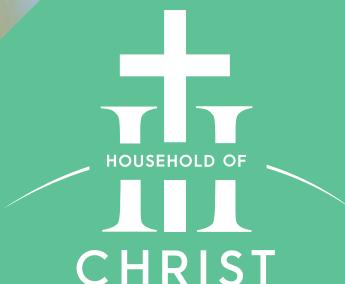




A FRESH START



Loving God – Loving People™

A FRESH START

A Guide to Your Salvation

**God's love for you
knows no bounds!**

CONTENTS

Our Message to You	1
Salvation Prayer	2
Introduction	3
Step 1: Admit	4
Step 2: Believe in Jesus	5
Step 3: Confess	6
Step 4: Water Baptism	8
Step 5: Holy Spirit Baptism	9
Step 6: Read Your Bible	12
Step 7: Prayer	13
Step 8: Community	14
Step 9: Obedience and Doing Good	16
Step 10: Healing and Deliverance	18
A 30-Day Devotional	20
Days 1-5	21
Days 6-10	22
Days 11-15	23
Days 16-20	24
Days 21-25	25
Days 26-30	26
References	29

OUR MESSAGE TO YOU

Welcome to “A Fresh Start”. Whether you just started following Jesus or seek to strengthen your faith, this book is just for you. Life is precious, and we have only one chance to live it fully for Christ. We will face many ups and downs, and the way to get through them and stay steady is to strengthen yourself with what you read and believe in the Bible.

James 1:21 reminds us to accept God’s Word with humility because it can change us from the inside out. Begin by starting to change your thoughts to align with God’s Word by asking, “What would Jesus do?” It’s a simple yet profound way to live life. This is called renewing your mind and is one of the best ways to change your life. Through Jesus, you have all you need to live a joyful and successful life. God is full of love for you.

Prayer:

Precious Father, please give me a sincere and humble heart that will always receive Your Word with meekness. Help me to do Your will, now and forever, in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Yours in Christ,

Bernard & Belinda Mulder

Senior Pastors & Founders

SALVATION PRAYER

The first step is ensuring you have committed your life to Jesus. Pray this prayer with us today:

Precious Father, my situation is beyond human means. I need the Saviour of the world to save me. Save me, Lord Jesus! Wash me with Your blood. Cleanse me from all unrighteousness. I confess with my mouth, and I believe with all my heart, that Jesus Christ died for me, that He's alive right now, making intercession for all my weaknesses. O, Holy Spirit, help me to live a holy life well-pleasing in Your sight. I am now a child of the Most High God. In Jesus' mighty name. Amen.

INTRODUCTION

God's wonderful plan of salvation through Jesus Christ is revealed in the Bible. This plan is so simple that even a child can repent and believe in Jesus, yet it is so profound that there is no other way to be saved from sin and death (Acts 4:12).

There are a few reasons why you picked up this book. This could be the beginning of your friendship with Jesus, or maybe you're returning to Him after a long time. You may want to make your bond with Him stronger. Whatever the reason, you're starting one incredible journey. Congratulations, we are proud of you!

In this booklet, we have put down ten key steps in developing a relationship with Jesus. These steps will guide you toward a deeper understanding of your faith and how to live it out.

"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all people." Titus 2:11 (NASB)

STEP 1: ADMIT

Read Romans 3:10, 3:23-24 and 6:23.

Accepting God's saving grace begins with a simple but important step: admit that you are a sinner in need of God's love, mercy and forgiveness. It's you saying that you need His saving grace in your life. It's in this honest moment with God that you allow His life-changing power and love to work in you.

"Once your life was full of sin's darkness, but now you have the very light of our Lord shining through you because of your union with Him. Your mission is to live as children flooded with His revelation-light!" Ephesians 5:8 (TPT)

STEP 2: BELIEVE IN JESUS

Read John 3:16, Ephesians 2:8-9, 2 Corinthians 5:21 and Romans 5:8-9.

By faith, believe that Jesus is the Son of God, lived a sinless life, died on the cross for your sins, was buried, rose from the dead and is now seated at the right hand of the Father.

Here, you begin to build strong faith by believing that Jesus willingly shed His blood on the cross for your sins and has victory over death by rising from the grave. Accepting this foundational belief opens the door to an incredible faith journey.

STEP 3: CONFESS

Read Ephesians 1:13-14, 1 John 1:9, Romans 10:9-10 and John 3:5-6.

