

Beginning a Christian Life.

by J.R. Miller

To begin a Christian life, one must commit their life to Christ, trust in his infinite love and strength, and surrender to his will, living out a life of love, obedience, and service.

Scripture: Matthew 22:37-39, Matthew 28:19-20, John 3:16, Romans 10:9, 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:8-9, Philipians 4:13, James 1:22, 1 John 4:19

Topics: "Love and Obedience", "Beginning a Christian Life"

Description

J.R. Miller emphasizes that every young person should embrace Christianity, as it fulfills the deepest longings of the heart. He explains that beginning a Christian life involves committing oneself to Christ, accepting His love, and establishing a relationship with Him as Savior and Master. Miller highlights the importance of love for Christ as the foundation of obedience and service, urging young people to act on their faith without delay. He encourages them to live out their Christian life with love and kindness towards others, reflecting the character of Christ. Ultimately, Miller advocates for starting this journey early in life, as it allows for growth and learning in faith.

Transcript

Every young person should be a Christian. All the heart's truest instincts would lead the soul to God. Christ alone can answer our cravings and satisfy our longings. In him alone, can anyone reach the things that are true and right and lovely.

How may one begin to be a Christian? The hunger is in the heart, the desire to take Christ as Savior and Master; but many a young person passes through a long experience of painful anxiety and perplexity, in finding the way into the light of faith and peace. This is a common experience. Young people long to have someone to speak to them about Christ, so that they can voice their heart's yearnings, and come out in joyful acceptance and confession of Christ. They love Christ, and want to speak of their love; but they need the touch of human love to help them. Happy are the young people who at this critical point in their spiritual history -- have wise, gentle, patient guidance.

To begin to be a Christian, is to commit your life to him -- and that you may without fear, doubt, or reserve, trust him. It is not by our love for Christ that we are saved -- but by Christ's love for us. Faith in Christ is simply the acceptance of divine friendship. You need not trouble yourself about the smallness of your love, or the feebleness of your faith; your hope and your security are not measured either by your love or by your faith -- but by the infinite love and strength in which you are trusting.

The first thing, is to get your relation with Christ clearly established. He loves you, and you receive his love. He would take your life as it is, with all its sins, faults, and shortcomings -- as you put it into his hands. You need not understand it all, there is no reason why you should. You believe that Christ has all power, all wisdom, all love. His hands are safe hands, skillful hands, gentle hands, hands of love. He can take your soul, which sin has hurt and stained, no matter how sorely -- and restore it to beauty. Faith is the committing of the life to him for salvation, for guidance, for care and keeping, for time and eternity.

You must receive Christ as your Master and Lord. A Christian is one who follows Christ. This means the surrender of the whole life to him. The heart must be given up. There can be no Christian life, without love to Jesus. Jesus demands the first place in the affections of his followers. If anyone loves father or mother, brother or sister, wife or child, more than him -- he is not worthy of Jesus, and cannot be his disciple.

Soldiers may obey implicitly without love; but the most perfect obedience, if the heart is not in it, would not make one a Christian. We might devote our life and strength to Christian work, toiling unweariedly in the service of the church, giving our money lavishly for the advancement of Christianity or for the relief of suffering -- and yet not be Christians. Love for Christ must be the motive at the heart of all our work for Christ. "Do you love me?" is the test.

But the heart draws the whole life after it. If we love Jesus -- we will obey Jesus. "If you love me -- keep my commandments." "You are my friends -- if you do whatever I command you." We cannot accept Christ as our Savior, and not at the same time accept him as our Lord and Master. We must begin at once to obey him; and our obedience must be without reserve, without condition, without question. It must also be cheerful and glad-hearted -- not compulsory, reluctant, or constrained. Christians are soldiers of Christ -- and the soldier's first duty is to obey. Whether the will of Christ is made known to us in his word, through our own conscience, or in providence -- we should always promptly and cheerfully accept and obey. It may not be always easy -- it may be very hard and costly; but when the will of our Master is made known, if we are his followers we can only obey, and our obedience should be sweet with love.

Consecration is nothing but being a Christian from the center of our heart to the tips of our fingers, and being a Christian always, wherever we go. "Whose I am, and whom I serve" was one great Christian's idea of the life we should live. A Christian belongs to Christ, and knows it and remembers it wherever he is.

Jesus spoke Mary's name -- she did not recognize him before, she supposed him to be the gardener; but when he said "Mary!" she knew him, and from her heart said, "Rabboni!" It is always just that way. We love him -- because he first loved us; we know him -- because he first calls us. He speaks our name, and then we say "Rabboni, Master!" Christ is ours -- and we are Christ's. That is becoming a Christian. Then, being a Christian is living out that same life of love, obedience, surrender, and service, through all the days.

There is something else; he who loves Christ, loves his Christian brethren also. To begin to be a Christian, is to remove from the arctic zone of cold selfishness -- into the warm summer zone of Christian love. We cannot make too much of our relation to Christ -- that is the beginning of it all; but we have relations to others as well. We are to live in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians: "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails."

The Christian life that does not make us more gentle, more patient, more unselfish, is not realizing its true meaning. A Christian life is a new Christ-life lived out in this world -- we are to be Christ to others.

When we love Christ, we will want our brother to love him too. We will strive to bring others to him to find the same joy we have found. We will seek to bring back the one who is wandering.

The heart of the Christian should be a well of living water, a fount of holy and blessed influences, whose streams flow in all directions, carrying comfort, cheer, encouragement, help, and gladness to every other life they reach. Mere orthodoxy of belief does not make one a Christian, nor does attention to ecclesiastical rites and rules. A Christian is one in whom the life of Christ pulses, and the love of Christ glows and burns.

When should a young person become a Christian? At once, is the answer -- today. Not an hour should be lost. The whole life belongs to Christ, not the mature years alone -- but the earliest days as well; not the ripe fruit merely -- but the bud and the flower as well; not the mid-day only, with its heat and burden -- but the morning, too, with its sweetness and freshness. One cannot come too early to Christ. Listen to the first gentle voices in your heart. Yield to the first influences of the divine Spirit. Give Christ the beginnings of your life.

It is a serious mistake for young people to wait until they can begin with deep experiences and conspicuous activities; they should begin as little children. Christian life is a school; we are to enter the lowest grades and become learners, advancing day by day. "Come unto me, and learn of me," is the Master's invitation. The best time to begin a Christian life is in childhood, when the heart is tender, when it is easy to learn.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jr-miller/beginning-a-christian-life/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net