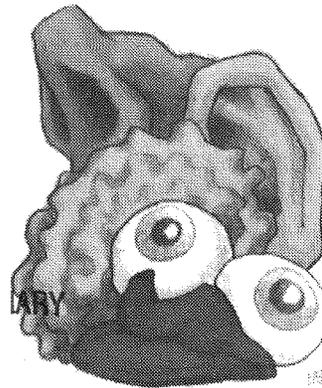
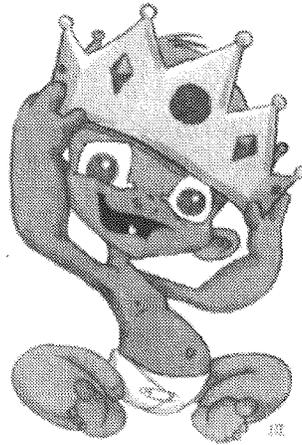


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Live What
You Believe



Live What You Believe

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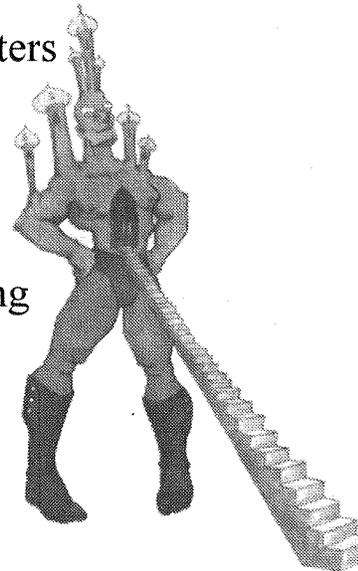


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CHAPTER ONE

Live What You Believe

Imagine if you were given the opportunity to really live a dream. Pick any adventure, quest, or daring new life! How many of us would walk through that door? Ok, many of you can put down your hands now. If you are a Christian, the fact is you have already stepped over that threshold and into a whole other world, a world of unbelievable adventure! If we could only peel back the curtain that hides the spiritual world from ours and let our eyes record the spiritual wavelengths right next to us, we would see angels battling demons. We would see the contrast of those who are walking in darkness and in light; we would notice our own hands shining, full of the Spirit of God.

The moment you became a Christian dozens of things happened to you that are just beyond the range of normal sight. You were given a whole load of new identities and gifts, the Spirit of God invaded your life and your name was written in God's Book of Life. As a Christian you have stepped over the line and you are now living a dream that people thousands of years ago could have only wished for (Matt. 13:17).

All of this new life happened for a reason. God wants us to explore His new Kingdom that He describes as, "Life in its fullness" (John 10:10). We could hang out by the door of salvation our entire lives and just be happy that we are "in," or we could start on the quest of exploring this entire new world. That is what this book is all about – to help you start down the adventure of actually living what you believe.

God is not passive in this process. If you don't get exploring, He will bring situations to you where you will need to live out your new identities. In the middle of life you will call out to Him for help and He will gently push you from the doorway. He will direct you to pick up the sword that has always been by your side and empower you to slay a dragon or two.

This book is for Christians – those who have stopped trying to earn God's favour and have accepted Jesus' gift of eternal life. Some of you may have accepted Christ's gift when you were children, others may be just a few days old spiritually. Some of

you may think that you have the whole Christian life understood and down pat while others of you may not know where to begin. If you are a long time Christian this book is designed to help you pick an area of spiritual growth and to work along side the Spirit of God's growth project in you. Start reading in that area where God is pushing you on toward spiritual maturity and try some of the projects. If you are a new Christian this book will give you a few places that God may be starting to build His life in you. Start at the beginning and live out a chapter or two at a time before you move on to the next chapter.

As Christians we know we need to become like Jesus and that will take God's power, God's direction and time. I realize that when I ask you to become more like Jesus it's like someone asking you to play the flute by telling you to run your finger over the holes and blowing across the big hole. The job looks simple at

What does it take to be a fully developed follower of Christ?

first, but we know deep down it is pretty complicated. Where do you get started? This is why the Bible often breaks down becoming like Christ into smaller jobs. There isn't one list you can go to that spells it all out. The Bible was not written as a textbook, but much more organically. God breathed through people who were attempting to address specific problems in specific situations. However, we know that if we take the Bible in its entirety it has everything we need to know for our faith walk (2 Peter 1:3).

Some of the letters to the churches provided lists of things that Christians should be working toward (2 Peter 1:5-8; Rom. 12:9-21; Eph. 6:10-18; 1 Thess. 5:12-22). It was not beyond the Biblical writers to attempt to break down what Christian growth looks like into practical lists. Although there is some overlap no one list is complete. I have taken these lists and clumped them together into pictures of who God wants us to be. I have chosen Biblical "pictures" or metaphors of the Christ-like life, because they can guide us beyond the mere "doing" of things to actually seeing ourselves as different people. These pictures show us who we really became the day we accepted Christ – we don't earn them by being an old enough Christian. We need to start to see ourselves in this new light. The new identities we will

explore include the facts that we are Aliens, Ambassadors, Children of the King, Parts of the Body of Christ, Stewards and Temples of God's Spirit.¹ My hope is that after working through this book, you will begin to see each of these identities in yourself. Before the beginning of the earth, God had figured out what he wanted: a whole group of people looking like His Son. Romans 8:29 tells us that God's desire is to have a whole group of brothers and sisters looking the same on the inside – becoming like Jesus. The heaven thing is just the icing on the cake. If you have each of these new identities in growing measure you won't be too far off the mark of becoming like Jesus.

If you are waiting to hear from God to call you into some great adventure, He already has. You don't need to wait for some feeling; God has called you to live each of these identities. That is your calling and as you live what you believe. He may even give you some side adventures that will blow your mind!

**God's already has
called you to an
incredible adventure!**

Read the next chapter on how we grow and then ask God what identity He is growing in you. Read that section taking time between each chapter. This book will only be half as helpful if you read it through all at once. Take the time to try the "projects" at the end of the chapters. Get a notebook to record the projects you are practicing. Look back over your notebook once in a while and see how far you have come. Use the "explain" section at the back of each chapter to phone or email a Christian friend what you are learning. When I was writing this section I could imagine this starting an instant messenger conversation with a Christian friend. The more we explain what we are learning the more we will remember it. There are questions in that section, that will not only bring a friend along for the journey, but also help you get each chapter into your head, heart and hands. The "community" section at the end of each chapter is there to help small groups discuss the ideas. My hope is that this book will turn into a several year workbook for you. As you become a co-worker with God in His most important project – making each of us complete in the image of Christ.