

The bible makes it clear we are all in need of saving, and we are unable to save ourselves. Because God loves us deeply, he has dealt with the problem of sin by sending his Son Jesus to live a perfect life and to offer himself in our place.

“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.” (Jn 3:16)

Repentance and faith are our essential responses to God’s gracious actions.

PASSAGES FOR REFLECTION

Ro 3:23, 6:23

Ps 51

Lk 15:11-32

1 Jn 1:8-9

Ro 10:9

REFLECTIVE EXERCISE

When you pause and reflect, can you identify a sense deep down that you are in need of saving?

What would a change of mind, heart and will look like for you?

Do you need to trust that God has forgiven and saved you because of what Jesus did on your behalf? If you are ready to do this, pray this prayer:

*Lord Jesus, thank you that you love me, thank you that you came and died for me, and that you rose from the dead. I believe you are the son of God, and today I receive you into my life. I'm sorry for living without you, and for sinning against you. Please forgive me. I accept your offer of salvation, and thank you for the gift of eternal life. Fill me with faith and with your Holy Spirit, that I would now live for you, and follow you with all of my heart. **Amen***

If you've prayed this prayer, we'd love to celebrate with you and help you grow. Let us know by clicking on the link below.

<https://c3churchryde.com.au/jesus/>

The bible states that because of sin we have all been separated from God and are all spiritually dead. Only God can make us alive again. This happens when we trust in Jesus alone to help us and save us. When we do this, we become God's child, and a member of his family forever.

Jesus said, "no-one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again" (Jn 3:3)

"If anyone is in Christ the new creation has come: The old is gone, the new is here!" (2 Cor 5:17)

PASSAGES FOR REFLECTION

Jn 1:12, Col 1:13-14, Eph 1:5

REFLECTIVE EXERCISE

In the past, in what things have you tried to find your meaning and significance?

What does it mean for you to be part of God's family with God himself as your father?

FURTHER REFLECTION

The bible says many things about 'who we are' in Jesus. Spend some time slowly reflecting on the attached list of verses on the next page...

In Christ, I am accepted...

- *I am God's child. (John 1:12)*
- *As a disciple, I am a friend of Jesus Christ. (John 15:15)*
- *I have been justified. (Romans 5:1)*
- *I am united with the Lord, and I am one with Him in spirit. (1 Corinthians 6:17)*
- *I have been bought with a price and I belong to God. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)*
- *I am a member of Christ's body. (1 Corinthians 12:27)*
- *I have been chosen by God and adopted as His child. (Ephesians 1:3-8)*
- *I have been redeemed and forgiven of all my sins. (Colossians 1:13-14)*
- *I am complete in Christ. (Colossians 2:9-10)*
- *I have direct access to the throne of grace through Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 4:14-16)*

In Christ, I am secure...

- *I am free from condemnation. (Romans 8:1-2)*
- *I am assured that God works for my good in all circumstances. (Romans 8:28)*
- *I am free from any condemnation brought against me and I cannot be separated from the love of God. (Romans 8:31-39)*
- *I have been established, anointed and sealed by God. (2 Corinthians 1:21-22)*
- *I am hidden with Christ in God. (Colossians 3:1-4)*
- *I am confident that God will complete the good work He started in me. (Philippians 1:6)*
- *I am a citizen of heaven. (Philippians 3:20)*
- *I have not been given a spirit of fear but of power, love and a sound mind. (2 Timothy 1:7)*
- *I am born of God and the evil one cannot touch me. (1 John 5:18)*

In Christ, I am significant...

- *I am a branch of Jesus Christ, the true vine, and a channel of His life. (John 15:5)*
- *I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit. (John 15:16)*
- *I am God's temple. (1 Corinthians 3:16)*
- *I am a minister of reconciliation for God. (2 Corinthians 5:17-21)*
- *I am seated with Jesus Christ in the heavenly realm. (Ephesians 2:6)*
- *I am God's workmanship. (Ephesians 2:10)*
- *I may approach God with freedom and confidence. (Ephesians 3:12)*
- *I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me. (Philippians 4:13)*

The bible is God's word to us, beginning with the creation of the world, and ending with the New Testament Church looking forward to the return of Jesus. The Old Testament (OT) follows the story of God and the Israelite people, while the New Testament (NT) focuses on Jesus and the formation of the Church.

The bible is one big story, told through 66 individual books, written by many different authors to different audiences at different times. There are letters, poetry, historical narratives, laws, prophecies and more, all communicating what God wants his people to know.

