

FIRST STEPS – DAY 1

Member's Packet



Congratulations!

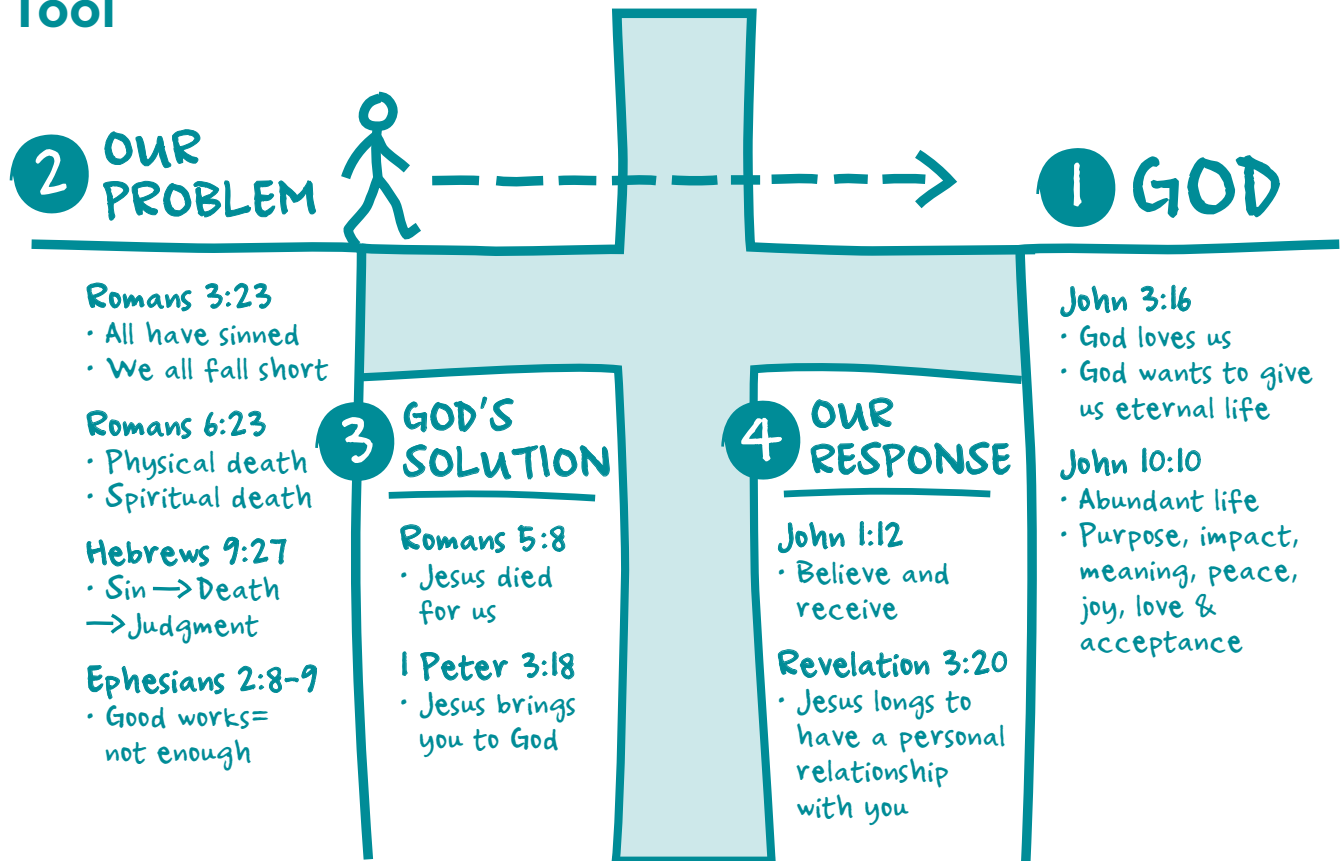
We are so excited and celebrate with you as you start taking your First Steps as a new believer! In fact, did you know that there is rejoicing in Heaven over your decision? Jesus said, “...heaven will be happier over one lost sinner who returns to God than over ninety-nine others who haven’t strayed away!”

