellowship with God.
- The inner urge to become more like Jesus.
- Deep joy and gratitude towards God.
- Love for other people! You could hug them all!
- Genuine, selfless love for fellow human beings – even for difficult ones.
- Willingness to forgive and reconcile.
- John 4:7–8 >> **Mercy!**
- A growing awareness of sin and sanctification.
- The Holy Spirit exposes sin within you (John 16:8). This creates a desire for holiness and a turning away from evil.
- You no longer live willfully in sin, but seek purification and renewal.
- The Holy Spirit gives you impressions, wisdom, and guidance (Romans 8:14).
The longer you go on, the more you hear his voice within you.
- Decisions in life are now brought before Jesus.
Before you decide, you ask Jesus what he would do. It becomes increasingly important to you to make decisions in accordance with God's will.
- Courage to bear witness: You are increasingly filled with the desire to share the gospel with others (Acts 1:8).
- Courage arises within you to stand by Jesus, even in the face of opposition.
- A powerful yet loving advocacy for the truth.
- Some believers are given spiritual gifts by God. For example, wisdom, healing, prophecy, knowledge, etc.
- You experience joy because you feel God's support and his mysterious guidance in your life.

I wish that the Holy Spirit will take up more and more space within you and make you a person who radiates much love and light through its work within you.

15. Living everyday life as a Christian

If you have consciously read this guide up to this point and tried to understand its content, then this chapter is actually superfluous.

The Holy Spirit clearly shows you how to live your daily life with God and with your fellow human beings.

However, for those who prefer to have it in black and white, I will write it down here again.

- You have come to realize that a life without God will end in damnation.
- You have come to realize that a life under the protection of Jesus Christ will be a happier life.
- You are NEVER alone again. You have an invisible friend and coach, Jesus, who loves you infinitely. And you have another helper, the Holy Spirit, who gives you insight and guidance. The Holy Spirit is the voice of God, who leads and directs you in life.

15.1 Basic rules for living as a Christian

This is how you should live as a follower of Christ, so that you walk under the ray of God's blessing:

- Give God first place in your life!
- Your thinking should be permeated by the desire for a life pleasing to God.
- May your love for Jesus grow ever stronger within you.
- Everything you do is aimed at pleasing Jesus.
- You want to give something back to Jesus for what HE has done for you.
- You want Jesus to be pleased with you.
- You want the Holy Spirit to take up more and more space in your soul.
- You have already begun to change your outlook on life.
- More and more you find yourself asking: "What do you want me to do, Lord?"
- Your selfishness, your pride, and your urge for self-determination recede within you.
- As a result, love and humility towards your fellow human beings will increase within you more and more.
- You see yourself as a true follower of Christ and want to become more and more like Jesus.
- You strive to adopt the character traits of Jesus as described in the Gospels. Therefore: love, compassion, forgiveness, acceptance, kindness, gentleness, patience, etc.
- The Holy Spirit is in the process of changing your being so that your character will move in this direction.

It's important to know : These personality changes don't happen overnight. It's a process that takes months, if not years. But I advise you: **Stick with it!**

15.2 What Would Jesus Do??

Keep asking yourself: "WWJD " (W would Jesus Do) ?

May Jesus be a help and a guide to you in your daily decisions.

If you're unsure what the right thing to do is, you can ask Jesus!

He is always very close to you. He will show you the right decision.

If not, then that's a sign for you to discuss and explore the problem with a third party. That's why it's necessary to find friends in faith. It's easier to walk the right path together.

Important to know: Especially in your spontaneous reactions you can determine whether your nature has already moved in the divine direction.

15.3 Abiding in Jesus:

Staying in Jesus and being online with Jesus are essentially the same thing. But I'd like to remind you of the image Jesus gave his disciples back then:

John 15:1-5 (HFA)

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch on the vine that does not bear grapes, but he prunes the branches that do bear fruit, so that they will be even more fruitful. You are already good branches, because you have heard me."

Remain closely connected to me, and I will remain closely connected to you! For a branch cannot bear fruit by itself, but only when it is attached to the vine. Likewise, you will only bear fruit if you remain connected to me.

I am the vine, and you are the branches. Whoever remains in me, as I in him, will bear much fruit; for apart from me you can do nothing.

I think this passage speaks for itself. Just this much: **You can't do anything without me!**

15.4 Prayer

15.4.1 Fundamentals

When we pray, our prayer is triune; namely, in the name of Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, to God the Father.

- **To God the Father:** He is the origin of all life and the goal of our worship.
- **Through the Son:** Christ is the intermediary to God. Therefore, we pray in his name.
We do not pray to God in our own worthiness, but in the name of Jesus Christ. For Jesus has reconciled us to God.
- **Through the Holy Spirit:** He carries our prayer to God.
He is the one who supports us in our prayer and teaches us how to pray. (Romans 8:26-27)

Thus, every prayer is triune, although we often don't consciously express this.

15.4.2 Different people to address in prayer

Nevertheless, it is possible for us to address the individual persons in the Trinity directly.

- **Father's Prayer;** as in the Lord's Prayer.
- **Jesus Prayer;** personal relationship, thanksgiving for salvation, request for support in daily life.
- **Prayer to the Spirit;** a plea to hear what the Holy Spirit wants to tell us and teach us.

It is also possible to switch between these levels within a single prayer.

However, many believers either always pray either to God the Father (because that is how Jesus taught us ; the Lord's Prayer, Luke 11:2-4) or to Jesus, because we have a personal relationship with Jesus. He is the way to God.

15.4.3 What are the best prayer practices?

Make it a ritual to take time for prayer before you go out into the day.

"How long?" you might ask.

As long as you can manage. Ten minutes should be enough time to discuss your day with God. **These ten minutes are a very good investment.**

Your prayer:

Thank God! (or Jesus). Thank Him for the night, that you can wake up healthy and refreshed.

You entrust your day to Him, discussing with Him everything that will come your way. Ask for His presence! Ask Jesus to stand by you in everything that happens today. Ask Jesus for wisdom in dealing with your neighbors.

Ask Him **to place great love** in your heart so that you can love and accept every single person you meet, just as they are.

Please ask God to always put the right words on your tongue and protect your thoughts. (It's possible to think *wrong* things too.)

When going to bed:

Make it a habit to reflect on the day before you fall asleep and thank God (or Jesus as your caregiver) for his protection and for everything he has given you today.

15.4.4 Listening Prayer

Many evangelical movements practice listening prayer. "Listening prayer" means that the person praying adopts a fundamental attitude of listening, rather than "only" addressing requests, thanks, or complaints to God.

This refers to a prayer where the person praying not only speaks, but consciously "receives" God's voice in silence. It is not "just" speaking, but consciously pausing to perceive impressions, inner images, Bible verses, or thoughts as God's answer.

This often happens in an atmosphere of silence and praise, often together with others. In this way, one can share the impressions one has received with others.

15.4.5 Meditation time before God:

Imagine a foggy, grey November day:

All the colors outside are shades of gray. People are suffering from melancholy...

