

The
JOURNEY INTO
FAITH
A Guide For New Believers

By
CHARLES SIMPSON

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Charles Simpson has ministered around the world as an effective Bible teacher, pastor, and church planter. At the age of twenty, Charles was ordained as a Southern Baptist Pastor. Years later, he was baptized in the Holy Spirit and became a pioneer in what later came to be known as the Charismatic Renewal movement. He has authored numerous books, and served as contributor to *The Spirit-Filled Life Bible*. Charles is the Editor-in-Chief of *One-to-One Magazine*, and the Senior Pastor of Covenant Church of Mobile, Alabama.

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The Journey Into Faith—A Guide For New Believers

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DEDICATION

To those who have learned the joy of sharing
their faith in Jesus Christ

INTRODUCTION

You have started on an exciting journey. It is a journey into new life, the purpose of God, and the wonderful destiny that He has planned for you. You have *turned* from your own way—a journey into death—and you have trusted the Lord Jesus. You have been born again from above, by His Word and His Spirit, and you have received His life, becoming a new creature in Him. You have begun a life of faith.

God's Word tells us:

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible....

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as an inheritance,

obeyed and went, even though he didn't know where he was going. By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations whose architect and builder is God.

By faith Abraham, even though he was past age—and Sarah herself was barren—was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who made the promise. And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore (Hebrews 11:1-3; 6-12 NIV).

Now, you have placed your trust in God just like these “ancients” who were ordinary people, but lived by extraordinary faith. And, like these “faith heroes,” you are embracing a destiny filled with great promise!

You may have had a dramatic experience or a quiet one, but His “Word seed” is in you. And this seed will produce change and growth. God will be faithful to empower you and encourage you as you set out on this new journey!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles V. Simpson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Charles V. Simpson

THE JOURNEY OF FAITH

What a privilege to start over again with God's Spirit as your guide!

Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you... (Romans 8:5-9 NIV).

You are now a citizen of His Kingdom (see Philippians 3:20-21). By His death on the cross, which you received as the offering for your disobedience, and by faith in His Resurrection from the dead, you too have been raised up into eternal life.

And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Christ from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from

the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you (Romans 8:9-11 NIV). (See also John 3:1-17 and 1 Peter 1:20-25.)

His Kingdom is heavenly or spiritual in nature. It is *eternal* or never-ending, and it is *internal*, residing within. You are not only in the Kingdom, His Kingdom is in you. His Kingdom is His government in our lives by the Holy Spirit.

*“The kingdom of God is **righteousness** (right relationship to Him), **peace**, and **joy** in the Holy Spirit.”*

His government in us produces *righteousness*—right relationship to Him and to our fellow man. It produces *peace* through harmony with Him and with others. And it produces *joy*—the eternal sense of well-being, satisfaction, and happiness that flows from righteousness and peace. Righteousness, peace, and joy are all in our relationship to the Holy Spirit—His presence in our lives. The kingdom of God is in the Holy Spirit (see Romans 14:17). Recognizing and responding to the Holy Spirit is living in the kingdom of God. The Holy

Spirit is God with us. He is the One Who has been speaking into your heart. He is the One Who has made you a new Christian (see 2 Corinthians 5:17).

Being in the kingdom of God entitles you to His promises, which are wonderful and many. Your journey will lead you to know these promises and see their fulfillment in your life. Your journey will teach you the principles of His Kingdom, which are like stepping stones to His ultimate purpose for your life. These principles are the laws of creation. He will teach you how He created things to work. Working with Him in these ways will lift you higher and higher in your understanding of God's ways and into His plan for your life. Later, we will discuss some of those principles.

All of this new life works by faith. Faith is a deep assurance and confidence in Him and in His Word. As you learn to hear His voice, read His Word, and be around other believers, your faith will grow and you can move forward and see His Word fulfilled. It is an exciting process!

Our faith is not in ourselves. We left that behind when we trusted in Him. Our faith is in Jesus Christ, His Spirit, and His Word. As we exercise faith in Him, our confidence in Him will grow and we can accomplish great things (see 2 Corinthians 12:9-10).