Begin by confessing your sins and being honest about them to God. Next, make a conscious decision to turn away from those sins, a step toward true repentance. Finally, ask God to forgive you and wipe your sins away. Pray for this out loud.

Being made right with God by what Jesus did on the cross is called being made righteous. It is not something you can do or need to earn, but it totally depends on Jesus giving you His righteousness as a gift. All you need to do is accept and receive His righteousness as your own. This is powerful.

How do I do this? Jesus never sinned, yet He became our sin, and in the same way, we were never righteous, but we receive His righteousness when we confess our sin and believe in Jesus with all our hearts.

Here, you experience the power of forgiveness, becoming blameless in God's eyes - just as if you had never sinned. We refer to this as being "born again", and it means you start a new life. You get saved when you confess and believe that Jesus died for you and that He was made alive. In all this, what you say must come from a sincere heart.

STEP 4: WATER BAPTISM

Read Acts 8:36-38, 9:1-19 and Romans 6:3-5.

Water baptism is a significant step, symbolising your repentance (turning away) from sin and your wholehearted belief in Jesus. As Christ died, was buried and was later raised to life, when you get baptised, you are burying your old self under the water once and for all and as you are lifted out of the water, you are raised into a new life in Christ Jesus. Baptism is the outward sign of what has already happened in your heart.

Even a child, understanding forgiveness and faith in Jesus, can choose to be baptised. Baptism is publicly showing that you have committed your life to Jesus and will now be living a new life. This is a very important step in your walk with Christ.

STEP 5: HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM

Read Luke 24:49, John 20:22, Jude 1:20 and Acts 1:8, 8:12-17.

Once you've been born again and baptised in water, the next part of your Christian journey is to be baptised in the Holy Spirit. This is when you humbly ask the Holy Spirit to permanently fill you with His presence, giving you the strength and guidance you need for your Christian walk.

It's possible to experience this alone, but you may find it helpful to ask one of our pastors or care pastors who are filled with the Holy Spirit to lay hands on you and pray with you. Our Get Connected tent is always available for a Care Pastor to support you in prayer. Baptism in the Holy Spirit is not earned or deserved; it's a precious gift from the Father, given to those who genuinely desire and ask for it.

Part of being filled by the Holy Spirit is the ability to pray in a different language also known as your heavenly language or praying in tongues. This is a gift that God gives us as a special way to talk to Him. This is the secret to successful living, being filled and relying on the help of the Holy Spirit. *Read 1 Corinthians 14:2.*

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, You said in Your Word that You give good gifts to Your children and want to give me the gift of the Holy Spirit, so I come to You with a pure and hungry heart, desiring to be filled by Your Holy Spirit. Let Your Spirit fill me today with the outward sign of praying in the Spirit. In the name of Jesus, please baptise me with the Holy Spirit and give me my heavenly language from above. Amen.

Take the step now and start to speak by faith in the Spirit. Jude 1:20 says when you pray in the Spirit you are building yourself up in your most holy faith.

Begin to praise God for filling you with the Holy Spirit. You may sense joy and peace starting to rise in you and words or syllables forming that are not in your language. You don't need to be afraid to speak these words but begin to worship and praise God in the words that He gives you. That is the language of the Holy Spirit. Praying in the Spirit is an excellent way to connect with God and strengthen your faith. It's like having a secret, powerful tool at your disposal. Don't hesitate to embrace and use it to connect with God.

STEP 6: READ YOUR BIBLE

Read 2 Timothy 3:16, Joshua 1:8 and 1 Peter 2:2.

Reading your Bible and thinking deeply about scripture are two basic things you need to do to be a Christian. It's something you do daily that allows you to discover God's wisdom, listen to His voice, and find answers to life's questions. As you read the Word and obey it, it will change you and help renew your mind.

Reading the Bible is Jesus speaking to us. When we obey what we read, we choose God's way. This isn't just something we do; it's a life-changing commitment that pleases God and strengthens us. Using our 30-Day Devotional included in this book is a good starting point.

The Bible was written for us to be successful, so take the scriptures that stand out to you, memorise them, and declare them over your life, family, and church because faith comes from hearing the Word of God. The Word of God is real, alive and can work wonders. Make it the foundation of your life.

