

THE GOSPEL IS THE AMAZING NEWS
THAT TRUSTING IN JESUS' LIFE,
DEATH, AND RESURRECTION IS ALL WE

NEED TO BE SAVED
FROM OUR
SINS AND
SOMEDAY GO
TO HEAVEN.



NOW WHAT? WHAT

DO WE DO BETWEEN NOW
AND WHEN WE GO TO HEAVEN?




NOW WHAT?

INTRO

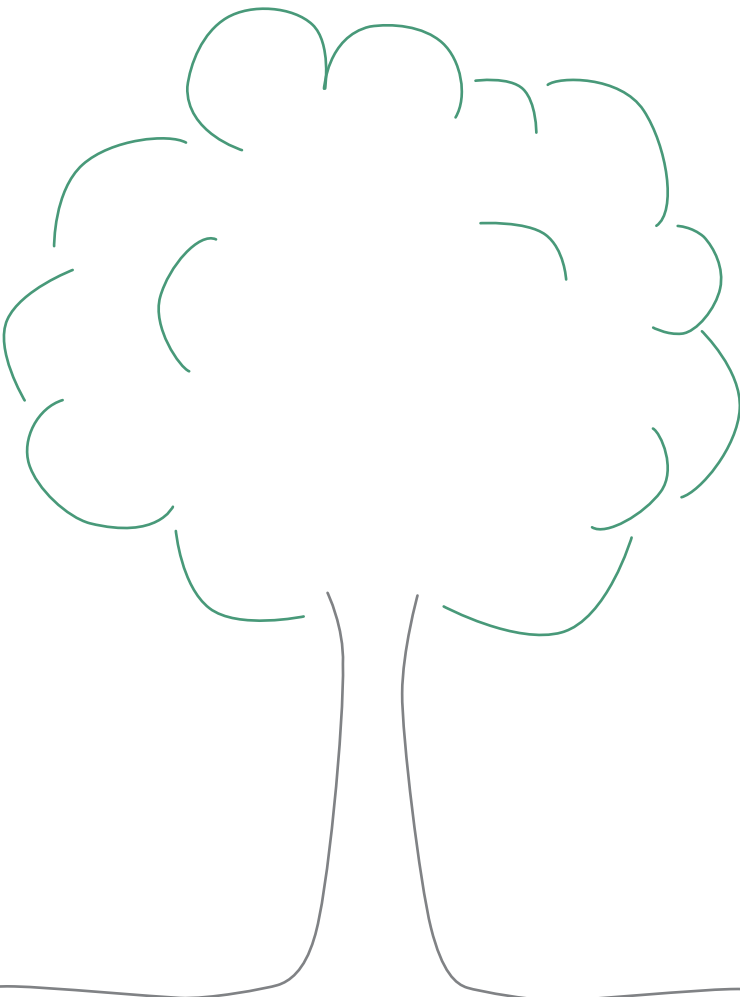
You believe in the gospel. You know that Jesus paid for your sins on the cross. The gospel is the amazing news that trusting in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection is all we need to be saved from our sins and someday go to heaven. Now what? What do we do between now and when we go to heaven?

You've probably heard the command to follow Jesus. Have you ever wondered what it actually means to follow Jesus? He's not physically here. How can we actually follow him? And if we can, what does he want us to do? That's what this book is about.

This book is kind of like step 2 in following Jesus. First, we follow him to the cross and then we follow him to glory. We will be with Jesus in glory either when we die or when he returns. Until then, we spend the rest of our lives following Jesus so that we become more like Jesus. And as we become more like Jesus, we experience greater joy, and God gets greater glory from our lives.



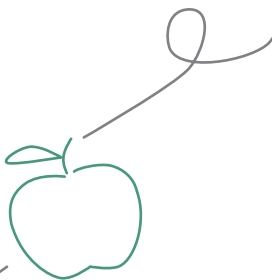
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While only God can make apples grow, there are a lot of things we can do to help make sure the tree will produce apples.

- We can make sure that the tree is well watered and the roots grow deeper and stronger.
- We can feed the tree fertilizer and plant it in rich soil.
- We can make sure to plant it in a spot that will get as much sun as possible.
- We can prepare the tree to endure strong winds, which will make the tree stronger.
- We can plant the tree near other apple trees so it can pollinate. Our tree is actually meant for an orchard!
- We can prune branches so that the other branches will grow stronger and produce more fruit.
- We can take branches or seeds from apples and plant more trees.

