



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

KNOWING JESUS

Becoming More Like Jesus

A Beginner Guide to Christlike Character, Spiritual Growth, and the Holy Spirit's Transforming Work

The short answer

Becoming more like Jesus means the Holy Spirit gradually transforms believers so that their character, thoughts, desires, words, choices, and relationships increasingly reflect Christ. This change does not earn salvation. It grows from belonging to Jesus, abiding in Him, learning His Word, and responding to His grace with faith and obedience.

"We all, with unveiled face seeing the glory of the Lord as in a mirror, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord, the Spirit."

2 Corinthians 3:18 WEB

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PART ONE · BEGINNER GUIDE

Welcome

This Companion was not written to replace your Bible. It was written to help you fall in love with it. Every page is intended to send you back into God's Word with greater confidence, deeper understanding, and a clearer picture of Jesus Christ.

The people of the Bible are not the destination; they are evidence of God's transforming work. The goal is not merely to know more about spiritual growth. It is to know Jesus more clearly and understand how He changes those who belong to Him.

Foundational truth

The Bible is not merely a book to be understood. It is God's self-revelation, given so that people may know Him through Jesus Christ.

How to use this guide

- Keep your Bible open and verify every cited passage in context.
- Begin with Part One for a complete beginner foundation.
- Move slowly; you do not need to understand or change everything at once.
- Ask the Holy Spirit for help. Transformation is His work, not merely self-improvement.
- Continue to Part Two when you are ready for intermediate concepts.

Beginner memory anchor

We become more like Jesus by staying close to Jesus and allowing the Holy Spirit to change us.



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PART ONE · BEGINNER GUIDE

What you will learn

01	God's purpose God intends to form His children into the likeness of Jesus.
02	Grace comes first Spiritual growth flows from salvation rather than earning it.
03	The Holy Spirit changes us Willpower alone cannot produce Christlike character.
04	We learn by looking at Jesus Scripture reveals Christ's character and ways.
05	Growth touches the whole person Jesus changes our hearts, thoughts, words, choices, and relationships.



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PART ONE · BEGINNER GUIDE

What you will learn — continued

06	Growth is gradual Genuine progress may be slow, uneven, and difficult to see.
07	We participate Prayer, Scripture, obedience, repentance, and community support growth.
08	Grace meets failure We return to Jesus rather than hiding in guilt or shame.
09	Love is central Growing in Christlikeness changes how we love God and people.
10	The goal is Jesus Maturity is not about appearing impressive; it is about reflecting Christ.



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PART ONE · BEGINNER GUIDE · 1

God's purpose is to make us more like Jesus

"For whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son."

Romans 8:29 WEB

God does not save people only to forgive their past and leave them unchanged. He rescues sinners, gives them new life, places His Spirit within them, and begins forming them into the likeness of His Son.

This does not mean believers become divine or turn into copies of Jesus in every personal detail. We do not receive His unique identity as the eternal Son of God, nor do we repeat His saving work.

God increasingly forms

- Love, holiness, humility, and compassion.
- Truthfulness, courage, patience, and obedience.
- Mercy, faithfulness, self-control, and dependence upon the Father.

God's purpose is not to erase the personality He gave you. Peter, John, Martha, Mary Magdalene, and Paul did not become identical people. Christlikeness purifies and redirects our personalities so that our unique lives increasingly honor Jesus.

Beginner truth

God is forming the character of Jesus within the person He created you to be.



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PART ONE · BEGINNER GUIDE · 2

Grace comes before growth

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, that no one would boast.”

Ephesians 2:8–9 WEB

We do not become more like Jesus so that God will save us. We are saved because of what Jesus has done. Jesus lived the sinless life we could not live, died for our sins, and rose bodily from the dead.

Ephesians 2:10 says believers are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works. Spiritual growth is not payment for grace. It is the result of grace taking root in a believer’s life.

The order matters

01	Jesus accomplishes salvation His saving work is sufficient.
02	We receive salvation It is given by grace through faith.
03	The Spirit gives new life God lives and works within believers.
04	God transforms us He changes our character and conduct.
05	Good fruit grows Good works become evidence rather than payment.

Beginner memory anchor

We are not changed so Jesus will accept us. Jesus accepts those who trust Him and then begins changing them.



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PART ONE · BEGINNER GUIDE · 3

What does becoming more like Jesus mean?

