

TRANSFORMED

How God Changes Us

7 Habits For Spiritual Health

God has promised that if we'll practice these 7 habits, all from Scripture, He will bless us with strong, spiritual health.

HABIT #1

If I want to be spiritually healthy, I must LOVE JESUS supremely.

In Luke 14, Jesus said this:

“If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple.” **Luke 14:26**

Now this sounds pretty radical, but He says, “Otherwise than that, you cannot be my disciple.

What is Jesus saying here? That we must choose to love Him more than anything else.

Spiritual health is measured by LOVE.

Spiritual health is measured by how much we love, not by how much we know. It's not measured by our Bible knowledge, or by our skills. It's not measured by the words that we say. It's not measured by how much we attend church. Our spiritual health is measured by how much we love God and how much we love others.

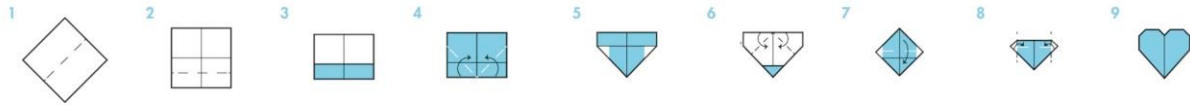
That's what Jesus said. In Mark 12, when asked which commandment mattered most, Jesus said this:

“The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’” **Mark 12:29-30**

This kind of love for God is called WORSHIP. Whatever we love most in life is what we worship.

If you love your boat the most, you worship your boat. If you love your job the most, then you worship your job. If you love your body the most, then you worship yourself. Whatever you give your best love to is what you worship.

But God says this, if you want to be spiritually healthy, then you must love Me the most. Worship me supremely. That's the first habit for spiritual health.



HABIT #2

If I want to be spiritually healthy, I must MEET WITH GOD DAILY.

It might just be 5 minutes a day, or 10 or 15 minutes a day or whatever, but you **make a date with God**. You get alone with God and sit there quietly and say, “God, is there anything You want to say to me?”

And as we talk to God in prayer about the things that are on our minds, and then you let God talk to us through His Word and His Spirit living in us, we experience communion – and that quiet date time with God is a worship experience.

“Blessed is the man who listens to Me, watching daily at My doors, waiting at My doorway.” Proverbs 8:34

Did you notice the word “daily”? What is God saying there? He wants us to have a daily appointment, a **daily habit of meeting** with Him. Why would God tell you to spend time with Him every day, if He didn’t want to spend time with *you* every day? Do you realize that? The God of the universe wants to spend time with *you*! This is important to God. And He always shows up for His appointment.

HABIT #3

If I want to be spiritually healthy, I must STUDY and DO God’s Word.

There are so many promises in the Bible where God says, “If you get my Word into your heart and into your mind, I will bless your business, I will bless your family, I will bless your health, I will bless your finances, if you get this book into you and into every area of your life.”

Whatever area of our lives we want God to bless, we’ve got to do what God advises on that area of life.

Psalms 1:1-3 says this:

“Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.”

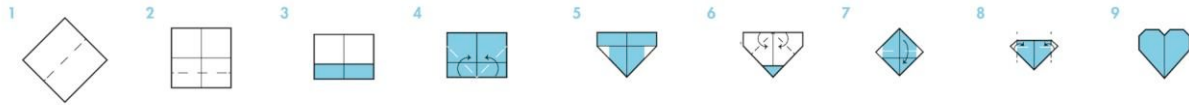
The **premise** is that if we’ll really think on God’s ways of doing life, value it, and put it into practice – even the parts that don’t come naturally, He **promises** to make our lives fruitful – lives that produce things of value.

And if this habit of studying and doing God’s Word is currently interrupted by other habits, it’s time to swap out unhealthy habits for ones that will help us to be spiritually healthy.

Jesus said *“You are my friends if you do what I command.” John 15:14*

James taught the same principle in his letter:

“But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.” James 1:25



Notice, the believer who INTENTLY – there’s the *study* part; and CONTINUES in it – there’s the *habit* part; and doesn’t forget but DOES what it says – there’s the *doing* part; that person will be blessed in what they do.

HABIT #4

If I want to be spiritually healthy, I must TITHE my income.

In a similar way to how I am to spend the first part of my day’s time with God, He asks me to spend the first part of my income with Him. The word “tithe” means “a tenth”, so I choose to give a tenth of my income back to God. And notice it’s “income”, if you don’t have income you can’t give a tenth of your income. But why does God ask us to give back a tenth of our income? Can He not accomplish His purposes in His creation without our meager contribution? Of course He can.

God communicates an incredible promise to believers in Malachi chapter 3:

“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house.

Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.” **Malachi 3:10**

The “storehouse” refers to the body of believers you worship with. It’s your local gathering of believers – the place you call your church. So it makes sense to give back to God through the place you are benefitting spiritually from. It is an essential part of your worship, to reflect that you recognize everything you have is from God in the first place.

HABIT #5

If I want to be spiritually healthy, I must learn to LOVE OTHER BELIEVERS.

