

INTRODUCTION TO BASIC INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE LEAVING EARTH (2018)

Dad always said, "When all else fails, read the instructions." Normally I would follow this advice only as a last resort. Almost everything we buy comes with an owner's manual. Owner's manuals not only contain instructions but also have warnings. I recently purchased a new computer. Thank goodness the manufacturer did not expect me to know how to operate the machine. I was happy to see that the manufacturer had included an owner's manual with the computer.

The owner's manual told me which keys to press for specific results. For instance, if I wanted to create a legal brief with specific margins and fonts, I went to the appropriate sections of the manual, did exactly what the instructions told me to do, and "magically" got the results I wanted. The instructions did not always seem logical (for instance, who would ever think that to reboot your computer you would simultaneously press the "Ctrl," "Alt," and "Delete" keys--where is the logic there?), but when I trusted the higher knowledge of the manufacturer and followed the instructions, the results were always what I wanted. In other words, I knew what I wanted, but I did not know how to accomplish it on my own. Although I always had the option of ignoring the owner's manual and using the trial-and-error method, I did not want to waste my time and achieve bad results. Therefore, I just followed the instructions.

Isn't life much the same. We know what we want out of life (happiness, peace, fulfillment), but we do not know how to get it. So we start guessing. We depend on our own senses and start doing what feels good. This is called the trial-and-error method. We soon find that we are making mistakes and getting unintended bad results. For instance, in an effort to have fun we might decide to simultaneously press the keys entitled "alcohol" and "sex" only to find short-lived fun and long-term pain. At one time or another, we have all made bad decisions--similar to the owner of a computer who decides to ignore the owner's manual and begins guessing. So, here is the question: Is there an owner's manual for life?

We can all agree that it would be absurd for a company to create an advanced computer system and fail to include an owner's manual. But wouldn't it have been just as absurd for God to have created us, far more complex than any computer, and failed to have included an owner's manual instructing us how to operate our lives to achieve the best results?

Life is not a dress rehearsal. Every day is show time. Thus, determining how to live every day to the fullest is the most important discovery a human can make. The Bible is God's owner's manual for humans. It contains all the basic instructions one needs before leaving earth. There are two methods by which one may live their life: (1) the trial-and-error method, or (2) the owner's manual method. You get to choose.

After becoming a Christian in high school, I began listing all the good sermons I heard by jotting down the topics and scriptures in the front of my Bible. When I later began working with teens, I found that many were making bad decisions due to not knowing God's specific instructions (and warnings). In talking with teens and answering their questions, I often found myself referring to the list in the front of my Bible. I discovered that teens wanted to know what God had to say about issues, but they did not have an easy way to quickly locate the information. To assist with this problem, I typed the list from the front of my Bible (condensing it to the thirty-five most frequently requested topics) and printed the list on a single page—front and back. The following is the list. It is entitled "Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth" (B.I.B.L.E.):

BASIC INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE LEAVING EARTH (B.I.B.L.E.)

Hosea 4:6--"My people perish for lack of knowledge"

