



God

He wants
to know you

Make
**FRIENDS
WITH HIM!**
Find out how
inside.



Stefanie's strange question


Alexa went to church with her family every week. She knew a little about the Bible and remembered to pray before bed most nights. But she didn't think a lot about God when she wasn't in church.

Friends with God

God wants you to know Him as deeply as He knows you. The closer you get to God, the more you'll be like Him—loving, caring, kind, and generous. Best of all, a friendship with God has eternal benefits. You get to spend eternity with Him in heaven.

Which statements are true about your friendship with God right now?

- I don't know much about God, and I've never really thought about Him much.
- I go to church and know some things about God, but I don't feel like He's my Friend.
- I'd like to be friends with God, but I don't really know how that works.
- God is my best friend, and I want to know how to get closer to Him.



One day, after soccer practice, her friend Stefanie asked a strange question. "Alexa, do you know God?"

"Um . . . yeah, I guess so. I mean, I go to church," Alexa answered.

"But do you really know God? Like He's a friend of yours?"

Alexa shrugged. "How can you be friends with God? Isn't He up there in heaven? I'm down here on earth, so it's not like we can really hang out or anything."

To some people, like Alexa, the idea of being friends with God might seem a little strange, even if they go to church and read the Bible. But the truth

is that God wants to have a relationship with each one of us. The Bible says God is like a father, a mother, a counselor, a friend. In other words, God is someone who knows us personally and cares a lot about us.

How does an ordinary human being get to become friends with the God of the universe? Turn the page for tips on how to get started.



The most important thing to know about God is that through His Son, Jesus, He became a human being and lived down here on earth just like us. Sure, Jesus lived 2,000 years ago, but He still knew what it was

like to be human, to get hurt and

feel tired and even be tempted to do things that were wrong. Most important, Jesus came to show us what God is like.

Look up each of the Bible verses below. Based on the verse, choose ONE word that describes what Jesus was like and write it on the line:

Matthew 9:36

John 11:5

John 15:1

Reading the stories of Jesus in the Bible gives us a picture of what God is like and how He feels about us. And that brings us to the second way we can know God . . .

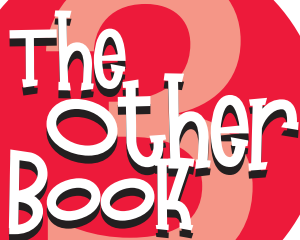
**READ ALL
ABOUT IT**

God gave us His Word, the Bible, as a picture of His character. There are lots of stories in the Bible, and they show us all sides of human nature—the good, the bad, and the ugly! But through them all we see God caring for His people and loving them even when they make mistakes.


If you don't know much about the Bible, start by reading the stories of Jesus in the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Then branch out

into the other parts of the Bible. The Old Testament (the front part of the Bible) tells about God's relationship with His chosen people, the nation of Israel. In the New Testament (the back part of the Bible) we read the stories of Jesus and His followers.

When we read the Bible as one complete story, it tells us about a God who created us, loves us, and cares for us no matter what. Regularly reading the Bible is a great way to get to know God!



The Other Book



Some people call nature "God's second book." The whole world around us was created by God. Like the Bible, it gives us a picture of the Creator.

Think about the most beautiful place you've ever been. Was it on a mountain, at a beach, or in the woods? Picture that spot in your mind. The beauty

of the natural world tells us that we have a creative, loving, joyful God who made an amazing world for us to enjoy.

4 Get Involved!

We don't learn about God just through reading the Bible and looking at nature. That would be like having a friend who always talked to us but never let us talk back. Friendship with God is a two-way street. We need to get involved so that knowing God becomes part of our everyday lives.

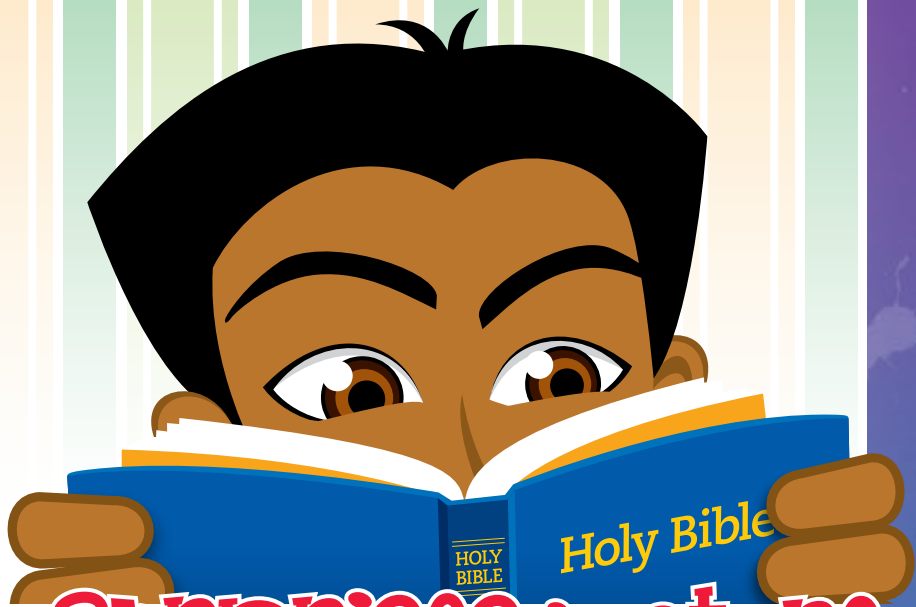
Look up the Bible verses below to see how we can get active in building our relationship with God. Fit the action words into the correct blanks.

Action words:

use - pray - sing
meet - serve

- _____ without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17)
- _____ the gifts God gave us to _____ others
(1 Peter 4:10, 11)
- _____ songs of worship (Ephesians 5:19)
- _____ together with other Christians (Hebrews 10:25)





Surprises in store

When Jared was 12, he got baptized because all his friends in church were getting baptized. At his baptism, the pastor gave him a Bible and a teen devotional book. Jared hadn't thought a lot about what his baptism meant before that. But in the front of the Bible the pastor had written, "Jared, I hope you will take time to become friends with God."

Jared started reading his Bible, beginning with the Gospel of John. Some of the things he read about Jesus surprised him. Jesus was kind to the poor and sick, and He loved to help people. But He could also stand up to the religious leaders and tell people off if He had to! Jared realized there was a lot more to God than he'd ever known before.

Soon Jared began talking to God throughout the day—not always getting down on his knees, but sending up little prayers in the middle of school, sports, or homework. He felt like Jesus was really close by, looking over his shoulder and helping him. The pastor's wish for him was coming true—Jared and God were becoming friends.

Try It for Yourself



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God offers us a kind of friendship that no one else can. We can talk to Him through prayer when there's no one else to listen. He offers us wise advice through His Word, the Bible. Through the life Jesus lived on earth, God gave us an example of how we should live. And He promises that someday we'll be with Him in a perfect world where no one will ever get hurt or sick again.

Who wouldn't want a friend like that? Do you want to be friends with God? You can talk to Him about it right now. Your prayer might go something like this:

Dear God,
it's me, _____
I know about You, but now I really want to know You, just like I know my family and friends. I know that You already know all about me and love me. Please help me get to know You better. I'd like to make a regular time to meet with You and talk about what's going on each day. Thank You for wanting to be friends with me.
Amen.



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