Becoming more like Jesus means learning to reflect His character and follow His ways. It does not mean copying every action Jesus performed.

Unique to Jesus

- He perfectly revealed the Father and lived without sin.
- He fulfilled the Law and the Prophets.
- He died as the atoning sacrifice and rose from the dead.
- He reigns as Lord and King, will judge the world, and will renew creation.

Presented as examples for His followers

- Love God, neighbors, and enemies.
- Speak truth with grace and serve humbly.
- Show compassion, resist temptation, and forgive.
- Pray faithfully and obey the Father.
- Care for overlooked people and stand courageously for truth.
- Endure suffering faithfully and make disciples.

Keep the distinction clear

Jesus does not simply show us how to become better people. He saves us from sin and then teaches us how saved people live.



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PART ONE · BEGINNER GUIDE · 4

The Holy Spirit transforms believers

Spiritual growth requires more than determination. A person may temporarily change a habit through discipline, fear, pressure, or a desire to impress others. Christlike transformation goes deeper. God changes what we love, desire, believe, and pursue.

The Holy Spirit

- Gives new spiritual life (John 3:5–8).
- Lives within believers (Romans 8:9–11).
- Teaches and reminds us of Jesus' words (John 14:26).
- Glorifies Jesus and helps us understand truth (John 16:14; 1 Corinthians 2:12–16).
- Helps us put sinful practices to death (Romans 8:13).
- Produces Christlike fruit (Galatians 5:22–23).
- Helps us pray and gives power to bear witness (Romans 8:26; Acts 1:8).

We are not passive, but neither are we self-powered. Believers actively read Scripture, pray, repent, obey, serve, resist sin, and practice wise discipline. Yet the power for genuine transformation comes from the Holy Spirit.

Beginner truth

We participate in spiritual growth, but we do not produce spiritual life by ourselves.



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PART ONE · BEGINNER GUIDE · 5

The fruit of the Spirit shows Christlike character

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, and self-control."

Galatians 5:22–23 WEB

Love

Seeking another person's true good in ways that agree with God's truth.

Joy

A deep gladness rooted in God's character and promises.

Peace

Resting in God and pursuing restored relationships.

Patience

Responding to delays and difficult people without harshness or hopelessness.

Kindness and goodness

Treating people with care while choosing what is morally right.

Faithfulness

Being trustworthy, dependable, and loyal to God.

Gentleness

Using strength with humility and care.

Self-control

Depending upon the Spirit to govern desires, words, and choices.

Whole-life fruit

The Spirit forms a whole life. Love needs truth, courage needs self-control, and truth needs gentleness.



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We become like Jesus by looking at Jesus

The more clearly we see Jesus in Scripture, the better we understand Christlikeness. Read the Gospels and notice how He related to the Father, prayed, treated hurting people, welcomed sinners while calling them to repentance, used authority, served, confronted hypocrisy, and endured suffering.

Jesus understands temptation

“For we don’t have a high priest who can’t be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but one who has been in all points tempted like we are, yet without sin.”

Hebrews 4:15 WEB

Jesus experienced genuine temptation, yet He never sinned. In Matthew 4:1–11, He answered temptation with Scripture, remained loyal to the Father, and refused to misuse His identity or power.

Jesus’ sinlessness does not make Him distant. Hebrews 4:16 invites believers to draw near to the throne of grace to receive mercy and timely help.

When tempted

- Come to Jesus honestly and ask for help.
- Remember Scripture and refuse to negotiate with sin.
- Leave situations that encourage temptation.
- Seek prayer and accountability from trusted believers.
- Depend upon the Holy Spirit.

Remember

Being tempted is not itself sin. Jesus knows temptation’s pressure, remained faithful, and offers grace to help.



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PART ONE · BEGINNER GUIDE · 7

A simple Gospel-reading practice

01	Read Choose one Gospel scene and read it slowly in context.
02	Notice What does Jesus say and do?
03	Recognize What does the passage reveal about His character and the Father?
04	Distinguish What is unique to His saving mission, and what may believers imitate?
05	Respond What should be trusted, worshiped, or obeyed?
06	Pray Ask the Spirit to make that truth visible in your life.

Questions that keep Jesus central

- Who is Jesus in this passage?
- What does this reveal about His character?
- How does He respond to people, pressure, temptation, or suffering?
- What must I believe before asking what I should do?
- How might the Spirit form this quality in me?

Memory anchor

We do not become like an imagined Jesus. We become like the Jesus revealed in Scripture.



