

I PRAYED THAT PRAYER – NOW WHAT?

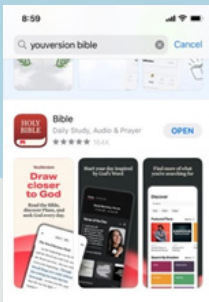
Dear New Christian,

Just recently, you prayed a prayer that changed the entire trajectory of your life. You asked Jesus to forgive you of your past and take charge of your future. You may or may not have felt something, but an amazing event has taken place. You may feel expectant, full of joy, full of peace...but perhaps there is also a little scepticism, a thought of “well, we’ll see...”

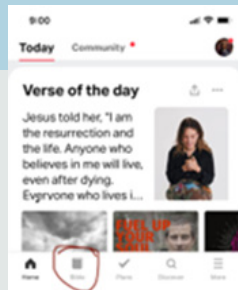
How about taking 5 days to read some Bible passages to better understand what has happened. There are three parts to this daily reading.

There are the bible passages.

If you have a paper bible, that's great. Your best friend is going to be the table of contents, where you can look up the book, go to that page, and then follow the numbers down to the chapter and verse. Why wouldn't we just print them out here? Well, we all learn and discover so differently, so we are covering off as many learning styles as we can. Please read the passages aloud – that is going to help you as well. If you don't have a paper bible, no worries! Simply download the YouVersion bible app on your phone. From there, choose the NLT bible to read, as it's easy to understand: no thee's and thou's! If you



hit “read” down the bottom, then hit the book up the top, all the books of the bible will come up, and you can even make it alphabetical to find them more easily.



Read the bible passage aloud and take a few moments to let it sink in.

There are the observations.

They are to help understand the scripture passage. Feel free to add your own – just write all over this!

Then there are the questions.

These are to help you think about what you have just read, and to ponder them in your own mind and heart.

Day 1: The Exchange

What you and I have in our lives is sin; harsh way to start day 1, right?!

Read: Romans 3:23, Isaiah 53:6, 1 John 1:8



Who has sinned?



How does Isaiah define sin?



Had you gone your own way before you prayed that prayer?

One of the things that happened when you prayed that prayer, was that an exchange took place.

Read: Isaiah 53:3-6 (“He” is Jesus), Romans 3:22-26.

We sinned; we went our own way, rather than God’s way. We rejected God, sometimes knowingly, sometimes unknowingly. But God had a plan to deal with our sin.



From the passages above, what was this plan?



What did Jesus take from us, according to Isaiah 53:4, 6?



What did dying on the cross achieve for us, according to Isaiah 53:5, Romans 3:22, 24?

Our sins were laid on Christ, and He bore the punishment for them. You might think, why didn’t God just forgive us? That would contradict God’s integrity; he could not merely overlook our sin and pretend it wasn’t there. Also, someone always has to pay. You borrow my car, you crash it, you are very sorry, so I forgive you. But someone has to pay. Either I pay, or you pay, but someone has to. Someone had to pay for our sin; God decided that He would be the one to pay. He had planned a way to deal with our sin all along, so that we didn’t have to be separated from Him.

We might think, well, surely sin isn't that big a deal? We live in an incredibly permissive culture. More and more things are acceptable, very few things remain off limits. This makes it hard to understand things being unacceptable to God. However, what we do understand is if something happens to us. It's the stuff of movies – you touch my kid, you have to pay. You hurt my family, you have to pay. You steal my wife, you have to pay. We understand this sentiment, even if we don't follow through on it.

Well God created the heavens and the earth. He created every form of life that exists, from the amoeba at the bottom of the ocean, to you and I who subdue the earth. The earth has been massively hurt. We have hurt each other. Humanity has torn itself apart and treated itself awfully. There is all this hurt and death flying around, but God decided to bear all the hurt and take all the death. God knew He would need to fix it; God knew He would be the one to pay. This would be the cost of allowing us to choose Him, rather than Him making us choose Him, which is no choice at all.

“The gospel is this: We are more sinful and flawed in ourselves than we ever dared believe, yet at the very same time we are more loved and accepted in Jesus Christ than we ever dared hope.” – Tim Keller

Read:

Romans 6:23, John 3:16


Watch:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-bUZj1bkoE>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j6VtOI9v0BI>

Day 2: Child of God

The next thing that we are going to look at that happened when you prayed that prayer, was that you became a child of God.

Read: 1 John 3:1, John 1:12-13

 How did you get this right?

God always wanted to be with His kids. The Judaeo/Christian origin story has it that God would come and walk with Adam and Eve in the cool of the day. This is a picture of family, when the day is done, spending time together.