(The Book of Luke, chapter 15, verse 7, TLB)

Over the next three weeks, we will be spending time together getting to know your story and helping equip you with the basic tools you’ll need to thrive in your new relationship with Jesus. Let’s get started!



Navigators Discipleship Tool



THE BRIDGE TO LIFE

This tried-and-true resource gives you the Bible verses to explain why we need Jesus' sacrifice on the Cross to solve our greatest problem: separation from God.

When you're not sure if friends have surrendered their lives to Christ yet, this is a great way to help them make that decision.

Draw this diagram on a piece of paper to walk someone through the gospel step-by-step. It helps to have the verses handy, bookmarked in a Bible or Bible app. The numbers show you the order in which to share.

Question & Answer Discussion Guide

1 GOD

[Draw the horizontal line on the right side with “GOD” above it, then add the verses and bullets underneath the line as you share them]

God created us with purpose, to be in relationship with Him and to enjoy all the fullness of life with Him.

John 3:16: “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.”

- What does God desire you to know in the first part of the verse? (**God loves us**)
- What does the last line say God wants you to have? (**God wants to give us eternal life**)

John 10:10: “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”

- What type of life does Jesus want to give you on earth? (**Abundant life**)
- What do you think would be some inner characteristics of this full, abundant life that Jesus wants to give you? (**Purpose, impact, meaning, peace, joy, love & acceptance**)
- Do you think everyone you know is experiencing this abundant life? Let’s see what the Bible says about what prevents it.

2 OUR PROBLEM

[Draw the horizontal line on the left side with “OUR PROBLEM” above it]

We have a problem we can’t fix on our own.

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

- What is humanity’s problem? (**All have sinned**)
- What is sin? (**Like an arrow missing its target, we fall short of God’s intent for us. All of us have done what we should not do and left undone what we should have done.**)
- What is the result of sin? (**Separation from God**)

[Draw two vertical lines to make a chasm]

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

- Wages are what we earn by our actions. What do we earn by our sin? (**Death**)
- There are two types of death. What are they? (**Physical and Spiritual**)

Our sin separates us from God for eternity unless somehow we are released from paying the price for it.

Hebrews 9:27: “Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment...”

- What happens after we die? (**We face judgment for the sin we commit.**)
- This looks bleak for us. What are some ways you or others you know have tried to get to God’s side? (**Going to church, praying, helping people**)

God sees the hopeless situation we’re in and provides a way out.

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

- Can our best efforts bridge the separation between us and God? (**No, we are saved by grace, which is unmerited love. Good works = not enough**)

3 GOD'S SOLUTION

[Draw the Cross]

We can't build a bridge to God, but Jesus Christ is God's bridge to us.

Romans 5:8: "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

- How did God show He loves us even though we're sinners? (**Jesus died for us to pay the penalty for our sin**)

1 Peter 3:18: "For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit."

- Why is Jesus dying on the Cross and rising again such good news for us? (**It allows us to be with God now on Earth and forever in Heaven because Jesus conquered both our sin and death by dying and rising again. That is the Christian gospel!**)

4 OUR RESPONSE

Each of us needs to respond to what God is offering us.

John 1:12: "Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—..."

- How does one become a child of God? (**By believing and receiving Jesus, trusting in his sacrifice as the payment for your own personal sin.**)

Revelation 3:20: "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 that person, and they with me."

- What is Jesus trying to show here, when he offers to come in and eat with us? (**That he longs to have a personal relationship with us**)

5 NEXT STEPS

Accept Jesus, Which Is As Simple As A-B-C

- **Admit** that you are a sinner in need of a Savior and ask God to forgive you and help you turn from sin.
- **Believe** Jesus died for you and rose again, conquering sin and death.
- **Commit** your life to following Jesus, putting your total trust in Him and giving Him decision-making authority as Lord of your life.

Talk to Jesus Right Now

You can talk to Jesus right now to receive him. You can repeat after me or put this in your own words: "Father God, I know that I am a sinner and that I need you to forgive me. I know that your son Jesus died a painful death and rose again so that my sins could be washed clean. Thank you. I want to make you the Lord of my life, and I will trust and follow You. Everything I have is yours now. In the name of Jesus, amen."

