

Principles for a Transformed Life (PTL)

Principle #2: Faith in God

Anyone who wants to come to Him must believe that God exists and that He rewards those who sincerely seek Him. (Hebrews 11:6b NLT)

Definition: Faith in God - A shift in lifestyle reflecting a trust in God. The concept includes commitment to the will of God, relationship with the Person of God, dependence on the grace of God, and obedience to the command of God.

◆ Making a decision to follow God.

- Decision means a conclusion or resolution reached after consideration. It comes from a Latin term meaning “to cut off.” Choosing one path means not taking another. Let’s consider having faith in God.
- A decision to follow God means seeking a personal relationship with Him. John 17:1-3 tells us that life eternal consists in knowing God. That is more than knowing about God or believing that He exists.
 1. Matthew 7:7-12 He promises to reveal Himself to anyone who genuinely seeks Him.
 2. John 14:7-9. Jesus Christ reveals to us the nature of God. Our religious training may have given us a distorted picture of God. We must change this view by studying Jesus in the Gospels.

Topics for Discussion

What do you think God is like? Where did you get those ideas?

Have you ever tried to adopt a spiritual way of life? What do you think that means? Are you willing to try? If not, why not

Describe your idea of the Jesus of the Bible.

◆ How can we get to know God?

- Prayer: Not just a shopping list, but a conversation.
 1. Colossians 1:9-12 Pray to increase in the knowledge of God.
 2. Philippians 3:8-10. Make knowing Him your first priority
- The Word of God: 2 Corinthians 3:18 / James 1:25 The Word of God (The Bible, 2 Timothy 3:16) shows us the nature of God.

Topics for Discussion

Do you ever pray? When do you pray? How do you pray – standing, kneeling, aloud, silent? Where do you do it? What do you say?

Do you have a Bible? If so, do you read it? What kind do you have? Do you like it? Why? Describe your experiences in reading the Bible.

How would you pray to ask God to help you get to know Him?

- ◆ Matthew 6:33 Tells us to seek the Kingdom of God first, to make it our priority.
 - John 6:27 Seeking God deserves our sincere effort.
 - Hebrews 11:6. We have to believe 2 things in order to draw closer to God: He exists and He will reward us if we seek Him
 - Proverbs 3:9-10 God wants us to place Him first in everything, even our finances and belongings.

Topics for Discussion

How do you seek first the Kingdom of God? What does it mean to put God first?

Do you know anyone who you believe actually does put God first in their life? Describe them and tell why you think they seek God first.

If you were going to really put God first, what changes would you have to make in your daily life?

- ◆ Learning to trust in the Lord. We humans trust in all kinds of things. It takes time and effort to learn to trust in the Lord. What areas do I hold back for myself? Look up some of these scriptures and think about what they teach you.
 - Psalm 20:7 / Psalm 37:3-5 / Psalm 44:6 / Psalm 49:6-9 / Psalm 62:9-10 / Psalm 118:8-9 / Proverbs 3:5-6 / Proverbs 29:25 / Mark 10:24 / Philippians 3:3-4

Topics for Discussion

In what areas of your life do you have trouble trusting God? What are you afraid will happen if you turn it over to Him?

- ◆ Learning to trust implies learning to obey. If I trust someone then I can do what they tell me because I know they will never hurt me. This is difficult for most of us. We are afraid God will ask us to give up something dear, or do something that is not for our good. The truth is, if I know the will of God and do it, it will always be good. How do I know the will of God?
 - John 13:34-35 Love is the command of the Lord. The will of God is to learn to love others.
 - 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. This describes what real love looks like. This is what God has in mind for you.

Topics for Discussion

What do you think it means to love like Jesus loved? What does the love commandment mean to you in terms of how you live your life?

Read 1 Corinthians 13: 4-8 again. Using this passage of scripture, decide where you can change to be more loving. Ask God to help you.



Trust and dependence on the grace of God.

- Grace is that which God does for us and in us that we have not earned. He saves us by His grace and changes us to look like Himself, placing His nature in us by His grace. Ephesians 2:8-10 / 1 Corinthians 15:10
- God gives us grace (ability) to do what He asks us to do. He will give you grace to love those you find it impossible to love on your own.
- 1 John 4:7-8 Our capacity for love is directly proportional to how well we know Him and His love for us. If you need to grow in love, get to know God better.

Topics for Discussion

Do you believe God loves you? How do you know?

Are there people in your life whom you find difficult to love? How would you pray to ask God to help you to love them?