

The Spiritual Starter Kit

Invitation page: <https://www.startingwithgod.com/starter-kit.html>

The Spiritual Starter Kit #1 – Is God in my life now?

Hi,

Welcome to your first email, in this 7-part series.

Congratulations, by the way, on beginning a relationship with God. When you asked Jesus into your life, you began the most valuable relationship a person could have.

The night that I asked Jesus into my life, I knew it was a big decision. I had been a skeptic/atheist for years. To speak out loud, into the air, and talk to God felt monumental.

It also seemed absolutely right to do.

My prayer was brief. "Ok, you win. I ask you to come into my life. You may do with it whatever you want."

In my mind, I was simply acknowledging God's existence. As God, it seemed to me, he had a right to influence my life.

Here's the first thing I noticed about God:

God is invisible. (Impressed, aren't you?) But actually, this was an issue.

I mean, when you asked Jesus to come into your life, how do you really know that he's there? You can't see him.

How do you know that he really entered your life?

Does it rely on your sincerity? Or what you said in your prayer? Or how you feel?

No. None of these.

You have a relationship with God now, because he offered it to you. You simply responded to him.

This article will explain how you can be sure that Jesus is in your life -- and what that means!

<https://startingwithgod.com/new-life/am-i-christian.html>

(You might want to write down one or two of the sentences from the Bible that are mentioned in this article. And maybe put that paper on your desk or nightstand to look at again later.)

If you have any questions, we are happy to chat with you. Just email us here:

<https://www.everystudent.com/contact.php>

Sincerely,

Marilyn Adamson

director of EveryStudent.com
and StartingwithGod.com

The Spiritual Starter Kit #2 – What God Did

Hi,

Here's one of the most remarkable aspects of your relationship with God.

You are not in this relationship alone.

This is not one-way communication. It's not merely you worshiping God. He is also very involved.

God pursued you!

I remember the first few days after asking Jesus Christ into my life. I had so many questions:

- What is he like? What does he care about?
- What does God think about our lives here?
- How does he view us? Or me?!

Here's the surprising thing. In the Bible, he answers those kind of questions! And more!

Now that you have a relationship with God, you will find him speaking individually to you as you read the Bible. He reveals himself through it. He will speak directly to your heart.

Don't ask me how he does it. He just does.

Do you have a Bible? If not, you can get one at a bookstore, or on Amazon.com.

When you go to buy a Bible, you'll find various translations. The King James Version uses "thee" and "thou" which is a tad slow to read (unless you're someone who speeds through Shakespeare).

If you need to buy a Bible, I'd recommend any of these:

- New Living Translation (NLT)
- English Standard Version (ESV)
- New International Version (NIV)

Also, you can read the Bible online at <https://www.biblegateway.com> or use the free app: YouVersion

Ok, let's move ahead to how to read the Bible. There's really nothing tricky about it.

Let's say you read this statement that's in the Bible, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son..."

And I asked you: "How does God feel about people in the world?" I really wouldn't want you to get creative. Or imagine how God might feel or should feel.

When you read the Bible, simply look at what it says. "For God so loved the world..." That tells you how God feels about people in the world: He loves us.

Makes sense?

Ok, here's a Bible study I think you'll enjoy. It shows how God is in this relationship with you!

<https://www.startingwithgod.com/bible-study/lesson-1.html>

You'll see some questions. Look at the verses (statements from the Bible) that come before the question. Type in your answer. At the end, you can print it out, if you'd like.

As you do this study, just notice what God says.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email us:

<https://www.everystudent.com/contact.php>

Next letter: Why God's love is so unusual!

Marilyn Adamson

director of EveryStudent.com
and StartingwithGod.com

The Spiritual Starter Kit #3 – God's Love

Hi,

To describe God's love, the best word I can think of is "unusual." His love is so different from what we experience from any other person.

Just to make sure I was being fair in using that description, I looked up the definition of "unusual."

Here it is:

"being definitely out of the ordinary and unexpected, slightly odd or even a bit weird."

Yep. That fits. Be prepared to be surprised. Here is what God's love is like:

<https://www.startingwithgod.com/new-life/gods-love.html>

Enjoy!

Marilyn Adamson

director of EveryStudent.com
and StartingwithGod.com

The Spiritual Starter Kit #4 – Your Relationship with God Is Secure

Hi,

In life, there is always a risk in starting a new relationship. You can never be sure if it will last.

