

# GETTING STARTED



IN  
**EXTREME LIVING**

## CONTENTS:

i.	<b>MAKING THE PIECES FIT</b> .....	<i>Running to win</i>
1.	<b>EXTREME PURPOSE</b> .....	<i>Becoming a new person in Christ</i>
2.	<b>EXTREME FRIEND</b> .....	<i>The Holy Spirit in you</i>
3.	<b>EXTREME POWER</b> .....	<i>Living by Faith</i>
4.	<b>EXTREME PROVISION</b> .....	<i>Living by God's Word</i>
5.	<b>EXTREME COMMUNICATION</b> .....	<i>Talking to God</i>
6.	<b>EXTREME RELATIONSHIPS</b> .....	<i>Fellowship with the Body of Christ</i>
7.	<b>EXTREME PRIZE</b> .....	<i>Obedying Christ</i>

## THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS LIKE A PUZZLE— IT WORKS BEST WHEN ALL THE PIECES FIT TOGETHER.

Are you a new Christian who desires to grow in your faith? Or, have you known Christ for some time...but haven't seen much progress in your walk with Him? Jesus wants you to know His will and awesome plan for your life.

### *Have you ever wondered what God's will is for you?*

The Bible tells you that it is God's will that you grow in your relationship with Christ, and live the awesome life He planned for you. (Eph. 2:10)

God has given you answers in His Word to the "puzzle" of how to grow and live an extreme...awesome life in Christ.

In this small study you will learn the "secrets" of **HOW TO LIVE AN AWESOME LIFE WITH CHRIST...** and how all these important "pieces" fit together. Take time to read the Scriptures and other reading materials listed.



# MAKING THE PIECES FIT

## Congratulations!

If you have made the decision to receive Jesus as your personal Savior and Lord, you have begun an awesome journey with Christ that will never end.

The Christian life is more like a marathon than a sprint. Don't expect the emotions that begin your walk with Christ to carry you through when you get back to your daily "grind".

Running a marathon requires much time in training. But training definitely pays off in a better race.

In order for you to run your best race for Christ, you also need to spend time in training. Set your sights on Christ at the finish line...and run to win!

### WARNING!

The temptations to quit the race will come from all directions. Perhaps even those who are closest to you

*God wants you to be a winner in the Christian life, and is totally committed to your success, and His Holy Spirit will empower you and help you during each mile you run in life.*



## USING GOD'S TOOLS

Once you have put your faith in Jesus Christ, you will want to learn the secrets of living the awesome life He has planned for you. Get ready for extreme living as you connect the “pieces” of His awesome plan for you.

### CONNECTING THE PIECES



**THE HOLY SPIRIT**



**FAITH**



**GOD'S WORD**



**PRAYER**



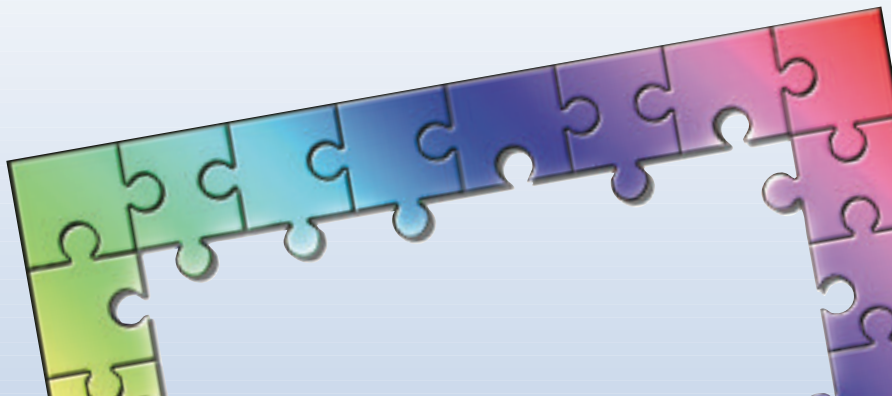
**FELLOWSHIP**



**OBEDIENCE**

Each of these “pieces” is interrelated, and works together to strengthen your walk with Christ. The more time you spend in understanding and applying what God’s Word says about each “piece”, the more awesome your walk with Christ will become.

But, these “pieces” will only fit together if the “puzzle frame” is in place. In this illustration, the “frame” means that you have put your faith in Jesus Christ...and are one of His children. Without the “frame” none of the “pieces” will fit.



Chapter One, Extreme Purpose, will help you to determine the certainty of your eternal future with Christ. Even if you have invited Christ into your life, it is vital to have assurance that you belong to Him forever.

## EXTREME PURPOSE

Most people live without the foggiest idea of what life is all about. Some even think life is a lucky “accident”.

## GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN

Have you ever wondered what life is all about?