HOW TO GET STARTED

To help us find our way around the bible, we use a "**book, chapter, verse**" system. Eg, Heb 4:12 is the **book** of Hebrews, *chapter* 4, verse 12. (Look this one up!)

The best place to start is a "gospel" - one of the first 4 books of the New Testament (NT).

HELPFUL TOOLS

- [Youversion app](#) - read and listen, bible plans, verse of the day
- [5x5x5 reading plan](#)
- [Koorong](#) - any resource you want (koorong.com)
- **A study bible** for more background
- **Bible and journal** - to underline a verse, jot down a question
- **A bible companion** - a great introduction is "[Know Your Bible](#)" from Value Books/Barbour Publishing

PASSAGES FOR REFLECTION

Jn 6:35, Ps 119:105, Pro 3:5-6, 2 Tim 3:16-17

Prayer is about communication and connection - the key to any relationship. Simply put, prayer is being with, talking to and listening to God. We pray because we have a relational God who wants us to know him, and live our life with him.

The best way to learn to pray is just to pray! Praying with other people is very helpful, and also the bible has many prayers in its pages.

PASSAGES FOR REFLECTION

Ps 100, Ps 139, Matt 6:9-13, Eph 3:14-21, Phil 4:6-7

FURTHER REFLECTION

What can you thank God for today?

What do you need to ask God's help for today?

"Lord Jesus, thank you that you are a good and loving God and that you hear me when I pray. Help me get to know you better and to live my life trusting in you. Amen"

HELPFUL HINTS

Because people are *different*, they pray in *different* ways. Have you found what is helpful for you?

- Sitting, standing, kneeling, walking?
- Being in a closed room, being outdoors?
- Praying aloud, or silently?

PART 1

Along with the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit is God, and rather than a mystical force, He is a person. It is through the Holy Spirit we can know God personally. Jesus came as Emmanuel - God with us, and promised to be with us till the end of the age. He fulfils this promise through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

PASSAGES FOR REFLECTION

Jn 14:15-18, Gal 5:16, Gal 5:22-25, Eph 5:18

REFLECTIVE EXERCISE

God gives us His Spirit to help us live the life God wants. Being filled with the Spirit is an ongoing necessity for every Christian.

Take a few moments to quiet yourself.

Ask God to simply help you become aware of His presence by the Holy Spirit.

Ask the Lord to fill you (again) with His Spirit.

PART 2

PASSAGES FOR REFLECTION

What does the Holy Spirit do?

Jn 15:26 - The Holy Spirit points people to Jesus.

Ro 8:16 - The Holy Spirit confirms we are God's children.

Eph 1:13-14 - The Holy Spirit seals our salvation.

Acts 1:8 - The Holy Spirit empowers us to witness about Jesus.

2 Cor 3:17 - The Holy Spirit frees us to love and serve God.

REFLECTIVE EXERCISE

Take time to thank God for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Ask him to help you hear anything he may want to speak to you.

Use this space to write down anything He says to you...

HELPFUL TOOLS

[Resource - 50 things the Holy Spirit does.](#)

Our faith, while personal, is not to be expressed only individually, but together with others. We are relational beings, and God has always been interested in working in groups of people.

Our corporate faith can be experienced and expressed in weekend worship services and midweek small group gatherings, where we can give and receive encouragement, prayer and acts of service.

PASSAGES FOR REFLECTION

Pro 27:17, Mt 18:19-20, Heb 10:25, Ro 12:1, Ps 84:10

REFLECTIVE EXERCISE

How have relationships with other believers helped encourage you in your faith?

In what context can you engage to be an encouragement to others?

How have you grown through relationships that are a challenge to you?

WAYS TO CONNECT INTO CHURCH LIFE

Connect groups - <https://c3churchryde.com.au/connect-groups/>

Volunteer at Church - <https://c3churchryde.com.au/volunteer/>

Water baptism has been practiced by Christians from the time of Jesus, and expresses personal faith, repentance and identification with God's people.

Take time to review the notes attached, and consider if this could be your next step.

Baptisms are conducted periodically throughout the year. If you'd like to know more, head to our website <https://c3churchryde.com.au/> to express your interest via the 'Take Your Next Step' section.

The text of the bible is written by many authors, to many different people, in many different styles over a broad timespan. Understanding these factors when we read helps us understand the author's intent and better apply God's Word to our lives.