The person might move away, or break off the relationship, or lose interest.

When it comes to having a relationship with God, there is a real security to it. God is not going anywhere. And even if you are not faithful to him, he will remain faithful to you.

It is not because God is subservient to you. He's not a wimp! It is because he has now adopted you, made you his child. God loves you and views your relationship with him as eternal.

This article explains the permanence of your relationship with Christ:

<https://www.startingwithgod.com/new-life/will-this-last.html>

Again, if you have any questions, just ask:

<https://www.everystudent.com/contact.php>

Marilyn Adamson

director of EveryStudent.com
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The Spiritual Starter Kit #5 – A Two-Way Relationship

Hi

No one likes to be in a relationship which seems one-way. One person doing all the effort. One person trying to communicate, trying to love the other. It's horrible.

The great thing about our relationship with God is that it is two-way. I find this remarkable. Knowing God is not religion. It's not all on us, one-way, our religious efforts. Instead, it's a relationship.

That means, we can talk to God and he can talk to us. Open communication, because of Jesus' death on the cross (eliminating that barrier of our sin, our unworthiness). And because we believed in him, inviting him into our lives we are now his children, known by God and loved.

You might be wondering how prayer works. How do we talk to God? Do we use specific prayers? No need.

Prayer is talking to God as you would a friend. Share whatever is on your heart, whatever you're thankful for, whatever concerns you. Ask God for what you need. He is our loving Father.

There's no formula, no script needed. It's just talking to God and bringing your needs and concerns to him. God does answer our prayers and encourages us to ask!

Jesus said to his disciples, "Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full." (John 16:24)

He knows everything about our lives, every detail, past, present and future. We can trust him to answer in ways that are best for us.

Here is an article for you, to guide you a little bit in how to pray.

<https://www.startingwithgod.com/new-life/new.html>

Regarding God speaking to us. God almost always speaks to me through the Bible. This is God's Word to us.

It is where God reveals to us what he's like, how he wants us to view life, what to do with difficult problems we encounter.

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. He who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 8:12) I love that promise.

Jesus encourages us to listen to his words so that we will know what's true. "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31,32) Isn't that great?

Jesus' words are recorded in the Gospels (the first four books of the New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John). The rest of the Bible also contains God's Word to us.

God has a way of speaking to our very hearts, on an individual basis, as we read the Bible. Primarily, we hear from God and get to know him better this way.

I'd encourage you to focus on the New Testament right now...it's easier to understand.

If you'd like, you're welcome to sign up for this free series with me through the Gospel of John:
<https://www.startingwithgod.com/gospel-of-john.html>

So this is how our relationship with God works...we get to talk to him, ask him for our needs, share with him whatever is on our heart; and he talks to us, guiding us and revealing himself to us in his Word, the Bible.

Again, if you have any questions, just ask:
<https://www.everystudent.com/contact.php>

Marilyn Adamson

director of EveryStudent.com
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The Spiritual Starter Kit #6 – The Value of Other Believers

Hi

Have you ever spent time with a marathon runner? (Maybe you're one!) Did you ever know a serious runner who didn't train with other runners?

Rarely happens. Why?

They need the motivation. Accountability. They need someone who expects them to show up at 5:30 in the morning. Someone they can run with, who will challenge their speed and distance.

Guess what? We need others around us who know Jesus. Who want God to influence their lives.

In case you're thinking I'm about to advocate "sign up with X group" - that's not going to happen.

I'm talking about the value of being around ANYONE who believes in Jesus and seeks to follow him.

When I first became a believer, I grew to know God through a variety of things. Let me list those for you, in priority order (that was true in my life, anyway)...

- Time with God, reading the Bible and talking to him.

I was always asking God questions. "Could you explain..." "How do you want me to trust you regarding this..." "What about this..." I would write out verses from the Bible, sometimes even write out my prayers. I preferred doing this in chunks of time. So I scheduled time for this, just two or three times a week, where

I could spend an hour or more. The other days, I would read over what I had written down, which I could do quickly.

- Time with other believers who became close friends.

I learned a lot seeing their lives, sharing concerns, what God was teaching us, praying for each other, having fun together. I felt God's love through them and I learned a lot about God processing life with them.

- Bible study in someone's home or coffee shop.

