

# **EMBARK...**

## **Beginning Your Journey with God**

Any great journey begins before you take your first step. On your pathway of faith there are people who have gone before you, people alongside of you, and still others who will come after you. On your spiritual expedition through life may you find yourself impassioned with the same reverent awe that has captivated the hearts and minds of humankind for thousands of years.

In your hands you hold a spiritual brochure of sorts – a cursory overview of some of the highlights you won't want to miss on your travels. Use this handbook more like a trail guide than a destination or end in itself. In this manual, you'll find some deep questions, some pages for you to jot down your thoughts, and some Bible verses to guide you in your discovery.

Be prepared to wrestle with new concepts, embrace some realities that might require some changes, but most of all, do all you can to get a better picture of God and a deeper understanding of who He is calling you to become...

Enjoy the journey,  
Pastor Michael Rogalski

### **It's Real**

In the Old Testament, the people were looking forward to the coming Messiah. Today, people look back at the Cross. Both perspectives land in exactly the same place—in the person of Jesus Christ. The reality of our faith rests in reality of Jesus. More than a good teacher, more than a martyr, more than an ancient



celebrity, more than a prophet, Jesus came and walked this earth (as both God and human) and became the only individual to live with flawless integrity and conquer death. He is, was, and will continue to shape the landscape of human history because of the reality of His existence.

### **It's Personal**

Rather than a poster on the wall or a snapshot of some far-off celebrity, Jesus longs to be close to you. Throughout history, the term “religion” has been quite distancing. Perhaps your spiritual background had left you cold and virtually unaffected, and you can understand why Bette Midler sang the lyrics, “God is watching us from a distance.” The reason Jesus left heaven was to bring you deep peace, wholeness, and redemption. Rather than just getting your ticket punched to assure your ticket to heaven, Jesus wants to be with you now, in this moment, in a deep relationship with Him at the core of your existence.

### **It's Real Personal**

When you get consumed with something, the natural byproduct is that it takes over. A lot of people are comfortable with the idea of Jesus, but letting Him guide and control your life is an all-together different scenario. He wants to bring you wholeness and holiness, and He will when you allow Him into every part of who you are.

## **Making your “house” a “home”**

If you're anything like me, guests are welcome into your house, but, to be honest, there are certain places you'd rather not let them see. That room you just piled stuff into. The bathroom you hadn't cleaned. The closet you just shoved a bunch of junk into so your guests wouldn't see it. You get the picture.

Spiritually, we often operate the same way. We'll let God into the places we've got straightened out, but hide the junk we aren't as proud of. But brace yourself, these are the places Jesus must go. He went to the cross to bring us spiritual cleansing and, being the gentleman that He is, He won't barge in and clean places where He is not welcome and invited.

Perhaps the biggest challenge before you on your journey is to allow Jesus to make Himself at home in your heart. Despite the junk in our lives, Jesus longs to come in, bring cleansing and, finally, help us to find rest in Him alone. He has more dreams and hope for you than you could ever imagine. Let Him in, let Him begin, and enjoy the journey!

To help you on your new journey there are a few main things to keep you on track.

- **Truth—Getting into the Bible**
- **Prayer—Communicating with God**
- **Others—Spending time with other Christians**
- **Honor—Obeying with all you've got**
- **Share—Passing on your faith to others**

### **Extras:**

- **FAQs—questions you might ask along the way**
- **“Christianese”—words you only hear at church**

Let the adventure begin...

## **Truth—Getting into the Bible**

Too many people subscribe to the thinking that reading a verse a day will keep the devil away. Rather than a simple vitamin the Bible has enough spiritual nutrients to serve up breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Up to this point, what adjectives would you have used to describe the Bible?

I've found that God's Word is much more like a love letter than a physics textbook. The overall theme of the Bible is God trying to establish a loving relationship with all of humankind. If you can imagine how excited you'd be to get a note or a letter from someone you cared about, you probably wouldn't just throw it in a stack and just maybe glance at it later — you'd rip it open, anxious to check out what was written. Well, if you can see God's Word as a love note this might help your perspective and eagerness to get into it.

Check out these verses and jot down some words and phrases to describe the Bible.

**2 Timothy 3:16-17**

**Hebrews 4:12**

**Matthew 4:4**

If you're just getting started at looking into God's Word it can be pretty overwhelming and difficult to understand. There are a lot of little books and devotionals (books designed to help you devote your life to God) that you could get at a Christian bookstore. But in the meantime, here are two similar guides that you can use to help you digest a passage of Scripture.