1. **Cursing/Dirty Jokes/Putting Others Down:** Matthew 12:34-37 (words: render account), 15:18 (mouth=heart); James 1:26 (vain religion), 3:5-6 (tongue small but defiles entire body), 3:10 (blessing and cursing); Proverbs 17:20 (perverted in language), 17:27-28 (cool spirit), 18:7 (fool's mouth), 18:21 (death & life are in tongue), 21:23 (guard mouth); Ephesians 4:29 (no unwholesome word), 5:3-4 (filthiness, dirty jokes); Titus 2:6-8 (young men: sound speech); 1 Peter 3:10 (refrain); 2 Timothy 2:16 (chatter); Colossians 3:8 (filthy speech, anger), 4:6 (speech seasoned); 1 Timothy 4:12 (youth's speech).
2. **Alcohol/Drugs:** Ephesians 5:18 (don't get drunk); Galatians 5:19 (deeds of flesh...drunkenness, carousing), 6:7-9 (God not mocked; Sow=Reap); 1 Corinthians 6:9 (drunkards=not inherit kingdom list); 1 Thessalonians 5:6-8 (be sober); 2 Timothy 4:5 (be sober in all things); 1 Peter 4:2-5 (don't go to drinking parties); Romans 13:13-14 (no carousing & drunkenness); Proverbs 20:1 (intoxicated=unwise), 23:20 (don't be with heavy drinkers).
3. **Sex:** 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8 (God's will=no fornication); Acts 15:20, 28-29 & 21:25 (essentials=no fornication); 1 Corinthians 6:9 (not inherit kingdom list: fornication #1); Hebrews 13:4 (fornicators); 1 Peter 2:11 (as aliens abstain from fleshly lusts); Romans 8:6 (mind set on flesh is death), 13:13-14 (put on J.C.); Galatians 6:7-9 (Sows to flesh=corruption); Romans 12:1 (bodies: living sacrifice); Galatians 5:16-21 (if walk by Spirit=not carry out); 1 Corinthians 6:13-20 (body is for Lord); Ephesians 5:5-7 (immoral); Colossians 3:5 (dead to immorality); Matthew 15:19 (fornication defiles).
4. **Friends:** 1 Cor. 15:33 (bad company corrupts your good morals); Prov. 13:20 (walk with wise men), 22:24-25 (don't be with angry/hot-tempered), 23:20 (don't be with heavy drinkers), 24:1 (don't be with evil men), 24:21-22 (don't be with people of change), 27:17 (iron sharpens iron; get with strong Christians); 2 Tim. 3:2-5 (avoid kids disobedient to parents, arrogant); Psalms 1:1 (don't be with people who practice sin); 1 Peter 4:4 (friends surprised at your change); Ecclesiastes 4:9 (two are better than one); 1 Cor. 5:9-13 (don't be with immoral Christians); Rom. 12:16 (associate with lowly).
5. **Anger:** James 1:19 (be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger); Ephesians 4:26 (reconcile & apologize before day ends or gives devil an opportunity), 4:31 (let bitterness & anger be put away, be ye kind one to another); Proverbs 3:3 (kindness), 10:19 (restrain lips=is wise), 12:18 (healing), 13:3 (guards mouth), 14:29 (slow to anger=great understanding), 15:1 (gentle answer), 16:21 (sweetness of speech=persuasiveness), 16:32 (slow anger=mighty), 17:27 (restrain words; cool spirit), 18:7 (mouth is ruin), 18:13 (hear before answer), 15:18 (hot-tempered), 18:21 (death & life), 21:23 (guard mouth), 22:24 (avoid angry men), 29:11 (a fool always loses his temper), 29:22 (angry stir up); Ecclesiastes 7:9 (don't be eager to be angry); 2 Timothy 2:24-26 (don't be quarrelsome); Colossians 3:8 (put aside anger, abusive speech); 1 Thessalonians 5:15 (don't repay evil for evil); Romans 12:17-21 (no evil for evil, burning coals).
6. **Keeping Things Good Between You And Others/Forgiveness:** Matt. 5:23 (if someone has something against you); Mark 11:25 (if you have something against someone); Matt. 6:14-15 (God won't forgive you), 18:34-35 (tortured if will not forgive); Eph. 4:26-27 (God allows anger for one day); Luke 12:58 (settle).
7. **Lying:** Proverbs 4:24 (deceitful mouth), 12:22 (lying lips are abomination to God), 19:22 (better to be poor), 6:16 (list of things God hates--lists liar twice); Colossians 3:9 (don't lie); Acts 5:3 (only place in N.T. God struck people dead--was for lying); Revelation 21:8 (liars in lake of fire), 27 (liars not in Lamb's Book of Life); John 8:44 (Satan is father of lies); Ephesians 4:25 (speak truth).
8. **Stealing:** Exodus 20:15 (Thou shalt not steal); Ephesians 4:28 (steal no longer); 1 Peter 4:15 (no thief in heaven); 1 Corinthians 6:10 (will not inherit kingdom).
9. **Homosexuality:** 1 Corinthians 6:9 (List: not enter kingdom of God); Leviticus 20:13 (detestable act, death), 18:22 (don't do, abomination); Rom. 1:26-28, 32 (degrading, depraved mind; death, approval); 1 Tim. 1:9-10 (unholy, contrary to sound teaching); Jude 1:7-8 (Sodom & Gomorrah, go after strange flesh); Genesis 19:4-25 (Sodom: homosexual city destroyed).
10. **Tattoos:** Leviticus 19:28 (make no cuts or tattoo marks on yourself).
11. **Abortion:** Gen. 1:27 (humans=God's image); Ps. 139:13-16 (God forms children in womb; don't interrupt God's work), 127:3 (children=gift from God), 22:10 (God from "womb"); Ex. 20:13 (don't kill), 21:22-23 (accidental abort=penalty).
12. **Thought-Life, Lust, Magazines/Internet:** Matt. 5:28 (thoughts defile), 6:22-23 (fill eyes & mind with good=full of light); Rom. 8:5-8 (mind set on flesh is death, mind set on spirit is life & peace), 12:1-2 (bodies living sacrifice, don't be conformed to world, renew mind), 13:14 (put on J.C., make no provision for flesh); Ps. 101:3 (I will set no vile thing before my eyes); Philip. 4:8 (whatever is pure...think on these things); 2 Cor. 10:3-5 (casting down every imagination, taking every thought captive); Eph. 5:26 (cleansed by washing of water with the word), 6:12 (our struggle not against flesh & blood); Proverbs 4:23 (watch over your heart); Isaiah 55:7 (let wicked forsake way and unrighteous man his thoughts); James 1:21 (put aside filthiness and receive word); Ps. 119:9 (how young man keeps way pure=read word), 105 (lamp & light to path); Col. 3:2 (set mind on things above); Galatians 6:7 (God not mocked); 1 Cor. 2:16 (we have mind of Christ); 1 Peter 2:11 (urge as aliens to abstain from lusts, wages war against soul); James 1:14-15 (tempted when lust=sin=death); Eph. 4:19-24 (put on new self); Gal. 5:24 (crucified flesh).
13. **Prejudice Not Allowed/Others Before Self:** Col. 3:11; 1 Sam. 16:7 (look at heart, not appearance); Jn. 7:24 (don't judge by appearance); 2 Cor. 5:16 (recognize no man according to the flesh); Eph. 6:9 & Rom. 2:11 (no partiality with God); 1