We met as a group, anywhere from 4 to 12 of us. (You can start a group, if you want, using this: <http://www.everystudent.com/knowingGod.html>)

- Conferences, church, books.

So, how do you find other believers?

You might already have a friend who has asked Jesus into his or her life. How would you know? Well, you could ask them.

You might also ask if there's a Bible study group or church they'd recommend.

There are many good ones. (There are some very weird ones out there also. Just to be honest.)

Ask God to guide you. He's able to caution you if a church or group doesn't seem right.

If you have any questions about a particular group or church, feel free to ask us. We would also be happy to try to help you find fellowship with other believers.

Just email us here:

<https://www.everystudent.com/contact.php>

And, if you are a university student, you could go to your university website and do a search for Christian student organizations. Or email us for help: <https://www.everystudent.com/contact.php>

Next email...what does it mean to trust God? How exactly do you do that? This one is hugely important. As you trust God, you see him act in your life!

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director of EveryStudent.com
and StartingwithGod.com

The Spiritual Starter Kit #7 – What Does It Mean to Trust God?

In all likelihood, you do not interact with everyone the same way.

You might do things for a demanding coach (give me 50 laps!) that you would not do for...a store clerk. What you share with a close friend, you might not reveal to your mother.

And she might appreciate that!

So now you are in a relationship with God. How do you think he wants you to relate with him?

The answer to this might surprise you.

It's not, "be good...clean up your act." Or "work hard to serve him." Or even, "stop sinning."

Throughout the Bible, God tells us how he most wants us to relate to him: Trust him.

Isn't that remarkable? But it's true.

He wants us to rely on him, to rest concerns and ourselves in his hands.

Proverbs 3:5 says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding."

If we are going to believe God, or trust God — what exactly does that mean?

At the end of this email, I'm going to point you to a great article that explains what faith is...and isn't.

If you would like to personally send me a message, just hit reply. I might not be able to write back. But I try to at least read everything that is sent.

Ok, this will help you understand what it means to trust God:

<https://www.startingwithgod.com/knowning-god/faith.html>

Next email will cover - If you sin, will God forgive you?

Marilyn Adamson

director of EveryStudent.com
and StartingwithGod.com

The Spiritual Starter Kit #8 – What If I Sin? Does God Still Forgive Me?

Hi,

One thing that is true of you now that you have Christ in your life...you are still human.

That means, you are sometimes (often) going to do things your way, instead of God's way. That is also true of me and every other Christian who is alive.

Even if we want to please God, want to trust him, and want to behave well. We still have a great ability inside us to sin.

This article will explain what sin is. It will show you what effect it does and doesn't have on your relationship with God.

And most importantly, it will help you be sure of God's forgiveness.

<https://www.startingwithgod.com/struggles/fall.html>

One more thing. You might be thinking that you'd like some friends to hear how they can have a relationship with God. If so, here's an easy way. Send them an email with this in it:

"I found this website, <https://www.everystudent.com>, and the articles on it were excellent. I began to realize some things about having a relationship with God. I thought you would enjoy seeing the site also."

Again, if you have any questions or would like to talk with someone, please contact us at:
<https://www.everystudent.com/contact.php>

Marilyn Adamson

director of EveryStudent.com
and StartingwithGod.com

The Spiritual Starter Kit #9 – Land Mines to Avoid!

Hi,

Having a relationship with God can be a wonderful experience. Or extremely frustrating.

There are land mines.

I remember the first year or so after asking Jesus into my life. I loved getting to know God. I'd spend hours in the Gospels, captivated by Jesus' life and how he interacted with people. The more I read, the more I appreciated him.

But I also found myself reading things in the Bible that took me off-guard. Certain actions were identified as *sins* that I had never viewed that way!

I also found commands like: "be patient, tenderhearted, forgiving." Those are far easier to read than to do.

In frustration, I thought, "It was much easier being an atheist."

Then, over the next several months, I started feeling like I owed God payback for all the great things he was doing in my life.

I thought, "Now that I know God is there, I should be talking to him more. I should be reading the Bible more. I should be talking to my friends who don't know him. I should be, I should be...."

Ok. Let me tell you -- that is NOT how God wants us to live out our relationship with him.

He has not asked us to open our arms, brace our footing, and catch some enormous, cosmic to-do list. He also is not asking us to prove that we are worthy to know him -- we're not! And he's perfectly ok with that.