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Jesus changes our hearts

Jesus taught that sinful actions grow from within the human heart (Mark 7:21–23). God cares about outward behavior, but He does not stop there.

He exposes and transforms

- What we desire, fear, trust, and worship.
- What makes us angry or envious.
- What we protect and believe we must control.
- What we secretly seek from other people.

Someone may stop speaking angrily while resentment continues growing inside. Christlike transformation does not merely silence the words. It invites Jesus to address the pride, fear, hurt, or desire for control beneath them.

“Search me, God, and know my heart. Try me, and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way.”

Psalm 139:23–24 WEB

Beginner truth

Jesus changes more than what others can see. He changes the heart from which our lives flow.



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PART ONE · BEGINNER GUIDE · 9

Jesus renews our minds

“Don’t be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

Romans 12:2 WEB

Our thinking is shaped by family experiences, culture, fear, pain, social media, habit, other people’s expectations, false teaching, and our own desires. Becoming more like Jesus includes learning to recognize what is true according to God’s Word.

Replacing false beliefs

- “My worth depends on approval” becomes “My identity rests in Christ” (Colossians 3:1–4).
- “I must control everything” becomes “God is trustworthy” (Philippians 4:6–7).
- “My feelings determine truth” becomes “God’s Word is truth” (John 17:17).
- “Forgiveness means nothing happened” becomes “Forgiveness releases vengeance while wisdom and justice may remain necessary” (Romans 12:17–21).
- “Failure makes Jesus reject me” becomes “He faithfully forgives those who confess” (1 John 1:9).

Beginner memory anchor

Christlike living grows from a mind increasingly shaped by God’s truth.



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Jesus changes our words and relationships

Jesus said the mouth speaks from the abundance of the heart (Luke 6:45). Christlike speech is truthful, gracious, timely, courageous, gentle, and intended to build others up.

Questions before speaking

- Is it true, necessary, and loving?
- Is this the right time?
- Am I trying to help, punish, impress, or control?
- Would I say this if the person were present?
- Does my tone reflect Jesus as much as my words do?

Christlike love

Jesus welcomed overlooked people, showed compassion, listened to honest questions, confronted sin and hypocrisy, forgave His enemies, served His disciples, and gave His life for sinners.

He receives people as they are, but His love does not abandon them where they are. He welcomes, forgives, teaches, corrects, restores, and transforms.

A needed safeguard

Biblical love does not require remaining in abuse, concealing crime, tolerating manipulation, or refusing professional help. Forgiveness does not automatically restore trust or remove consequences.



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Jesus teaches humility and obedience

Humility

Jesus said, “Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart” (Matthew 11:29). Humility does not mean believing you have no value.

- Recognize that God is God and we are not.
- Receive identity from Him rather than making ourselves the center.
- Listen, admit wrong, and accept correction.
- Serve without demanding recognition.
- Use authority for another person's good.
- Refuse both pride and self-contempt.

Obedience

Jesus said, “If you love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). Obedience does not earn His love. It grows from trusting Him.

- Tell the truth, refuse gossip, and turn from sexual sin.
- Forgive while establishing wise boundaries.
- Give generously, confess wrongdoing, and serve quietly.
- Wait when you want to rush and trust God when you do not understand.
- Leave situations that encourage temptation and seek accountability.

Beginner truth

Spiritual maturity is not sinless perfection. It is a growing willingness to trust, obey, seek help, and return when we wander.



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Jesus teaches us to serve and forgive

Serve

Jesus washed His disciples' feet and gave them an example of humble service (John 13:1–17). Christlike service notices needs, values overlooked tasks, protects dignity, and uses gifts for another person's good.

Serving does not mean saying yes to every request. Jesus sometimes withdrew to pray and did not meet every demand. Wise service depends upon the Father rather than guilt or people-pleasing.

Forgive

Ephesians 4:32 calls forgiven people to forgive as God forgave them in Christ. Forgiveness releases personal vengeance and entrusts justice to God.

Forgiveness does not necessarily mean

- Saying the harm did not matter or immediately restoring trust.
- Avoiding consequences or refusing to report a crime.
- Remaining unsafe or reconciling without repentance.
- Forgetting what happened.

Reconciliation usually requires truth, repentance, and willingness from both people. Deep wounds may require repeated surrender, wise pastoral care, and professional counseling.



