



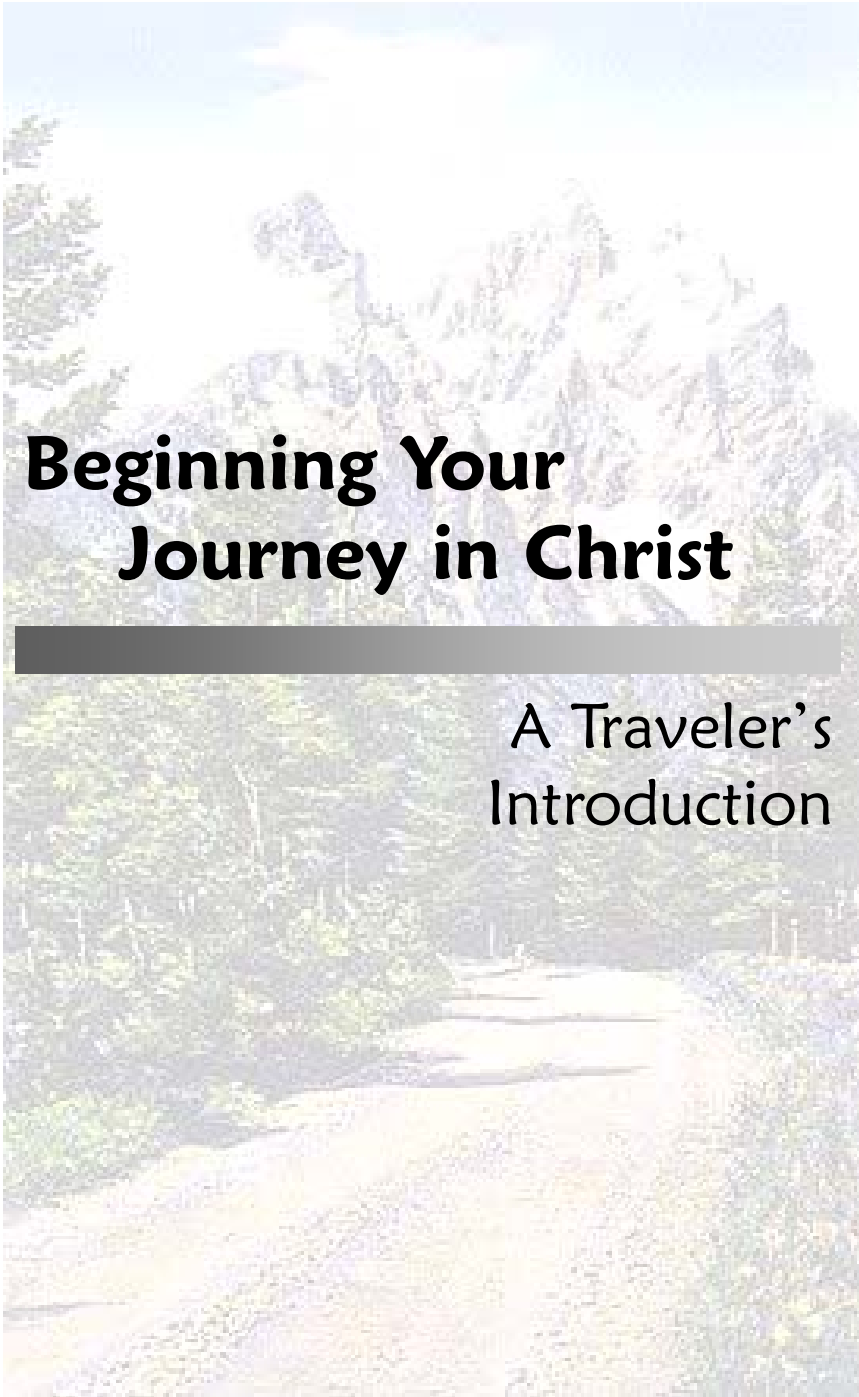
**Free Methodist Church**

[www.freemethodistchurch.org](http://www.freemethodistchurch.org)

1.800.342.5531

**Southeast Region Office**

[riley661@yahoo.com](mailto:riley661@yahoo.com)



# Beginning Your Journey in Christ

A Traveler's  
Introduction



## **A TRAVELER'S INTRODUCTION FOR BEGINNING YOUR JOURNEY IN CHRIST**

This resource is a traveler's guide for you, the new believer.  
Begin exploring its features today.  
You'll be encouraged in your new life in Christ!