Read: Galatians 4:6-7

The God of heaven and earth desires to be your Father. Maybe that term rustles up some tense triggers or memories for you; you need to know some things about your wonderful heavenly Father.


Firstly, He doesn't change.

Secondly, He is generous.

Thirdly, He knows what is best for us.

 Can you find all these things in James 1:17?

Read: Galatians 3:26, Romans 8:16, Ephesians 4:32-5:1, Philippians 2:14-15, Isaiah 49:14-16

 As children of God, how should things change in the way we do things?

 How does Isaiah suggest God is a different parent?

Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lcClBpI3n_4

Day 3: God's Holy Spirit

You prayed that prayer – an exchange took place. Your life of sin (remember – going your own way, dealing with the consequences of you doing it your way, and everybody around you doing it their way) for the perfect life of Jesus Christ. When God sees you, He doesn't see your stuff ups, He sees it all paid for. Also, you have become His own child.

But that's not all. He gave you a gift.

Read: Acts 2:38



What is this gift?

Read: John 14:15-17; 2 Corinthians 3:17; Romans 15:13; John 14:26; Acts 1:8

As you go through these passages, underline or write down what the Holy Spirit does.

Read John 16:7-8, Galatians 5:22-23



Why did Jesus have to go?



What does the Holy Spirit do in our lives?

As the Holy Spirit convicts us of sin, we have the choice to listen to Him or to ignore Him. You will find that things that never previously bothered you now trouble your conscience. You might have checked someone out with no feeling of guilt whatsoever! But now you want to honour your spouse, or honour that person as a creation of God. You might have previously not told the whole truth and it didn't concern you, now it feels like a blatant lie. As you listen to the Holy Spirit, you will stop doing what you've always done, and you will start doing what you never could.

The Holy Spirit will fill you with power to live the Christlike life. You can't do it on your own. He will gradually work change in our life. We choose to cooperate with the work He does on our character through surrender and obedience or compete with it through stubbornness and unbelief. Choose life!

Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NBKT_aTbG6A

Day 4: I Messed Up Again

You got it wrong. You did what you didn't want to do. You knew what you should do, and you didn't do it. Does that mean none of this works? Should you just give up?

Read: Romans 7:15-25

Sounds familiar, right?

Here's the thing: though you are now a child of God, you still live in your same body, in the same world. All the same temptations are right there.

Read: Romans 8:1, 1 John 2:1-2, Galatians 5:16-26



What is the definition of condemnation? (Ask Siri or Google if you need to!)



You are in Christ Jesus. What happens to your condemnation now?



What does John say about what takes place when you sin?

Galatians shows us that there is a constant letting go of the old and replacing it with the new. We let go of jealousy and replace it with love. We ignore our lust and take hold of self-control. We remind ourselves that our anger is nailed to the cross.



As you look at those lists of fruits of our old selves (the flesh) and the fruits of the Spirit, which one can you let go of today, and what can you replace it with?

This will be a daily activity from the day you give your life to Jesus until the day you pass from this life to the next. Remind yourself that you are not alone; you are not condemned; and the Holy Spirit is working in you and on you. Thank God for His kindness, patience and faithfulness.

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kDYjn-YdnD4>

Day 5: From Now until Forever

Read: Ecclesiastes 3:11

In his book “Mere Christianity”, CS Lewis wrote If I find in myself desires which nothing in this world can satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for another world. What we see around us, where people are constantly looking for the “next thing”, is actually a reflection of the Creator having made people to long for eternal life with Him.



Have you ever seen that at work in your own life?

Read: John 3:16, Romans 6:23, John 5:24, When Jesus and the two criminals are being crucified: Luke 23:39-43



Who gives you eternal life? What's the condition of getting it? What would you have thought it was before reading these verses?

Read: Hebrews 12:1-2, Jude 24-25



Who is responsible for getting you there? What does this do to your confidence?

Read: Romans 6:1-11



What does all the above mean for your responsibility?

Your future is assured. God awakened your faith, and He will bring it to completion and perfection. We respond in love by obeying how He asks us to live.

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mC-zw0zCCtg>

Next Steps

On your own or with a friend:

Discipleship on Demand: Coming Soon to Website and YouTube

A series of 3-5 minute videos giving an introduction to key Christian concepts.

Going Forward –

- Water Baptism
- Grace vs Works
- Conviction vs Condemnation
- The Kingdom of God
- YouRevolution 1-5

Going Deeper –

- Holy Spirit Baptism
- Holy Spirit Fruit 1-9

Going Live –

- Prayer
- Reading
- Church
- Small Group
- Serve
- Give
- Tell
- Listen
- Purpose

With the Church:

ALPHA

A 10-week foundation course to explore faith to ask all your questions in a safe environment.