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Jesus teaches us to endure

Jesus said, "In the world you have oppression; but cheer up! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

Believers may experience illness, grief, rejection, persecution, betrayal, financial hardship, waiting, disappointment, unanswered questions, and harm caused by human choices.

Christlike endurance does not mean pretending pain does not hurt. Jesus wept (John 11:35), expressed sorrow (Matthew 26:38), submitted His desire to the Father (Luke 22:42), and lamented from the cross (Matthew 27:46; Psalm 22:1).

Faithful endurance means continuing to trust God in real pain. It may include lament, tears, counseling, medical care, practical help, rest, boundaries, and asking others to carry burdens.

Beginner memory anchor

Christlike faith does not deny sorrow. It brings sorrow honestly to the Father and continues trusting Him.



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PART ONE · BEGINNER GUIDE · 14

Spiritual growth is usually gradual

Some changes happen quickly when a person comes to Christ. Other areas require years of growth, repeated repentance, healing, and practice.

The first disciples misunderstood Jesus, argued about importance, responded impulsively, fell asleep when they should have prayed, fled at His arrest, and struggled to believe the resurrection. Yet Jesus patiently taught, corrected, restored, and used them.

Peter denied Jesus three times. After the resurrection, Jesus restored him and entrusted him with responsibility (John 21:15–19).

Questions that may reveal growth

- Am I more willing to confess and quicker to return?
- Am I becoming more patient, truthful, or compassionate?
- Do I recognize unhealthy patterns sooner?
- Am I increasingly willing to obey Scripture?
- Am I learning to receive correction?
- Do I depend more upon God and less upon myself?

Beginner truth

Slow growth is not the same as no growth. God is patient, but He is not passive.



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PART ONE · BEGINNER GUIDE · 15

What should I do when I fail?

Two unhealthy reactions

- Pride says, “I can fix this myself and prove I am better.”
- Shame says, “I am hopeless. Jesus must be tired of me. I should hide.”

The gospel offers another response

01	Come into the light Do not minimize, rename, excuse, or conceal sin.
02	Confess specifically Agree with God about what was wrong.
03	Receive forgiveness Trust Christ rather than punishing yourself.
04	Make amends Apologize, restore, correct, or accept consequences where appropriate.
05	Seek help Invite trusted believers, pastoral care, counseling, or other support.
06	Learn Notice triggers, beliefs, habits, and circumstances involved.
07	Take the next step Do not wait until you feel spiritually impressive.

Grace does not make sin harmless

Grace gives us courage to face sin because Jesus carried its condemnation (Romans 8:1).



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PART ONE · BEGINNER GUIDE · 16

Practices that support spiritual growth

Scripture

Know God, recognize Jesus, renew the mind, and learn obedience.

Prayer

Praise, confess, thank, ask, lament, and intercede.

Worship

Respond to God's worth through gratitude, surrender, and obedience.

Christian community

Learn, serve, receive encouragement, and practice forgiveness.

Communion and baptism

Remember Christ's saving work and publicly identify with Him.

Confession

Bring sin into the light and receive prayer and accountability.

Service and generosity

Practice humility, compassion, stewardship, and love.

Fasting

Set aside a legitimate comfort to seek God with focused dependence.

Rest

Receive human limitations rather than treating exhaustion as faithfulness.

Keep grace central

These practices are not spiritual scorecards. The goal is not mastering a routine; it is remaining close and responsive to Jesus.



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PART ONE · BEGINNER GUIDE · 17

Community helps form Christlike character

We cannot practice patience, forgiveness, encouragement, service, generosity, or burden-bearing entirely by ourselves. God uses other believers to help us grow.

Christian community provides opportunities to

- Hear Scripture, worship, and ask questions.
- Receive encouragement and correction.
- Confess struggles and use spiritual gifts.
- Practice forgiveness, patience, and service.
- Carry burdens and persevere through hardship.

Recognizing growth

- Am I more aware of my need for grace and quicker to confess?
- Does Scripture increasingly shape my thinking?
- Am I becoming more loving, truthful, patient, and self-controlled?
- Can I receive correction with less defensiveness?
- Does my life increasingly point away from me and toward Jesus?

Leadership safeguard

Spiritual authority never permits manipulation, threat, exploitation, isolation, or abuse. Leaders remain accountable to Scripture, and serious wrongdoing should not be hidden.