A wonderful adventure lies before you.  
Who will you meet on the journey?  
How will the experience change you?  
Ready to get moving?

Turn the page and get started!

## CONTINUING YOUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

BOOKLET DEVELOPER

Peggy Riley

BOOKLET WRITER

Peggy Riley

All rights reserved. No part of this manual may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means – electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other – except for brief quotations in printed reviews without prior permission in writing from Greenville Free Methodist Church.

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION Copyright 1973, 1978, 1984. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers.

This seven day devotional booklet has presented the Christian life as a spiritual journey which begins when one personally responds to Christ's offer of salvation. Understanding what has just happened to you and getting started in your new life as a believer, is similar to walking the "foothills" of your spiritual journey. You're well on your way with Christ by your side! Can you make out the breathtaking mountains that jut upward on the horizon? Hand in hand with Christ, allow Him to be your Guide through all of life's adventures!

In the coming days, return to the "*Beginning Your Journey in Christ*" booklet often. As you continue reflecting upon its devotionals, God's Spirit will bring to your attention new insights and fresh encouragements.

At this point you may be wondering what additional support or guidance might be available to you in the coming weeks. The concepts introduced to you in the "*Beginning Your Journey in Christ*" devotional booklet have provided a foundation for your deepening relationship with Christ. Now you need to connect with other believers. You are strongly encouraged to become involved in your local Free Methodist Church where you can participate in weekly worship services, and develop supportive relationships with others through a Sunday School class or small group. Should you have personal issues that you would like to talk about with someone, please contact the church and ask to speak to the pastor.

**REFLECT UPON THE FOLLOWING WORDS  
FROM PAUL, A FELLOW TRAVELER  
ON THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY:**

Read this passage:

*"No, dear brothers and sisters, I am still not all I should be, but I am focusing all my energies on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I strain to reach the end of the race and receive the prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us up to heaven." (Philippians 3:13-14 NLT)*

On what are your eyes and energies focused?

---



---



---

Read this passage:

*"I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through Him who gives me strength." (Philippians 4:12-13)*

What difficulties may you encounter on your spiritual journey?  
In what will you place your confidence?

---



---



---

**TALK TO GOD TODAY . . .**

Open your life wide to His will, telling Him that you're ready to follow wherever He leads.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING THE  
SEVEN DAY GUIDE**

Plan on setting aside ten – fifteen minutes daily for the next seven days to reflect upon the included materials. Find a quiet place where you can be completely available to God. Have at your fingertips the provided devotional booklet, a pen or pencil, and a Bible.

Daily read one of the provided seven meditations. In the course of the coming week, you'll be introduced to important Scripture verses that speak directly to new believers. The daily text will address many of the basic questions or concerns you may have regarding your new life in Christ.

Day 1:	What Have I Just Done?
Day 2:	But Will It Last?
Day 3:	So Now What?
Day 4:	Isn't This Risky?
Day 5:	Are We There Yet?
Day 6:	What About Others?
Day 7:	Me, A Disciple?

Each day the opening reading will introduce a theme for consideration. You will then look up the Scripture verses in your own Bible, or if you do not own a Bible, simply read them from the provided text. Note that space is provided for you to respond to printed questions and to write out your own thoughts. Make sure and take time to do this – as you reflect, God will speak to you through His Word. Lastly, you'll be provided with a prayer guide for talking to God. Whether you bow your head and close your eyes or not, imagine Christ sitting beside you. Share with Him your thoughts and then pause, allowing His thoughts to come to you.

