

INTRODUCTION

NEW **CHRISTIANS** **thrive**

CONGRATULATIONS!

The choice that you have made to commit your life to God is the most important decision of your life. God made you for a purpose and now that you have received the forgiveness that Jesus made possible and have been reconciled to God, you can begin to live out that purpose. God is with you and, in you. He will continue to lead and guide you; all you need to do is continue to respond to what he is doing. So talk to God often, hand your concerns over to him and make time for him to bring clarity to your mind and focus to your heart. God wants, above all, to have a relationship with you. You are his child, he loves you and he wants you to call on him as a loving father and walk with him through life.

Be careful that you don't get distracted at this point because you will find many influences coming in to snuff out the flame that God has lit in your heart. The most important thing now is to guard and feed that flame so that it can grow and make you into a shining light. Commit yourself to a church community and keep meeting together with other Christians. Talk to your Christian friends and



leaders and draw from their knowledge and experience. Don't try to go it alone. And of course you should start reading the Bible which is the foundation of your new faith. God will speak to you through the Bible and it will become a light for your path.

This booklet is designed to guide you through an introductory reading of key parts of the Bible and help you to understand the key teachings of the Bible. We always know more about the things that matter most to us. So I encourage you to begin a learning journey in which you can learn about God and his will for you. I encourage you to put aside half an hour each day to read the Bible passages I have selected together with my comments and to reflect and pray.

welcome to the journey!

How do you know there is a God? If you are reading this then you probably already believe in God. But what makes you believe this? God is, by definition, absolutely distinct from all other things. He is the *creator* of all things: space, time and matter. This means that he is not limited by space and time. His infinite and eternal being is far beyond what your finite mind can grasp. God cannot therefore be perceived like finite objects. We can see plenty of evidence of God's activity in the fine tuning of the universe and in the intricacies of life. But God himself cannot be perceived by our five senses. So how do we experience God? Well, I said that it is impossible to grasp God, *but you can be grasped by God*. Anyone who ever knew God only knew him because he grasped them in some way. Some people have very dramatic encounters with God and others seem to have a gradual experience in which God dawns within them. Do you feel like God has been taking hold of your life? Do you feel like God is calling you? If he is, you will feel like the lights are coming on inside you. You will start to see and feel things clearly. Your conscience will start to become more sensitive. You will feel like you can no longer be the person you were before. All this is a sign that God is calling you to live the way he made you to live. I encourage you to respond by entrusting yourself to him and asking him to lead you forward.

Read Psalm 103.

Entrust your life to God and ask him to lead you in his path.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

KEEP UP THE GOOD HABIT

If you have worked through these fifty days then you have made a great start on your journey. Now that you are in the habit of spending some time each day reading the Bible, reflecting and praying I would encourage you to keep this up. With all the distractions and the hectic pace of life these days it is really important to spend a little bit of time each day to connect with God and maintain the right perspective for your life. You have already read many key sections of the Bible but now it is time to keep reading and work through the rest. I would recommend that you read the rest of the New Testament and then go back to the Old Testament and read from the beginning. When you read through the Old Testament the first time feel free to skip the long sections containing obscure laws, genealogies, building instructions, and the like. You can come back to these some time for more in depth study. On your first read of the Old Testament you really need to just focus on getting the story. If you want to stick with the format you have been using here then you can subscribe to the Thrive daily devotional Bible reading guide which works through various books of the Bible.