But now imagine the sun! You know:

The sun exists! – But we just can't see it. Because it's hidden by the clouds. If you want to find it, you have to go to the Alps. Up high somewhere. Just above the cloud line. And now you see it! You're already standing in the sun's radiant sea!

And so it is with God:

Set aside time a few times a week for extended meditation. Meditation is related to listening prayer. Sit on the floor. Close your eyes. Ask God to fill you completely. Feel the warmth spreading within you. That is God's love flowing into your heart! Imagine yourself sitting in a deck chair on a terrace of a mountain restaurant, the sun's rays warming your face. Turn your face to God! He shines upon you with his love and kindness.

Behold His light! His immense energy. Let yourself be filled with His light. Let yourself be completely enveloped by His love. It is an inner opening to the divine presence. This divine light fills you.

Almost like Moses did when he came down from Mount Sinai with the tablets of the law. He truly radiated God's light! Read Exodus 34:33-35: Moses, in a sense, reflected the light of divine glory.

These times of **contemplation** , being before God, coming before His face, and being one with Him, are always very precious to me.

15.5 Love

Love is the fundamental principle of all divine and human existence. I have dedicated the entirety of Chapter 19 to love.

15.6 Forgiveness

Forgiveness is one of Jesus' most important themes.

Even on the cross he is said to have cried out: " **Father! Forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing!**"

Jesus was once asked how many times one should forgive a person: (Matthew 18:22)

No, he says: *"Not seven times. But seventy-seven times!"*

In another passage, Jesus says that if we want to enter paradise, it is essential that you forgive those who trespass against us. Matthew 6:14-15 (HFA)

"Your Father in heaven will forgive you if you forgive those who wrong you. But if you do not forgive them, God will not forgive your sins."

Therefore: Forgive all those who have wronged you from the bottom of your heart. Otherwise, you will have no right to citizenship in paradise.

Also read the **parable of the hard-hearted debtor**. Matthew 18:21-36

16. How can you grow in faith?

16.1 Basics

Growing in faith is the same as growing in the Holy Spirit.

Because: When the Holy Spirit grows within you, your faith automatically grows as well. Being filled with the Holy Spirit is therefore crucial.

16.2 Applying what has been learned:

Faith is like any other newly learned skill: **if you don't use it, it is lost.**

However, belief in God is not simply a skill, but a **way of life**.

Applying : Now it's about putting the content of this book into practice. In this way, you will have more and more experiences with Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Your ability to hear the voice of God (the Holy Spirit) will be strengthened.

Example : It's like a foreign language: the more you use it, the better you'll speak it. And if you also take the time to learn new words, the better you'll become.

Therefore: Pray to Jesus and the Holy Spirit every day that they may grow ever greater within you. That they will help and support you in your active life as a believer.

16.3 Faith means trust

We can't trust someone we don't know. If someone says, "Trust me," you have two options. Either you say, *"Yes, I trust you,"* or you say, *"No, why should I?"*

The main reason you should trust God is because He deserves your trust. God is holy! God never lies. He keeps His promises.

However, He sometimes keeps His promises in a way you don't expect. Or it might take time for them to be fulfilled.

"God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a human being, that he should regret anything. Should he speak and not act? Should he promise and not keep his word?"

(Numbers 23:19 and Psalm 89:34).

If you have trouble forgiving other people who have wronged you, then it makes sense to ask other Christians what their experiences have been in this regard.

16.4 Recognizing God's Will

Jesus said that His true relatives are those who know and do the Father's will. (Mark 3:35)

God wants to show you His will. He has given us many instructions! You can find them in His Word.

That's why it's important to read the Bible every day.

For example : *We should "be thankful in all things; for this is God's will for you."*

(1 Thessalonians 5:18).

"We should do good works." (1 Peter 2:15). And: *"It is God's will for your sanctification that you abstain from sexual immorality."* (1 Thessalonians 4:3).

We know God's will. The Holy Spirit reveals it to us. And we see it in the New Testament.

Romans 12:2 says: “*Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*”

Here Paul explains an important principle to the Romans:

A child of God turns his back on the world and invites God to grant him a change in thinking and character. The believer's mind is transformed by God, and he can clearly recognize God's will.

Despite it:

Discerning God's will can sometimes be difficult. For sometimes God's will is not immediately apparent. Then we should ask Him to reveal His will to us and to strengthen our patience and faith. Most of the time, God reveals things to us one thing at a time, step by step. We simply need to have patience and trust.

16.5 Letting God guide you

You're probably wondering what God's will is for specific situations:

For example, where you should work or live, whom you should marry, or which car you should buy. God allows us to make our own decisions. We are not puppets. If we follow Him, He has ways to prevent wrong decisions. (Read Acts 16:6-7).

It's not that you have to ask God for advice with every single decision. Over time, you'll come to understand God's thinking. You'll know exactly what He would say.

If you walk with God, obey His word, and rely on His Spirit, you can observe that the mind of Christ has been given to you (1 Corinthians 2:16).

When you are closely connected to the triune God on your journey, your desire will be to do His will.

For God will write His will on your heart, so that His will becomes your desire. This is how God leads!

17. Love: The most important thing in life!

Love is, in many ways, a central element of being human. Ultimately, everything in people's lives revolves around one single thing: love. And that's why this topic is so important.

Biologically, love is closely linked to neurotransmitters and hormones such as dopamine, oxytocin, and serotonin. These ensure that we experience closeness, trust, and attachment. Love is therefore not just a feeling, but also a physical state.

Love provides support, reduces stress, increases joy in life and self-esteem. People who cultivate stable and loving relationships are often healthier and live longer.

Even in ancient times, philosophers like Plato and Socrates pondered love and concluded that love is the most important thing.

Love goes beyond our mere self-interest. It opens us to compassion, devotion, and willingness. Love empowers us to do something for others, even if it costs us something.

Love is a law of nature: Humans want to be loved. And: If not loved, then at least respected.

Love isn't just romantic. It manifests itself in various forms: deep friendship, parental love, affection for an animal, passion for an activity, devotion to an idea or ideal. Love can be ambivalent: it can be blissful, fulfilling, but also painful. It is precisely this spectrum of emotions that makes it such a powerful life experience.

Humans need love to strengthen their self-esteem. Knowing that one is loved is the most beautiful thing there is. We only feel comfortable in our own skin when we sense that we are loved. At least one person should love us. If perhaps not another person, then at least God.

For God, love is the highest virtue. For **God is love**. Christianity therefore emphasizes love for one's fellow human beings as the highest virtue. Love is also an expression of connection with all living things, as a force that overcomes separation.

Yes, God loves you *infinitely*! He created you. His love carries you through life if you allow it and open yourself to it. It gives you strength! It lifts you up.

17.1 Humans, relational beings

God created us as relational beings, capable of loving others. We don't want to be alone. That's why we seek companionship, conversation. Even when no one is with us – we talk to ourselves!