How Did You Get Here?

What Were You Created For?

Where Are You Going After You Die?

**So what is life all about? What is its purpose...and how can you be sure that your Creator will accept you with open arms when you stand before Him...face to Face?**

Read this chapter, and learn about God's awesome plan for you for all eternity.

On September 11th, 2001, nearly 3000 people were tragically murdered in a violent act of terrorism at the World Trade Center. They immediately faced their Maker. None started his day with any clue it would be his last day on planet Earth.

You and I will also face our Maker at some point in the future. Then it will be too late to live for God.

Are you ready to face your Creator? The Bible says you can be ready. It says that you can be absolutely sure that, as one who trusts Christ, you actually have God's guarantee of His acceptance.

## HOW YOU GOT HERE

***You are no accident!*** (Psalm 139:13-18)

The Bible says that our awesome God created everything from nothing---and it says that it was mere “fingerwork” for Him. There are more stars in the universe than grains of sand on the entire Earth, yet God says you are more important to Him than all of them put together.

Psalms 139 tells us that God’s thoughts about you as a person are more than all the grains of sand. He thinks about you and me all the time!

## WHAT YOU ARE HERE FOR

The Bible reveals God is your loving Father, who planned and designed you to be His child for all eternity. He wants you to share in the awesome treasures He has for you in Christ. (Eph. 1:3-11)

God could have made you like a robot who had no other choice but to love Him. However, He wanted you to choose to love and obey Him of your own free will. God gave you free choice!



## WRONG CHOICES

The first man, Adam, was given the choice to obey or disobey God. When Adam chose to disobey, he began the sad plight of selfishness and rebellion that's rampant in our world today. Read Genesis Chapter 3 to find out how sin originated.

**Q** What does Romans 5:12 say Adam passed on to us?

---

The problem is that we all have made wrong choices in life.

The Bible calls these wrong choices—sin—which in the original Greek language means “missing the mark”... like an archer missing his target.

Sin is the reason for wars, terrorism, social injustice, selfishness, greed, jealousy, and addictive behavior.

**Q** What does Isaiah 53:6 say we have done with our choices?

---

**Q** What do Gen. 6:5; 8:21, and Jer. 17:9&10 say about the human heart?

---

**Q** In Romans 3:23, how many have sinned?

---

**Q** Does that include you?

---

## SEPARATION FROM GOD

The Bible says that God is absolutely pure and holy, and cannot allow unforgiven sinners to pollute His holy Presence.

(Hab. 1:13 & Isa. 59:2)

Paul told the Roman believers what God's attitude is toward open rebellion and sin:

*"For God's [holy] wrath and indignation are revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who in their wickedness repress and hinder the truth and make it inoperative."*

Rom. 1:18

**Q** In Romans 6:23, what is sin's penalty?

---

If we were to stop at this point, life would be hopeless and full of despair. But, in spite of our unworthiness, our loving and merciful God, found a way to give us hope and favor.

And...He paid the ultimate price to do it...His only Son!

## JESUS CHRIST – GOD'S SOLUTION

### *The Promised Messiah*

In the Old Testament Scriptures, a spotless, unblemished lamb was the picture of a sin offering. This offering pointed to the future spotless Lamb of God, the Messiah, who would be God's perfect sacrifice for our sins. (John 1:29)

For centuries the prophets of Israel had foretold the coming of the Messiah. (Read Isaiah 9:6, and 53:1-12, written 700 years before Jesus was born).

Over fifteen hundred years, nearly three hundred specific references were made to His coming. All are recorded in Scripture.



## JESUS FULFILLED PROPHECY

Following are a few Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah which were fulfilled by Jesus. Look them up, and write down the specific prophecies that were fulfilled:

OLD TESTAMENT:	NEW TESTAMENT:	FULFILLMENT:
Micah 5.2	Matthew 2.1	
Isaiah 9.6-7	Luke 1.31-33	
Psalm 22.1	Matthew 27.46	
Psalm 22.18	Matthew 27.35	
Isaiah 7.14	Luke 1.35	

The odds against one person fulfilling merely eight conditions in these prophecies would be the same as a blindfolded person picking one special silver dollar from a two foot high stack of silver dollars over an area the size of Texas (greater than the entire nation of France.)

Yet, Jesus Christ fulfilled over two hundred of them...exactly! And His sinless life qualified Him to be God's perfect sacrifice for all of our sins. (Heb. 9:14)

## *Jesus Claimed To Be God*

Jesus claimed that He was the “I AM” that God had called Himself in the Old Testament. (Ex. 3:14,15; John 8:57-59)

Jesus made other “I Am” statements of Himself:

“I AM the bread of life”	John 6:35
“I AM the light of the world”	John 8:12
“I AM the good shepherd”	John 10:11
“I AM the door”	John 10:9
“I AM the resurrection and the life”	John 11:25
“I AM the way... truth... and life”	John 14:6
“I AM the vine”	John 15:1

**Q**

Who is Jesus according to the following verses?

