

## THE BASIC MECHANICS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Or, "The Christian Life for Dummies."

This is taken from **Lesson #61** of the Basic Exegesis (of Genesis) series ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#))

What exactly is the Christian life? Is it going to church? Is it doing good works? Is it developing and regularly using a holy language? Do you stop hanging out with your old friends? What exactly is Christianity, what is the Christian life and exactly what do you do as a Christian?

As an aside, because these mechanics were given in the book of Genesis, sometimes the information in Genesis is specifically referenced.

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Mechanic or Principle	Text/Commentary
Salvation	Salvation comes through faith in Christ. <b>For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-born Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life</b> (John 3:16). In the Old Testament, this is faith in Jehovah Elohim (the <i>Lord God</i> ), Who is the Revealed Member of the Trinity. Salvation occurs one time and never has to be repeated. We cannot lose our salvation because it depends upon what Jesus did on the cross, and not what we do in our lives. See also John 3:18, 36 Eph. 2:8–9 Titus 3:5. This is equivalent to Abraham being justified in Gen. 15:6, which reads, <b>And Abram believed</b> [perfect tense; completed action] <b>in Jehovah and it was accounted</b> [imperfect tense; continuous, prolonged or future action] <b>to him as righteousness</b> .
Fellowship (filling of the Holy Spirit)	Sin takes us out of fellowship, and naming these sins directly to God puts us back into fellowship. <b>If we acknowledge our sins, He [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness</b> (1John 1:9). See 1Cor. 11:31 and 1John 1:6–10. Although we find the naming of one's sins to God in the Old Testament (Psalm 51:4); it is more difficult to find in the book of Genesis. God kept on Adam and Eve until they admitted what they had done, when they sinned in the garden. Jacob's sons will admit what they did to Joseph, their half-brother (Gen. 42:21–22). So we see the seeds of this technique in Genesis; however, it is not specifically laid out in the book of Genesis.

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Spiritual growth	<p>Spiritual growth is a matter of learning Bible doctrine on a grace basis. <b>Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ</b> (1Peter 3:18). That is a command, not an option, for the believer. See also Prov. 8 Luke 2:40, 52 and the dozens of times Paul writes, <b>do you not know...</b> At salvation, we as believers know practically nothing. We barely know the gospel. Knowledge must be acquired and we acquire it through the accurate teaching of the Word of God.</p> <p>Spiritual growth is implied in our passage, where Noah is said to be <b>complete in his generations</b> (during the time periods in which he lived). That is an indication of spiritual growth, although the mechanics are not given. The importance of knowledge of divine truth is found throughout the Old Testament. Prov. 8 is a particularly important passage in this regard: <b>Take my instruction instead of silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold, for wisdom is better than jewels, and all that you may desire cannot compare with her (wisdom)</b> (Prov. 8:10–11).</p>
The grace aspect of spiritual growth	<p>All believers are able to understand and to store knowledge of the Word of God. <b>I pray that He [God] may grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, and that the Messiah may dwell in your hearts through faith. I pray that you, being rooted and firmly established in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints</b> what is the length and width, height and depth of God's love, and to know the Messiah's love that surpasses knowledge, so you may be filled with all the fullness of God (Eph. 3:16–19). Being able to grow spiritually from the Word of God is not limited to people with high IQ's. If a person has an IQ high enough to understand having faith in Jesus Christ, that same person is <b>able to comprehend with all the saints</b> Bible doctrine. This appears to be strictly a New Testament phenomenon.</p>

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This grace system requires that we be taught; ideally by a pastor-teacher	<p>Paul and the other Apostles taught Bible doctrine; however, this was eventually handed off to men like Titus and Timothy, who were pastor-teachers (an Apostle had authority over all churches; a pastor-teacher has authority over only one church at a time). If you have been in a church for over a year, and they have never made it clear to you how to have your fellowship with God restored; if they have never made it perspicuous that the filling of the Holy Spirit comes with the naming of your sins to God, then you are in the wrong church. That is the most fundamental mechanic of the spiritual life after salvation. The authority of your pastor-teacher means very little if they are not teaching you the most fundamental doctrine. See also Heb. 13:7, 17. In the book of Genesis, God appears to teach many men directly (He speaks directly to Adam and the woman in the spiritual part of the day; He spoke directly to Cain after his sin; God is said to walk with Noah and with Enoch, which suggests conversation).</p> <p>If you are geographically removed from a good church, then may I commend to you one of the pastors from this list: <a href="http://kukis.org/Links/thelist.htm">http://kukis.org/Links/thelist.htm</a> Most of these pastors have a means by which you can hear the Word of God taught regularly and carefully (they either stream their sermons online, or they make their lessons available as MP3 files, or you can call and have CD's or DVD's of their lessons sent to you. In all cases, there is no charge and none of the pastors listed should ever ask you for money.</p>