Do you remember the movie "Cast Away" with Tom Hanks?

He's the sole survivor of a plane crash and now lives on a deserted island. To avoid being alone, he painted a face on a basketball, creating a companion. And when he lost his "Wilson" at sea, his world collapsed... **It's truly heartbreaking !**

If Chuck Noland, the character Tom Hanks portrays in the film, had been a believer, then Chuck would have had a wonderful companion in Jesus on his island.

Yes, we humans are relational beings. God created us as such, to enable us to seek and nurture a relationship with Him. **Relationship and love belong together like identical twins.** Thus, we are also capable of loving God.

Luke 10:27: *“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind. And you shall love your neighbor as yourself.”*

Many people are indifferent to God. But when it comes to love, at least in this respect, people recognize how important this quality is. Nothing in human life works without relationship and without love. **When we give love, love comes back to us.**

Therefore, this is the most important aspect of life: **practicing love!**

17.2 Aspects of Love

Here are some aspects associated with this commandment:

Love of neighbor as a foundation: The commandment to love one's neighbor is closely linked to the love of God. One cannot truly love God if one does not love one's fellow human beings.

Golden Rule: The golden rule states that you should do to others what you would like to be done to them.

Self-love as a prerequisite: In order to be able to love others, it is important to also love and treat yourself well.

Dealing with those who think differently: Love of neighbor also means respecting and accepting people regardless of their origin, religion or beliefs.

Instructions for a fulfilling life: The Bible , with its emphasis on loving our neighbor, shows us the way to lead a fulfilling and meaningful life.

17.3 Eros, Philia, Agape

As mentioned in the introduction, there are several words in the Greek language to express love.

Eros: There is erotic love; the word is "Eros." I believe this word needs no explanation.

Philia : This is the second word for love in the Greek language. It refers to close friendship or brotherly love.

Agape : The third form of love in Greek is "agape." This is the kind of love the Bible speaks of. The essence of agape love is divine love, benevolence, charity, and acceptance.

Agape love is the holistic and intentional joy of being with another. It encompasses faithfulness, devotion, and a conscious act of will. It differs from other types of love in its high moral nature and strong character. Agape love is beautifully described in 1

Corinthians 13.

Agape is also used to describe our love for God. (Luke 10:27)

God's love for us: God's love is most clearly shown on the cross.

"But God, who is rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, made us, who were dead, alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved!" Ephesians 2:4-5

We are to love others with agape love, whether they are friends or our enemies. Jesus gave the parable of the Good Samaritan as an example of self-sacrifice for the sake of others, even those who might not care about us at all.

A resolute act of will: Agape love, as exemplified by Christ, is not based on a feeling, but is a resolute act of will. An active decision to place the well-being of others above our own.

17.3 The most important verses about love in the Bible

Here I have written down the most important verses about love for you.

All of them are from the Bible translation "Hope for All". (Hfa)

"Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not proud or rude; it does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful." 1 Corinthians 13:4-5

"Let all that you do be done in love." 1 Corinthians 16:14

"Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." 1 John 4:11

"And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity." Colossians 3:14

"Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God." 1 John 4:7

"Whoever does not love does not know God; for God is love." 1 John 4:8

"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." 1 Corinthians 13:13

"Let us love one another, for he first loved us." 1 John 4:19

"This love is shown in that we live according to God's commandments. And his commandment is the same one that was said to you from the beginning: Love one another! Let this guide your whole life." 2 John 1:6

"With all humility and gentleness, with patience. Bear with one another in love." Ephesians 4:2

"Above all, love one another deeply, because love covers a multitude of sins." 1 Peter 4:8

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." John 15:12

"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Outdo one another in showing honor." Romans 12:10

"If we love one another, God abides in us, and his love is perfected in us." 1 John 4:12

"Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for whoever loves another has fulfilled the law." Romans 13:8

"May the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for everyone, just as we have love for you." 1 Thessalonians 3:12

"Hate stirs up strife; but love covers all transgressions." Proverbs 10:12

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength." Markus 12:30

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Mark 12:31

"Love does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." 1 Corinthians 13:6-7

"Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law." Romans 13:10

"This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins." 1 John 4:10

There are dozens of other beautiful verses about love that will do us good when we read them.

Find them!

18. How can I distinguish the voice of God from all others?

18.1 Introduction to the topic

Every day, life demands decisions from us. This begins with choosing a career, choosing a partner, and making decisions regarding school, university, and work...

We humans usually have several options available to us.

We would like to make the choice that Jesus considers best for us.

But how do I know which of the many possibilities is the one that Jesus considers the right one?

Respectively, which of the various voices and impressions bombarding me is from God?

We are aware that it is about choosing the right path, God's path. For this is the path upon which blessing rests.

18.2 Personal experiences

I made a decision in my life that I regretted for twenty-five years. At the time, I was quite young and inexperienced in faith. Furthermore, I was wavering and thought that the voice I heard most clearly regarding this decision was that of God. No. It was the voice of the devil. Satan rejoices in our sorrow.

But thank God: God loves us beyond measure. He still blessed me and kept his hand over me. Since then, I have learned a great deal about recognizing the different voices.

In any case , looking back, I can say that apart from that one wrong decision, I've almost always felt that what I'm doing is God's will. And Jesus has always faithfully supported me on my path.

18.3 And you?

Which path will you choose? Which voice inside you will you listen to?

one voice

inside you , but several... **And now:** Which is the good voice of God and which is the voice of the adversary who wants to draw us into his sphere of influence?

Good to know 1:

In the unseen world, evil and good are fighting for us. The devil constantly tries to draw us away from God. > 1 Peter 5:8-9

"Be alert and sober! For the devil, your mortal enemy, prowls around you like a roaring lion, waiting to devour one of you. Be strong and steadfast in your faith and resist his attacks. And remember that all the brothers and sisters throughout the world must endure these sufferings."

Good to know 2:

Let me be completely honest with you:

If you find yourself in this situation, hearing multiple voices and unsure which one to listen to, then this is a sign that you are not yet fully committed to following Jesus. The door to your life is still slightly ajar. The devil can still come and go as he pleases.

That's why he speaks to you, just as the Holy Spirit speaks to you. And then you're confused because you hear so many voices.

Banish the devil from you. He must have **NO influence** over you anymore. Then he won't speak to you anymore. That's the ideal scenario.

In other words:

If you hear multiple voices in your chest, that's a sign that you haven't truly committed yourself to Jesus yet!

Change your life and invite the Holy Spirit to give you the strength and ability to eradicate sin from your life and live a truly sanctified life.

James 4:7 calls out to us: *"Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."*

That's absolutely true! If you live a consistently holy life and the Holy Spirit completely surrounds you, then you will have no difficulty distinguishing the good voice from the bad voice.

But the fact is: the vast majority of religious people, usually without realizing it, make it possible for the adversary to intrude into their lives somewhere and throw a wrench in the works.