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PART ONE · A PRACTICAL TOOL

A simple weekly rhythm

01	Look at Jesus Read one Gospel scene and notice His character.
02	Examine your heart Where is that quality weak or missing in you?
03	Renew your mind Choose one related Scripture to remember.
04	Practice obedience Take one concrete action: apologize, encourage, tell truth, set a boundary, give, or serve.
05	Invite community Share what you are learning and ask for prayer.
06	Notice grace Thank God for evidence of growth, however small.
07	Rest and return Remember that Jesus is the source and begin again.

Keep it simple

Choose one area at a time. The goal is not to fix yourself in seven days. It is to cooperate with the Spirit.



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PART ONE · COMMON BEGINNER QUESTIONS

Questions about spiritual growth

How long does it take?

Growth continues throughout Christian life. Complete transformation awaits resurrection.

What if I do not feel like I am growing?

Feelings are not always reliable. Look for gradual repentance, love, obedience, humility, and dependence.

Does struggling with sin mean I am not a Christian?

Not necessarily. Take sin seriously, confess honestly, seek help, and continue returning to Jesus.

Is temptation the same as sin?

No. Jesus was tempted yet without sin. Temptation becomes sin when we welcome, cultivate, or act upon what opposes God.

Can willpower make me like Jesus?

Discipline can support wise choices, but only the Spirit produces deep spiritual transformation.

Must I copy Jesus' personality?

No. Quiet and outgoing believers can both display Christlike character.

Does Christlikeness mean always being nice?

No. Jesus was gentle and compassionate, but He also confronted hypocrisy and spoke courageously.

What if someone else grows faster?

Do not make growth a competition. Learn from others, but keep Jesus as the standard and grace as the foundation.



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PART ONE · PRACTICE PAGE

Read Colossians 3:1–17

01

Consider

What has happened to believers because they belong to Christ?

02

Consider

Where does Paul tell them to set their minds?

03

Consider

What belongs to the old life?

04

Consider

What qualities are believers told to put on?

05

Consider

What place does love have?



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PART ONE · PRACTICE PAGE

Read Colossians 3:1–17 — continued

06	Consider How should Christ's Word live within believers?
07	Consider What role do gratitude and worship play?
08	Consider What old pattern do you need to put away?
09	Consider What Christlike quality do you need to practice?
10	Consider How does the passage keep grace and obedience together?

One possible faithful summary

Because believers have been raised with Christ and given a new identity in Him, they put away the old life and put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, forgiveness, and love.



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PART ONE · REVIEW AND REFLECTION

What have you learned?

- What does becoming more like Jesus mean?
- Why must grace come before growth?
- What is unique to Jesus and cannot be copied?
- How does Jesus' experience of temptation encourage believers?
- What role does the Holy Spirit have?
- How does Scripture renew the mind?
- Why does God care about the heart and outward behavior?
- How should believers respond after failure?
- What is the difference between forgiveness and reconciliation?
- Why are Christian community and grace-centered practices important?
- What evidence of God's work can you recognize?

Beginner memory anchors

- Grace comes before growth.
- The Spirit produces Christlike character.
- Jesus understands temptation and gives mercy and help.
- Growth touches the heart, mind, words, choices, and relationships.
- Failure is an invitation to confess and return.
- The goal is not to look impressive; it is to reflect Jesus.



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PART TWO · WANT TO GO DEEPER?

An intermediate study of transformation

Part One provides a complete beginner foundation. Part Two explores sanctification, union with Christ, God's work and our participation, identity and obedience, the already-and-not-yet pattern, spiritual practices, suffering, assurance, and the final completion of God's work.

Intermediate memory anchor

Sanctification is God's gracious, lifelong work through which believers, united to Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, actively grow in holiness and increasingly reflect Jesus.

How to use Part Two

- Read every passage in context.
- Keep justification and sanctification related but distinct.
- Distinguish clear teaching from inference and debated explanations.
- Hold differing Christian perspectives with humility.



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PART TWO · INTERMEDIATE · 1

What is sanctification?

Sanctification refers to being made holy or set apart for God. The New Testament speaks about it in more than one way.

A completed position

Believers have been set apart through Christ's once-for-all sacrifice (Hebrews 10:10).

A continuing process

Believers are called to grow in holiness (1 Thessalonians 4:3).

A future completion

God will finish His transforming work when Christ returns (1 Thessalonians 5:23–24).

These are not contradictions. A believer belongs to God because of Christ, is being transformed by the Spirit, and will one day be made completely like Christ in resurrection life.