John 1:1-14

---

John 14:9

---

Colossians 1:15-20

---

Hebrews 1:1-8

---

John 10:30

---

Philippians 2:6-11

---

Colossians 2:9

---

Revelation 22:12-16

---

**All the evidence points clearly to the fact that Jesus Christ is God!**

*Incredible!*

*The One who created the universe became a man!*

It is sometimes hard for people to accept the fact that Jesus claimed to be God. 'Doubting Thomas' was like that. Read John 20:24-29.

**Q** What convinced him?

---

**Q** What convinced you?

---

### *Jesus Died On The Cross*

The religious leaders knew Jesus was making statements that only God could make, and accused Him of blasphemy against God. (John 10:33) In a mock trial they convicted Him, and turned Him over to the Romans to have Him executed.

Jesus then was beaten mercilessly, nailed to a cross between two thieves, and buried in a heavily guarded tomb. All hope seemed lost.



### *Jesus Conquered Death!*

But, He rose from the dead on the third day...just as He had promised! (Matt.16:21) Historical records from eyewitnesses testify that Jesus Christ was then seen alive by over 500 people. (1 Cor. 15:3-8) He is alive today!

To check out the historical evidence, read, Evidence That Demands A Verdict, by Josh McDowell, or, The Case for Christ, by Lee Strobel.)

Buddha is dead  
Mohammed is dead  
Confucius is dead

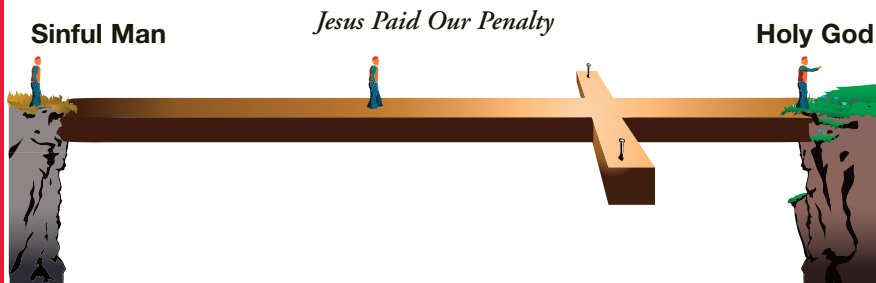
**JESUS CHRIST IS ALIVE!**

Jesus' disciples fled in fear when He went through the torture of the cross, but they became men of great courage when they saw Him alive after 3 days! They lost all fear—even when, later, they too were tortured to death for their faith.

Wow! Isn't that awesome? Jesus Christ is alive today!

The Bible calls Jesus the “King of kings and Lord of lords.” (Rev. 19:11-16)

And, it states that Jesus Christ will return to the earth in power and great glory! (Zech. 14:4; Luke 21:27)



This illustration shows how the cross of Christ becomes your “bridge” to God. (Heb. 4:14-16)

*“There is salvation in no one else! There is no other name in all of heaven for people to call on to save them.”*

Acts 4:12

Jesus told His disciples:

*“I am the way. The truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.”*

John 14:6

## GODS FREE GIFT

The awesome truth is that Jesus Christ paid for all your sins on the cross...and has given you direct access to God.

God's perfect justice is totally satisfied by the blood of Jesus. He "bought" you, and there are no "returns"! (Heb. 7:25; 9:12) But, you might wonder, "What about all the good things I've done in my life?"



In the following verses, who is responsible for your salvation?

	You	Jesus
Romans 5:8	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ephesians 2:8-9	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Titus 3:5-6	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1 Peter 3:18	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**ETERNAL LIFE IS A GIFT FROM GOD.  
YOU CANNOT DO ANYTHING TO EARN IT!**

However, like any gift, you can choose to accept or reject it.

**IT'S YOUR FREE CHOICE!**

## HOW TO JOIN GOD'S FAMILY

**Q** If you had been one of the victims at the World Trade Center on September 11th, 2001, what would you have said to God if He had asked you, "Why should I let you into my heaven?"

---

---

**Q** According to 1 John 5:11-13, and John 3:15-18, what is the one requirement of having eternal life in heaven?

---

---

In the original Greek language, the word "believe" means to:  
**TRUST IN ; CLING TO ; RELY UPON**

In other words, "believe" in the original Greek language is an active faith...much like the faith rock climbers have in the rope to hold them secure.

Becoming a Christian is putting your faith in Jesus' death for you on the cross, and in His resurrection for your eternal life.