## WHAT HAVE I JUST DONE? (About Salvation)

Congratulations! By entering into a personal relationship with Christ, you've made life's most significant choice! Each person's experience is unique – you might have been in a worship service, in a conversation with someone, or perhaps by yourself. However, some characteristics of your encounter with God are similar to those of other believers. You became aware of a need in your life, and you recognized God's love reaching out to you. You understood that Jesus' death on the cross was for you, and you responded to Him, acknowledging your sin and receiving His forgiveness. In that instant, you were given a fresh start in life and a new, eternal relationship with Christ began.

The decision you've just made is called many things, including being born again, getting saved and being redeemed. You are now a Christ-follower, or Christian. Your decision signifies a turning point in your life. Whether you realized it or not, the moment you said "yes" to Jesus, the doorway to a whole new world opened to you! You'll learn more about that new life in the remaining pages of this booklet.

## ME, A DISCIPLE? (About the Lordship of Jesus in Your Life)

What an accomplishment! You've come all the way to the final entry in this new believer's guide! As you've utilized this seven day devotional, you've been introduced to an ongoing process of moving from that initial decision of "making a personal commitment to Jesus" to daily being mindful of your relationship with Him. This is what it means to become a "disciple of Christ." A disciple is one who intentionally sets his or her heart on seeking God's presence and God's path through each day's activities, choices and relationships. Slowly read Jesus' descriptive words of a disciple:

"Live in Me. Make your home in Me just as I do in you. In the same way that a branch can't bear grapes by itself but only by being joined to the vine, you can't bear fruit unless you are joined with Me. I am the Vine, you are the branches. When you're joined with Me, and I with you, the relation intimate and organic, the harvest is sure to be abundant . . . This is how my Father shows who He is – when you produce grapes, when you mature as My disciples . . . Make yourselves at home in My love." (from John 15:4 - 10, The Message)

Read the passage:

*“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.” Matt 5:14-16*

What did Jesus challenge His followers to become? \_\_\_\_\_

Where are some places and who are some people upon whom you might “let your light shine?”

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Key: family, light

**TALK TO GOD TODAY . . .**

Thank Him that He has given you an extended family and opportunities to encourage others.

**THINK ABOUT THESE QUESTIONS  
AND RECORD YOUR THOUGHTS:**

What made you realize that something was wrong or missing in your life?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How did you recognize that Christ was the answer to your needs?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How did you personally respond to His offer of salvation?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**BUILDING UPON WHAT DREW YOU TO CHRIST, REFLECT UPON GOD’S ANSWER TO YOUR NEED:**

Read these verses:

*“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23)*

*“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:23)*

How does the Bible describe your greatest need?

---

---

---

Read these verses:

*“But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8)*

*“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves; it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9)*

What did God do to meet you at your point of greatest need?

---

---

---

Read this verse:

*(Jesus speaking) “Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with Me.” (Revelation 3:20)*

What does it mean to personally respond to Jesus and begin a relationship with Him?

---

---

---

**TALK TO GOD TODAY . . .**

Thank Him for knowing your needs in advance and sending Jesus as the answer to your deepest longings.

**READ THE PROVIDED BIBLE PASSAGES TO HELP YOU RESPOND TO THESE QUESTIONS:**

Read this passage:

*“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.” (Galatians 6:10)*

How did the Apostle Paul describe all believers?

The \_\_\_\_\_ of believers.

What does that term imply to you?

---

---

---

Read this passage:

*“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another, and all the more as we see the Day approaching.” (Hebrews 10:24-25)*

What are some practical ways believers can encourage one another?

---

---

---

Who are some believers with whom you might receive or give encouragement?

---

---

---

## WHAT ABOUT OTHERS? (About Daily Relationships)

While listening to someone share about the surprises he encountered as a new believer, the following comment was made, “I didn’t know that when I invited Jesus to be the Savior and Lord of my life that He’d bring along all His friends, also!” This individual was referring to the exciting discovery he made that when he became a child of God, he became a member of an “extended family” – God’s family – which includes all other believers.

