

God Sense Workbook 2 God & Christianity

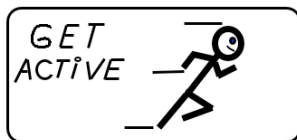
Read Deuteronomy 30:11-20

Ezekiel 18

John 15 (note vs. 6)

Philippians 2:12 - 18

See the similarities in scripture and how it works together. In order for our understanding and knowledge to grow there must be application, participation, experience, evaluation, introspection, testing, and observation. If we want to increase our understanding of God we must align our thoughts and actions into more agreement with God's ways, paths, principles, and character. Now, let's learn from the Bible God's will and how Christians ought to behave. Then, laying aside any contrary understanding, begin to do as the Bible says with achievable goals.



Do we read instructions in the Bible thinking we ought to obey them? Do we believe it is God who has written them and that they are to us? Do we pick and choose which scripture is for us and which is not?

God's Character

We ought to align our thoughts and actions increasingly with God's character. We cannot be perfect and will always sin/miss the mark. So the journey is not about being perfect, but progressively moving toward inward perfection. We may get tired, confused, doubtful, and distracted. Yet we can rest, learn, grow in faith, and refocus. Growing spiritually with God is a life set on learning, applying, correcting, and teaching. Failure, hurt, success, and joy are part of the journey. Every character in the Bible went through challenges and struggles, before reaching success. We are no different. Yet just as others in scripture, we must choose our path.

Christianity ~ Read these sections and note how each one is titled.

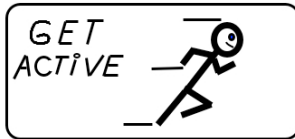
Romans 12:9-21 NKJV, "Behave Like a Christian"

[Ephesians 4:17-32](#) NIV, “Instructions for Christian Living”

[1 Peter 3:8-22](#) NLT, “All Christians”

Philipians 4 [NCV/NET](#) “What the Christians are to do”/“Christian Practices”

[1 Thessalonians 5:12-24](#) NASB “Christian Conduct”



Do we want to be Christians as the Bible describes it? Are we willing to hold ourselves to these descriptions and to seek development within ourselves to grow such character in our hearts, minds, strength, and soul?

Belief definitions

1. “Belief is the state of **mind** in which a person thinks something to be the case with or without there being **empirical evidence** to prove that something is the case with factual certainty.”

2. “Another way of defining belief sees it as a **mental representation** of an **attitude positively oriented** towards the **likelihood** of something being **true**.”

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belief>

James 2:19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!

James refers to the definition #1 above for belief. Simply believing something is not enough. Faith involves definition #2 where our attitude acts as though it is true.

Belief with out action or faith without deeds is dead. To believe with all our heart, mind, and soul requires action with all our strength. The greatest commandment says to love which is action, not just thinking. If we actually love God with all our heart, strength, mind, and soul, then we are compliant to God’s will. If we do it here and there, we will at best have “here and there” compliance. What does that say about our belief?

Yet if we commit ourselves to simple daily adjustments, continuously, to grow with God and God’s character little by little with easy achievable goals we can over time experience God in ways we never thought possible. Each new experience adds to our understanding.

The work in 12 step groups comprises confession, repentance, correcting evil character, making right wrongs done to others, improving Godly thoughts, and helping others do these things. Many will not do it, but still show up at meetings. Those who do the work and continue at it sincerely & honestly know God at a deeper level. Some 10%ish actually get to know God at such levels. It doesn't sound like much, but 10% of a million is a lot of people, so this is far from a rare experience.

Instead of faultfinding, complaining, making excuses and blaming we can take responsibility for the choices we make. We can create new thoughts that can move our hearts toward peace, truth, justice, patience, mercy, forgiveness, compassion, and love. Truth is required our new thoughts must be something we believe and not lies. This may seem silly or ridiculous at first, out of the ordinary, but we ought to keep seeking understanding of how God exists within this character. God is this character. We ought to think how is God present with love, justice, truth, and mercy? Goodness and righteousness is within our reach, but we must give our hearts, minds, strength, and soul over to it.

My wife and I got two beagle puppies. They needed potty training. We were told to "throw a party" whenever they would pee in the right place. Neither of us were raised with praise or compliments so such actions were foreign to us at the time. This positive praise went against our understanding and experience. It just wasn't who we were. We could not see the good in it because we did not experience it.

However, it made practical sense so we did it anyway. It felt awkward doing it and we both felt stupid, but after a while we saw the results. Seeing the results proved to us it worked. Seeing it worked gave us faith in the process. We no longer felt stupid for doing it. We had confidence in it. Confusion disappeared through experience and testing. Seeing is a different level of believing.

There are different levels of learning and understanding.