Faith is assurance of His purpose in us. I urge you to believe now that you can do all that He asks you to do (see Mark 9:23 and Philippians 4:13). By

faith, our spiritual ancestors accomplished many great things, and the same Lord and Holy Spirit who helped them is with you today. Faith is the belief that His reward is ahead of you and having the courage to move forward.

You are now a pilgrim; there is no place to settle here. We are looking for better things in better places—places that God has already prepared for us. You are on a journey, an exciting journey with

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no end. An important key to this journey is to enjoy it. If you enjoy the Lord and His will, you will stay strong and continue to move ahead (see Philippians 4). This is a process that will not only change our location, but we are being changed as we move ahead (see 2 Corinthians 3:18). As you journey on in faith, doing His will, you will become more and more like Him. Each time you receive His Word, His nature will increase within you. This journey and process will continue until you see Him face to face.

WHERE YOU WERE

At this point I encourage you to read Ephesians chapter two. It is important to understand where we were before we accepted Him. The Apostle Paul reminds us in this great chapter that we were separated from God, His life, and His promises; we were spiritually dead. In our former state, we lived under guilt, conformity to the world, and dark spiritual forces. We were without hope. Eventually we would have faced death, and eternity without

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God. In a directional sense, we were lost. This is a bad condition—the worst possible.

Ephesians 2:4 says, “But God...” God butted into our condition; He gave us mercy for our sins, joined us to Himself, His life, His promises and His people. And remember, it was all a gift! This great gift was given to show the world what He can do with a person’s life and draw others to Himself. In us, the world sees that God is good and His mercy is everlasting! Because of God’s great mercy, we are now part of His eternal family, His people on earth, and His Kingdom.

You have received abundant life (see John 10:10). Remember it comes from *relating to Him*, not our own goodness or good works. You have received the Holy Spirit, "God with us." He has energized you to follow Christ and will help you in

You have received abundant life. Remember, it comes from relating to Him, not from our own goodness or good works. God is with us. He has energized you to follow Christ and will help you in all situations.

all situations. Learn to trust Him and obey Him. (For more insight, you should read Romans 7 and 8).

WHERE YOU ARE GOING

Now let us look ahead. Where should we go from here? Remember, faith is the key. Simply *believe* and *obey* what He says.

1

Be baptized.

One of the things He has commanded us to do is to *be baptized*. The word “baptize” comes from the Greek word, “*baptizo*.” It means to immerse. Jesus was baptized in water by John the Baptist, and Jesus commanded His disciples to baptize all those who believed in Him (see Matthew 28:18-20). On the Day of Pentecost, all who believed were baptized (see Acts 2:37-39). The Apostle Paul baptized those who believed, and taught that baptism is a symbolic act portraying...

- Jesus’ death, burial, and Resurrection.
- That we have died to ourselves and identify with His death on the cross.
- That we have been raised to walk a new life (see Romans 6:1-6). It is a first step in following Him and confessing our faith.

I urge you to go to a Bible-believing evangelistic church and ask the pastor to baptize you, as an act of confessing Christ, and an act of obedience to the Lord. I am sure the one who has spoken to you about Jesus will be glad to advise you.

2

Receive "Holy Communion."

Another privilege that we have is to *receive* "Holy Communion," the "Lord's Supper," or the "Eucharist," as some refer to it. The night before Jesus was crucified, He brought His disciples to an

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upper room in a private home and ate with them what is called the "Last Supper." But He did something more; He made a New Covenant with them. He took the unleavened bread and said, "This is My body which is given for you, do this in remembrance of Me." Then He took the cup and said, "This cup which is poured out for you is the New Covenant in My blood" (see Luke

22:19-20). The Lord's Supper reminds us of His sacrifice for us and His faithful love that will be with us always.

The practice of how, and how often, communion is taken, varies among churches. But Christians agree that this act causes us to solemnly remember that Jesus died for us, and that He has made a covenant with us to give us His life (see 1 Corinthians 11:23-26). We believe that His very presence is with us as we receive the consecrated bread and wine. It is vital to our fellowship with Him and one another that we receive the tokens of His body and blood, and renew our awareness that we have a covenant God Who gives us covenant life to share with others.

