

10 Things Every New Believer Should Know

- 1. The one thing that the Bible emphasizes more than us loving God and people is that God loves us.** He loves us first and most. God isn't in heaven plucking a daisy saying, "I love you" when you obey and "I love you not" when you sin. He cannot not love you (Rom. 5:8 and 1 Jn. 4:16).
- 2. Your motivation for and the purpose of learning, serving, worshipping, giving, reaching, reading, praying, etc. is to grow relationally** more in love with God and people (Mt. 22:36-40).
- 3. You not only are saved by grace, but you grow by it, too.** A common trap for new and growing Christians is trying to clean up their lives without God's help. This is a false equation: The less you sin = the less you need God's grace. You can't sin less and love more without the strength of God's grace.
- 4. Don't trample all over the Great Commandment (love God, love people) trying to obey the Great Commission (go and make disciples).** New and enthusiastic Christians often do this. Instead, lead people to Jesus by loving people to Jesus (1 Cor. 13:1-3). If they ask you why live the way you do, humbly and simply share with them why you put your hope in Jesus.
- 5. Love your neighbors—your literal neighbors—the ones you have, not the ones you wish you had.** Do this because you are a Christian, not just because you want them to be Christians.
- 6. Focus on Jesus, His cross, His resurrection and His kingdom.** When you confessed Jesus as the living Lord and Messiah, you never said—and will never say—anything more meaningful. Jesus is God with skin. No other "religious leader" (Moses, Buddha, Muhammad) is His equal. They were mere men; Jesus is God who became a man. He is the center and circumference—the hub and rim of all of life and creation. All of the world's greatest gifts—love, life, truth, grace, etc.—have a name. Jesus.
- 7. God cares about your whole life, not just your "spiritual life."** It is a mistake to think that God is only concerned about a section of your life called "your soul" or "your spirit." God cares about and is to be Lord of all of your life—personal, emotional, social, familial, financial, physical, vocational, sexual, intellectual, and so on.
- 8. Love other Christians who go to different churches (or no church at all) and who aren't like you.** Unfortunately, many Christians and churches view their "brand" of Christianity as the only true or most true type of Christianity. They may not think they are the only Christians, but they do think they are the best or most right ones. This is a prideful and sinful attitude that grieves Jesus and dismembers His body. Strive for unity in the body of Christ by praying humbly and thankfully for other Christians.
- 9. Pray with your Bible open.** There are many different spiritual exercises (fasting, solitude, serving, etc.), but the two most important ones are communicating and communing with God through prayer and listening to and learning about God through the Scriptures. Prayerfully read about Jesus (in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). Prayerfully read about the beginning of the church in a book called Acts. Prayerfully read some letters written by Christians for Christians—some good ones to start with are James, Philippians and Ephesians.
- 10. Find a Christian mentor.** You will need help and encouragement in this journey with Jesus. Ask an older Christian (of the same gender as you) to mentor you. Look for someone who displays the attitudes and actions that were described above. Be a blessing to them in return.

Christianity is not a list but a life; it's not a chart but a charter. But new Christians will learn new things. Some of those things will be true but not important. Some things will be off by degrees that can lead them astray. Other things will be just plain wrong. Help new Christians learn to follow Jesus by being their best at what matters most to Him.