Although your faith in Christ is personal, it was never meant to be a private relationship. That’s why Christians join together in large, weekend worship services to collectively honor God and receive Biblical instruction. That’s also why believers are strongly encouraged to participate in a Sunday School class and small group of some kind – these are conducive settings to give spiritual encouragement and practical care to one another.

As you think about your spiritual journey, remember that it is not a solo relationship of “just me and Jesus.” Instead, it is the primary relationship out of which many other important relationships are meant to grow.

## BUT WILL IT LAST? (About Assurance)

Receiving Christ as your Savior was not a random experience or fleeting impulse. God has loved you and desired a relationship with you long before you recognized or responded to Him. When you prayed, inviting Christ to be your Savior, the Bible tells us that a party broke out in heaven and the angels celebrated (Luke 15:7)! God’s love for you is complete and unchanging. Regardless of how you feel or what you think, God guarantees us that His love is unchanging and eternal (John 10:28). How reassuring it is to know that your relationship with God is based upon His character, which is always consistent, rather than your feelings, which may vary from day to day.

Although your life may seem to be the same as before you invited Christ into your life, in reality dramatic changes have already taken place! Let the following questions and Bible passages guide you in identifying some of the new things that have occurred since you entered into a personal relationship with Christ.

**READ THE PROVIDED BIBLE PASSAGES TO HELP YOU RESPOND TO THESE QUESTIONS:**

Read these verses:

*“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.” (John 3:16)*

*“And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.” (1 John 5:11-12)*

What kind of life do you have now?

\_\_\_\_\_ life.

Read these verses:

*“Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.” (John 1:12)*

*“How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God.” (1 John 3:1)*

How has your relationship with God changed?

I’m now a \_\_\_\_\_ of God

Read this verse:

*“Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, ‘Abba, Father!’” (Galatians 4:6)*

What has God placed within you?

The \_\_\_\_\_ of His Son.

What do you think it means to change from being “conformed to the world’s pattern” to being “transformed by God?”

---



---



---

**TALK TO GOD TODAY . . .**

Thank Him for opportunities to read His words in the Bible and to talk to Him personally in prayer. Invite God to work in your life, making you more like His Son.

**READ THE PROVIDED PASSAGES TO HELP YOU RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

Read these Scriptures:

*"Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path." (Psalm 119:105)*

*"Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and obey it." (Luke 11:28)*

What is the benefit of reading and obeying God's Word, the Bible?

---

---

---

Read this Scripture:

*"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, 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)*

What is the benefit of talking to God in prayer?

---

---

---

Read this passage:

*"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer 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." (Romans 12:1-2)*

How might you daily offer yourself to God's care and His will?

---

---

---

Read this verse:

*(Jesus speaking) "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in Me. In My Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me that you also may be where I am." (John 14:1-3)*

What is Christ preparing for you?

A \_\_\_\_\_ in heaven.

Key: eternal, child, Spirit, place

**TALK TO GOD TODAY . . .**

Thank Him that He knows you completely and loves you as a perfect Father.

## SO NOW WHAT? (About Your New Life in Christ)

You've experienced a turning point in life, and now you're standing on the threshold of an exciting new relationship. It's time to start exploring life with Christ by your side! As in any new relationship, there will be much you will learn about yourself and your new life together in the coming weeks. As you're getting started, keep this foundational perspective in mind: TRUSTING rather than TRYING brought you into a personal relationship with Christ, and now TRUSTING rather than TRYING will be the basis of your ongoing relationship.

So how do you start "growing more mature" as a Christian? Is it all up to you – do you need to start "pushing yourself along?" In truth, God has already taken the initiative and He is at work within your life through His Spirit, growing within you new sensitivities and creating new motivations that formerly were not present. Taking special moments daily to think about God's words in the Bible and to talk to Him in prayer are more "planned ways" to experience His presence. But inviting God into all your daily activities and responsibilities is also an important "along the way" means of growing in your understanding of what it means to be a follower of Christ. All aspects of your life – attending a worship service, being with your family or friends, reading the Bible and praying, interacting with others at work or helping a neighbor – all of these are avenues through which Christ desires to accompany you and make you more like Himself. What an exciting adventure you have begun!