God doesn’t only want us to love Him, He wants us to love other believers. Jesus said it like this, “If you’re going to be my disciple, you can’t just love Me, you’ve got to love everybody in my family.”

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” - **John 13:35**

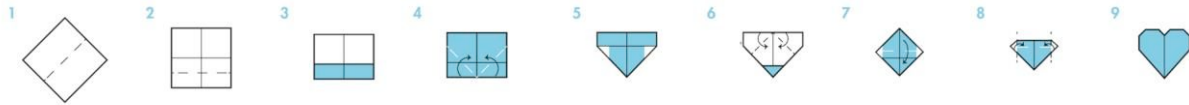
The mark of being an authentic Jesus follower, is not just that you love God but that you love his family. God says the proof that you are Jesus’ disciple is that you practice the habit of loving all the other members of God’s Family. You can’t say you love God and then avoid being around other Christians. You can’t do the Jesus thing alone. It’s not a solo life. If you don’t like being around other Christians, you’re not going to like heaven too well. So you need to figure out how to learn to love other disciples of Jesus. Look how the Apostle John put it...

“Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen.” **1st John 4:20**

That’s pretty clear. God says I’m a liar if I claim to love God but I don’t love other Christians.

Because if we can’t love Christians who we can see, how can we love God who we can’t see?

We cannot genuinely love God while isolating from other Christians. And here’s why...



Spiritual growth happens in COMMUNITY.

Spiritual growth happens through my connections with other believers on the same journey. You cannot be a disciple by yourself. You cannot be a follower of Christ without being in community, because it's all about love. You'll never grow to spiritual maturity without a church family.

We were put on this planet to love. First to love God supremely, and then to learn to love each other. You have to have a church family - relationships with other Christians - to learn to love.

This is why being in a small group is absolutely essential to your spiritual health. Because you can't love a crowd. You can worship with a crowd, but you can't love a crowd. You can't fellowship with a crowd. You can't connect in a meaningful way with a crowd. You need to be committed to being connected to a group of believers where you can not only receive love, encouragement, and support, but where you learn to offer those things to benefit the spiritual growth of others in that group.

HABIT #6

If I want to be spiritually healthy, I need to learn to **SERVE OTHERS UNSELFISHLY.**

Service is an important part of your spiritual health and development. God says that to grow, it's not all about "taking in", you also need to be giving back. God says if you want to be the most important person in the room you need to take the last place in the room and be the servant of everybody. The way to be great is by serving. You have to give your life away.

Jesus said it like this: *"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."* **Mark 10:45**

Notice the words, "serve" and "give", in these two words, Jesus gives us our two primary purposes after our worship of God: serve, and give. That's what defines the Christian life. The more you learn to serve and the more you learn to give the more you're going to be like Jesus, and the healthier you're going to be, and the more fulfilled you're going to be.

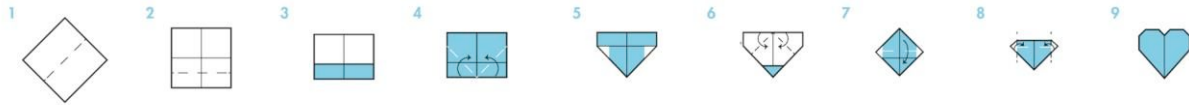
But why is serving so important to spiritual growth and spiritual health? It's like always eating but never exercising. If you don't get some spiritual exercise by serving others, there's no way you're going to reach any kind of spiritual maturity.

HABIT #7

If I want to be spiritually healthy, I must pass on the **GOOD NEWS.**

What I've been given, I've got to pass on to others and not keep it all for myself. I've have to tell others the good news about Jesus Christ, and that there's a purpose for their lives.

They need to know they can be forgiven, their pasts can be forgiven, and they can have a purpose for living and they can have a home in heaven.



Just as we've been accepted back into a restored and reconciled relationship with our Creator through our faith in Jesus Christ's work 2,000 years ago, they can, too. They can also enjoy the relationship we are enjoying with our Creator, whom we call Father since trusting in Christ.

The Apostle Paul taught a young man named Timothy to pass on what he had learned...

"And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others." **2 Timothy 2:2**

You're going to heaven because somebody told you. And somebody told the somebody that told you. And somebody told the somebody that told the somebody that told you. So here's an important question. *Is the chain gonna break with you?*

Will anybody be in heaven because of you? Have you told anybody? If you don't tell any of the people in your circles of contact, who will?

Jesus said this:

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." **Matthew 28:19-20**

So Jesus' marching orders were to go pass on the faith, teach the new Jesus followers to put into practice everything He taught. That's the premise, and what was the promise? "I am with you always – all the way to the end.

Do you intend to be as spiritually healthy as you can?

It will not happen unless you CHOOSE to develop these habits.

1. I'm going to choose to love Jesus supremely.
2. I'm going to choose to spend time with Him daily.
3. I'm going to read the Word of God and do what it says, every day.
4. I'm going to tithe faithfully.
5. I'm going to love other believers and be committed to my church and small group.
6. I'm going to serve others with whatever gifts and abilities I have been given .
7. I'm going to pass on to others whatever I've learned about being a Jesus follower and share the Good News.