We should prepare for receiving communion by repenting of any known sins in our lives, and seeking to restore any broken relationships that we are able to restore. Communion should never be taken lightly or irreverently; doing so violates the spirit of love and sacrifice that it portrays to us.

3

Lead a life of prayer.

Among the privileges of the Christian life, none is greater than *prayer*. By faith in Christ, we have access to God the Father—Jesus is our Intercessor, Mediator, and the One Who opened the way to the Father (1 Timothy 2:5). Jesus in His earthly life prayed to the Father for His disciples, for guidance, for strength, and for the success and

protection of those who would believe on Him.

Jesus also taught His disciples to pray (see Matthew 6:5-15). He said that when He would go away, He would send the Holy Spirit Who would be with them and help them in their relationship

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to the Father. Prayer is a vital part of that relationship. The Apostle Paul tells us how the Spirit helps us to pray in Romans 8:26-27. Paul also tells us how he himself prayed for the church in Ephesians 1:15-23 and 3:14-21.

Prayer is not only talking to our Heavenly Father; it is listening to Him. In a time of prayer, we can better sense what the Spirit is saying to us, and that is even more important than what we say to Him. In prayer, you will learn how to hear and follow His guidance, and receive His strength. Prayer unburdens and strengthens us. It also affects others as we pray for them.

4

Study God's Word.

Bible study and prayer go together. A set time for both each day will prove helpful. The Bible

should always be studied in a spirit of prayer so that the Lord can speak through the scriptures to us. *I've listed a number of helpful verses throughout this book for your further study about your new life in faith.*

The Bible is not only a book of history and theology, it is a book of God's love and purpose for us. It cannot be properly understood apart from the Holy Spirit Who inspired it. The Apostle Paul commended it to his spiritual son, Timothy, as the inspired Word of God and as profitable for instruction in righteousness. Paul urged him to study it so that he could become a workman who would be unashamed as he rightly understood the Word of truth (see 1 Timothy 2:15; 3:16).

5

Attend church regularly.

There is one other vital part of your journey that I would urge you to observe: *attend church regularly* (see Hebrews 10:25). The new believers mentioned in Acts 2:41-47 gave themselves to continual fellowship, prayer, and worship. The church was very powerful because the believers were strong in their covenant love for one another. Regular fellowship washes us from wrong attitudes and activities, and keeps us focused on Jesus' will for our lives. It is a source of support, love, and guidance for living the Christian life in a world often hostile to faith.

The Church is Christ's Body, and God has

given you gifts and talents which will bless and strengthen it. Your presence adds life to others who, like you, need inspiration and strength in order to fulfill their purpose. Your presence in the assembly is important to you and to them.

So I offer to you that *baptism, communion, prayer, Bible study, and fellowship* are privileges and sources of help in our pursuit of the will of God. I urge you to avail yourself of these vital provisions that the Lord has given to us. They will help you greatly on your journey.

ONE-TO-ONE KEYS

PRIVILEGES OF THE JOURNEY:

1. Be baptized.
2. Receive Holy Communion.
3. Lead a life filled with prayer.
4. Study God's Word.
5. Have regular fellowship with other believers.

PRINCIPLES OF THE KINGDOM

I cannot overstate the importance of Kingdom principles for your advancement on this journey of faith. Principles are how things work. It is the way God created life and all that exists. Principles are not prejudiced; they work for anyone who respects them, and they cannot be violated without negative results. Gravity is a physical principle—we call

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it a law. It cannot be broken, but it can break us if we ignore it. So it is with principles. They will work *for* us or *against* us, but they will work. Therefore, I encourage you to learn these principles and how to apply them. They are biblical mysteries of the Kingdom that the Holy Spirit wants to give to you. Here are some of them:

1

A kept heart brings life.

A kept heart brings life (see Proverbs 4:20-27). Biblically speaking, the heart is the center of our being. It holds the deepest motivations of our mind, conscience, and subconsciousness. It is why we do what we do. To put it another way, keep your thoughts and motives pure. Everything else flows out of this. Philippians 4:7-8 says the same thing another way, "Think on good things." Prayer and confession of sin also help to keep our hearts pure so that pure life flows out from us to others.