Once again; because this is important:

If you realize that you are tolerating sin in your life, then eliminate the evil. Live a holy life. Live in such a way that Satan must flee from you ! Then you will no longer be haunted by Satan, and you will no longer have the problem of hearing different voices in your chest.

What I'm telling you here isn't easy . Not many believers live at this level.

So: Stick with it. Jesus is patient with you.

18.4 Tips and Tricks

Here are some tips and tricks to help you distinguish and differentiate the various voices in your chest:

- God's voice is peaceful, not frightening.
The voice of God speaks in a tone of love, truth, and clarity—even when it admonishes or corrects.
The voice brings peace, not confusion or fear. *"For God is not a God of disorder but of peace."* 1 Corinthians 14:33
- **Ask yourself** : Do I feel inner peace, even if the call may be challenging?
- **God's words** are always in accordance with the Bible.
What God says is never selfish, unloving, manipulative, or destructive.
- **Examine** : Is what the voice wants to tell me compatible with God's nature (love, justice, truth)?
- **promote** goodness – in myself and others?
- **Devotion and trust** ; that is God's call to you.
- **God's words** often aim to draw you closer to Him. What God tells you can be uncomfortable because it takes you out of your comfort zone.
- **Example:** He might tell you: *"Trust me, even if you don't see the way yet."*
- The voice (or rather, the message) of the adversary is often insistent, manipulative, and insists on our understanding of justice. What this voice wants to tell us is rather unkind or sometimes even

accusatory.

Examples of what the devil wants to convince you of:

- You deserve this! You've already done enough. The others should...
- You have to take responsibility!! - God wants this from you! - What would people think of you!

- **God's voice is completely different:** God's Spirit speaks to us very quietly. Without pressure. But admonishing. But with gentleness.
- **Often we know it immediately :** That is the voice of God!
- **The voice of God** is that which carries goodness within it: patience, faith, courage, joy, truth. What does not lead to these qualities is highly likely **not** of divine origin.
- **Consult other believers :** In difficult situations, it is wise to seek advice from spiritually mature people—people experienced in listening to God.
"Where there are many advisors, there is security." Proverbs 11:14
- **Take your time when deciding !** Don't rush into anything! God rarely, if ever, forces you to act. If a voice puts you under pressure ("You have to now..."), it's usually the voice of the adversary.
- **Practical approach:** Daily dialogue (meditation) with Jesus. Ask Him to show you which path (or which voice) is the right one.
Take notes: What do I hear? How does it feel?

18.5 Disobedience

Sometimes Satan has such a firm grip on us that we are disobedient and don't do what the Holy Spirit tells us to do. **Yes!** We hear God's voice clearly—and yet we still don't do what he advises.

We think: A little disobedience isn't so bad! Satan very quickly finds a way to manipulate us. Be vigilant and be wise!

Prayer: Ask God for clarity and for the Holy Spirit as a guide.

19. Do I have eternal life in any case?

19.1 Biblical Foundations

Perhaps you're wondering whether you have eternal life in any case? Or whether God, if you were to turn your back on Him, would erase your name from the Book of Life?

Biblical scholars disagree on this point. Depending on the theological school of thought, this question is answered differently:

The New Testament contains passages that offer believers a firm foundation . Make promises .
John 3:16 states that everyone who believes in Christ *“will not perish but have eternal life .”* John 10:28: Jesus says that no one will snatch his sheep out of his hand.

Many Christians understand such verses as a guarantee: Whoever entrusts themselves to Christ in genuine repentance (conversion) and faith receives eternal life inseparably.

19.2 Different theological perspectives:

Calvinist/Reformist: Once truly converted, always saved. The guarantee lies not in one's own faithfulness, but in God's faithfulness.

The evangelical perspective:

Salvation is real, but a person can consciously turn away from God again (apostasy). Here, the emphasis is on maintaining faith until the very end.

Catholic and Orthodox perspectives:

Baptism and faith open the way to salvation. But one must remain in God's grace. Grave sin can nullify this grace. Reconciliation and a new direction are then necessary.

Practical meaning:

True discipleship means a lifelong journey in relationship with Christ until the end of life. From a biblical perspective, the "guarantee" is not understood as a "contract," but rather as a relationship.

Conclusion: You can be sure that God will grant you eternal life, provided you remain in this relationship until the end of your life and do not turn away from God.

20. Is Jesus the only way to heaven?

Yes: Jesus is the only way to heaven.

Such a statement of exclusivity may sound confusing, surprising, or arrogant to modern ears. But it is nonetheless true.

The Bible teaches us that there is no other way to salvation than through Jesus Christ. Jesus himself says in John 14:6: *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*

Jesus Christ is not a way, *one of many*. Jesus is **THE way, the ONE and ONLY one.**

No one – regardless of their reputation, achievements, or special knowledge, no matter how kind-hearted they are – can come to God the Father except through Jesus.

Jesus Christ, God incarnate, came to earth to die for our sins and to give us the gift of eternal life.

"But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed." (Isaiah 53:5).

Jesus, himself God, was chosen by God the Father to be the redeemer of all mankind (1 Peter 2:4).

Jesus is God, who came down from heaven and returned there (John 3:13). Because of his divinity, he was able to live a perfect, sinless life (Hebrews 4:15).

Jesus spoke of himself as the only way to heaven not only in John 14:6, but also in other passages. In Matthew 7:21-27, he presented himself as the goal of faith. He said that his words are life (John 6:63).

He promised that those who believe in him will receive eternal life (John 3:14-15).

- He is the gate for the sheep. (John 10:7)
- He is the bread of life. (John 6:35)
- He is the resurrection and the life. (John 11:25)

No one else can rightfully claim these titles. When Peter spoke before the Sanhedrin, he clearly proclaimed Jesus as the only way to heaven:

"And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12).

John described the name of Christ in his letter to the churches as the basis of our forgiveness:

"I am writing to you because your sins have been forgiven on account of his name." (1 John 2:12).

No one but Jesus can forgive sins. Eternal life in heaven is only possible through Christ.

"You have the words of eternal life; and we have believed and have come to know that you are the Christ, the Son of the living God!" (John 6:68-69).

No other founder of a faith has the same authority as Jesus Christ. No one else could perform miracles.

Because all other founders of religions were only human and their ideas do not correspond to the truth.

Only the Christian faith is the truth. Just as Jesus testified about himself;

"I am the way, the truth, and the life."

21. Why does God allow suffering?

21.1 Introduction to the topic

The question of why an all-powerful, benevolent God allows suffering is one of the oldest and most profound questions in theology and philosophy. It has preoccupied humankind for millennia, from Job in the Bible to modern thinkers.

Since I am not God myself, I can only offer inferences here.

But one day I will be in glory, and then all these questions will be answered for me by Jesus. Of that I am certain.

Free will : God created us humans in his image. He gave us free will. And with that, he also gave us responsibility.

God doesn't create puppets or even robots. And that's as it should be. God gave us humans freedom because true love, morality, and responsibility are only possible in freedom.