The Adventure Ahead

Now that we're restored in our relationship, we get to join him in the restoration of all things on Earth that are broken and damaged by sin! This includes helping your friends have a relationship with Jesus, bringing justice where there is injustice, healing where there is pain, and hope where there is despair.

Your New Identity

Now that you have accepted Jesus, you are given a new identity that God gives you. While we'll go into more depth about these next week, here are a few truths that are worth noting.

Many life-changing things happen at salvation, including:

- Your sins are forgiven completely.
- You receive eternal life with God.
- You become a new creation in Christ.
- You become part of God's family as His adopted child.

In other words, you have a brand new identity. Welcome to the family of God!



Now that you have an idea of what happened to you and who you are, let's take a moment to look at what a life in Christ consists of...

Navigators Discipleship Tool

The Wheel diagram, created by Navigator founder Dawson Trotman in the 1930s, is a simple and effective way to visually explain the structure of a God-glorifying life. Sharing it can be as simple as drawing it on a napkin or notepad. The diagram challenges us to think deeply about how to be an obedient follower of Christ and each part represents a crucial component of a vibrant Christian life.



THE FRONT WHEEL

How you relate to yourself

THE CENTER HUB AND OUTER RIM

- **Christ:** Total surrender to Christ's authority and Lordship is not always a decision made right at conversion, but is a necessary act of the will. For the believer, the "old life" has gone and the new has come (2 Corinthians 5:17), because Christ has begun to dwell in us (Galatians 2:20). God creates within us the desire to do what He wants us to do in order to express His Lordship in our lives.
- **The Christian in Action:** Some acts of obedience to God are internal, such as attitudes, habits, motives, values and day-to-day thoughts. But even these eventually surface outwardly in our relationships with other people. Keeping His commands in obedience is our outward indication of inward health and love for Christ (John 14:21, Romans 12:1).

How you relate to God

THE VERTICAL SPOKES

- **The Word:** God uses His word to speak directly to us, revealing not only who He is, but how He calls us to live and interact with everyone around us (2 Timothy 3:16). This means an earnest personal intake of God's Word is essential for our spiritual health and growth (Joshua 1:8). As God speaks to us through the Scriptures, we learn how to obey Him and apply the gospel to every part of our lives. We also come to know Jesus personally and find He is worthy of our steadfast allegiance.*
- **Prayer:** Prayer is the natural response to God as we hear Him speak through His Word. It is sharing our heart with the One who longs for our companionship and who cares about our concerns. Prayer not only trains our hearts and minds to know the power and glory of God, but also turns His ear towards action in our lives (John 15:7, Philippians 4:6-7).

How you relate to others

THE HORIZONTAL SPOKES

- **Fellowship:** God has directed Christians to build each other up through interdependence and loving relationships with each other (Hebrews 10:24-25). Gathering together as the Body of Christ draws God close around us as we praise Him and encourage one another (Matthew 18:20).
- **Witnessing:** God has given believers the joy and responsibility of telling the world about the good news of Christ's work on Earth (Matthew 4:19). In fact, sharing about His amazing grace is the natural overflow of a rich, vibrant life in Christ (Romans 1:16).

* See Appendix 2 for the Bible listing.



Navigators Discipleship Tool

**Want a deeper relationship with God?
Start with seven minutes a day and
see what happens!**



HOW TO HAVE A DAILY QUIET TIME

Most Christians firmly believe in the importance of spending daily time in God's Word and in prayer, yet so many of us struggle to do either consistently. Perhaps it's because for us to consider them successful, we think every time with God needs to leave us feeling 100% peaceful or sure that we've received crystal clear messages from the Lord. That's not what happens every time, and that's okay.

*In the Book of Psalms, David, who is called "the one after God's own heart," (1 Samuel 13:14) experiences the full spectrum of emotions as he prays fervently to God. He didn't hold back from pouring his authentic, messy heart out to the Lord, and we don't need to either. In fact, God welcomes it.