Just like the purpose of growing an apple tree is to get apples, there is a purpose to following Jesus. And there are several pieces to following Jesus, which is what the rest of the booklet looks at.



NOTE TO PARENTS

Parents, we wrote this booklet as a tool to help kids understand what being a disciple of Jesus actually means. This booklet is based off of Pastor Dave's book Follow Me to Glory where he identified seven marks that a disciple of Jesus will increasingly have. The format of this booklet is to give a brief explanation of the mark,



Scripture passage to read that shows each mark from the Bible.



Discussion questions to help draw out your child's understanding of the chapter.



Now What? This section gives a list of ideas of things for you and your child to actually do in light of understanding the chapter.



There is also a simple prayer in each chapter based on a passage of scripture related to the chapter (Thanks to the Saari family for writing these prayers).

The hope is that this booklet will be more than information or head knowledge, but to have tangible ways to begin following Jesus. Depending on your kids' abilities, have them read the chapter, look up the passages, and encourage them to do the activities. There is also a list of additional resources at the back that might help expand on the different chapters.

Jesus calls us to follow him, and it doesn't matter what age that begins happening. Our prayer is that this booklet would be a tool to help families know how to better follow Jesus and then help their kids do it.

I GRACE-FUELED EFFORT

Before we get to the ways that we follow Jesus, we need to understand something about how the gospel works.

We follow Jesus because God created us to be like Jesus. As we follow Jesus in the ways that God has commanded us, we start to think and act more like Jesus.

- We don't follow Jesus to earn our salvation. Jesus already took care of that for us on the cross.
- We don't follow Jesus so that he will keep us saved.

Salvation is a gift, which like any other gift you've received means you get it for free and without strings attached. I doubt your parents give you a birthday present and then say, "Happy Birthday, now go and clean your room to pay for this gift." Neither does God.

When God gives us the faith to believe in the gospel, we become part of God's family. You didn't do anything to be part of your own earthly family and it's the same in God's family. In your earthly family, you probably have things you have to do. They aren't required for you to stay in the family, but because some things you do because you belong to the family. Following Jesus isn't the way you stay in the family, it's how you show that you are part of the family.

It's good for us. When we follow Jesus, we become more like Jesus. And that shows others what Jesus is like. Have you ever tried to use something in a way it wasn't made for? Maybe you



tried to use a matchbox car for a hammer. Or using flip-flops as running shoes. Maybe running in flip-flops works for a few times, but eventually they are going to break. Why? Because flip-flops aren't made for running.

It's the same with our lives. God created us to live lives that are pleasing to him. So when we live the way God created us to live, it works best. God created us to glorify him and enjoy him forever. Following Jesus is the way we glorify God and we will enjoy him more and more.



Philippians 2:12-13



Who does the work of saving us from sin?

What part do we play in following Jesus?



Pray that the Holy Spirit would help you to want to follow Jesus more and more.



O God, how Great you are! What a gift it is from you when I truly want to praise you! Please make me someone who praises you forever. Jesus is our blessed Redeemer! May my life reflect and enjoy your goodness.

2 SEEING GOD AND HIS WORD RIGHTLY (WATERING)

Imagine you needed glasses to see anything. Without your glasses the world is fuzzy. Someone hands you a book with words and pictures in it. You know it's a book, you can tell there's a bunch of words on a page, but you can't actually read it, you can't see the pictures. And then someone gives you glasses. Suddenly all the words make sense; you can read the words and understand them. It's like you see an entirely new world! That's kind of what the Bible does for us. The Bible is like our pair of glasses that allows us to see God. Without the Bible, the world is blurry. We can know some things about God, but not how the gospel saves us or how to obey God. The Bible tells us everything we need to know about who God is, how to be saved from our sins, and how to live like Jesus. Without the Bible, we would not know how to be saved or how to follow Jesus and live like Him (this idea comes from the famous pastor and writer, John Calvin).

