

The answer is quite simple. It is like any relationship that you would like to develop with another person. You spend time with that person to get to know him or her. It is no different with God, who has saved us, giving us His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross for our sins. We need to get to know Him to develop that love he has given us by the Holy Spirit and to grow in our understanding of that which He requires of us to live in thankfulness to Him for our salvation.

The following is a list of key aspects to developing our love for God and our neighbor, and to grow in our faith to walk rightly before God and men (not for our justification before God, but rather to express our thankfulness to Him for our redemption by the blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ):

Personal;

Prayer – *formally* (head bowed to express humble submission before you're the Lord God) and *informally* (talk to the Lord throughout the day as you encounter various situations whether they are blessings or trials – giving thanks for the blessings or asking for patience and God's grace by His Holy Spirit to endure your trials and lean on His word of promise) (Psalm 50:15; Matthew 7:7-8; Ephesians 6:18; 1 John 5:14; Daniel 9:17-18; Psalm 143:1; Luke 18:13)

Devotionals – daily reading of God's word in a quiet place, removed from all distractions to focus on a small portion of God's word help you throughout the day (start in prayer asking the Lord to open your eyes to wondrous truths from His word and end in prayer – ACTS (Adoration, Confession of sins, Thanksgiving and Supplication) (Psalm 63:1; Mark 1:35; Psalm 119:48, 128; Philippians 4:8)

Bible Study – Study God's word looking at a passage of Scripture asking "What does it say or what is it about?" Next ask, "What does it mean?" (the hard part – may require some research using Biblically sound Commentators, such as, John Calvin, Matthew Henry or Hendricksen, etc.), and then last but most importantly, "How does what I have learn apply to me and how can I use this knowledge to live rightly before God and men with a thankful heart to God's glory?" (2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17)

Scripture Memorization – A very important part of growth in your love for God and walking by faith in thanksgiving – remembering God's promises reassures our heart, strengthens us during trials and grows our faith as we see God working mightily in our heart as His Spirit works grace in us (Psalm 119:1, 11)

Corporate (with other believers in a Christ-centered church, focused on the preaching of God's word, whose purpose reflects rightly Ephesians 4:11-16);

Lord's Day Worship (Hebrews 10:25) – **Prayer, Praise, Preaching**

- *Corporate Reading of God's Word and the Preaching of His Word*
- *Responding in Prayer, Singing Songs of Praise and Adoration to our Lord, and the Giving our Tithes & Offerings in Thanksgiving to Him to Grace, Mercy and Peace that abounds toward all who belong to Him*
- *Ministering to one another* – not about what we can gain out of the worship, but how to encourage one another to love and good works – How I can minister to others as I hear the word preached, and as I am blessed in the worship service

Evangelism/Out Reach (Mark 16:16; Matthew 28:19-20; Galatians 6:6-10)

Witnessing to Others Jesus Christ (to unbelievers) – Fulfill the Great Commission given by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, to all His children, using the gift(s) given to them by the Holy Spirit according to His grace that abounds to all them who He has saved.

Good works – ministering to those who are in need (1 John 3:17) (*to unbelievers and believers*)

Let's then Get Started:

It begins by the believer coming to Christ daily and throughout the day in prayer. The new life in Christ begins in prayer and is one of the key aspects of the Christian life.

The question is asked that if God is all knowing and sovereign over all things that happen, "Why do we need to pray?" Drawing from God's Word the answer has been expressed in the following way:

"Because it is the chief part of thankfulness which God requires of us,¹ and because God will give His grace and Holy Spirit only to those who earnestly and without ceasing ask them of Him, and render thanks unto Him for them."²

[1] Psalm 50:14–15. [2] Matthew 7:7–8; Luke 11:9–10, 13; Matthew 13:12; *Ephesians 6:18 (Heidelberg Catechism #116).

Always remember:

"Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6)

"He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He

not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32)

"Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'" (Hebrews 13:5)

Witness Jesus Christ to others without fear – *"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."* (2 Timothy 1:7; also the rest of the Chapter)

Recommended Reading:

"Confessing Christ" by Calvin Knox Cummings

"Redemption: Accomplished and Applied" by John Murray

"Classic Teachings on the Nature of God" by R.C. Sproul

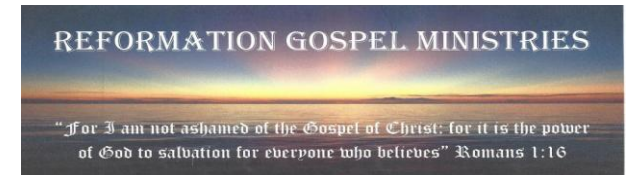
"Essential Truth of the Christian Faith" by R.C. Sproul

"Quiet Time" by InterVarsity Staff

Prepared by: Reformation Gospel Ministries, a non-profit charitable organization (all donations are tax-deductible)

WWW.ReformationGospelMinistries

RefGosMin@gmail.com



What Next? . . .

Now that you have come to Christ for Salvation

The new life that is in Christ is a life filled with a desire to live for Him who has saved it. By the grace of God through faith you have come to Christ for salvation, putting your trust in His redeeming work on the cross for you and resting in His care for you. Because of His great love for you it is your desire to live for Him and serve Him from a thankful heart for such a great redemption from your sin and misery.

This desire does not come naturally. It is a desire put in your heart by the Holy Spirit. It is one of several fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23; 1 John 4:7-11). It is this love that comes from God that is to drive us, as believers in Christ, to live for Him in thankfulness to Him. Living for Christ our Savior in thankfulness to Him is an out flowing of being a new person in Him. You might say, *"it is impossible that those who are implanted into Christ by true faith, should not bring forth fruits of thankfulness"* (Heidelberg Catechism #64).

So the question that ought to come to your mind as a new believer in Christ is **"What do I do next to develop my love for God and strengthen my desire to live in thankfulness to Him as I walk by faith in Jesus Christ my Lord?"**