Keep the order clear

Justification concerns God declaring sinners righteous through faith in Christ. Sanctification concerns God increasingly transforming those He has justified.



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PART TWO · INTERMEDIATE · 2

Union with Christ and gospel-shaped obedience

Union with Christ

To be “in Christ” means believers are joined to Jesus in a real saving relationship established by grace. They do not become divine or lose individual identity.

- They share in the benefits of His death and resurrection (Romans 6:1–11).
- They receive a new identity (2 Corinthians 5:17).
- Christ lives in them through the Spirit (Galatians 2:20).
- His life becomes the source of fruitfulness (John 15:1–17).

The indicative and imperative

New Testament letters often state what God has done before commanding how believers should live. Colossians 3 says, “You died, and your life is hidden with Christ,” then commands believers to put sin to death and put on Christlike character.

The order

Legalism says, “Obey so God will accept you.” The gospel says, “Because God has received you through Christ, learn to live according to your new identity.”



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PART TWO · INTERMEDIATE · 3

God works, and believers participate

Philippians 2:12–13 calls believers to work out their salvation while affirming that God works within them to desire and accomplish His good pleasure.

God's work

- Gives new life and places His Spirit within believers.
- Produces new desires and convicts of sin.
- Gives strength and completes what He begins.

Our participation

- Trust, read Scripture, pray, and obey.
- Resist temptation, confess sin, and practice wisdom.
- Serve, seek accountability, and persevere.

Putting off and putting on

Ephesians 4 and Colossians 3 describe a complete pattern: identify the old response, turn from it, renew the mind with truth, and practice a Christlike replacement.

Temptation example

Put off entertaining sin. Remember that Jesus understands temptation and offers grace (Hebrews 4:15–16). Put on prayer, Scripture, wise escape, accountability, and faithful obedience.



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PART TWO · INTERMEDIATE · 4

Already and not yet

Believers are already new creations in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17), yet they still await bodily redemption and complete freedom from sin (Romans 8:23).

Already

- Believers are forgiven, have new life, and possess the Spirit.
- Sin is no longer their rightful master.
- They belong to Christ.

Not yet

- Temptation and weakness remain.
- Growth is incomplete and creation continues groaning.
- Believers still await resurrection.

Grace-centered practices

Christians use terms such as spiritual disciplines or means of grace. Practices become legalistic when used to earn acceptance, prove superiority, hide sin, or trust a routine more than Christ.

The difference

Legalistic effort trusts performance. Gospel-shaped effort trusts Christ while faithfully responding to grace.



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PART TWO · INTERMEDIATE · 5

Suffering and emotional maturity

Transformation through suffering

Romans 5:3–5, James 1:2–4, and Romans 8:28–29 teach that God can produce endurance, character, and hope through trials. This does not mean suffering is automatically good, abuse should be tolerated, pain should be minimized, or we can always explain God's hidden purpose.

Jesus is more than an example in suffering. He entered human sorrow, carried sin, defeated death, intercedes for His people, and promises resurrection.

Emotional maturity

- Recognize emotions without making them final authority.
- Express grief without shame and handle anger without sin.
- Receive correction and take responsibility for harm.
- Communicate honestly and respect boundaries.
- Distinguish service from rescuing or controlling.
- Seek reconciliation without demanding it.

Pastoral safeguard

Medical care, counseling, legal protection, lament, rest, and practical assistance may all be wise expressions of faith.



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PART TWO · INTERMEDIATE · 6

Personality, culture, and assurance

Jesus corrects every personality and culture

- He was gentle without weakness and courageous without recklessness.
- He was compassionate without approving sin and truthful without cruelty.
- He was humble without denying His identity.
- He served without being controlled by people.
- He was emotionally honest without being ruled by emotion.
- He was tempted, yet completely without sin.

Healthy assurance

Fruit does not save us, but it can provide evidence that the Spirit is at work. Healthy self-examination asks whether we presently trust Christ, take sin seriously, repent, desire obedience, and see growing love.

- Rest in Jesus' sufficient sacrifice and trustworthy promises.
- Recognize the Spirit's presence and growing fruit.
- Avoid endless inward inspection that barely looks at Christ.

Our confidence

Not "I perform well enough," but "Jesus is sufficient, His promises are trustworthy, and His grace is changing me."



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PART TWO · INTERMEDIATE · 7

God will complete His transforming work

"We know that when he is revealed, we will be like him; for we will see him just as he is."