If you begin the spiritual discipline of spending 10 minutes with God each day, you will soon find that it's impossible to stop there. An amazing thing happens—10 minutes become 20, and it's not long before you're spending 30 precious minutes with Him daily.

Do it for the right reason.

Do not become devoted to the habit, but to the Savior. Spend time in the Word and prayer, not because other people are doing it, not as a spiritless duty every morning, not merely as an end in itself, but because God has granted us the priceless privilege of fellowship with Him.

1/2 minute

Preparing Your Heart

Invest the first 30 seconds preparing your heart. You might pray, "Lord, cleanse my heart so You can speak to me through the Scriptures. Make my mind alert, my soul active, and my heart responsive. Surround me with Your presence during this time."

4 minutes

Listening to God (Scripture Reading)

Take the next four minutes to read the Bible. Your greatest need is to hear a word from God. Allow the Word to strike fire in your heart. Meet the Author!

1 minute

Meditate

This is not the same as what you see in Eastern meditation. Instead, by using your imagination, enter into the Biblical scene in order to "see" the setting, the people, and the unfolding action. It is through this meditation that you encounter the text and discover its meaning for your life.

2 1/2 minutes

Talking to God (Prayer)

After God has spoken through His Word, then speak to Him in prayer. One helpful method is to incorporate four areas of prayer that you can remember with the word, ACTS.

ADORATION

This is the purest kind of prayer because it's all for God. Tell the Lord that you love Him. Reflect on His greatness.

CONFESSION

"Confession" comes from a root word meaning "to agree together with." When we apply this to prayer, it means we agree with God's estimation of what we've done. Ask Him to cleanse you of your sin and help you turn from it moving forward.

THANKSGIVING

Think of several specific things to thank Him for: your family, your business, your church—even thank Him for being with you in hardship.

SUPPLICATION

This means to "ask for, earnestly and humbly." Ask for others, then ask for yourself. Include people around the world, missionaries, friends, and those who have yet to hear about Jesus.

2 minutes

Contemplate

Rest in God's presence and receive His transforming embrace. Sit still with God, realizing that in this deep and profound relationship, words are not necessary. Be content and at peace with a wordless, quiet rest in God, which brings joy to the heart. Remember that contemplation is not your action or doing, rather it is allowing God to act in you.



Navigators Discipleship Tool



Travel Hacks for Traveling with God

Whether you're an avid traveler or you only travel occasionally, you can use these travel hacks to remember that God is with you all the time. "And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" Matthew 28:20b (NIV).

Sometimes when you step out of your normal routine for travel, it can be challenging to have a daily quiet time with God. Instead of trying to maintain what you always do at home, be available for whatever God may want to do during this time away.

Here are 7 Simple Travel Hacks for Traveling with God



1. Fold In Scripture

Select a handful of Bible verses that are presently significant and write them on index cards. As you pack your clothes, fold them into a shirt or put them in a clothing pocket. Discover how the Lord uses that specific verse on whichever day you decide to wear those clothes. Make sure to remove the paper before putting any clothes in the laundry.



2. Walk Your Prayers

Create a simple prayer with no more than 10-12 syllables. It could even be from a passage of Scripture. Anytime you're walking on vacation, try praying that prayer as you walk. For example: Use either one of these sentences from this Bible verse: "I keep my eyes always on the Lord. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken" Psalm 16:8 (NIV).



3. Post Your Focus

Throw in a pad of Post-Its into your suitcase, and when you arrive, write one word that will be a reminder of the God who deeply loves and cares for you. Place this in a prominent place where you'll see it often. For example, you could write the word "Hope" on the Post-It as He is your hope. Or possibly "Love" as His love for you is unending. Come back to that word each day for as long as you are in that location. You may even find yourself coming back to it throughout the day.



4. Connect As You Wait

Instead of checking your phone, use those waiting times to connect with God through having conversations with those you're traveling with. Here are some fun conversation starters:

- Which form of biblical transportation would you prefer and why: ark, chariot, donkey, or by foot?
- If God told you like He told Abram to leave your home and start moving, where would you hope He was moving you to and why?
- Would you prefer to walk on water like Jesus or walk through the Red Sea on dry ground like the Israelites and why?