## **A-E-I-O-U:**

*A – Ask questions.* Before you get too deep into a text it's important to understand what's going on. So look at some the verses around where you are reading and answer questions like: Who's involved? What just happened? Where is it taking place? What can I learn about God from this passage? Etc.

*E – Emphasize key words/phrases.* Basically, what's the overall theme of the passage you are reading? Is there a word or phrase that keeps coming up? If you could sum it all up in a brief statement what would you say?

*I – Illustrate.* So you may not be a Michelangelo (I often mess up stick-figures), but the point of this is to help you "picture" what's going on. If you want to draw, then do that. Otherwise, try putting it in a modern-day setting. For example, if you were reading the story where Jesus was feeding the 5000 people on a hillside with fish and bread from the book of Mark chapter 6, you might imagine the same miracle taking place with a chili-cheese dog at a high-school football stadium – wouldn't that be wild! When you're able to put yourself in the shoes of the original audience the Bible really comes to life.

*O – Other verses.* One of the coolest things about the Bible is that it never contradicts itself and has recurring themes throughout the text. Try remembering some of the verses you've read that connect with what you're reading now. This might not happen right away, but as become more familiar with God's Word you'll have more to draw upon.

*U – USE IT!* This is the most active part of Bible study. Jesus said, "Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock." (Matthew 7:24). Make some tangible goals to help you live out the truth of what you just read.

### **Y.A.D.A.**

The Hebrew word “**yada**” is used over and over again in the Old Testament. Its primary meanings are “to know” and “to make known”. Two purposes in reading the Bible is that you would both know God and make Him known. We believe that Scripture leads us to that end. My prayer is that God is revealed in you and through you as you uncover the beauty of our Lord.

*Y – Yield.* Take a moment and ask God to guide you through the Bible with His guidance and leading. Essentially, this step is prayer.

*A – Ask.* Before you get too deep into a text it’s important to understand what’s going on. So look at some the verses around where you are reading and answer questions like: Who’s involved? What just happened? Where is it taking place? What can I learn about God from this passage? Etc.

*D – Dig.* Through prayer and reading Scripture in context attempt to discover what God wants you to understand about Him and yourself. It can also be helpful to have a Bible with study notes or to have another reference book to get some deeper Scriptural insights.

*A – Apply.* While the words may be enriching, God gave us His Word so that it can move from our head and our hearts, but ultimately to our hands. The pivotal moment of study comes when the words on a page become actions in your life. Challenge yourself to set some tangible goals to help you live out the truth of what you just read.



### **Boiling it Down: Four Questions to Ask about a Bible Passage**

- *What can I learn about God here?*
- *What can I learn about myself here?*
- *How should I be changed by this Truth?*
- *What should I do with this Truth?*

Here are a few passages from Scripture to work with:

Psalm 23

John 5:1-9

Colossians 3:1-11

When you read the Bible using one of the formats above it's wise to tackle only about 10 or 12 verses at once. Most Bibles have some natural breaks (indicated by spaces, new paragraphs, or titles over a specific passage) and it's good to go by those. I'd recommend studying the book of Mark for a good overview on the life of Jesus, then go on to Colossians to learn about your new life in Christ. Then, reading through the book of Acts will give you some good insight as to what the first Christians did and how they lived.

## **Prayer–Communicating with God**

If you are new to the idea of having a relationship with God, then prayer probably seems like one of those mysterious, religious things that people do to seem holy. Let me challenge you to change your thinking when it comes to prayer. In the same way that you'd call a friend to tell them about something exciting, or ask someone for some advice, try talking to God this way. He cares so much about who you are, what you think, how you feel—He wants to know you intimately. Telling Him about your life lets Him in on the relationship.

Some people don't pray simply because they don't know what to say. To help us get in on this God-conversation, let's look into the Bible at some prayers and some principles to guide this dialogue with God we call prayer.

The book of Psalms is almost like a hymnal slash diary that King David composed to and for God. In it you will read of moments in which David was elated and joyful and at the other extreme he seems to be completely depressed and brokenhearted. Take a look at these chapters from the Bible and see if you identify the raw emotions David carried in and through his prayer life.

How would you describe David's emotional and mental state in these passages?

