

FIRST STEPS WITH GOD.



You have discovered God is real. In whatever way it happened, slowly or suddenly, you have found God.

To your surprise, you actually FEEL God there. A reverent hush inside you, perhaps a tingling sensation around your body. An awareness of an unseen presence, a sweet realization of frayed edges being made whole again.

Overwhelming relief, serenity, feeling clean again, maybe a tearful knowledge of being loved in spite of your past. A sense of feeling

small, which is oddly comforting, with a certainty everything is going to turn out all right.

Life suddenly makes sense.

Those words describe my experience, at least, but with one more. SO HAPPY.

You have stepped into the kingdom of God. You are NO LONGER under the realm of darkness, but you have come into the light of God.

Jesus Christ has come into your life and is now your Lord, your Savior, your Teacher, your Protector, your Comforter, your Provider, your Healer, your Guide, your Wisdom, your Righteousness, your Holiness, your Forgiver, and your Master.

So what do you do now?

What you do NOT want to do right now is suddenly try to be “religious.” Yes, it is very important to find a church where you feel God’s presence, where they believe the Bible, where they love Jesus and one another.

Now that you have found God, DO NOT substitute religious activity for your LOVE AND ENJOYMENT OF GOD.

Yes, read in your Bible daily (I suggest you start with the Gospel of John, then read the rest of the New Testament), set-aside time in each day to be alone with God in prayer, tell those who matter to you that you have found God – but keep in mind your real focus must never be on your religious activities, but on God himself. GOD IS YOUR TREASURE.

God has come into your life. He will NOT let you go. You can count on him. He will not change his mind about you later on. His choice of you is irrevocable. You are SAFE in God now, tomorrow, and forever.

You are FREE to live in LOVE towards all other people, especially those you might previously have seen as hateful, irrelevant, or “beneath” you.

FOCUS ON JESUS. Learn to TRUST Jesus with everything. Do not try right now to change what you are doing. Instead, begin to invite Jesus INTO everything you are doing.

What you used to do for your personal glory or pleasure, now do it for Jesus.

LISTEN inside for the gentle whisper of his voice. You will begin to notice the needs of others. When some GOOD AND HELPFUL idea for service occurs to you to do, trust that the idea is from God, step out in faith, and do it.

You are now a different sort of human being. You are a SON or DAUGHTER of the living God. Let your lifestyle become that of following Jesus Christ, learning directly from him how to live your life.

It will be a GREAT help for you to join with a small group of fellow believers. You can learn from them, find encouragement from them, and learn to pray and worship along with them.

PLEASE NOTE THIS. Before long the serene and happy feelings you are now experiencing will begin to diminish. Do not worry. NOTHING IS WRONG. God is teaching you to live by FAITH in him, not by your feelings.

The feelings of God’s presence with you will come and go, increase and decrease and increase again, as time goes by.

I can assure you though, after 40+ years of Jesus having come into my life, I am more consistently aware of his presence daily than ever before.

Your faith in God will be tested. Some of the tests you will fail. When you fail though, you will learn to really appreciate God’s mercy. You will learn to keep “short accounts” with God, to ask his forgiveness immediately, and then THANK GOD that he forgives you because of Jesus.

Confess your failure to God. Ask him to forgive you. Then, THANK HIM for forgiving because of Jesus Christ shedding his blood on the cross for you. Renew your TRUST in Jesus and begin again.

We live by faith, not feelings. So after you have failed, pick up the pieces and continue trusting and following Jesus.

The Bible says, “If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

Some of these tests of faith though, you will PASS (!!), strengthening your confidence that God is with you in this new life.

That feeling of closeness to God WILL return, especially as you live trusting Christ, learning to give him praise and worship in all the little things of your day.

God is shaping you over time, into a person who takes on the very character of Christ himself. This process will take a lifetime and will involve both seasons of joy and seasons of suffering.

A phrase I like to describe our life now with God is that of “training for reigning.” In the next life, according to the Bible, we will reign with God forever (Revelation 22:5).

God is shaping us into the kinds of persons he can trust to reign with him.

No one likes to suffer, but everyone does. Suffering for the cause of Christ is an HONOR and brings with it the sublime confidence that your name is written in heaven.

So don't be too hurt when family or friends don't understand (or like) the changes happening to you. They have their own life to account for – you are called to follow Jesus.

Begin each day offering yourself and your day to God. Ask God to fill you afresh to OVERFLOWING with the light, life, and power of the Holy Spirit.

Ask God to teach you how to walk with the Holy Spirit. Follow his guidance and set your focus on Jesus Christ.

Finally, learn to give and receive forgiveness. Take some time alone with God and ask him to bring to your remembrance everyone from your past you need to forgive – and those whose forgiveness you also need.

If practical, contact those individuals and ask them to forgive you. They may or may not, but you will have done what God wants you to do.

The Holy Spirit will lead you in this. Some things are better left just between you and God, but if some kind of restoration is called for, do that as well.

I am VERY happy for you to have found God. It was October 10, 1976 when God came into my life. I continue to be amazed and SO grateful. You will be too.

Feel free to make use of the written posts and videos on my Facebook page. These are offered to help people grow in their faith.

KEEP TRUSTING AND OBEYING JESUS!

<https://www.facebook.com/PastorScottHilborn>