Abusing freedom : Suffering often arises because people abuse this freedom. And there is always the adversary who blinds and influences us to do evil things (war, violence, greed, hatred, exploitation). Especially in our time, there are many examples of what can happen when people are influenced by evil.

There are many politicians who don't care whether their decisions bring suffering, hardship, hunger, war and deprivation to the country.

This inevitably raises the question: why doesn't God intervene to clarify the situation? Like a referee in boxing when both opponents exceed certain limits?

Preventing people from doing so:

It would certainly be within God's power to prevent people from starting wars. But God allows this suffering for reasons only He knows.

Let me remind you: God has a plan. It's happening according to his script.

God himself says so in the Bible: **Isaiah 55:8-9** (HFA)

"My thoughts are not your thoughts, and my ways are not your ways."

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

And then Paul also mentions the image of the potter in his letter to the Romans: (According to Jeremiah chapter 18)

Romans 9:20 *"Who are you, human beings, to think you can hold God accountable? Does a clay pot really say to the potter, 'Why did you make me like this?'"*

21.2 Suffering shapes character:

Suffering is not merely punishment or a consequence of sin, but a tool for shaping character.

Without challenges, there would be no virtues such as patience, courage, compassion, acceptance, and forgiveness.

Suffering shakes us awake and makes us cry out to God. It is only in suffering that we truly realize our need for God. Without suffering, we would not seek God.

Sad but true....

Suffering and problems in life strengthen us:

It's like walking barefoot. At first, you walk like you're on eggshells because the soles of your feet aren't toughened up yet. Over the months, the skin on your feet becomes so tough that you can walk almost as if you were wearing shoes.

21.3 Suffering also as a follower of Christ:

Yes, God sometimes asks a lot of us. But he has given us Jesus. Jesus carries us when we no longer have the strength to do so ourselves. In these moments, we feel God's support. These experiences shape us and strengthen our faith.

Jesus warned us and told us that it would not be easy to go through life as his followers.

Matthew 7:13-14

"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and few find it."

And elsewhere he prepares us for his succession by telling us:

Matthew 16:24-25: *"Whoever wants to belong to me must not put himself in the center, but must take up his cross and follow me."*

For whoever clings to their life will lose it. But whoever gives up their life for me will gain it forever.

21.3.1 What does it mean to take up one's cross?

Jesus uses this drastic image to illustrate:

Self-denial : Putting aside one's own desires, securities, and claim to self-determination in order to follow God's will.

Willingness to suffer: Those who follow Jesus must expect to endure rejection, ridicule, or even persecution because of their faith.

Consistent discipleship: The decision to follow Christ is not an add-on option in everyday life, but should encompass one's entire life – even to the point of being willing to lose it.

Because: In the end, we will be rewarded.

Jesus, our filling station: Jesus tells us that we can refuel with Him! (Matthew 11:28)

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

And Jesus further tells us: (John 16:33)

"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

It's not easy! Jesus knows that following him won't be easy. But he calls you to come to him again and again. He gives you the divine boost for everyday life:

love and kindness to truly connect with others, and

joy

in tackling daily tasks.

Jesus has gone before us:

Suffering is something humanity has had to endure since the Fall. We must accept and bear suffering. God himself set an example by bearing the greatest suffering.

Namely : Jesus' suffering for us on the cross: Absolutely voluntary!! - That is proof enough that God himself does not shy away from suffering. **He bore the greatest suffering!**

Goal : Revelation 21: In the end, God will abolish all suffering, but in the meantime, it serves greater, often invisible purposes.

21.4. Is God inhuman?

Many people say:

I believe God is not a loving God. Otherwise, he would n't allow this!

- Natural disasters where thousands of people die.
- People who kill other people.
- Men who abuse women and girls.

This line of reasoning is very understandable. We humans see God through our human eyes and imagine him as a loving and human God.

Yes, God is love. That's true.

But God is not human; God is divine! That's a big difference.

I assume that God has no "problem" with a person's physical death. After all, it is the body that dies.

I believe that for God, a person's soul is far more important than their body, because the soul lives on for eternity.

If such a person is one who already follows God, then their soul immediately enters that part of the realm of the dead where the followers of Christ reside.

where YOUR soul will spend eternity! - Depending on how you lived your earthly life.

Either you are still on the broad road to damnation, or you have taken the narrow path to glory.

Proverb: You reap what you sow.

May 21st. Why so much blood in the Old Testament?

Many people are disturbed by the fact that God commanded his people to kill all the nations whose land they conquer. The command to destroy the nations of Canaan is repeated several times in the books of Deuteronomy, Joshua, and Judges.

Men, women, children... To even imagine that is horrifying these days! *"That's pure genocide ,"* one would say! Absolutely unacceptable! Almost like Hitler in World War II!

People who are new to the faith and read these passages in the Old Testament put the Bible down in disgust and rebel against God:

"How can a loving God command such a thing! No! I cannot and will not believe in such a God!"

Therefore, it is necessary to put this commission into its proper context: To correctly assess God's commission to the Israelites, one must know that the nations living in the land of Canaan at that time were utterly corrupt. Sin had spread among these people like a virus. According to God, these nations were disfigured by sin (Deuteronomy 9:4–5; 18:9–12).

Among the atrocities that were commonplace among these peoples, the following should be mentioned:

Child sacrifice, cult prostitution, idol worship, in connection with magical rituals, and much more. God knew that if he allowed these people to live, they would mix with the Israelites, and their sin would spread to them like a virus.

The following fact shows that God was right in his command and his fears:

The Israelites did not fully obey God!

Instead of complete annihilation (as commanded in Deuteronomy 7:1-2), Israel also resorted to enslavement and subjugation. They spared several nations, particularly the Philistines, Midianites, and others.

This incompleteness is explicitly criticized by God: (Judges 2:1-3)

"Therefore, I will no longer drive these peoples out of your territory. Instead, what I warned you about will come to pass: They will cause you great suffering and lead you to ruin with their idols."

Conclusion:

God was right in his command to completely annihilate the nations. Even if carrying out this command is sheer horror in our eyes and was certainly extremely difficult for the Israelite soldiers at the time to implement.

21.6. Personal experiences

I have lost several friends and relatives in my life who died of cancer. Among them was an eleven-year-old girl. She had leukemia.

I prayed intensely **for all these people . Because I didn't want them to have to die.**

But my prayers were of no use to any of these people.

How do I classify this?

- Were my prayers not intense enough?
- Does God not hear my prayers at all?
- Are his promises untrue?
- Is God inhuman?
- What purpose does God serve with the death of a child?

I was very dismayed to discover that my prayers to God were not answered. There is no magic prayer that elicits a specific response from God. If my requests align with His will, then He will grant them.

Knowing that God loves us infinitely and forms only the best from the lump of clay that I am, I can accept his ways and decisions.