Psalm 84

Psalm 13

Psalm 51

No matter how presentable or raw David's emotions seemed to be, he came to God with honesty. In our relationships it's not always honorable to "shoot from the hip", but with God, He

wants us to pray straight from the heart. He wants to know you and He longs for you to be real and honest with Him, just like David.

Throughout Jesus' time with the disciples He would often pause for a teachable moment with them. On several occasions He instructed them about prayer. Check out what Jesus has to say about prayer.

What guidance does Jesus give about prayer?

### **Matthew 6:5-13**

A lot of people get hung up on "saying the right thing." Don't worry about what to say, just talk to God as you would talk to a friend. This can seem kind of weird at first, but God is real and eager to hear you speak to Him. Until you feel more comfortable just speaking from your heart here are a few things to help guide your prayer life:

*"Thanks"* – Thank God for who he is. Tell him what characteristics you really like about Him. Thank him for what He's done in your life...

*"Sorry"* – Ask God for forgiveness for things you've done or thought that He wouldn't be proud of. It's important to take down any walls in our relationship with God.

*"Ready"* – Be ready to live for Him and ask Him what he wants to teach you. Sometimes sitting in silence is good during this time.

*"Please"* – God can do some amazing things in life if we would just ask Him. Maybe you want Him to heal you, give you peace, restore a relationship, or whatever – just ask him.

If you'd like to find out what and how Jesus prayed, check out John chapter 17. There are three major sections to this chapter that we can pattern our prayer life after...we can't really go wrong if we're following Jesus anyway!

Sometimes it can be hard to stay focused during prayer. To keep my mind from wandering, I often write down my prayer. Try writing your prayer here.

### **Others—Spending time with other Christians**

There was an old show called “The Lone Ranger” which was basically about a man on a horse who went around fighting crime all by himself. Our society often idolizes those who live with raging independence, but God is calling us to live focused on interdependence.

The Bible uses the analogy of the human body to show how we are all connected in our relationship with God. “All of you together are Christ’s body, and each of you is a separate and necessary part of it.” (1 Corinthians 12:27). And Hebrew 10:24-25 says, “Think of ways to encourage one another to outbursts of love and good deeds. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage and warn each other, especially now that the day of his coming back again is drawing near” (The Message). It is so important you get together with some other Christians who can encourage you in your new relationship with God. You might find them at church, at your school’s bible club, or a home bible study. The point is that it is so important that you get with some other followers of Christ to help you stay on the right path.

Take a moment to look at a passage in the bible from the book of Acts. To understand the context of this passage, you need to know that after Jesus left earth that the disciples and his followers were left with lots of questions. They had a mission and a message to spread, but didn’t necessarily have a plan about how to get there. Naturally, they banded together and supported each other on their newfound spiritual journey. They were a people of action and mission and others were drawn to this deep interdependence.

As you learned how to better understand the Bible in the first section of this guide, take some time to study Acts 2:42-47 and reflect on the beginnings of the first church.

What are some benefits of connecting with other followers of Christ?

What are some fears of connecting with other Christians?

Who are some of the Christians in your neighborhood, at work, or at your school, that you could get to know better?

*“Christian community is the final apologetic.” – Francis Schaeffer*

*“The biggest challenge for the church at the opening of the twenty-first century is to develop a solution to the discontinuity and fragmentation of the American lifestyle.” – Lyle Schaller*

*“The future of the church depends on whether it develops true community. We can get by for a while on size, skilled communication, and programs to meet every need, but unless we sense that we belong to each other, with masks off, the vibrant church of today will become the powerless church of tomorrow. Stale, irrelevant, a place of pretense where sufferers suffer alone, where pressure generates conformity rather than the Spirit creating life – that’s where the church is headed unless it focuses on community.” – Larry Crabb*

Take a moment and reflect on these quotes. Do you sense the need for one another? Do you see how important it is to connect



with other Christians? Maybe that’s why the book of Ecclesiastes says, “Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken” (Ecc. 4:9-12).

## **Honor–Obeying with all you’ve got**

Too many Christians spend their lives trying not to sin. While it is important to not fall into sin, a better perspective is to live trying to please God. Ephesians 5:10 says, “Find out what pleases the Lord” – do what you can to put a smile on God’s face. Honoring God flows out of the love we have for him. Three basic things you can do to honor God are 1) obey his commands, 2) resist temptation, and 3) give to him.

