

## Living as a Christian

*Sometimes people accuse Christians of being hypocrites. What do they mean by that?'*

*What kind of behavior do **you** expect from other Christians?*

Everybody expects Christians to be truthful and have high moral standards. Some people think that being a Christian means having lots and lots of rules to live by, but Jesus said that basically there are just two:

*Jesus answered, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the greatest and the most important commandment. The second most important commandment is like it: 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself.'" Matthew 22.37-39*

**Love God** - when we love God we want to do those things that please him. We will spend time in worshipping him.

*Where and how can we worship God?*

**Love our neighbour** - when we love our neighbour we will want the best for others and look for ways to help those in need.

*In what ways can we help those in need?*

**Find a mentor** - A mentor is an older and more experienced Christian who is a good listener and will pray for you and with you. You will want someone who doesn't have all the answers and doesn't pretend to have them, but to whom you can talk freely about your relationship with God and your relationships with family and friends. You will be able to talk about what you are reading in the Bible and those things you don't understand.

Approach someone who you think will be suitable. They will want to know what is expected, so show them the above list. Suggest that you meet once a month (for about an hour) for a chat.

*Can you think of someone in the church that you could ask to be your mentor?*

**Tell other people** - about God's involvement in your life. This is how the Christian faith has spread around the world from the time when Jesus first chose his twelve special friends.

### Homework

Visit [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com) and compare different versions of the Bible.

Read John 15.1-5 and consider:

Who is the vine and who are the branches?

What happens when we remain in Christ?

# Confirmation Studies



## Study 3 - Life as a Christian



This Confirmation study material is a **Refresh Resource** produced by Andrew Gamman  
**Mission Resourcing:** *Inspiring and resourcing our communities for a journey with Christ that enriches lives and relationships*

(Begin by going over the homework from the last session. Have a discussion on how we can know the voice of God.)

## The Bible

*What sort of books do you like to read and who are your favourite authors? Do you like to read novels? history? travel? poetry? science fiction?*

The Bible is a collection of books written by many authors over hundreds of years.

*Which of the categories of literature above would you expect to find in the Bible? (Other types in the Bible include letters, prophecy and law)*

The books of the Bible are divided into two parts: the First Testament, which was written in Hebrew and deals with God leading people before the coming of Jesus, and the New Testament, which was written in Greek tells the story of Jesus and the church. In recent years Christians have used the term *First* Testament rather than *Old* Testament to avoid the associations of the word "old" with being ancient, irrelevant and out of touch. The First Testament is regarded as relevant Scripture for Jews as well as Christians.

Over a period of time Christians began to recognize that much of the writing that was circulating in the church was inspired by God and, by the fourth century, the bishops and councils of the church had agreed on the books currently in your Bible. This list of books is known as the "canon of Scripture".

*What version of the Bible do you own?*

Because words keep changing in meaning the work of translating the Bible into English is never finished. For the same reason publishers are constantly working on newer versions of the English dictionary. It is important that Christians own and read the Bible in a version that they can understand. The **Contemporary English Version** and the **Good News Bible** are both good examples of translations that are easy to read.

*In what ways is the Bible different from other books that you might read?*

*All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults, and giving instruction for right living, so that the person who serves God may be fully qualified and equipped to do every kind of good deed. 2 Timothy 3.16-17*

*In this passage what do you think it means when it says that all Scripture is inspired by God?*

*In this passage what does it say Scripture is useful for?*

**One of the best ways to grow as a Christian is to develop a habit of reading some of the Bible every day. On request The Bible Society of New Zealand will provide you with a free Bible reading plan, or you could begin by reading a chapter of the Bible a day. (Try starting at the Gospel of Mark)**

## Prayer

*Do all this in prayer, asking for God's help. Pray on every occasion, as the Spirit leads. For this reason keep alert and never give up; pray always for all God's people. Ephesians 6.18*

Prayer is talking and listening to God. The Bible assumes that Christians will do a lot of this.

*Why do you think some people find it difficult to pray?*

Although we are used to having conversations with our friends and family, having a conversation with God can be difficult because we can't see him, and sometimes our thoughts wander. The following suggestions are things that people have found help to keep focused when praying:

- If you are alone, try praying aloud
- Get away from distractions
- Find a special spot - you could try walking and praying
- Pray at a time of the day when you are alert
- Journal – write your prayers – leave a gap to fill in answers to prayer later
- Pray with someone else

*There's an old prayer that goes:*

*"Lord bless me and my wife  
my son John and his wife  
us four no more."*

*What's wrong with prayer that is all about ourselves and our wants?*



The **PRAYER HAND** helps us to develop a good pattern of prayer. Start by **praising God** for who he is. Then **thank him** for the things he has done. After that **intercede** - that's asking God for the needs of other people. Then **confess** those areas where you know you've fallen short of God's standards and ask for his forgiveness. After you've done all that then you can **petition** God for your own needs.

*Have you ever experienced an answer to prayer that seemed miraculous? Have you had the experience of asking God for something in prayer and not getting it?*

*Why is it that prayer isn't always answered the way that we want?*

**Try spending five minutes a day praying with the help of the prayer hand.**