STEP 7: PRAYER

Read Acts 2:46-47, Matthew 6:5-13, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Philippians 4:6-7, 1 John 5:14-15, Mark 11:24, Ephesians 6:17-18, 1 Timothy 2:1, James 5:16, and Luke 21:36.

A life of constant prayer will keep you connected to God. Prayer is talking to God and allowing time for God to speak to you in return. It's a conversation where you and God take time to talk and listen. The easiest way to pray is while reading your Bible. Prayer is simple. It's an action that links you up with God all day.

Prayer is not just saying words but connecting with God with all your heart. This means that God also hears your heart's cry when you are not even saying a word. However, it is important to pray aloud (Ps 34:17-18).

Praying in the Spirit (in your heavenly language) will build your faith, and when you seek God's guidance in prayer, you'll also find protection in obeying His will. God loves it when we talk to Him. We don't have to use big words to impress Him. We can simply talk to Him with a sincere heart.

STEP 8: COMMUNITY

Read Hebrews 10:24-25, Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, Colossians 3:12-17, 1 Peter 4:8-11, 1 Corinthians 12:12-20, and Psalm 133:1.

We need each other because everything God made is connected. I need you like you need me. Connecting with other like-minded believers is necessary to give you the support and strength you need to live life the Jesus way. Together, you mutually encourage each other to keep going, to keep following Jesus, to keep forgiving, repenting, praying, loving God and walking through the good and bad times. In a community, you have someone to watch your back and help you in areas you need to change (Gal 6:2). Spending time together is a commitment to your church community every Sunday to honour God, worship together, and grow your spiritual life.

1 Peter 2:17 says we should love the family of believers. This is what it means to say two believers are better than one, and when every member finds their rightful place, the body builds itself up in love. Your strength becomes mine and my strength becomes yours (Eph 4:11-16).

Part of community life is making new friends, attending a Connect Group and serving with others in the church. Become an active member in the church by doing the HOC 101 course which will guide you to becoming part of the HOC family.

STEP 9: OBEDIENCE AND DOING GOOD

Read Matthew 16:27, Ephesians 2:10, Galatians 6:9-10, 1 Corinthians 3:11-15, Acts 26:20, Psalm 111:10, Philippians 3:12-14 and Isaiah 1:19.

Obedience to God's Word and staying faithful to Jesus are big parts of being a Christian. Obedience means living according to Jesus' teachings and staying loyal to Him. You need to shape your life according to His will, and you can trust God when He asks you to do or change something. Obedience to the Word of God is the only proof of your faith in Him. Everything seems difficult in the beginning but we have a friend in the Holy Spirit to help and lead us in the path of Jesus' righteousness.

Think of the Word of God as seeds in a field. In Luke 8:5-15, Jesus shared a story about seeds sown in different soil types. The seeds that fell on good, fertile ground had a great harvest. Trusting God's message of salvation from the Bible can take root in your heart and bring blessings into your life.

It's incredible to think God has planned for you to do good works. Jesus' teachings are full of examples of loving God and others, being in a community, supporting the work of the ministry and caring for those in need. By doing good works, you follow Jesus' example, positively impact your community and show your faith in action. The Bible says to never lose heart in doing good. The Bible teaches us that we should not just listen to the Word of God but be doers of the Word. We are called to do good.

Obedience is possible because we have a friend in the Holy Spirit who wants to help us. He is called the Helper (John 14:26), and even when you make a mistake, you can always run to Him because He is ready to help you finish strong.

STEP 10: HEALING AND DELIVERANCE

Read Isaiah 61:1-3, Acts 10:38, 2 Corinthians 2:9-11, Matthew 12:43-45, 1 John 3:8 and Mark 14:38.

Jesus came to earth to show us a better way to live; He died so that we could have life in full and was raised back to life so that we could walk in victory. You might encounter challenges like persistent sins, and ongoing struggles in various aspects of your life or relationships, or even grappling with unforgiveness. There is hope for you and me to change because Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. You may need physical healing or a transformation within. Identifying with any of these things could be a sign that seeking prayer for deliverance and healing is a good thing.

You can meet a Care Pastor at the Get Connected tent for general prayer or attend a Miracle Service, where we will trust God to do a miracle in your life for His glory. After being prayed for, you must protect your new freedom. We have a great resource book, "Maintaining My Miracle", which will help you protect your breakthrough and stay close to Jesus.