- [Mary's room - knowledge argument](#)
- [Webb's depth of knowledge](#)
- [Piaget's Constructivism](#)

God is invisible and intangible. We can't provide pictures or images of God. It is the experience that teaches. It must be demonstrated and lived out. We have an inward ability to understand God if we set ourselves right to be with God. We cannot improve our faith/understanding in who God really is by reading about God any more than we can improve our understanding of riding a bike. Experience is necessary to learn intangible things.

Each day we ought to set our minds and actions toward understanding God's spiritual kingdom and seeking to sense it with our hearts. We ought to focus upon sensing compassion, empathy, love, intimacy, and connecting at a heart level with others. This can be a powerful and intimidating experience. Yet God is there. Humility, transparency, genuineness, and being real are at the heart of this activity. Attempting such connection with others can stir up a lot of contrary thoughts which we ought to examine and take into account for correction.

The ultimate plan is love. We are to be learners and teachers of sincere love. All our hearts, all our minds, all our strength, and all our soul every day and every minutes ought to be focused upon love. Anything else is sin.

At the end of each day we ought to be able to see that we did something toward growth and development of God's character. What new understanding, experience, or sense have we gained? Did we connect with someone in a loving way? How much effort did we put forth. Did we plan for it? Are we really seeking to serve God or ourselves?

Definition of the greek word belief used in the Bible

“pisteuy: to believe, entrust

<https://biblehub.com/greek/4100.htm>

3982 /peñthō, "persuade, be persuaded")

How is your belief persuading you? Within our minds exists a system of rational that will defend its understanding. When contrary information is presented our first reaction will often be defensive and seek to prove it wrong. Our minds are biased.

Becoming Ready - being convinced

Many people who seek God in recovery circles hit what they call a “bottom.” Their way of doing things fails them to such a point they realize continuing to do things they way they know will be devastating. They reach out for help only because they become convinced they have to. Rarely will people live differently because it sounds like a good idea or even because the Bible says so.

To really get convinced means we will need to gain experience that it works. Living life differently is beyond awkward. We just need to accept that things are going to get weird and perhaps scary. Yet to get the evidence we need that God exist here and now involves living in ways completely contrary to our understanding. It can feel like choosing to jump in a pool of freezing water and then finding out it’s really not that cold. It’s the choice and taking the action that is the most difficult.

Wheel Barrel Story

The evidence is in the work. Like the ‘Wheel Barrel Story’ we cannot know what it is like unless we give our life to God. The level of personal investment we make within ourselves toward God has to do with the affect of spiritual understanding we receive. There is a cause and affect relationships. God opposes the proud, but gives favor to the humble. We ought to humble ourselves. This is an attitude within our minds.

Read the instructions Jesus provides in Matthew 6 and practice it for a week. It’s just one week, right? We can learn about our resistance, how it feels to give in to God’s ways, and perhaps a bit of God’s grace. As we trust God our eyes can be opened in ways that reveal our fear, denial, anger, vanity, idolatry, and shame. Whatever new learning about ourselves comes about through this exercise, it is important to understand it is our awareness that has changed. Nothing is different. We simply turned on the light to see spiritual truth.

Matthew 6 Do these with and attitude of love and compassion.
Do charity each day, but tell no one. (Experience it with empathy)
Pray privately daily. (Listen to inward senses for understanding)
Forgive everyone, hold no grudges, be at peace. Have mercy.
Do not lie. If you do lie, confess it.

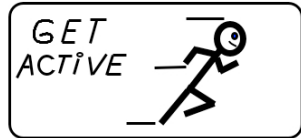
Seek peace. Move patiently within the mind, heart, attitude, and actions.

Fasting: Give up anything that distracts from focusing upon God.

We rely fully upon God's character and spiritual goodness. We do not seek our own desires, but the will and grace of God.

Compassion, empathy, and connection with others through love is our goal.

Living spiritually involves more attention to such things.



How important is God, God's ways, and God's character? Will we choose God? Will we try it for a week? The only way God can teach us is if we listen and then do what God says. Ever try to teach someone who wouldn't listen or obey?

Collaborate with others about the experience (this is essential). We must work together. Our minds are full of self deceptive tricks that can fool us. Through our personal sharing we can encourage others, give and receive empathy, bond, and learn where we may need still more growth through personality conflicts. Patience, forgiveness, mercy, and compassion must be present. Sharing about our impatience, fear, anger, shame, or pride also can provide bonding and encouragement since we all sin. Once shared openly and honestly we can gain good spiritual food.

Matthew 5:19 Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 7:26 "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand:

Matthew 12:50 For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother."

Matthew 16:25 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

Matthew 23:12 And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Mark 3:35 For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother."

John 12:46 I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.

Acts 10:35 But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.

1 John 2:5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.

1 John 3:6 Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.