- Jn. 2:9-11 (hates brother=in darkness), 3:15 (hates=murderer), 4:20 (if can't love person, can't love God); Prov. 14:21 (despises neighbor=sin); Levit. 19:16-18, Mark 12:31 & Matt. 22:39 (love neighbor as self); Luke 10:29-37 ("neighbor" was different race); Philip. 2:3-5 (regard others more important than self); 1 Cor. 10:24 (seek good for others); Rom. 12:10 (give preference to others), 12:18 (be at peace with all), 15:2 (please neighbor); Jn. 13:34 & 15:12,17 (new command=love others); Matt. 7:12 (do unto others); 1 Jn. 3:23 (believe + love others); James 4:4 (speak not against brother).
14. **Parents/Children:** Exodus 20:12 (honor parents=long life), 21:15 (strikes=death), 21:17 (curses=death); Mark 7:10 (speaks evil=death); Deuteronomy 27:16 (your life will be cursed if dishonor); Ephesians 6:1 (children obey); Colossians 3:20 (be obedient); Romans 1:30 (disobedient to parents=depraved mind); Leviticus 19:3 (reverence mom & dad); Proverbs 1:8 & 6:20 (follow parent's instructions), 20:20 (lamp will go out, 23:22 (listen to dad, don't despise mom); 2 Timothy 2:24 (don't be quarrelsome).
15. **Discipline By Parents:** Prov. 12:1 (loves discipline=loves knowledge), 13:24 (spares rod=hates child), 19:18-20, 22:15 (foolishness is bound up in child's heart), 23:13 (delivers child's soul), 29:15 (child who gets his way), 22:6 (train up child), 29:15 (gives wisdom), 29:17 (correct=will comfort), 13:1 (wise accepts discipline), 15:5 (fool rejects), 19:18 (while hope), 19:20 (accept discipline), 1:8 (parents' instructions).
16. **One Life/No Reincarnation:** Hebrews 9:27 (once to die & then judgment).
17. **Read Bible/T.A.G.(Time Alone with God):** Psalms 119:105 (word=flashlight to path), 119:9-11 (keeps me from sinning); Joshua 1:8 (learn Bible=will have success); 2 Tim. 3:16-17 (inspired by God & good for training, equips you for life); Proverbs 4:20 (life & health), 5:23 (instruction); Isaiah 55:11 (word not return empty but will succeed); 2 Cor. 4:16 (inner man renewed day by day).
18. **Temptation:** 1 Cor. 10:13 (not allow tempted beyond able); Hebrews 4:15 (J.C. was tempted in all things), 2:18 (comes to our aid); 2 Peter 2:9 (rescues us).
19. **Repent, Believe, Confess Jesus:** Matt. 3:2 (John the Baptist: "Repent"), 4:17 (Jesus: "Repent"); Acts 2:38 (Peter: "Repent"); Mark 1:15 (repent+believe); Acts 20:21 (repent+believe), 3:19, 3:26; Romans 10:9-10 (confess Jesus+believe raised from dead); 2 Cor. 7:9-10 (sorrow=repentance=salvation); 2 Timothy 2:25; 2 Peter 3:9; Proverbs 28:13 (conceals sin); James 5:16 (to one another); 1 John 1:9 (if confess); Acts 24:16 (blameless conscience), 26:20 (deeds).
20. **Jesus Comes Into You:** 2 Corinthians 13:5 (J.C. is in you); Romans 8:10 (Christ in you); John 17:26 (I in them); Colossians 1:27 (mystery=Christ in you); Galatians 2:20 (Christ lives in me); 2 Corinthians 6:16.
21. **One Way:** John 14:6 (I am the way), 3:18 (judged already), 3:36 (believes=eternal life); Acts 4:12 (salvation in no other name); 1 Tim. 2:5 (one mediator); 1 John 2:23 (denies Son=not have Father); 1 John 5:12 (not have Son= not have life).