### **Obey**

Obeying God’s commands is a reflection of what He means to us. Jesus said, “If you love me, you will obey what I command.” (John 14:15) Living according to God’s standards is so much better for us than anything else. In John 10:10 Jesus said, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that may have life, and have it to the full.” Life with Jesus is so much better than the seemingly satisfying things the world has to offer.

Before receiving Christ, what had been the goal of your life?

On this spiritual journey you are taking, what new insights have been most exciting for you?

Take a moment and read [John 15:9-14](#). What connections does Jesus seem to make about love and obedience?

### **Resist**

There is no doubt that as soon as you decide to follow Jesus, our new enemy, Satan, will attempt to distract you from honoring God. 1 Peter 5:8 says, “Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.” Just like a skilled military force, he will look for weaknesses and attack you there.

What are some areas of your life that the enemy will probably attack to distract you in your relationship with God?

Check out **Ephesians 6:10-18** and list some ways you can defend yourself.

A great verse to memorize in your struggle with temptations is "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so you can stand up under it."

—1 **Corinthians 10:13**

Take some time now and try to memorize that verse.

### **Give**

Giving to God is a great way of saying thanks for all he's done for us. When we give him our time, our treasure (giving tithe and offering as part of our worship), and our talents, we will be blessed.

What are some ways you could honor God with your time?

What changes will you have to make in your schedule in order to do some of these?

Check out the verses in **Malachi 3:6-12** and journal some of your thoughts on honoring God with your money?

Honoring God with your talents is probably a new concept for you. Whether you think you don't have a single talent or you've got a trophy room that could compete with Michael Jordan's, now is the time for you to use what you've got to shine for Jesus. There is nothing wrong with receiving accolades and prestige – so long as that doesn't become your priority. There are many Christians who happen to have a bunch of money and a sizeable fan club, but they have honored God and given him the glory for all they've got. God has blessed them with a huge platform so they can tell others about what he has done for them. Well, for those of us that might not win the Heisman or a Grammy we've got to figure out how we can honor God with our talents.

What are some things you're good at? (Don't be bashful, anything from the kazoo to lawn bowling can be written here.)

How can you honor God through these gifts? (This may take some genuine creativity, and maybe some help from your friends at church or your pastor).

Ephesians 4:7 says, "he has given each one of us a special gift according to the generosity of Christ." Verse 16 goes on to say, "As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow..."

Keep working on this idea of using your life to honor God.

### **Share—Passing on your faith to others**

In a relay race the most important aspect is passing the baton. Before Jesus died on the cross, he entrusted 12 men with his life-changing message. Because of their faithfulness, die-hard commitment, and unashamed courage, we now have that message and it's changed our lives. Well, now God is trusting in you to carry on this message to the people in your life. Two ways to share your faith is with your actions and your words.

Francis of Assisi (a monk who gave all his possessions to the poor) once said, "Preach the gospel at all times, if necessary use words."

What do you think that means?

Romans 10:14 says, "But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells him?"

Journal about your first reaction to reading that verse.

Who are some people you'd like to see in heaven?

From your list above, how many of those need to hear about the message of Christ?

God wants us to talk to him about people before we talk to people about him. Write out some prayers that you have for the people you need to share Jesus with.

Similar to what you probably did when you began your relationship with Christ, here is a simple way of leading someone in a prayer to receive Jesus. It's A-B-C.

A – Admit you've messed up and need a Savior. (Romans 3:23, 6:23)

B – Believe that Jesus is God's Son who died for your sins and offers eternal life. (John 3:16, 5:24; Romans 10:9)

C – Commit to honoring God with your life (1 John 2:6).

### **Where do I go from here?**

Even though you've traveled through some of the basics, your journey has really just only begun. As you continue to practice what you've learned, keep growing. It is vital that you get connected with some other Christians – get to a small group, volunteer with a ministry, go to church regularly – but do something, we don't need any more "Lone Ranger Christians" around here! And read your Bible – perhaps next you could tackle a book of



the Bible – check out the book of Mark for an action packed narrative tracking some highlights from Jesus. Look into the book of Colossians for a description of who you are and God's purposes for your life. Of, if you're into some heady theology, check out the book of Romans. Whatever

you do, stay connected to Jesus. Just like an electrical circuit, you won't have any power or sustainability unless you are plugged into the Source of all life – God!

