

The Good News

Discovery Guide



The Branches of Life

Why is this called a Discovery Guide?

We call this a Discovery Guide, as there are so many things you have to discover on this spiritual journey.

Obviously, we cannot cover everything here. In fact it is a never-ending story. But it is our hope to give you some foundational truths to ponder.

Every journey starts with the first step.



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This journey starts with faith. Faith in things you cannot see. It is a spiritual journey - your inner life. The very first thing you must have faith in is this . . . there is a God. A good God; a loving and compassionate God who is the creator of all things. He divinely designed you - and everyone else too. He wants you to know Him, love Him, trust and obey Him.

In return, He watches over you, protects you, and provides for you. He gives you wisdom to make the right decisions in your life. He gives you inner strength and an inner peace that the world cannot give you. But, most important of all, He offers you the salvation of your soul, not only for this life, but for all eternity. Plus, He will keep you from the wrath that will soon come upon the whole world - for those who do not know Him.

And everything God asks of you is for your good, because He knows everything about you, and wants the best for you. He loves you!



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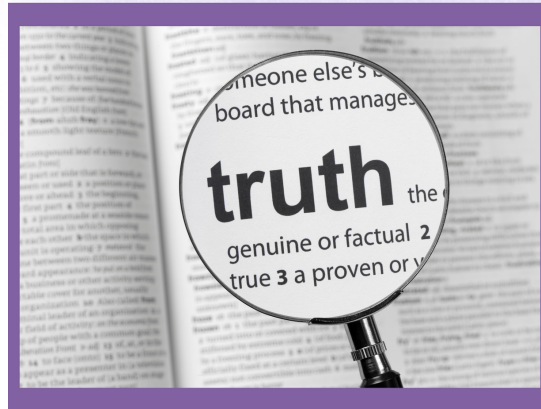
God gave us His Word. It is found in a book called the Holy Bible. The Word of God is absolute truth and was given to us so that God could teach us to understand who He is and how much He loves us. His Word gives us powerful instructions that He wants us to put into practice in our everyday lives. It is His desire that we learn to live for Him.

You will grow as you go by reading and studying the Word of God. Just like a tiny seed needs to be watered and nurtured before it can bear fruit, God will water you with His Word and nurture you by His Holy Spirit, which is a spiritual gift that He wants to impart to you, so that you can be guided by Him in this life, and for all eternity.

This entire journey is by faith. By faith you must believe that God exists, that He loves you and has only good for you, and that He has given you His Word that is perfect, flawless, faithful and true.



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Just like when a house is being built, it needs to be set on a solid foundation. It is the same for this spiritual journey. You need a firm foundation in order to stand with an unshakable faith. God gives us that foundation in His Word. This foundation must be laid first in your experience, in order for your journey to start down the correct path.

So, the next few pages will be just a brief discussion of each of these foundational truths. Using God's Word, we will confirm that each of them is the absolute truth, and that they are God's will for your salvation.

They are as follows:



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1 - In God's eyes all human beings are living with a sinful nature. Even if you are a really good person, you are still a sinner separated from God for all eternity without a Savior. There is nothing you can do, in and of yourself, to be right with God.

2 - God loves you so much that He came to earth, as a man. He took on human flesh, born of a virgin by the Holy Spirit - and was the only sinless man who ever lived. He was given the name Jesus while on earth. He called himself the Son of God and the Son of Man.

3- At the age of 30, Jesus began a three year ministry preaching the 'good news' of the Kingdom of God. He healed the sick, raised the dead and performed countless miracles. The religious people of the day hated Jesus and crucified Him on a cross. He suffered a brutal death. This was God's plan to take upon Himself all the sins of humanity. He died for you and me. .

4 - Jesus was buried in a tomb. On the 3rd day, Jesus rose from the dead and showed Himself to all of those who had followed Him. He told them that He was going back to heaven to prepare a place for all believers . . . but to wait in the city "**until you have been clothed with power from on high**". (This was the promised Holy Spirit.) Then they all watched as He was taken up to heaven before their very eyes.



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5 - They all waited. In an upper room on a day known as Pentecost, Jesus sent His Holy Spirit to indwell all the believers who were waiting. (He does the same for all who believe in Him today.) How did they know they had received the promised Holy Spirit? God gave them miraculous, spiritual evidence. They all began to speak in a new language from heaven, that they did not know.

6 - Everyone who wanted Jesus crucified realized that they had killed the God of Glory and asked God's followers "What must we do?"

The following is from God's Word, telling them what they should do. It is the same for you today! It is from the book of Acts 2:38-41

"Repent and be baptized, everyone of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off - for all whom the Lord our God will call."

With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." Those who accepted this message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.



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This is the same pattern that those who believe today are to follow for salvation. You must (a) repent (b) be baptized in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins and (c) receive the Holy Spirit (with the evidence of speaking in a new language, or tongue.) By this pattern, by faith and obedience, you are truly born again, born from above.

Jesus also confirms this in the book of Mark 16:15-18: He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues. . .

Jesus also taught us in John 3:5: "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying 'You must be born again.'

This is the firm foundation, the truth from God's Word. This is saving faith.



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Before we go, there are two more important things to remember:

First: God and human beings have a spiritual enemy. You may or may not have heard of him. He is known as the devil or Satan. (He was one of God's heavenly angels who rebelled against Him.) He does not want you to be born again and belong to Jesus. He wants you to stay under his control, which is the world system and your sinful nature. He will do everything he can to turn you away from what you have just learned. He will even use others to try to deceive you. He will put thoughts in your mind that what you have just learned is not the truth. (Always trust God's Word alone.) The devil will try to tell you that you have to give up too much to belong to God. I warn you now, if you accept his lies and do not continue with God, when this life ends you will be with the devil for all eternity in hell, separated from Jesus - forever and ever and ever.

The choice is always yours. God will never make you love Him, serve Him or obey Him.



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Second: Pray. Prayer is just simply talking to God, just like you would talk to anyone else. He always hears you. Talk with Him. Ask Him to reveal Himself to you. Ask Him for His peace and divine direction to move forward. And, if you are ready right now, ask Jesus to be your Savior and He will be there for you. (Remember, Jesus is God who came in the flesh).

Please visit our website branchesoflife.com to continue on this spiritual journey you have begun. There you will find Frequently Asked Question, Video Bible lessons and so much more.

God wants to teach you by His Word and by His Holy Spirit.

Until then, know that we will be praying for you. We are passionate about your salvation, and here to serve you.

Here is God's Word for you!

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks the door will be opened. Matthew 7:7-8



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All of these things may sound strange to you right now. That is why you must have faith and be open to learning the truth from God's Word. But, we can assure you, as you continue to walk in faith, you will begin to **experience** the things of God for yourself. You will come to know Him. This will build and strengthen your faith, until you become a true born again believer. Right now you are just a seeker. That's where we all begin.

Listen. God is calling you now!

Will you answer?



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