### FAITH VERSUS FEELINGS

Christianity is a relationship with Christ—based on faith alone!

Your faith is to be based on the facts in the Bible...not feelings! (2 Tim. 3:16)

Faith in Christ may result in feelings...and often does. But, emotions are changeable, and you can't depend upon them. You can only depend on what God says in His Word!

## ACCEPTING HIS FORGIVENESS

The most important decision you will ever make in life is to receive Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord.

Coming to Jesus is not about “giving up” things. Rather, it is about accepting His forgiveness by faith.

### PERSONAL INVITATION

In order to receive God’s forgiveness for your sins, you must personally invite Jesus Christ into your life. (John 1:12) God knows your thoughts and motives. He desires you to come to Him in faith and humbleness, thanking Him for His death for you on the cross.

You receive Jesus Christ into your life by personally asking Him to come into your life and forgive your sins. Simply pray the following words, trusting Him to answer you.

“Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for dying for all my sins – past, present, and future. Thank you for giving me eternal life which you made possible by your death and resurrection. I receive You as my Savior by faith, and desire You to be Lord of my life.””

Date:

## WHERE YOU ARE GOING AFTER YOU DIE

**Q** If you have Jesus Christ in your life, what else are you sure of? (1 John 5:11-13)

---

**Q** Once you have put your faith in Christ, is there anything that can separate you from God's love? (Romans 8:38,39)

---

**Q** Will Christ ever leave you? (Hebrews 13:5)

---

**Q** For how long will God forgive your sins? (Hebrews 8:12)

---

***If you have put your faith in Jesus Christ, your eternal destiny is with Him in Heaven...forever!***

As God's child He will always love you—even when you fail Him. He will never give up on you—even when you give up on Him. ***Never quit running the race!***

### YOUR INHERITANCE IN CHRIST

As a Christian, you are granted an awesome inheritance:

- Your sins are completely forgiven. (Col. 2:13,14)
- You become a child of God—forever. (John 1:12)
- Christ actually comes into your life. (Rev. 3:20)
- The Holy Spirit is your guarantee. (2 Cor. 1:22)
- Christ gives you His nature. (2 Cor. 5:17)

Take time to read these verses that tell you about your awesome inheritance, and thank God for giving it to you.



## LIVING FOR CHRIST

Faith in Christ, over time, will result in obedience to God's Word, even though there will be ups and downs. (James 2.17)

However, the Bible says, the Christian life is like a battlefield.

**Satan will try to discourage you.  
The world will offer you cheap substitutes.  
Your own desires will attack you.**

**SATAN:** Satan is a vicious enemy who will aim to destroy you and your walk with Christ. The Bible calls him a "roaring lion" who is always looking to destroy believers. (1 Peter 5.8) His biggest weapon is to keep you away from God's Word...and your dependency on Christ. Then he can launch his weapons of doubt and discouragement. You don't need to fear him. He can only defeat you if you let him. Prepare for battle. (Eph. 6:10-18)

**THE WORLD:** Although there is nothing wrong with money or material success, it is very easy to get so focused on possessions and success, that God becomes secondary to personal ambition. God wants to be your first and highest focus in life...and you will only be truly satisfied when you give Him His rightful place. (Matthew. 6:33)

**"FLESHLY" DESIRES:** We all are assaulted daily by images and desires that are outside the will of God. This includes temptations such as sex (outside of marriage), gossip, anger, addictions, and other destructive behavior. (Gal. 5:17)

As you grow in Christ, you will experience more and more victory over these attacks. Your growth in Christ, and your victory over temptation will largely depend on you following God's growth plan. In the Christian life you are either growing or shrinking.

## GROWTH IS GOD'S PLAN FOR YOU

God's Growth Plan for You as a Christian is as follows:

***Walk in the Spirit.*** (*Holy Spirit – Chapter 2*)

***Trust God with Your Life .*** (*Faith – Chapter 3*)

***Know and Trust God's Word.*** (*God' Word – Chapter 4*)

***Pray to God.*** (*Prayer – Chapter 5*)

***Fellowship with other Christians.*** (*Fellowship – Chapter 6*)

***Obey Christ.*** (*Obedience – Chapter 7*)

### CONNECTING THE PIECES

Extreme living with Christ begins to take shape as the pieces of the puzzle connect.

SO...ARE YOU READY TO RUN THE RACE?  
EVEN THOUGH IT MEANS CHANGING DIRECTIONS?



If you are serious about growing in your new relationship with Christ, then spend time going through the next chapters—looking up the Bible verses—and telling God you want to live the awesome life He has planned for you.

### AND...RUN TO WIN!

In the following chapters you will learn how each “piece” of the “puzzle” is a vital part of your growth in Christ.