Enjoy the journey...and remember, you're not alone!

## **FAQ's—Questions you may ask along the way**

### **What do I do if I mess up and sin again?**

Chances are you will sin again and possibly do some of the things you were used to doing before you met Christ. But the difference is that you will probably feel bad about cheating or lying or taking advantage of someone because what you're doing on the outside doesn't match up with what's on the inside—God. You were born into the world destined to mess up. That's why you're parents favorite word seemed to be "No!" especially when you were real little. They were trying to correct your bad behavior. Well, after you let Christ into your life, the bible says that the Holy Spirit comes in too (John 14:26). The Holy Spirit will guide you and help you make godly decisions. Just remember that the goal is not so much to keep from sinning, but to honor God—live in love for God, not fear of messing up.

### **How do I tell my family about my new decision?**

Your family might have a totally different view of God and religion than you do. The best thing you can do is to let your actions do the talking. If you've said you've made some changes, then show them. Clean up your attitude (and keep it that way). Don't get caught up in the bad choices and behaviors you were known for. If you live with your folks, honor your parents and show them respect whether you think they deserve it or not (the Bible says you'll live a long time if you do it—really, check out Ephesians 6:1-3 and see for yourself). As for telling your family, lovingly tell them about what God has done in your life and do your best to understand what that means. Before you do anything though, spend time in prayer asking God for his wisdom.

### **Does God send people to hell?**

I mean, really, if God says he loves the world so much, why send them to hell.

The idea that God *sends* people to hell is in itself false. It's just not true that God sends people there. Too many people

make God out to be this cosmic killjoy, who gets great pleasure from seeing people in misery. Well, this is totally opposite from what is true about the heart of God.

“He is patient with you, *not wanting anyone to perish*, but everyone to come to repentance.” 2 Peter 3:9

“How often they rebelled against him in the desert and *grieved him* in the wasteland!” Psalm 78:40

“Do not worship any other God, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.” Exodus 34:14

He desperately wants to be with you! Don’t rob yourself of the opportunity to hang out with Him – both here and in heaven.

### **Is Hell a real place?**

Let’s look at the Bible’s description of this place:

A “pit” – Job 33:24

The “blackest darkness” – 2 Peter 2:17

“The fiery lake of burning sulfur” – Rev 19:20

“Weeping and gnashing of teeth” – Matt 24:51

Hell in Greek, the original language of the New Testament, is gehenna, and gehenna was a valley outside of Jerusalem which was used as the city’s major dump.

But the scariest aspect of hell is that people there will be excluded from God’s presence. “He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of His power” (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9)

God doesn’t force people to love Him – (see Revelation 3:20)

He’s given us all free will. God lets people choose heaven or hell through their responses to Him. God cares so much that he doesn’t base our entrance into heaven on what we’ve done. If he did that, no one would make it to heaven. Instead God does all the work; we simply have to acknowledge our need for the sacrifice and righteousness of Jesus Christ.

### **What will we do in heaven?**

There are lots of descriptions of heaven in the Bible and the

overwhelming theme of what goes on there has to do with glorifying God. The Bible isn't clear about how much of what we have on earth is similar to heaven, but we know that it is a place free of sadness, confusion, anger, jealousy or really anything negative. It will be peaceful freedom and everyone there will absolutely love it. It's also an amazingly beautiful place. The bible says that the city is gold and the gates are pearls (Revelation 21:21). Whatever we'll there and whatever it's like is far greater than anything our minds could even imagine.

### **Is God loving?**

According to His Word, the Bible, God embodies the idea of love.

"God is love." 1 John 4:16

"We love because He first loved us." 1 John 4:19

"I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38-39 – (he's talking to Christians here)

So, the answer, to "is God loving?" is undeniably YES!

### **What if I don't feel the same way I did when I prayed to receive Christ, is something wrong?**

Be careful not to base your relationship with God on your feelings. It's more of a commitment than a temporary crush. If I only brushed my teeth when I *felt* like it I'd be paying for it at the dentist's office (not to mention the impact it would have on my relationship with my wife). Just like any relationship, the more time you spend with God the better the relationship will get. So whether you feel like it or not, reading your bible and spending time talking with God through prayer is the best way to get to feeling good again.