We need the Bible to see the world clearly and rightly. Let's look at a few things about the Bible. The Bible is a fascinating book. It's actually a collection of different books of different kinds written by many different authors. And yet the whole collection tells one great story of a loving God rescuing people from sin by sending his Son Jesus. While it was written by different people like Moses, David, prophets and disciples, it was also written by God. It is actually the Word of God. That means it doesn't have errors, and it's exactly what God wants us to know.

The Bible tells us who God is, how we can be saved and also how to live a life that is pleasing to God. It does this in a number of ways. Sometimes it tells us with stories, or poems, or through a letter that gives us instructions on how to follow Jesus.



One other thing that we need to keep in mind with the Bible is that we don't just learn information, but we have to obey what it says. Here's an activity to try: Have your mom or dad blindfold you and then try to get across your living room without bumping into anything. You can only listen to what mom or dad says. What if instead of bumping into a chair, it was running into something sharp or dangerous? You would want to listen really carefully and do exactly what you were told. That's what the Bible does for our lives. If we listen carefully and do what God tells us, it keeps us away from the dangers of sin.



Make a list of the benefits of reading the Bible from Second Timothy 3:16-17.

Hebrews 1:1-2. Who is the entire Bible about (John 5:39)?



What are some things that keep you from reading the Bible on your own? What can you do to change that? Why is reading the Bible such a big deal? Why is it better than other books we read?

Read Matthew 28:19-20 and find the things Jesus commands and the things Jesus promises. What are the differences?

Why is it important to start with the Bible if we want to follow Jesus?

12 NOW WHAT?

NOW WHAT?

Do a quiet time with your mom or dad.

Find a reading plan: set a goal to read one of the gospels on your own.

Work on memorizing the weekly Fighter Verses.

Watch some of the videos from the BibleProject.com with your mom or dad.



HEBREWS 4:12-13

You are my Father! You hold the world together in your hand, seeing all things, and yet you love me and know me like a Dad! God you see my heart when I am sinning. You see me when I try to obey you. Help me, Dear Father, to cherish your promises and to obey your commands for Jesus' sake, because You love me so! Amen.





WORSHIPER AND LOVER OF GOD (SOIL/FERTILIZER)

Maybe you've heard this question before: Q. How can you glorify God? A. By loving him and doing all he commands.

We hear the word love used a lot. What does it mean to love someone? You probably think about your parents, your siblings, your extended family, friends. What about loving God? How do we love a God we can't see?

Before we look at how to love God, let's first make sure we understand what love is. What does the word love mean? It means warmly wanting what is best for someone else. What is best for someone isn't always what they think is best or what they want. Love is wanting what is best for someone else, and doing it in a kind and warm way. You don't just tell people the best thing for them in a mean tone. You also don't always give someone what they want, because it would make them happy. Sometimes it's loving to do something different than what a person thinks they want.

Think of a time when you wanted to do something, but your parents knew it was dangerous? They said 'no', even though you really wanted to do it. Even if you didn't like it, it was the best thing for you to keep you safe. That's an example of love. How do we know what is the best thing for us? God is what is best. We might want other things, but in the end God is what is best. And God gives us rules, not to drag us down, but to keep us safe and help us see God as the best thing in the universe.



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What is worship? Worship is everything we do in our lives that responds to God's greatness. If you think God is really great, it changes how we live, what we say, and what else we care about. When God tells us to love our siblings or our neighbor or classmates, we do it because we love God. That's a big job, but because God is so glorious, it's worth it.



Look up First Corinthians 13:4-7 and then talk about what love is and isn't. What are some ways you need to grow in loving others?



What are some ways it's easy to worship God?
What are ways that are harder?

What are some ways we show love to God?

Why do we sing songs as a church?



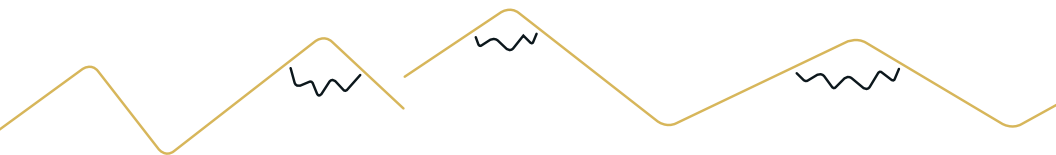

 NOW
WHAT?