God has an entirely different perspective on our relationship with him.

I'd love for you to grab this now. (I wish I had realized this much sooner.) This is important. I put together for you a short, 6-part series I've simply called, "Skip the Stress."

Here's the link: <https://www.startingwithgod.com/skip-the-stress.html>

If you would like to receive it, just click on that link and then fill in the form with your name and email address again. This could save you a lot of frustration!

Sincerely,

Marilyn

director of EveryStudent.com

and StartingwithGod.com

The Spiritual Starter Kit #10 – Important Questions Answered

Hi,

For many months after asking Jesus into my life, I seemed to have question after question.

There was so much I wanted to know. It all seemed so new to me.

Same for you?

It was comforting to read Jesus' words when he said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life..." (Jn 14:6).

I felt that I could ask him any question, and he didn't mind. He could handle it.

Also, because he is the truth, no matter how much I researched, I could never prove him false. I felt free to explore, question, ask "what about...?"

There is a lot on EveryStudent.com that answers many of the questions I once had. Here are a few that could be of great help to you:

Why you can trust the Bible:

<https://www.everystudent.com/features/bible.html>

Evidence that God exists:

<https://www.everystudent.com/features/is-there-a-god.html>

Why we can know that Jesus is God:

<https://www.everystudent.com/features/is-jesus-god.html>

Why Jesus, rather than Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, etc.:

<https://www.everystudent.com/features/religions-of-the-world.html>

In really tough situations, what exactly can we count on God for?

<https://www.everystudent.com/features/where-is-god.html>

These articles are written to those who have not yet started a relationship with God. Yet these contain great information, strong facts to base your faith on.

If you're looking for a specific topic, just enter a phrase in the search box on the site. Our search box is great. It's better than Google's.

Or, you're welcome to ask a question here:

<https://www.everystudent.com/contact.php>

Someone will personally reply to you.

And if others are asking why you believe in Jesus, send them to EveryStudent.com!

Marilyn Adamson

director of EveryStudent.com
and StartingwithGod.com

The Spiritual Starter Kit #11 – Learning More about Jesus

Hi,

I'm so glad you signed up for The Spiritual Starter Kit.

The best way to grow to know Jesus better is to see his life, what he said, how he interacted with people, what he cared about.

A study through the Gospel of John helps you do that. I created another series for this reason. This one might be the most valuable, because it will help you know God better.

The Gospel of John is loaded with truths about God and how he views our relationship with him.

I'd like you to join me in a study of the Gospel of John, for two reasons:

1. To help you know Jesus better. 2. To show you how to read and study the Bible on your own - useful for the rest of your life.

This is purely for your own enjoyment. It's free. No assignments to turn in or anything. We won't cover every sentence in John...just hitting the highlights.

As always, you can unsubscribe anytime. That option will be at the bottom of every email.

Just click the link below to sign up, and the first study will be in your mailbox in a couple of minutes.

<https://www.everystudent.com/knowingGod.html>

That we might know him better! I think you will thoroughly enjoy this!

Marilyn Adamson

director of EveryStudent.com
and StartingwithGod.com

The Spiritual Starter Kit #12 – Explaining Jesus to Others

Hi,

Someone once asked me:

"How do I tell someone about Jesus, without sounding like a psycho?"

I laughed for a while, because I loved how he worded that. That IS a great question, isn't it?

It's not always easy. Hard questions. Awkward moments. Right?

EveryStudent.com can really be a help here. Mention a website or connect with someone online, and everyone's good with that.

I once asked a group of people, "How many of you get stressed out while on Facebook?" They just laughed.

The Internet is comfortable. Everyone is in control of what they read, who they connect with, what friends they stay in touch with. It has become second-nature to us.

This gives us an open door. EveryStudent.com can help people in their spiritual search for God. I would like to show you how.

To my knowledge, I've not ever seen an email series quite like this one.

I'd like to call it, "Talk about God, without sounding like a psycho." But think I'll go with a shorter version: "How to Talk about God."

I honestly think that through this, you'll discover an exciting, new dimension in your relationship with God.

Many people will likely begin a relationship with Jesus, as a result of your efforts. (I see it happen all the time!)

To receive this from me, please go here to sign up:

<https://www.startingwithgod.com/talk-about-god.html>

So glad to be able to offer this to you!

Marilyn Adamson

director of EveryStudent.com
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