REFLECTIVE EXERCISE

What can you do to be more aware of contextual factors when reading different parts of the bible?

What Psalm, chapter or passage of scripture can you choose for meditation and memorisation?

FURTHER REFLECTION

What can you do to deepen your awareness of God's presence while reading the bible?

HELPFUL TOOLS

Resources - [Youversion bible app](#)

Suggested reading: Gordon Fee and Douglas Stewart ["How to Read the Bible Book by Book"](#)

PASSAGES FOR REFLECTION

2 Tim 2:15

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

2 Tim 3:16-17

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

REFLECTIVE EXERCISE

What would help you correctly handle the word of truth?

What can you do to become more familiar with all of scripture?

How can you be more thoroughly equipped?

What are some good bible reading habits you need to further develop?

HELPFUL TOOLS

Online Resources

[The Bible Project](#)

[E-Sword](#)

[Bible Gateway](#)

[Blue Letter Bible](#)

Prayer is our dynamic interaction with a loving and present God. There are many ways to pray, and wherever we are in our journey with prayer, there is more to discover.

Ideas from this episode for growing in our prayer life and staying the course include:

- Responding to challenges by praying
- Carrying others in prayer
- Including God in all parts of our day
- Being disciplined in both good and challenging times
- Spending time in worship
- Praying with others
- Speaking God's Word aloud

REFLECTIVE EXERCISE

In what season of life has prayer been rich for you? When has it been challenging?

What hindrances could you eliminate to engage in a more enlivened prayer life?

What one practice listed above can you begin to add to your prayer life?

FURTHER REFLECTION

When you pray, how can you become more aware of God's presence and more expectant that your prayers will be heard and answered?

PASSAGES FOR REFLECTION

Mk 11:22-25, Heb 11:1, Jas 1:5-6, Mt 6:9-15

The first outpouring of the Holy Spirit happened at Pentecost (recorded in Acts chapter 2). In this session Ps Cathie unpacks how baptism in the Holy Spirit is available to all believers today, its purpose and effects.

We encourage you to read and reflect on the scriptures, and speak to your pastors if you'd like to know more.

PASSAGES FOR REFLECTION

Eph 1:13-14

Acts 1:8

Acts 2:17

2 Cor 1:22

1 Cor 12:7-10

Lk 11:13

Jn 20:19-22

1 Cor 14:4

Acts 1:4-5

Ro 8:26

Acts 2:1-4

1 Cor 14:2

Acts 2:11

Mt 3:11

REFLECTIVE EXERCISE

Still yourself for a few moments and try to become aware of the presence of God's Spirit.

Do you sense a conviction that you should be baptised in the Holy Spirit?

Do you feel you need a fresh infilling of God's Spirit?

What action should you take next?

The New Testament indicates God has given gifts to His people, to be used for His purposes. No-one has all the gifts, and learning how God has made and gifted each one of us, is an important and (hopefully!) rewarding journey.

Gifts are not only for use in the church - our whole life belongs to God, and He wants to work through us everywhere.

PASSAGES FOR REFLECTION

1 Cor 12:4-11, Ro 12:4-8

REFLECTIVE EXERCISE

What have you discovered about how God has gifted you?

Is there something you like doing that enlivens you?

In what context inside and outside the church could this gift or ability be expressed and developed?

PRAYER

Spend some time asking God for a fresh desire to serve and live for Him (Ro 12:1)

HELPFUL TOOLS

A survey for helping discover how God may have gifted you is attached, as well as a guideline and survey to help you reflect on your God given SHAPE.

PART 1

Vocation is important to understand, as we all have a workplace and context where we serve God. What does the Word of God say about this?

PASSAGES FOR REFLECTION

Col 3:17, Eph 2:10

REFLECTIVE EXERCISE

Spend a few moments reflecting on your vocational context.

What good works has God prepared in advance for you in this setting?

Is there something you could do to be a better representative of Jesus where you are called?

How can you pray about being a more effective minister in your context?

PART 2

God positions us in work places with other people around us, and for most of us, this is our mission field. Our faith is lived out through our actions, and sometimes our words.

PASSAGES FOR REFLECTION

1 Pe 3:15-16

REFLECTIVE EXERCISE

How can you be a bridge for others to move towards Jesus in your workplace?

What attitudes can you cultivate that will help others realise you are different (in a good way!)?

What prayer or practice have you found helpful when you experience opposition to your faith?