1. Review the different pieces of Sunday morning worship (singing, praying, reading, preaching, giving, announcements, communion) and explain how they bring God glory.
2. Look at the chores, activities and things you do during your week. What are the ways you worship God through these?
3. List some ways you can eat to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31).
4. How do you spend your money? What are ways your spending shows you love or don't love God?
5. Look up the songs for this Sunday's service and practice singing them.



1 JOHN 4:10

Thank you God that you are love. Thank you that you sent Jesus to be our perfect example of how to be patient and kind and humble. We love you because you loved us first. Please LORD, help us to love others by serving them when they need help and by sharing about your love for them. We praise you God for giving us Jesus, a perfect example of love.



4

RECOGNIZING OUR DEPENDENCE ON GOD (SUNSHINE)

What would happen if you stopped breathing? Try it right now. Hold your breath for as long as you can.

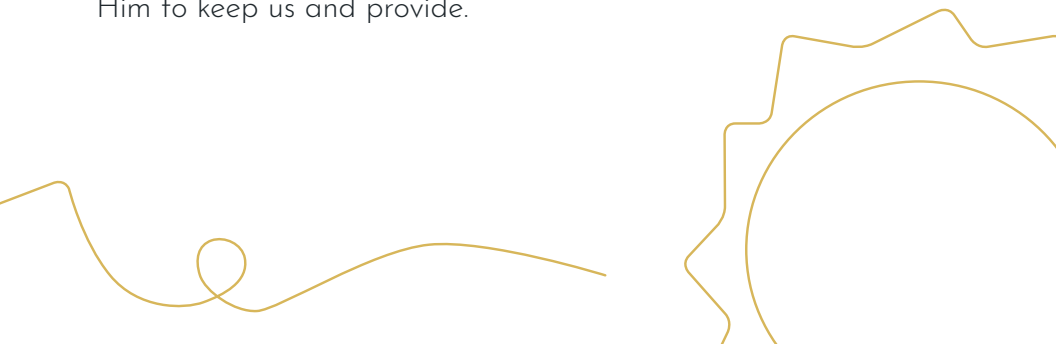
Why do you need to breathe so badly? Try another one: make your heart stop beating. Tell your heart to stop beating. Did it work? Why couldn't you stop your heart from beating?

Do you realize that God is the one keeping you breathing and your heart beating? If we need God to even keep our heart and lungs working, what else do we need God for? We actually need God for everything. If God decides to stop our hearts or not fill our lungs, we are in big trouble.

This kind of need for God is called dependence. We need God to keep us alive, give us breath, provide food, clothing and everything else we need in life. Every person is dependent on God, but not everyone recognizes that it's God who keeps us and provides for us.

Two ways that we remind ourselves how much we need Jesus is through prayer, and fasting. You've probably prayed before. What we are saying with prayer, is that we need God to do something that we can't. We need God to do everything. Which means the more we realize our need for God, the more it will drive us to pray. And the Bible tells us to pray about everything (Philippians 4:6), and without stopping (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

What is fasting? It is a way to remind ourselves that we need God for everything we do, including feeding us. When you don't eat food for a whole day (or longer), your stomach starts growling. When you notice this, let it remind you of your need for God's provision. And then pray and tell God of your need for Him to keep us and provide.





John 15:1-11

Matt 6:5-8, 6:16-18



What are some things that make prayer hard?

Can you think of some ways to make prayer easier? Can mom or dad?

Have you ever fasted before?



Take time to pray on your own. Have your mom or dad show you how to pray the Lord's Prayer.

Try fasting. Start with not eating breakfast and lunch. What did you notice when you fasted?



PSALM 121

Heavenly Father, you made heaven and earth, and you made me. You make me breathe and run and eat and think. You are my help and my Keeper. You keep me when I'm awake and when I sleep. Help me to remember that I need you for everything. Help me to pray to you. Help me to stay away from evil. Don't let me try to do things on my own, but grow in my awareness of you. Please keep me from today until forever. Amen



FUNCTIONING AS PART OF THE BODY OF CHRIST (POLLINATION)

Jesus saves individuals, but he also saves a whole group of people. Remember during the Exodus, God saved all of the Israelites in one night from slavery in Egypt? He called them to worship him and to be different from all of the other nations around. They were the people of God. When God saves a person, they join all of the other people who have put their trust in Jesus too. We belong to the people of God, which is called the church. There are two ways to think about the church. First, there is what is called the Universal church, which is made up of every person, from every place, from all time, who all believe in the gospel. This is what it will be like in heaven, with everyone worshipping Jesus together.

