

FIVE PILLARS OF THE BELIEVER'S LIFE

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Becoming a Christian is a life-changing event. It affects our priorities, choices and moral compass – it changes our whole worldview; the glasses through which you see the world. It is a person's way of understanding, experiencing and responding to the world. Our worldview can be influenced by:

- Culture
- Family
- Upbringing
- Education
- Religion
- Person circumstances

Everyone has a worldview whether it is subconsciously or consciously. It may be true, half-true or completely false. We are bombarded with people's worldviews everyday through social media, news, adverts, films, music etc.

A worldview is how you look at life. How you interpret the meaning of life and understand it. As believers, our worldview should be influenced by the word of God and his standards and expectations.

If this is the case, the Bible shows us five things that should become pillars in our life, and if we understand and commit ourselves to practising them then we will grow in our relationship with God and other believers:

1. Worship
2. God's Word
3. Prayer
4. Fellowship
5. The Holy Spirit

WORSHIP

Sing to the Lord, for he has done wonderful things. Make known his praise around the world. (Isaiah 12:5 NLT)

Worship is most obviously seen when a church gathers together and sings praise and worship songs. When we worship God we are expressing a deep and profound love for Him. It is a way of acknowledging His lordship over our lives and showing those around us that our trust is in Him.

However, worship is more than singing songs. A true worshipper develops a lifestyle of deep reverence, respect and love for God.

What is worship?

We equate worship with music but the Bible rarely puts the two together. When Job hears that his possessions are gone and his children have died, the Bible says he falls to the ground

and worships (Job 1:20). When Jesus speaks to the Samaritan woman at the well, His description of the kind of worship the father is seeking has zero musical references (John 4:21-24).

Jonah 1:9 says, *'I am a Hebrew and I worship the Lord the God of heave who made the sea and the land.'* – He was speaking of a lifestyle wholly dedicated to glorifying God.

Therefore I urge you brothers and sisters in view of God's mercy to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice holy and pealing to God – this is your true and proper worship. (Romans 12:1)

True worship takes place within our hearts.
Worship is what we do in our daily lives.

GOD'S WORD

All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17 NLT)

As we live our lives in this world, face challenges and have our values tested or questioned, it is important to know who you are, what you believe and why. The bible is our primary source of material that we use for the basis of our life. Our convictions are grounded in the word of God.

So faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ. (Romans 10:17 NLT)

'What we think about this book will determine the convictions that come out of it. If we have a weak understanding of the Bible and see it as a nice old piece of literature, my convictions will be weak because I don't have much confidence on it so I will compromise on its word.' – *Lanny Hubbard*

How do we respond to the word of God?

- Do we resist it?
- Do we study it?
- Do we close our ears to it?
- Do we treat it carelessly?
- Do we mix it?

If we study the Bible with plan to live it and obey it, we are hurt ourselves. We should be applying the word each day.

For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires. (Hebrews 4:12 NLT)

But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. (James 1:22 NLT)

PRAYER

Prayer is just talking to God. He wants us to talk to Him in all circumstances and situations, to bring our thoughts, needs and desires to Him. It is not just about asking God for things but nurturing our relationship with Him. It is a place where we can be honest about our deepest self and where we can listen to Him. We should develop a daily habit of prayer, and pray for God's will to be done – for ourselves and for others – as Jesus showed us in the Lord's Prayer.

We should be devoted to prayer. Not only praying when there is a crisis or at meal times, or before you go to bed. It should be intentional, habitual and constant.

Prayer should never be our last resort, it should be our first response. It is a privilege that allows us to commune with God and strengthen our faith. It is where our faith is activated. It is not only about asking for things, but about building and deepening our relationship with Him. It doesn't just change our outward situations and circumstances, more importantly it changes our internal state.

*'Prayer fuels the engine of your heart and mind'.
Romans 12:12 – 'devoted', 'constant' 'faithful' in prayer.*

FELLOWSHIP

All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer. (Acts 2:42)

And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near. (Hebrews 10:25 NLT)

'Every exchange with others counts for eternity. We are either weakening people's affections for God or strengthening them.' – John Piper

In 1 Samuel 23, David's life is at risk. It's revealed to him that people are after him and Saul wants to kill him. David flees for his life. Later the Ziphinites betray David and tell Saul where he is so that Saul can go after him. David just about escapes. Imagine the immense stress, fear and discouragement he would have felt? Is it worth it to be God's anointed one?

So faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ. (1 Samuel 23:16)

We encourage and stir each other up. We pray for one another, we provide practical help or support for one another, we remind of the word and guide each other. We remain strong when one is weak.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Just before Jesus' death on the cross He promised that we would not be left alone. Jesus said that the Father would send the Advocate who would never leave us. This Advocate is the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Holy Trinity. The Holy Spirit is not a force but a person who is there, through relationship, to help us. So even though Jesus is not with us physically, we have the Holy Spirit who promises to guide us, empower us and give us joy and peace.

Holy Spirit ministry to the world:

1. Convicts the world of its sin
2. Reveals Jesus to us

Seeing the Holy Spirit work in our lives is not a matter of following a religious formula, it is about our relationship with God. We all want to lead fruitful lives, but to produce fruit you have to nurture the plant. In the same way, if we nurture our relationship with God, we will see the Holy Spirit working in our lives and on our behalf.

To the Believer:

- New birth
- Indwelling
- Assurance of salvation
- Baptising
- Filling
- Tongues
- Speaks
- Illuminates
- Calls to special service
- Teaches
- Renews
- Empowers
- Enables worship
- Leads and guides

PRACTICAL STEPS

1. Set aside a regular time every day to read the Word and pray (Matthew 4:4)
2. Find a place where you will not be disturbed (Matthew 6:6)
3. Spend time in prayer (Matthew 6:9-13)
4. Keep a diary of your reading and thoughts you have
5. Share what you are doing with someone else

"Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock. But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn't obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash." (Matthew 7:24-27 NLT)

Pillars are essential to a building's strength, carrying its weight and keeping it secure through pressures and storms. In the same way, the five pillars discussed keep us anchored in the faith so that we can finish the race strong. When our foundation is firm, we will not crack, break or collapse under life's pressures.