**Nothing you do
or don't do could
make God love you
more or less!**

A 30-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Building a relationship with God is a step-by-step journey with Him as you grow in your faith and love for Him. You don't need to have all the answers figured out. You can come to God as you are. Spending time with Jesus will help you get to know God better, understand Him more, know what He wants, and discover your identity as one of His children.

This 30-day reading plan is designed to help you get started. Don't just read; speak to God and take the actions He prompts you. Whatever pace you choose, stick with it. Don't give up. This is your starting point, and God will guide you. Each day includes a task, a Bible verse to read and a prayer.

The Bible is the most incredible book! It is living and active and will change you because it will reveal Jesus to you, and He never leaves anyone the same. The whole point of reading the Bible goes beyond just learning facts about Jesus; it's about forming a deep, personal relationship with Him, truly knowing Him with all your heart. Follow a reading plan. Underline your favourite verses. Read the Word with your head and heart open. God is inviting you to find your life in His story.

DAYS 1-5

ACT

Start your Bible reading journey by reading one or two chapters daily in the book of John (in the New Testament). Along with that, read and think about the daily scriptures below. As you read the verses in this section, pick one that speaks to your heart. Write it down and commit to memorising it this week.

READ

DAY 1: *Ephesians 2:6-10.* Life in Christ is a gift.

DAY 2: *Romans 3:21-26.* Jesus lifts you out of sin and into a new life.

DAY 3: *2 Corinthians 5:14-19.* God loves you as you are, but He loves you too much to leave you as you are.

DAY 4: *Romans 6:9-14.* Jesus didn't come to make bad people good; He came to make dead people live and give them new life with Jesus.

DAY 5: *John 10:7-10.* Trusting in Jesus means you'll live forever in heaven and have a full and meaningful life here on earth.

PRAY

Lord Jesus, thank You for dying on the cross for me. Thank You for paying a price I could never repay to grant me a life I don't deserve. I pray that You will give me a hearing heart. Teach me how to recognise Your voice and obey it. Let everything about me become everything about You. In Jesus' name. Amen.

DAYS 6-10

ACT

During this week, talk to someone about Jesus. You could share your favourite Bible verse on social media, invite someone to church, or tell someone why you're excited to start your relationship with Jesus.

READ

DAY 6: *John 1:9-14.* Jesus truly makes God's Word alive and meaningful to us.

DAY 7: *Hebrews 11.* Living by faith means believing that God has a greater purpose for our lives.

DAY 8: *1 Kings 19:10-18.* Even when we feel distant from God, He is always near us.

DAY 9: *Proverbs 3:5-6.* God doesn't expect us to understand Him fully but to obey Him with all our hearts.

DAY 10: *2 Timothy 3:14-17.* God's Word is alive, active, and applicable to everyone in every way.

PRAY

God, I trust You completely. I know You are always with me. O Holy Spirit, help me to always choose Jesus in everything I do. Lord, open my heart to Your faith, open my heart to Your Holy Spirit, and open my heart to Your Word. In Jesus' name. Amen.

DAYS 11-15

ACT

Practise setting aside a dedicated time each day to read and talk to God. This can be first thing in the morning or the evening, but it is a special time set aside for God.

READ

DAY 11: *Genesis 1:24-31.* God created you, knows you intimately, and intends to shape you in His image.

DAY 12: *Joshua 1:1-9.* God often uses unlikely people and situations to do His work.

DAY 13: *1 John 1:5-10.* Everyone makes mistakes and sins. But Jesus offers us a fresh start.

DAY 14: *Genesis 2:15-17.* God's first instruction wasn't about holding us back but setting us free.

DAY 15: *Romans 8:26-28.* God is loving and kind and has a plan for all of us.

PRAY

God, You are good and steadfast and have never left my side. Thank You! Help me gain the perspective to recognise that You are with me wherever I go. O Holy Spirit, come into my heart and sanctify my heart! Make my soul ready to follow You and my spirit ready to obey You now and forever. Amen.

Days 16-20

ACT

Create a prayer journal and start by thanking God for who He is. Write down all the things you are grateful for. Look out for where He has loved, protected and carried you. Your gratitude may extend to inviting someone to join you at church. This is a wonderful way to share what God is and has done for you. It is not how we start but how we finish.

READ

DAY 16: *Colossians 2:6-15.* The Christian journey is a journey, not a project or achievement.