But we're not in heaven yet, so there is another way to look at the church too. The church is also all of the smaller groups of Christians who gather in one place. This is called the Local Church. Grace Church is one example of a local church. This is where we gather to worship Jesus, hear the gospel preached, take communion, and have community with others who follow Jesus.

The Bible describes the local church in a number of ways, but one of the examples is of a body. "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. (1 Cor. 12:12)". Think about all of the different jobs your physical body can do and which parts do different things. Your toes do different things than your ears or stomach. But all the parts work to make up one body. The Bible uses that example to describe what a church with many different people is like.



OBJECT LESSON

-AN INDISPENSABLE LINK

With a piece of chain, have your kid point out the different links. What are the different links for?

If you have some kind of weight to connect to one end, great, otherwise help your kid imagine a weight hanging from the end. What would happen if one of these chains didn't work right?

Each link is like each member of a church. If one doesn't work, the chain falls apart. One link isn't better than the others.



1 Corinthians 12:12-26

Hebrews 10:23-25



20 NOW WHAT?



What ways do your parents help be part of the church?

What are ways you can be part of the church?

What are some of the things we do as a local church to show we are together in one body?

Why is the local church so important? What are some reasons?



Make a list of the skills and gifts that God has given you.

Find a way to serve at Grace Church. Even if it's not the thing you want to do most, try something.



EPHESIANS 2:19-22

Father, thank you for saving me from my sins. Because of Jesus, I'm not a stranger to you and I am part of your family now. Help me to love the people in my church and appreciate all of the ways that you use different people to build your church. Help me to grow and follow Jesus. Show me how to help others grow and follow Jesus. I want to learn more about the church and love it more.



6

SUFFERING SERVANT (WIND)

Who doesn't want to be great? We want to be great at sports, school, great at playing an instrument or an activity. Usually it's by being better than others or standing out. Jesus has a way to be great too, but you might guess that it's different than we think.

When Jesus talked about being great, he had a completely different way to be great. Jesus said if you want to be great, be a servant. Imagine a race where everyone tried hard to finish last. Now imagine that race is a long marathon. It's a long race, you have to run 26 miles, you're sweaty, thirsty and tired. You might call it suffering!

There are many kinds of suffering in this life. Sometimes you suffer because you sinned, like when you get punished for disobeying. Sometimes you suffer because someone else sinned, like if your brother or sister breaks your arm. Other times you suffer because you live in a world broken by sin. Like if you get seriously sick, it wasn't your fault or someone else's. It is just because you live in a world where sickness and pain exist.

Everyone in this world will face suffering, but for a Christian there is another kind of suffering. We will suffer for following Jesus. When you share the gospel with others, they might not like it. Sometimes they really might not like it. When Jesus began teaching about people's sin and rejection of God, it made people angry and want to kill him. It happened to Jesus' followers like James and Peter and Paul. And it will happen to us too. We may not face death, but not everyone will be excited for you to tell them about Jesus. Not everyone will be excited if you say 'no' to something because it goes against what the Bible teaches.

We will suffer, but Jesus calls us to serve the people around us, even if it hurts us. And when we do, we are truly great in God's kingdom.



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Matthew 20:20-28

Acts 12:1-5



The Bible says followers of Jesus will suffer. What do you think about that?

What does suffering mean in your own words?

Tell about a time when you had to suffer?

Tell about a time when you served someone else, not because you were told.

Can you imagine suffering for the name of Jesus?
How can you prepare for suffering?



Make a list of people you know in your family, DG, neighborhood or church that you could serve.

What would it be like to not run when you wanted to because you hurt all the time? Imagine what it would be like if your friend wouldn't play with you anymore because you believed in Jesus?



JAMES 1:2-4

God you say to count it all joy when I meet trials of various kinds when I am living for your Great name. Please help me to suffer in a worthy manner, that brings more Honor to your name. Please let these trials lead me to more maturity and a deeper knowledge of you and more rejoicing. Amen.



