

## **A Recipe for Spiritual Success**

**Intro:** It's always a great joy to see a person come to the Lord. It is equally sad to see that same person leave the Lord. Many of those who are converted to the Lord have remained in the faith; but often disciples who began with enthusiasm fall away. Their condition is even worse than when they became a Christian.

**Is there a way to prevent this from happening? Yes, each new Christian needs to accept responsibility for succeeding in their new life. There are things that they can do to help themselves remain faithful. One key factor is getting off to a good start in their spiritual lives. I recommend to you a recipe for spiritual success.**

### **Attend all services of the church**

*As disciples we have an obligation to assemble to break bread with the brethren in memory of the Lord.*

*And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." (Luke 22:19)*

***Jesus' disciples responded by assembling each first day in assembly to break bread.***

*And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. (Acts 2:42)*

*And on the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to depart the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight. (Acts 20:7)*

***The assembly was commanded as a mean of spiritual edification. God defined the activities of assembly with an emphasis upon teaching and worship, things that will help your faith remain vibrant and fresh.***

*What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. (1 Corinthians 14:26)*

***Though the first day assembly is the only assembly commanded by God, we are permitted by God to establish other arrangements for edification that are helpful for spiritual growth.***

*But when some were becoming hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the multitude, he withdrew from them and took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. (Acts 19:9)*

***In the same spirit, the church provides other opportunities for studying the Scriptures--additional Sunday services, mid-week classes, training classes gospel meetings, special classes. I would encourage new converts to commit to attending all these services of the church that you can possibly attend as a means of fulfilling the command to grow.***

*but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. (2 Peter 3:18)*

### **Make Christians your best friends**

***As a Christian you need the additional encouragement of good role models and associations with people with shared values. The first Christians appreciated the benefits of not only worshipping together but just spending time together socially.***

*And day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. (Acts 2:46-47)*

***This doesn't mean you can't spend time with old friends or seek to convert them. It is simply to recognize the dangers of bad company.***

*Do not be deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals." (1 Corinthians 15:33)*

***Returning to non-Christians friends for support, for entertainment will produce a lot of conscientious conflicts. Spare yourself grief and possible apostasy by re-aligning your friendships with your faith.***

***Select as your friends those who are friends of Jesus!***

*"You are My friends, if you do what I command you. (John 15:14)*

***When other Christians reach out to you, respond to them. Step out of your comfort zone and let others get to know you and help you. Sometimes mature Christians want to help and put forth efforts to include newer members only to be frustrated by their non-participation.***

#### **Study your Bible every day**

***God doesn't in the Bible command people to read the Scriptures every day; but it does teach the importance of growing in knowledge.***

*like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, (1 Peter 2:2)*

*Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge; and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness; (2 Peter 1:5-6)*

***Each person has to develop their own discipline; but suggest that many mature Christians have practiced and recommended a daily time of Bible reading and meditation.***

**Get a personal Bible with good study helps and in an accurate but modern speech translation (NKJV or NASV, for example.)**

**Keep a journal of your reading and jot down interesting things you discover and questions that arise to ask others later.**

**Do some random reading if you like; but don't neglect the many study guides and resources available to guide you in your Bible study. You don't have to re-invent the wheel! Learn from those who are experienced in studying the Scriptures.**

**Consider having ongoing guided studies through Biblical books or topics with knowledgeable Christians!**

#### **Talk to God every day**

*A part of what should have drawn us to the Lord the possibility of having a relationship with Him and talk with Him about our lives and looking to Him for blessings in our lives. NT Christians were urged to:*

*pray without ceasing; (1 Thessalonians 5:17)*

*Consider what great possibilities are before you when you pray to the Creator of all things not only about your rlife and about the concerns you may have for others around you.*

*Some Christians have found this acrostic outline helpful as a guide to praying in all areas:*

Adoration—Spend some time in prayer praising God and expressing your growing appreciation of His nature.

Confession—Recognize the covenant blessing of coming to Him day by day for forgiveness of sins.

Thanksgiving—Give thanks for all the ways the Lord blesses you from day to day.

Supplication—Ask God to meet your needs and the needs of others. Be specific in your requests.

**Speak about Jesus to someone every day**

*New disciples are pretty evangelistic. I've noticed that the new Christians are usually very zealous to reach someone else with the gospel. A part of the goal of growing in knowledge is so we can teach others!*

*For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. (Hebrews 5:12)*

*You will have mixed success! Don't let that desire to reach others die; and don't become discouraged if can't convert the world! Just realize that every time you speak for God, He is pleased and you will help bring others to Him!*

*And it will help you stay alive! When we go on the offensive, we are more effective than when we just stay on the defensive in our spiritual lives.*

**Conclusion:** Of course, in addressing new converts with a limited set of suggestions like this, there is some risk that they will come to believe that only these aspects of serving God are important and others may be neglected. Instead I would say, these are the first steps that will help you get to where you want to go, i.e. being obedient all that the Lord has taught us! (Mt. 28:19). You might say that these are the foundation upon which to build the remainder of your spiritual life.

And by implementing it early in your spiritual life, you will reap great benefits. You will not likely fall away from the Lord; but instead grow with increasing effectiveness and influence in God's kingdom until you leave this life!

Thanks to Bill Walton for the major points of this lesson.