DAY 17: *Acts 2:42-47.* Following Jesus is a personal choice, yet it cannot be done all on your own.

DAY 18: *1 Peter 4:8-11.* God gives you blessings so you can bless others and honour Him in all you do.

DAY 19: *Colossians 3:15-24.* God values who you are more than what you do every day.

DAY 20: *Psalm 119:105-112.* God plans to guide you, even if He doesn't always show you where you're going.

PRAY

Precious Father, give me a picture of my good future that will give me the strength to endure until the end. Amen.

Days 21-25

ACT

You are called to be different, which means some things in your life will change because you serve God. Ask God what things in your life do not please Him and start to work those things out of your life. God is with you and loves you through it all.

READ

DAY 21: *Philippians 4:11-13.* Your happiness comes from what Jesus does in and through you, not from outside situations.

DAY 22: *Joshua 6:1-20.* Even if it seems like your faith isn't working, you could be close to a big breakthrough.

DAY 23: *Romans 12:9-21.* Keep inviting friends and family to join you at church. God wants everyone to be saved.

DAY 24: *Jeremiah 1:4-9.* God has already chosen you. You don't have to meet anyone else's expectations. Only, be who God has created you to be.

DAY 25: *Matthew 18:21-35.* Holding onto unforgiveness harms you more than the person who wronged you. Choose to forgive today.

PRAY

Jesus, I'm grateful for the fresh start You provide. Each day, You're shaping me to be more like You. Help me see myself and others as You do. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Days 26-30

ACT

If you haven't already, decide to become actively involved at church this week. Prayerfully consider volunteering, linking up with a Connect Group, or both. Then, during the weekend church service, take the next step and implement your decision by popping in at our Get Connected tent for more information about us and doing the HOC101 Course to become part of the HOC church family.

READ

DAY 26: *Colossians 1:15-18.* Don't only put Jesus first; make Him the centre and Lord of your entire life.

DAY 27: *Psalm 100:1-5.* Gratitude is the key to experiencing God's presence in every circumstance.

DAY 28: *John 16:31-33.* Making Jesus the centre of your life doesn't remove all problems, but it gives you hope, even in the toughest times. This hope lights up the darkest paths.

DAY 29: *John 3:16-17.* Being a Christian isn't just about what you can or can't do. It's about living because of what Jesus did for us on the cross. This changes everything for us.

DAY 30: *John 14:11-14.* The best is yet to come when you start living life with Christ.

PRAY

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh upon me and fill my heart with Your divine faith. Jesus, You mean the world to me. Without You, I am nothing. Teach me how to place You at the centre of my life so that everything I do flows from my love for You. I love You, Father. I love You, Jesus. I love You, Holy Spirit. Amen.

As we finish this 30-day journey, know that this time you've spent with God is just the beginning. You've begun to build a strong base for your life. Keep this foundation strong by reading, praying, going to church, and practicing your faith in Jesus. Think of this not as the end, but as the beginning of your lifelong journey with your Creator. Your story is now joined with His, and together, you'll explore the amazing life He has for you. Welcome this journey with an open heart, prepared for the blessings and growth that lie ahead.

**God already loves
you now, as much
as He ever will!**

Copyright © 2024 by Household of Christ, Pretoria, South Africa. Edited and printed in the Republic of South Africa, Pretoria. For orders, email info@hoc.org.za or contact Household of Christ, Pretoria, South Africa, by visiting www.hoc.org.za.

First edition: 26 March 2024.

New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1971, 1977, 1995, 2020 by The Lockman Foundation. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked (TPT) are from The Passion Translation. Copyright 2017, 2018 by Passion & Fire Ministries, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved. ThePassionTranslation.com.

Although the author and publisher have made every effort to ensure that the information in this book was correct at press time, the author and publisher do not assume and hereby disclaim any liability to any party for any loss, damage, or disruption caused by errors or omissions, whether such errors or omissions result from negligence, accident, or any other cause.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any information storage and retrieval system without permission in writing from Household of Christ.

Cover photo: Photo by Kulwinder Brar. Selective Focus Photo of Green Leafed. From Pexels: www.pexels.com.

ISBN (print): 978-1-7764806-4-7.

ISBN (e-book): 978-1-7764806-5-4.

I LOVE MY CHURCH

ISBN 978-1-7764806-4-7



9 781776 480647