GROWING IN GODLINESS (PRUNING)

Has anyone ever told you to look more like your brother or sister? Or maybe that you look like your dad? Have you ever heard someone say you need to look more like Jesus? What does this even mean?

We were made in God's image. Jesus was born as a man and obeyed his Father perfectly. He is the image of the invisible God. It's not because of his physical looks, but his character. He acted, spoke, thought, and lived exactly like God wants us to.

Godliness means to live as God wants us to. There are some things God tells us not to do, and others that he tells we should do. The Bible gives a few lists of the kind of things that will make us more like Jesus. Galatians 5 gives us a list of the fruit of the Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Self-Control. Ephesians 4 and Colossians 3 give us lists of things to take off, and things to put on. On a piece of paper, make a list with two columns and write down all of the things that Ephesians 4 or Colossians 3 tell us to put off, and the things it tells us to put on.

Here's an example: Maybe you struggle with anger. Your mom or dad tells you to do something and you get mad, or your little brother messes with your stuff and you find yourself yelling at him and you can't explain why. You know you're angry, but how does it happen? What do you need to 'put off'? Anger. But that's only half of the solution. What can you 'put on' in place of anger?



CLEANING OUT OUR SIN

Imagine you have to clean a messy basement? It's dark and filled with junk. There are boxes and trash everywhere. You see things that you didn't even know your family owned. You know it's dirty, but where do you start?

The first thing you need is a light. It shows where the junk is so you don't trip on it (Ps 119:105, 1 John 1).

Then you need someone to help you pick up the first object and move it out of the way. Then you take the next one and so on until you work your way through the whole basement. Maybe you get to a point where all of the big boxes are put away. Things look pretty clean. Except now you realize that some of the boxes left a gross ooze on the floor. You hadn't even seen that before. After you mop up that mess, things look pretty good until you shine your flashlight in the corner. There are cobwebs all over. The more we clean, the more dirtiness we find. A basement is kind of like our hearts. The mess is sin. The light is God's Word that helps us see the mess.

When we first come to believe in the gospel, there are probably some obvious sins you don't want to do anymore. Maybe it's yelling at a sibling or a new desire to obey your parents. That's like the big boxes you see first in the basement. Once you've cleaned out the big things, it's tempting to think, "I've got sin taken care of." But then as we keep shining the light of God's Word on our hearts, we find other sins like pride and we find we want things more than Jesus. So we have to go to work cleaning up these things too. It might feel frustrating at times because you keep finding more mess and it seems like it will never end. But the truth is like the basement, your heart is getting cleaner.



1 Timothy 4:7-8

Galatians 5:19-24



If Jesus has already forgiven your sins, why does it matter if you are godly or not?

What are some things that are required to grow in godliness?

Can you imagine yourself becoming more like Jesus? What would that actually look like?



Name something you struggle to stop doing (anger, fear, laziness, etc). Find some verses that the Bible say about this sin.

What is the opposite of this sin? (example: anger vs patience, lying vs telling the truth)

What is a way to be more like Jesus in that area?





EPHESIANS 5:1-2, ISAIAH 30:21

Mighty God, Thank you for saving me by pure grace, salvation is truly a gift from you! I praise you for your workmanship, that was created in Christ Jesus for my good works. Therefore, help me to walk in the good works which you prepared beforehand for me. In Christ, please keep building us together into a dwelling place for yourself by the Spirit. Jesus, I want to be an imitator of you. Show me, day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment what it means to walk in love. I love being your beloved child!



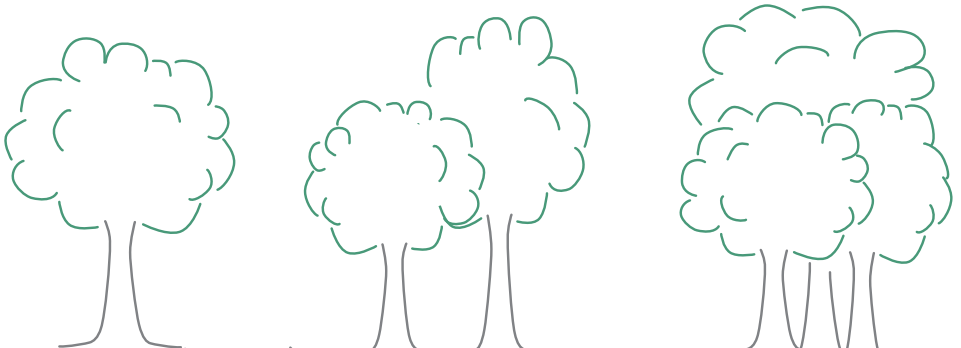


DEBTOR OF OTHERS (PROPAGATION)