2

Faithfulness brings increase.

Faithfulness brings increase. Be responsible for your resources and assigned tasks; it brings rewards from God, Who owns all things. Luke 16:10-12 gives us three sub-principles to this basic principle:

- *If you are faithful in a little, you will be given much.*
- *If you are faithful in that which belongs to another, you will be given that which will be your own.*
- *If you are faithful in money, you will be given true riches. Proper financial management demonstrates our readiness to handle **greater spiritual resources.***

Much more needs to be said on these matters, and I have additional teaching for you that is available. But remember, faithfulness *where you are* prepares you for *where you are going*.

3

Sowing determines harvest.

Sowing determines harvest. This is a most exciting principle. It is your ticket to where you want to go. Your life and resources are “seed.” You can invest them in ways that will bring a multiplied harvest (see Galatians 6:1-10).

Jesus spoke often of the law of sowing and reaping. *We reap what we sow*. Whatever you want to receive, give it. If you want mercy, give it. If you want friends, be friendly. If you want financial increase, be generous. Sowing and reaping run

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through the entire Bible. God sowed seed in Genesis chapter one. Every living thing brings forth “after its kind.”

We not only reap what we sow, *but in proportion to how much we sow* (see 2 Corinthians 9:6-15). If we sow sparingly, we shall reap sparingly.

Faith in this principle will motivate us to sow goodness and mercy in every way possible (see Luke 6:27-38).

Another aspect of this principle is that we reap *where we sow*. Where our efforts are focused, results will come. If you want better results with a particular person or group, sow toward that objective. *But do all that you do as unto the Lord.*

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Occasionally some soil will not produce, or will seem not to for a long period of time. But the Lord is a Rewarder of those who obey Him. He will not forget your seed (see Colossians 3:17-25 and Psalm 126).

There is one special seed that I want to mention. The Bible calls it the “First Fruits” of your harvest, or the tithe. It is the first tenth of all your income or increase. Since all we have is the Lord’s, I would urge you to give Him the “Owner’s portion” as an acknowledgement of His ownership and blessing on your life. This part is His (see Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 23:10; Exodus 23:19; Malachi 3:8-11; Luke 11:42; 1 Corinthians 16:2; and 3 John 2).

God has promised to prosper us if we give Him His portion and allow Him to help us manage the rest. I have practiced giving to God the first tenth, ever since I was a child. My father and grandfather

“If the top button is in the wrong button hole, then all the other buttons will be as well.”

before him practiced tithing. I wholeheartedly recommend sowing this seed to the Lord.

My friend Ern Baxter used to say, “This is the top button. If it is in the wrong button hole, then all the other buttons will be as well.” The tithe principle puts the rest of our finances under His guidance and demonstrates to Him that we believe that He is Lord of our wealth (see Ephesians 4:27).

Also, you should tithe to the place where you are being fed spiritually. I trust that will be the local church. It is the place where food is put on the table for you. It is the place where the Lord is blessing you. Never seek to use the tithes to buy favor or manipulate the church. It is God’s, not ours; once we give it, it is in His hands.

THE JOURNEY HAS BEGUN

You have begun an exciting new journey in your life; a journey into the righteousness, peace, and joy of the Holy Spirit. You have been given resources and wisdom through God's Spirit and His Holy Word, the Bible. God has sent trustworthy Christian friends to stand and walk with you...you are ready!

Now, press onward and upward into the high calling that God has for your life. One of the best

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ways to keep your faith is to share it with others. There are people you know who need the same grace and revelation that God has given to you. Tell them in love, tell them in wisdom, but tell them! Ask your Christian friends to help you in this process. As you do, you'll discover that next to receiving Jesus in your own heart, the greatest joy in life is leading others to Him.

CONTACT US!

If you have received Jesus into your life, we would love to hear your testimony! Also, CSM Publishing will provide assistance to those who have questions, or need materials. You can reach us through:

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