## Christianese: Words you hear only church people say

- **“Hello Brother” or “Hello Sister”** – often heard in church foyers followed by a mushy embrace by people who don’t look anything like family. Comes from the idea that every Christian is part of a larger, more global family all with the same Father God. It’s also been said (in decidedly Christian circles), “we’re brothers from another mother, but the same Father” – referring to God.
- **Baptism** – also known as “getting dunked” among less pious circles, a new (or recommitted) follower if Jesus is brought under water and then raised back up again to symbolize the death and resurrection of Jesus; it is a public proclamation of a personal decision – the corporate alliance of dedication into the family of God that has stemmed from a personal alliance of commitment to Jesus
- **Communion** – a “remembrance ceremony” initiated in the Old Testament (through the Feast called Passover) and fulfilled by Jesus in the New Testament, bread and juice is taken to symbolize the forgiveness and redemption that Jesus brings to those who follow Him (see Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; 1 Corinthians 11:23-28)
- **Quiet Time** – people may use this word to refer to their time spent alone with God. Contrary to how it sounds it is not sitting in a yoga position while humming. It is merely a term that likely sprung out the idea that you would stop for some “quiet time” to be alone with God. (see Devotional)
- **“God-shaped hole”** – an analogy of the fact that there is a place in everyone’s heart that desires God and will only be filled with Him (usually about the size of a half-dollar – just kidding)
- **Saved** – similar to a rescue, it’s the idea that Jesus Christ saves us from eternal punishment in hell. Someone might say, “I got saved when I was...” to indicate the day that they prayed to commit their life to Christ.
- **Witness** – used to convey the notion that you’ve seen and

experienced God and are on a mission to tell people about him

- **Word** – most commonly refers to the Bible; also used to refer to Jesus in John chapter 1
- **Born-again** – refers to a conversation Jesus had with a Pharisee named Nicodemus telling him about starting his life over with God at the center (check out John 3:1-21)
- **Anointed** – used to describe a person, event, or idea that has been clearly touched by God, specifically the power and presence of the Holy Spirit
- **Tithe** – comes from the Hebrew word meaning “tenth” to describe the Old Testament practice of giving 10% of your earnings to the church
- **Holy Ghost** – another term used for the Holy Spirit
- **Trinity** – the concept that God is composed of 3 entities: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus Christ), and God the Holy Spirit
- **Omnipotent** – all-powerful; a characteristic of God
- **Worship** – too often this is relegated to the singing time during church service, so when you hear someone say, “worship was really good this morning”, they’re likely talking about the song selection or the musical prowess of the people on stage; however, the Bible talks about worship involving sacrifice and honor, which can be done in more ways than singing or playing an instrument; check out Romans 12:1, Luke 4:8, 1 Corinthians 10:31
- **Devotional** – a book or a guide that contains spiritual insights. Some Christians use this as a daily discipline for their time spent alone with God.
- **Testimony** – similar to “witness” someone gives an account of their experience with God; often in a group or in front of church, someone will “give their testimony” and recount the highs and lows of life and reflect on God’s redemption; but beware, the goal of a testimony is to bring glory to God, but all too often people glory in their sin rather than in their Savior.
- **Sanctification** – literally means “set apart”; refers to an inner work of God moving a believer towards holiness

- **Justification**—another one of those “churchy words” this one refers to Jesus’ sacrifice that justifies us for heaven
- **Rapture**—a word used to describe Jesus coming back to earth to bring His people to heaven; to the surprise of many, this word is not found in the bible
- **Amen**—literally “let it be so”; used to conclude a prayer; also, often heard from eager congregants after the pastor utters something profound during the sermon (ie. A “hearty Amen!”)
- **Hallelujah**—a Hebrew word that literally means “praise the Lord”
- **End Times**—the term used to define the events that surround God’s plan as told through the book of Revelation and told by Jesus in the Gospels
- **“Get fed”**—contrary to how it sounds, this has less to do with doughnuts or breakfast at church and more to do with the depth of spiritual teaching one receives; often used negatively, “I didn’t *get fed* at my last church” translation: “the teaching there was not deep enough for my liking” (see Hebrews 5:11-14); interestingly, Jesus said that it wasn’t teaching that fed him, but serving God (John 4:34)—something to chew on (yes, pun intended)
- **Fellowship**—refers to Christians hanging out, building relationships and getting to know each other; “Fellowship Halls” are places within the church dedicated to this cause; among some Christian circles this word has morphed into the word “community”
- (add new ones you learn here—this can be fun...and funny)
-