Paul wrote to us in Romans:

(Romans 8:28) *"And we know this: In all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been chosen according to his purpose."*

22. Life in God's ray of blessing

How to be guided by the Holy Spirit and surrender yourself completely to Jesus:

22.1 Why is a life in God so difficult?

- Have you decided to trust God completely?
- Are you praying for his will?
- But you hesitate to completely relinquish control of your life to HIM?
- Are you asking for guidance?
- But when the Holy Spirit leads you, (wants to lead you), do you resist?

Why is it so hard to surrender completely to Jesus?

It's a struggle! The struggle between control and surrender. It's the struggle between complete trust in God and trying to take matters into your own hands.

The truth is : You cannot be fully led by the Holy Spirit if you still think you want to control everything yourself. God doesn't require partial surrender. He requires complete letting go and surrendering into His loving hands.

If you don't fully commit yourself, you will always live

below your true calling. Sure, you'll experience moments of faith. But you won't have a real life of faith. You'll feel God's presence, but you'll never walk in His power. You'll always be driving with the handbrake on.

You will always wonder why his promises seem so distant, why his voice sounds so unclear, and why your heart never finds perfect peace in God.

The truth is: The moment you surrender completely, everything changes.

That's when you stop wrestling with God, when you let go of your fears, your doubts, and your own plans. Then you enter a life truly guided by the Holy Spirit!

I want to show you how you can follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit without fear or hesitation. You will understand why surrender doesn't mean losing control, but rather striving for a higher purpose. You will discover how to let go of your resistance, how to recognize His voice, and how to completely surrender to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

But first you need to understand why so many people never experience true devotion to God.

Why is it so difficult for most people to surrender to the Holy Spirit?

The reason: Devotion is not in our human nature!

From birth, we are taught to take control and fight for ourselves. To rely on our own strength. To make our own decisions.

The world tells us: surrender is weakness! To give up life, to relinquish control, is said to be naive and foolish. We always need a plan. And, just to be safe, a Plan B as well!

But the Kingdom of God works differently. True strength is found in surrender . True wisdom means trusting God more than our own mind. True power is gained when we let go of control and allow ourselves to be led by the Holy Spirit.

One reason people are reluctant to surrender to God is the fear of losing control. Deep down, people don't trust that God will provide for them if they let go. They fear that surrendering means losing their comfort and security.

In reality, however, clinging to the status quo leads to fear, worry, and frustration. The more one tries to maintain control, the more one realizes that one doesn't truly have it. Who really has control over their health? And what about setbacks?

Another reason is the fear of the unknown. The human heart yearns for security. People want to know every step before they take it.

Those who want to see the big picture before obeying will never experience the fullness of God's guidance. Many people also struggle with the fear of failure.

People think, "What if it doesn't work out?"

Surrendering to God is never a failure . Failure means trying to live without Him!

God works differently: The Holy Spirit guides us one step at a time. We can only progress by obeying His voice in faith.

22.2 To surrender oneself completely to God:

Peter was able to walk on water when he trusted Jesus. But the moment he focused on the storm, he sank. His faith allowed him to get out of the boat. But his fear caused him to sink. As long as he kept his eyes on Jesus, he could walk on the water! But when his fear of the waves arose, he sank! This is what happens when we trust God for a moment, but then suddenly relinquish control when things seem uncertain!

These people are fighting an inner battle with their trust in God. They have never truly learned to surrender completely into God's hands.

They have never truly realized that God loves them infinitely and that all His ways, even those that seem difficult, are ultimately the very best. Paul recognized this! He wrote in Romans: (Romans 8:28) *Everything that happens to us works for our good. This applies to all those whom He has chosen according to His plan.* This applies to you too!

Some people have been hurt in the past—by others, through experiences, through disappointments. And without realizing it, they project this distrust onto God. They assume that He will abandon them, just as He has others. Or their adversary convinces them that they themselves have been abandoned by God, for example, regarding prayers that God hasn't answered.

But God is faithful, and His plans are always good. Surrendering to Him is not a risk; it's the safest decision you can make.

Some people resist surrender because they believe they can handle things themselves. They rely on their logic, their abilities, their experience. But the Bible says: Your wisdom is limited.

God's wisdom is eternal. You can either rely on yourself and live with stress, or you can trust God and live in supernatural peace. What you try to control actually controls you.

The things you refuse to give up are precisely the things that have power over you. But when you let go, when you choose trust, when you cease to resist, then true freedom and true peace begin.

But how do I know if I'm resisting the Holy Spirit without realizing it? God speaks and guides in various ways. Very often, people ignore the Holy Spirit without realizing it. We resist Him in subtle ways.

The Holy Spirit is always speaking to you. He is always trying to guide you. He is always calling you to a deeper relationship with Jesus.

The reason many people don't feel His guidance and don't truly hear His voice is that they unconsciously resist Him. Resistance doesn't always look like open rebellion. It isn't a "no" to God. Sometimes resistance is much more subtle.

Resistance hides in excuses, delays, and distractions.

Many people believe they are waiting for God, when in reality God is waiting for them. He has been speaking for a long time! But his message is subtle.

One of the most common ways people resist the Holy Spirit is by ignoring His gentle nudges. **The Holy Spirit He whispers.** But they dismiss it as mere thoughts.

He exposes it, but they argue it away. He urges them to act, but they hesitate.

Believers expect God to speak with an audible voice, with a dramatic sign, with something undeniable, something powerful!

However, in reality, the Holy Spirit often speaks in silence; in the quiet conviction of the heart.

Another way people resist Him is through delayed obedience. When God speaks, obedience should be immediate, yet many hesitate. They wait for confirmation after confirmation, searching for signs instead of simply obeying Him the first time.

But delayed obedience is disobedience. When the Holy Spirit tells you to pray, forgive, let go of something, take a step in faith... and you put it off, you are resisting Him without realizing it.

People also resist the Holy Spirit by trying to negotiate with him.

Instead of surrendering completely to him, they try to compromise. They say, "God, I trust you; but only if you do it this way or that way."

Or, "I obey you on this point. But that point, I want to settle on my own."

They want God's blessing without completely relinquishing control. But the Holy Spirit doesn't work through partial surrender.

Either you surrender completely, or you live in a constant state of spiritual tension.

Distractions are another subtle form of resistance. The Holy Spirit calls people to deeper prayer, to greater intimacy with Jesus.

But instead, they fill their time with many worldly things and social media.

The enemy doesn't have to destroy you to render you ineffective! He only needs to distract you!

As long as your mind is too busy to listen, as long as your heart is too busy to react, you will unconsciously resist.

And then there is the greatest resistance of all:

clinging to something God has already told you to let go of or take hold of something else.

The rich young man wanted eternal life. But he wasn't willing to give up what was most important to him. He thought he could have both, God's will and his own.

But Jesus challenged him to make a decision.

The young man went away sad because he refused to surrender. Many believers live in this struggle.

They love God, but they still cling to control and refuse to let go of something He has already commanded them to let go of.

If you hesitate, if you ignore his voice, you are resisting him. And every time you resist, your heart hardens and becomes even less receptive to his voice.