22. **Our Power Over Satan:** 1 John 3:8 (destroy works of devil), 4:4 (greater is He that is in you), 5:18-19 (evil one does not touch); James 4:7-8 (resist devil--don't ignore--and he will flee from you, draw near to God, not double-minded); 1 Peter 5:8 (roaring lion--no teeth), 5:9 (resist & God will strengthen & establish you); Ephesians 6:12 (not flesh & blood, armor); 2 Corinthians 10:3 (weapons divinely powerful); Romans 16:19-20 (crush Satan); Colossians 2:15 (display); 2 Corinthians 4:4 (blinded eyes).
23. **Eternal Life:** 1 Timothy 6:16 (only He possesses); John 17:3 (eternal life is to know thee and J.C.); 1 John 2:25 (He promised), 5:11-13 (you may know you have eternal life).
24. **If Keep Sinning after Salvation:** Hebrews 10:26-31 (no longer remains sacrifice); 2 Peter 2:20-22 (dog returns to vomit); John 14:15 (if love me, you'll keep my commandments); 1 John 2:4 (says "I know Him" but not keep his commandments=liar), 3:8-9 (no one born of God practices sin); 1 John 2:15 (do not love the world); Luke 6:46 (Lord, Lord); Matthew 7:21 (not everyone who says Lord, Lord), 7:26 (hears & not acts); Psalm 66:18 (if I regard wickedness He not hear me); Isaiah 59:2 (sin=God not hear); Proverbs 13:21 (adversity pursues sinners); 2 Chronicles 15:2 (if forsake Him, He'll forsake you); 1 John 3:8 (practices sin=of the devil).
25. **Jesus Claims He Is God:** Mark 14:61-62 (I am Messiah); John 4:25-26 (I am Messiah), Matthew 27:43 (Son of God); 14:9 (seen Father), 10:30 (are One), 10:36 (Son of God), 18:36-37 (I am a King), 12:45 (One), 5:18 (self equal to God).
26. **Jesus Is Called "God":** John 20:28 ("my Lord & my God"); Titus 2:13 (God & Savior); 2 Peter 1:1 (God & Savior); John 1:1 (Word was God); Romans 9:5 (God); Hebrews 1:8 (Son=God), 1:10 (Lord); Colossians 2:9 (fullness of Deity in Jesus), 2:3 (all wisdom & knowledge); Acts 4:12 (salvation in no other); 1 John 5:20 ("Jesus Christ. This is the true God").
27. **Fortune Tellers:** Leviticus 19:31 (defiles), 20:6 (if turn to them God will set His face against you), 20:27 (death penalty); Deuteronomy 18:10-12 (witchcraft, sorcerer, medium, or calls up dead--God detests).
28. **Obey The Law:** Romans 13:1-4 (be subject to governing authorities; police are ministers of God).
29. **Dating:** 2 Corinthians 6:14 (date Christians, be equally yoked).
30. **Don't Conform To World:** Rom. 12:2 (don't conform); 1 Jn. 2:15 (don't love world); James 4:4 (friendship with world=hostility toward God); 2 Cor. 6:17 (be separate).
31. **Church:** Ex. 20:8; Isaiah 58:13-14; Hebrews 10:25.
32. **Fighting:** Rom. 12:18-21 (never take own revenge).
33. **Trials:** Rom. 5:3 (trial=character); 2 Cor. 4:17-18 (affliction); James 1:2; 1 Pet. 4:12, 5:8-10; Rev. 3:19 (discipline/repent).
34. **Smoking:** 1 Cor. 6:19 (body is temple of H.S.), 9:27 (make body slave), 2 Cor. 7:1 (cleanse ourselves of defilements).
35. **Divorce:** Matt. 19:3-9, 5:32; Mark 10:2-12; Luke 16:18; 1 Cor. 7:10-15. ©K.Coghlan 1994-2018