## ARE WE THERE YET? (About Daily Communication with Christ)

Today's title question is a common refrain often voiced by children on a long journey. The question reveals a perspective of "enduring the trip" so that one can ultimately reach the destination and finally begin enjoying the benefits of having arrived. In a spiritual journey, however, you need a different perspective! Daily time spent with Christ now is PART OF the destination! Jesus taught that "the Kingdom of God" not only exists in heaven where we will one day live with Him, but the Kingdom also lives inside each person beginning the moment that we say "yes" to a personal relationship with Him.

Recognize that as each day dawns, you will have new opportunities to learn more about His love and experience life from His perspective. This understanding will encourage you to draw close to Jesus and savor special moments with Him. In each day of this *"Beginning Your Journey in Christ"* traveler's guide you have been practicing a pattern of daily Bible reading and talking to God in prayer. These are two very basic, or foundational, ways to "enter into His presence" and grow to become more like Him. Enjoy the journey of traveling with Christ by your side! Daily read His words written to you in the Bible and talk with Him in prayer!

Read this passage:

*“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified . . . for the Lord your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you.” (Deuteronomy 31:6)*

How does the promise of God’s presence give you hope in overcoming problems and disappointments?

---

---

---

Read this passage:

*“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.” (Romans 8:28)*

Over the passage of time, what promise does God make to you concerning difficult times?

---

---

---

**TALK TO GOD TODAY . . .**

Thank Him for being your Abba (Daddy) Father. Tell Him that you’re going to depend upon His wisdom, His strength and His love to help you face everything that comes your way.

**REFLECT ON THE FOLLOWING BIBLE PASSAGES TO BETTER UNDERSTAND GOD’S ONGOING INVOLVEMENT IN YOUR LIFE:**

You are now a new person in Christ . . .

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (2 Corinthians 5:17)*

What does it mean to you to have a “fresh start” in life through Christ?

---

---

---

Coming to saving faith is just the threshold, or beginning, of the good work that God is going to do in you . . .

*“Being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 1:6)*

What can you be confident of now that you’re a Christian?

---

---

---

God has a wonderful plan for your life . . .

*“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” (Jeremiah 29:11)*

How is your outlook on the future impacted by this statement?

---

---

---

**TALK TO GOD TODAY . . .**

Thank Him that your salvation experience launched you on a life-long adventure with Jesus. Share with Him what you anticipate in your future relationship together.

## ISN'T THIS RISKY? (About Set-Backs and Sin)

Sooner or later something disillusioning or disappointing will happen to you. Perhaps you'll tell a family member or friend about your new faith in Christ, and they'll be unsupportive of your decision. Or an unexpected difficulty may come your way, causing you to wonder why God let this happen to you. Or possibly you'll disappoint yourself, giving in to an old temptation that used to defeat you before becoming a Christian. How should you respond when disheartening times come?

First, recognize that Christ alone was the only Person whose trust in God was complete and whose life was lived in perfect harmony and obedience to His Heavenly Father. All believers experience times of disappointment, failure and confusion. Paul, a great Christian leader, wrote these self-disclosing words in Romans 7:15: "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do, I do not do, but what I hate, I do."

Expect that in your new life as a believer, you will experience some challenges, changes and growing pains. As you're "a work in progress," humbly recognize your incompleteness. Then draw close to God, and watch how, in His magnificent way, He will turn your failures, difficulties and disappointments into rich experiences of personal growth and deepening bonds with Him.

## PREPARE FOR LIFE'S CHALLENGES BY THINKING ABOUT THESE BIBLE PASSAGES AND QUESTIONS

Are you facing a temptation right now? If so, what?

---

*"No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it." (1 Corinthians 10:13)*

How does knowing that God will faithfully work on your behalf give you encouragement?

---



---



---

Read this 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)*

Even though Christ died for all your sins (past, present and future) on the cross, why do you think the Bible encourages you to confess your failures to God and others?

---



---



---

How does unconfessed wrong in a relationship create barriers or distancing?