And: the more you resist, the harder it will be for you to recognize when he is leading you.

If you resist, the voice of the Holy Spirit will eventually seem distant to you – not because he has stopped speaking, but because you will slowly become hard of hearing due to your resistance.

Good to know: You can learn to recognize when the Holy Spirit is guiding you. You can be so in harmony with Him that His guidance in your life becomes clear and powerful.

God is not a God of disorder or uncertainty. When He speaks, there is clarity, peace, and conviction.

Many people struggle to recognize His voice because they are unfamiliar with His way of speaking.

Those who do not recognize His guidance will constantly second-guess their decisions. Such a person will always hesitate instead of moving forward in faith.

The Holy Spirit often leads through deep conviction. It is not just an idea or a fleeting thought. It is more than that. He is something that takes root in your mind, something that does not disappear. It is

a divine prompting that calls you to action, to move forward in faith. That is why it is dangerous to ignore this voice. The longer you hesitate, the more you train your heart to resist the Holy Spirit instead of following Him.

One of the clearest signs of His guidance is peace in your heart. When God guides you, even in uncertain situations, even when you don't know all the details, you experience a profound peace in your spirit.

We attain this peace when we walk with Him continuously. That's what He created us for: walking with Him day in and day out, step by step, moment by moment, constantly being online with Jesus. This is the life God intended for us.

This peace is not the absence of challenges, but the confidence that God is in control. If you struggle with confusion, fear, or constant doubt, it may be a sign that you are trying to impose your own will instead of following God's.

The Holy Spirit also leads through confirmation. When He speaks, He often confirms His message through Scripture, by showing you a Bible passage. Or through circumstances that align with what He has placed in your heart. He leads us by opening or closing doors. As you surrender to the Holy Spirit, you will find that opportunities either arise effortlessly or doors close unexpectedly. God's leadership is not about struggling through every obstacle, but about walking through the doors He has prepared for you.

If something doesn't work out, no matter how hard you try, it may be because God is directing you toward something better. The Holy Spirit also speaks through a deep sense of urgency. There are times when you feel a strong urge to do something. Whether you are praying for someone or doing something God is showing you, this urgency is often God's way of leading you out of your procrastination.

The question is: Will you listen, or will you wait until it's too late? **You don't need a loud voice from heaven to recognize the guidance of the Holy Spirit. You simply need to be perceptive, listen, and obey Him when He speaks.**

If you're constantly waiting for something dramatic to happen, you might miss the gentle whisper that's been guiding you all along.

But there is something that can prevent you from recognizing God's voice, something that keeps many people from fully surrendering. And until you address it, you'll always struggle to follow God's lead.

The problem is the ego, the drive for self-realization.

Theoretically, they trust in God, but in practice, they rely on their own wisdom, their own plans, their own strength. They pray, but take back control as soon as things don't go as planned. They ask God for guidance, but only when it suits their desires.

Self-control is dangerous because it creates the illusion of control. Self-control convinces you that you can master your life without completely surrendering, as long as you work hard enough, plan carefully enough, and avoid failure. But that's a lie.

You were never created to live independently of God.

King Saul is a perfect example of what happens when self-control replaces surrender:

He was called by God, anointed to leadership, destined for greatness. But instead of trusting God's plan, he took matters into his own hands. He feared losing control more than disobeying God. And that's why he lost everything! Including his life.

This is what happens when self-realization replaces dependence on the Holy Spirit. People become content with their own way instead of God's way. They choose logic over faith, comfort over calling, security over surrender. And as a result, they live below their potential. They never live in the fullness of God's plan.

They will never experience the supernatural life that comes from complete trust in God. Complete surrender requires giving up one's own plan and accepting God's plan. But that also means being willing to accept situations one doesn't understand. Everything is based on trust in God.

One must trust that God's way is better, even if one doesn't know how. One must be willing to walk God's path, even if it is unclear. One must believe that God's wisdom is greater than one's own ability to understand things.

Self-control prevents people from venturing into the unknown with God. But when you finally surrender, when you stop relying on yourself and place your complete trust in the Holy Spirit, everything changes. Then God's power is unleashed in your life.

The moment you completely let go, you enter something greater. It's the moment you move from confusion to clarity, from stress to peace, from struggle to purpose.

But what exactly happens when you surrender completely? How does the Holy Spirit transform your life when you stop resisting and give Him full control? **Everything changes** as soon as you stop fighting

for control and trust God completely. Surrender doesn't mean losing freedom. It's the gateway to true freedom.

It's exciting to experience how Jesus Himself is at the wheel of your life's car, chauffeuring you as a passenger to the realms He wants you to be in.

The constant struggle between what you believe is best and what God is leading you to disappears. You no longer have to figure everything out on your own. The Holy Spirit bestows divine wisdom and reveals the right steps to you at the right time.

The burden of indecisiveness, fear, and uncertainty falls away from you, for your trust no longer rests in yourself, but in the One who knows all. Surrender brings a supernatural peace that is not dependent on your circumstances. You may not know what comes next, but you know who is guiding you.

You no longer feel the need to force things, manipulate results, or fight battles. You rest in the certainty that God plans every step and walks with you.

When you surrender completely, your prayers become more powerful. Instead of praying out of fear and despair, you pray with confidence, knowing that you are in harmony with God's will. Instead of begging God to do things your way, you trust that His way is always the better, the best way.

Your faith is no longer based on emotions, but on the unshakable truth that God is in control.

The Holy Spirit is also beginning to awaken new desires within you. What once attracted you no longer holds the same power. What once seemed impossible now seems within reach. Your desires are beginning to align with God's desires. You realize that you want to spend more time with Him, that you long for His presence and His voice.

The things that once distracted you from God lose their appeal because you are no longer driven by your own will, but by the Spirit of God. Surrender also leads to divine acceleration. Doors open that you could never have opened on your own. Opportunities, relationships, and breakthroughs that once seemed far away come to you effortlessly because you are no longer striving. You are walking in harmony with God.

The greatest transformation that takes place within you is that your identity becomes unshakable. You no longer define yourself by your past, your achievements, or your ego.

You recognize and understand that God loves you perfectly and gives you His full power.

You stop having to prove yourself. You begin to live securely in Him.

Surrender doesn't take away your identity. It reveals your true identity in Christ.

Devotion removes every mask from your face. Every insecurity. Devotion replaces insecurity with confidence, courage, and determination.

But devotion is not a one-time decision. It is a daily journey. It is the commitment to be constantly guided by the Holy Spirit. Not only in big decisions, but also in the small moments of everyday life.

22.3 How can I achieve this in daily life?

What does it look like in practice to live in daily dependence on the Holy Spirit?

Being led by the Holy Spirit doesn't just mean hearing God's voice in big moments. It means walking in harmony with Him every day.

It's good to know: The guidance of the Holy Spirit isn't always dramatic. It's often a quiet, constant guidance that shapes your daily life.