Imagine your mom or dad has a secret. They have the secret code to defeat that video game you've been playing. Maybe it's a coupon for unlimited ice cream cones at DQ. Or they have a bottle that holds the cure to cancer. What if they never shared that thing? No one gets to win the video game. Ice cream cones go unlicked. Cancer continues to destroy people. If your mom or dad didn't share the good thing that they had, it would be the opposite of good: it would be a terrible thing. Now compare that to something that you have which is the greatest news of all.

The message of the gospel is better than a cheat code for a video game, better than unlimited cones, better even than curing cancer. The way to be forgiven of our sins, avoid God's punishment forever and the only way to be with Jesus is way better than anything the world has to offer. What God has done for us is meant to be shared with others. We don't owe God anything, but we do owe it to others to tell them the good news that we have.

We share the good news in the hope that others will believe too. We hope that others, lots of others, will want to follow Jesus too. So now instead of one apple tree, it turns into a second, a third and on until we have a whole forest filled with apple trees that bear good fruit.





Philippians 3:7-8

Romans 10:14-15



Have you ever owed something to someone else?

In your own words, what is the gospel?

Have you ever had the chance to share the gospel with someone else? What was it like?



Write down 1 or 2 people you know who don't believe the gospel.

Pray for these people that they would believe in the gospel.

Practice sharing the gospel with your mom or dad.

Make a plan to share the gospel with the people on your list.



MATTHEW 9:37-38

Oh LORD, I pray that you would give me courage to share the Gospel with those around me. Would you please work in people's hearts around the world, using them to further your Kingdom by sowing seeds of truth in many hearts. Please show me how I might tell people about you.



CONCLUSION

The question we asked at the start was 'Now What'? Do you have a better idea of what to do now? If you wanted to plant an apple tree and watch it grow, first you would read a manual on growing giant, delicious apples. The next step would be to go and plant an apple tree.

It's the same with following Jesus. You've read this basic manual and with the help of your parents, the church, the Bible and the Holy Spirit, you have everything you need to go and follow Jesus. The only thing left is to go and start following. You won't get everything right the first time. You'll make mistakes, you'll sin, you'll forget some things. But following Jesus is something that will take the rest of our lives to perfect.

After you have worked through this booklet, I pray that you would have a better idea of what it means to follow Jesus and that your love for Jesus would grow.



What areas are you already following Jesus?

What areas do you need help?

Which chapter do you need to review and understand better?

What is one thing you are excited to do now to follow Jesus?



JOHN 15

Lord, just as you were mighty to save me, thank you that you will not leave me nor forsake me. Help me to do as you have commanded me, so that the world may know that I love you. Please make me a branch that bears fruit because I abide in the vine, which is Christ. May I trust you when you prune me and thank you for promising to preserve me.

Father, glorify yourself by making me to bear much fruit, so proving me to be Christ's disciple. Amen



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Knowing God and His Word Rightly: The Knight's Map
- RC Sproul, *The Biggest Story* - Kevin DeYoung,
thebibleproject.com

Lover and Worshiper of God: The Ology - Marty Machowski,
Seeds Family Worship (CD's),

Dependence on God: The Barber Who Wanted to Pray -
RC Sproul, *What Every Child Should Know About Prayer*
- Nancy Guthrie

Being Part of the Body: My First Book About the Church -
Carine Mackenzie

Suffering Servant: Trailblazer Books (missionary stories)

Growing in Godliness: Good news for Little Hearts (series
of counseling books for kids), *The Radical Book for Kids* -
Champ Thornton

Debtor to Others: What is the Gospel? - Greg Gilbert, Pastor
Dave's *What is the Gospel* booklet