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Such a grace system involves <i>believing</i> Bible doctrine	<p>There is more to spiritual growth than simply academic excellence; the key is believing in what you are taught. Now without <b>faith</b> it is impossible to please God, for the one who draws near to Him must <b>believe</b> that He exists and rewards those who seek Him [which is positive volition toward Bible doctrine] (Heb. 11:6). This particular chapter (Gen. 6) is about men who, having believed in Jesus Christ, then took their faith even further to believe in the Word of God and to conduct their lives in the sphere of that faith. The Word did not profit those hearing it, not having been mixed with faith in the ones who heard (Heb. 4:2). Hearing the Word of God is not enough; one must believe the Word of God; your hearing must be mixed with faith. By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith (Heb. 11:7). Noah believed what God told him and built an ark, and, by this, condemned the world.</p>
<p>As an aside, faith gets a bum rap in our age of science, where people are falsely led to believe that all that we know can be proven or reasoned out. If this were true, then all scientists and all philosophers would agree on everything, but they don't. Faith is an integral part of every person's perception—even the perception of a scientist. This is why some scientists, for instance, believe in man-caused global warming and other scientists repudiate this notion as foolish.</p>	
Such grace growth is available only to believers	<p>For who among men knows the concerns of a man except the spirit of the man that is in him? In the same way, no one knows the concerns of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, <b>in order to know</b> what has been freely given to us by God. We also speak these things, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual things to spiritual people. But the natural man does not welcome what comes from God's Spirit, because it is foolishness to him; he is not able to know it since it is evaluated spiritually. The spiritual person, however, can evaluate everything, yet he himself cannot be evaluated by anyone. For: who has known the Lord's mind, that he may instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ (1Cor. 2:11–16). In Genesis (as in the rest of the Bible), the key is always the spiritual line (or genealogy). God follows the lives of some and some genealogies, but these are always limited in scope. The Bible focuses on those who believe in Jehovah Elohim and who exercise faith in God's teachings after they have believed.</p>

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Spiritual maturity	Believers reach spiritual maturity by being in fellowship and learning Bible doctrine at the foot of an accurate pastor-teacher (metaphorically speaking). Jesus Christ spent most of His ministry teaching. Paul, after he did the work of an evangelist, then established churches for the purpose of disseminating truth. This is equivalent to Noah being called <i>perfect</i> or <i>complete</i> .
Walking with God	A spiritually mature believer then has his remaining years called <i>walking with God</i> . You cannot walk with God if you have limited spiritual growth. If you are spiritually immature, then God will go one way and you will go another. Walking with God means that you, as a mature believer, remain in fellowship for extended periods of time and operate according to the truth that is within you. We find this with Enoch (Gen. 5:22, 24) and Noah (Gen. 6:9). We find this same kind of phrasing in the New Testament as well (Luke 1:6 1Cor. 7:17 Col. 1:10). <b>For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared before that we would walk in them</b> (Eph. 2:10).

These are the foundational steps in the Christian life: faith in Jesus Christ, returning to fellowship with God by naming your sins to Him, and growth through knowledge of the Word of God.

Noah and his family would have had a similar spiritual support system. However, the mechanics (which may be almost identical) are not fully enumerated in the first few chapters of Genesis. These stages are only alluded to in this verse: **Noah was a justified [righteous] man and perfect [complete, spiritually mature] in his generations. Noah walked with God** (Gen. 6:9b).

As an aside, when you witness to another person, it is not necessary to convince them of the validity of the Bible, the truth of Bible doctrine, the power of the filling of the Holy Spirit or of the importance of free enterprise and limited government. You make one thing clear to them: *Believe in Jesus Christ, and you are saved*. You may get to this point in a number of different ways, but that is the essence of the gospel (good news) of Jesus Christ. For the unbeliever, whose thinking may be far removed from the truth, you can only reach them only through the gospel of Jesus Christ (and, if you know them, through the integrity of your life).