Being led by the Holy Spirit means no longer relying on your feelings, your own wisdom, or the opinions of others when making decisions. You rely more on God's voice than anything else. Instead of reacting to situations out of fear or impulse, you act with divine wisdom and discernment. You don't simply do what seems logical. You do what the Spirit prompts you to do, even if it doesn't make sense to the world.

Jesus himself showed us what it means to be completely led by the Spirit.

He said, "I do nothing of my own accord, but only what the Father tells me."

Every word he spoke, every step he took, every miracle he performed—everything happened under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

His life was a perfect example of complete surrender, total dependence, and absolute trust in the Father's will. To be led by the Spirit means to have a heightened awareness of God's presence in your daily life.

You begin to notice how He guides you in conversations, on occasions, and in divine decrees that you would have previously overlooked. The more you surrender to Him, the more receptive you become to His guidance. You begin to recognize when He warns you, when He inspires you, when He leads you to something great and important.

Being led by the Holy Spirit means trusting, even when you don't know all the answers. There will be times when God calls you to move forward without revealing every detail. He may be calling you to take a step of faith. And this will happen even when logic tells you to wait, especially when circumstances seem uncertain.

But the guidance of the Holy Spirit is not based on what you see, but on God's perfect knowledge of what lies before you. When God tells you, "Trust," then trust.

The degree of trust and surrender determines how well you hear God's voice. If you surrender only partially, you will only experience partial guidance.

But when you surrender completely and allow the Holy Spirit to guide every aspect of your life, you will walk in a supernatural flow.

True surrender, however, requires something many fear: prayer, "Thy will be done!" Are you ready to pray this prayer and mean it sincerely? This prayer can completely transform your life! Are you ready for it?

It is the prayer of total surrender. When you say, "Lord, Your will be done," you are surrendering yourself completely to God.

You give up your plans, your expectations, your schedule, and place everything in God's hands. You choose trust over comfort, obedience over ease, and faith over fear. This prayer is challenging!

It forces you to let go of everything you've been clinging to. It means not only giving up what you're willing to let go of, but also what you secretly don't want to let go of.

It means saying: God, even if it doesn't look the way I expected, I trust you.

Jesus prayed this prayer at the most critical moment of his life!

In the Garden of Gethsemane, as he endured the agony of the cross, he cried out: "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me. Yet not my will, but yours be done." This moment of surrender changed everything. His willingness to submit to the Father's will opened the door to salvation for all humanity.

True devotion always leads to a greater goal than one can currently perceive.

Yet many people hesitate to say this prayer because they are afraid of what might happen next.

What if God takes something away from me? What if He asks me to do something unpleasant? What if He leads me down a path I hadn't planned? These questions reveal a heart still struggling to trust that God is LOVE. That His plans are better. That His way is perfect. God loves you infinitely! He ALWAYS wants what's best for you!

Most people don't realize that surrender sets you free! When you stop resisting. When you relinquish control, the burden falls away. The pressure to make everything work disappears. The fear that arises from trying to solve things alone vanishes.

You enter a place of supernatural peace! Knowing that the God who created the universe is guiding your steps. When you pray, "Thy will be done," you invite the Holy Spirit to take the lead. And when

He takes the lead, everything changes. Things that were stuck begin to move. Locked doors open.

Surrender leads to breakthrough.

It's about surrendering control so you can receive God's best. And that's what we'll talk about next: the power of letting go, when surrender leads to breakthrough.

Surrender isn't about losing. It's about achieving something greater. But many people cling too tightly to their own plans, their own expectations, and their own way of doing things. And in doing so, they block the very breakthrough they prayed for.

God cannot fill hands that still hold control. He cannot fill a heart with new blessings that refuses to let go of old burdens. Breakthrough comes when you let go. Yet God sometimes asks us to do incredibly difficult things!

Abraham experienced this firsthand. God had promised him a son, a future, an inheritance. Imagine Abraham: He had to wait until he was 100 years old for his son Isaac to be born! His wife Sarah was 90 when she became pregnant!

Yet Abraham always trusted God! What faith!

And then came the ultimate test, part two: God asked him to lay Isaac on the altar!

Could he trust God enough to give up what he loved most?

Abraham obeyed, ready to give up what he had waited for his entire life. But the moment he relinquished control, God intervened.

The test was never about losing Isaac. It was about proving that Abraham's trust lay in God. And because he submitted, he entered a new level of divine care and destiny.

This is how surrender works!

When you let go of what you think you need, God gives you something even greater. Therefore, entrust yourself to God. He will lead you to other dimensions. But you will only realize this when you let go.

Many people think surrender means passively waiting. But surrender is not inaction. It is an act of faith.

It means saying, "God, I trust you so much that I will stop striving and begin to obey." It means choosing to act according to His timing.

Instead of trying to force things through your own efforts, the seemingly impossible begins to shift as soon as you let go. The job you've been pursuing suddenly falls into place. The relationship that has been causing you stress either falls into place, or God takes it away from you.

When you surrender, you are not pursuing your own goals. You are walking in harmony with Heaven. It is waiting for you to stop striving, forcing, and controlling.

22.4 Give thanks in every situation!

Give thanks, even for bad, difficult, and negative things!

If you place yourself completely in God's hands and trust in Him, then you will be able to give thanks even for the difficult and unbearable things in your life.

Your faith and your trust will sustain you! You know that everything comes from God's hand, even negative situations. God uses such situations to strengthen your faith and to test your trust in Him, just as He did with Abraham.

God writes in His Word that we should give thanks for all of life's circumstances, because He has allowed them to happen!

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:18:

"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for Christ Jesus in you."

God wants you to thank Him for all of life's circumstances, even when you experience illness, suffering, accidents, setbacks, and much more.

For you know that God has allowed these circumstances and that these situations serve to strengthen you in your faith and trust in Him. God promises you that in His love for you, He will not overwhelm you with His demands.

1 Corinthians 10:13.

There are hundreds of instances that confirm this divine law, both in the Bible and in the daily lives of many Christians.

God can write straight even on slanted lines.

Therefore, thank God especially in bad times for the hardship He puts you through. It is incredibly difficult for us!

But you will see how God ultimately brings good out of negativity.

Always remember:

God loves you infinitely! He has a perfect plan for your life . Consistently trust in His guidance and live in uninterrupted dependence on Him. This brings joy and makes you happy!

You will see: Your life will open to new dimensions .

I wish you courage and determination for a genuine life under God's guidance.

May God's rich blessings accompany you throughout your life. Jesus loves you! He wants to make you happy!

23. Concluding Remarks

Now that I've reread this guide to faith for typos, I'm amazed that I was the one who put all this down on paper.

No; actually, it wasn't me who wrote this guide, it was God.

That's how God leads! You can experience this too.

If you allow yourself to be used by God, as I have with this book, He can accomplish amazing things with you. I pray that this guide will help you live a life under God's ray of blessing.

And what happened to my friend Peter , the one who survived the avalanche?

He, too, has remained faithful to Jesus ever since. God has richly blessed him with a loving wife and many children.