1 John 3:2 WEB

This future completion is often called glorification. Believers will be raised with transformed bodies, sin will no longer corrupt them, death will be defeated, and God's people will fully reflect the holy character He intended.

The triune God transforms

- The Father chose believers to be conformed to His Son and faithfully completes His work.
- The Son accomplished salvation, reveals the Father, understands temptation, intercedes, and unites believers to Himself.
- The Spirit gives life, reveals Christ, produces holy character, empowers obedience, and transforms believers into Christ's image.

Final hope

God Himself is committed to completing the work He began in His people.



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PART TWO · INTERMEDIATE REVIEW

Questions for deeper reflection

- What is sanctification, and how does it differ from justification?
- How does union with Christ support transformation?
- How do identity and command protect grace and obedience?
- How can believers participate while depending upon God's power?
- What does it mean to put off the old and put on the new?
- How does Jesus' experience of temptation shape our response?
- How does already-and-not-yet explain genuine but incomplete growth?
- When can a spiritual practice become legalistic?
- How may God redeem suffering without calling evil good?
- How can emotional maturity overlap with Christlikeness?
- Why should Jesus rather than personality or culture define maturity?
- How can fruit support assurance without becoming the basis of salvation?
- How do the Father, Son, and Spirit work together in sanctification?



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CONTINUE IN SCRIPTURE

Key passages for further study

God's purpose

Romans 8:28–30; 2 Corinthians 3:12–18; Ephesians 4:11–16; 1 John 3:1–3

Jesus' temptation and compassion

Matthew 4:1–11; Luke 4:1–13; Hebrews 2:14–18; 4:14–16

Union with Christ

John 15:1–17; Romans 6:1–14; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 1:3–14

The Holy Spirit

John 14:15–27; 16:5–15; Romans 8:1–17; Galatians 5:13–26

Fruit and character

Matthew 5–7; John 13:1–17, 34–35; Colossians 3:1–17; 2 Peter 1:3–11

Putting off and putting on

Romans 12:1–21; Ephesians 4:17–32; Titus 2:11–14

Growth through testing

Romans 5:1–5; James 1:2–8; 1 Peter 1:3–9; Hebrews 12:1–14

Assurance and completion

John 10:27–30; Philippians 1:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:23–24; 1 John 2:1–6

Study reminder

Read each passage in context. Ask what it reveals about Christ and how the Spirit forms His character in believers.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

A CALL TO SALVATION

Would you like to begin life with Jesus?

Becoming more like Jesus begins by belonging to Jesus. God created us to know Him, but every person has sinned and fallen short of His glory. We cannot repair that separation through good behavior, religion, spiritual growth, or personal effort.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, lived the sinless life we could not live, died for our sins, and rose bodily from the dead. Everyone who repents and trusts Him receives forgiveness, reconciliation, new life, the Holy Spirit, and eternal hope.

01

Recognize your need

Admit that you have sinned and cannot save yourself (Romans 3:23).

02

Look to Jesus

Believe that the Son of God died for sinners and rose again (Romans 5:8).

03

Repent and believe

Turn from sin and self-rule toward Jesus (Mark 1:15).

04

Call upon Him

Trust Jesus as Savior and confess Him as Lord (Romans 10:13).

God's promise

"For whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved." — Romans 10:13 WEB



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

BEGIN WITH JESUS

A prayer can express your faith

A simple prayer

Lord Jesus, I know I have sinned and cannot save myself. I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. Please forgive me, make me new, and teach me to follow You. Give me Your Spirit and form Your character within me. I trust You as my Savior and Lord. Amen.

A prayer is not a magic formula. Salvation rests in Jesus Christ, not in perfectly worded sentences. If you are turning to Him, begin reading the Gospel of John, speak with a faithful Christian, and connect with a Bible-teaching church.

This content is made to be shared

There is no charge to download or use this resource. Please read it, print it, copy it, and share it with others. The goal is to point people back to Scripture and toward Jesus.

Resource review note

These resources were created with care but may contain mistakes. Please verify every teaching and citation through Scripture. Possible errors or needed clarifications may be reported to 3NailResources@gmail.com for careful review and correction.

Final memory anchor

We become more like Jesus as we belong to Him, behold Him in Scripture, abide in His love, walk by His Spirit, obey His Word, seek His grace in temptation, return when we fail, and trust Him to complete the work He began.