5. Listen On The Journey

There are many ways you can draw near to God through music, podcast episodes, or even audio Bibles. If you're traveling where there won't be internet, then you may want to download some of your favorites to have available offline. Here are a few ideas you could use at any point on your travel journey:

- Create a music playlist that draws you near to God.
- Find podcast episodes that speak to an area of interest or even struggle as you follow Jesus.
- Use an audio Bible and listen to the same Bible passage for the duration of your trip. How does the passage speak to you throughout that time?



6. Drink In His Goodness

As you sip your favorite morning coffee or tea, find a one or two sentence psalm to declare and meditate on. For example, using Psalm 136:1 (NIV), Declare: "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good." Drink in His goodness (drinking coffee or tea) while you pray silently: "His love endures forever."



7. Review Your Photos

As you prepare for bed, take a few moments to review any photos you may have taken from the day.

Notice where you experienced connection to God and where He felt distant. If there is a photo you are most drawn to, stop there and talk with God about what you see and experienced in that scene. Use this as a way to review your day with God and unwind from the day.



Next Steps

Before we finish today, let's make sure:

1. You have a Bible and know where to start.

We are recommending that you start by reading the book of Matthew.

- **If you are a digital person**, we recommend downloading the YouVersion app and selecting the bible reading plan called "[How To Start Reading The Bible](https://www.bible.com/en/reading-plans/27462)" (<https://www.bible.com/en/reading-plans/27462>)
- **If you are looking for a Bible to purchase**, we recommend:
 - [NIV Basic Study Bible NIV, Basic Study Bible, Economy Edition](#)
 - Or the more robust [NIV Study Bible](#)

2. You have seen our groups webpage (gatewayfellowship.com/groups) and have an idea of which group or disciple-maker you'll connect with.

Appendix 1

Online Resources to Answer Your Questions

We are aware that the internet can be a dangerous place to go to in order to find answers to your questions about faith because there are so many unhealthy teachings that are out there. In light of that, we have vetted a few websites that we have found to generally be beneficial in helping answer your questions from a Biblical worldview. Below is a list of them.

- Christian Apologetics and Research Ministries (www.carm.org)
- Got Questions (www.gotquestions.org)
- Stand to Reason (<https://www.str.org/articles>)

Appendix 2

THE OLD TESTAMENT | 39 BOOKS

NARRATIVE	WRITINGS	PROPHECY
PENTATEUCH *	JOB	MAJOR
GENESIS	PSALMS	ISAIAH
EXODUS	PROVERBS	JEREMIAH
LEVITICUS	ECCLESIASTES	EZEKIEL
NUMBERS	SONG OF SONGS	DANIEL
DEUTERONOMY	LAMENTATIONS	MINOR
		HOSEA
JOSHUA		JOEL
JUDGES		AMOS
RUTH		OBADIAH
1&2 SAMUEL		JONAH
1&2 KINGS		MIKAN
1&2 CHRONICLES		NAHUM
ESTRA-NEHEMIAH		HABAKKUK
ESTHER		ZEPHANIAH
		HAGGAI
		ZECHARIAH
		MALACHI

THE NEW TESTAMENT | 27 BOOKS

GOSPELS	NARRATIVE	LETTERS	PROPHECY/LETTER
MATTHEW		PAUL→CHURCHES	REVELATION
MARK		ROMANS	
LUKE	ACTS	1 CORINTHIANS	
JOHN		2 CORINTHIANS	
		GALATIANS	
		EPHESIANS	
		PHILIPPIANS	
		COLOSSIANS	
		1 THESSALONIANS	
		2 THESSALONIANS	
		PAUL→INDIVIDUALS	
		1 TIMOTHY	
		2 TIMOTHY	
		TITUS	
		PHILEMON	
		GENERAL	
		HEBREWS	
		JAMES	
		1 PETER	
		2 PETER	
		1 JOHN	
		2 JOHN	
		3 JOHN	
		JUDE	

THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

How To Read the Bible?

Parable of The Prodigal Son -- Luke 15: 11-32

Name of Book

Verses

Lk 15: 11-32

Chapter

