



YOU SAID YES

How do I start my
new life with Jesus?

Week 1: Starting to Follow Jesus



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Introduction

You said yes to Jesus. Now what's next?

Inside this little book, you'll discover more about what your decision to follow Jesus means.

Each day will include daily thoughts from the Bible and ideas to try for yourself.

Together, we'll answer questions like "what does this mean," "what should I do," and "what does this change?" Our hope is that this tool can provide guidance as you begin your journey of following Jesus.

This book is organized into 21 days, but feel free to go at the pace that best helps you grow. You might finish this book in 100 days, 21 days, or a week. You might even keep reading it over and over. Finishing the book is less important than finding direction, growing in confidence, and starting conversations with others about what you're learning.

Following Jesus is a process of taking next steps, one day at a time. We're thrilled to join you!

Day 01

What Does It Mean to Say Yes to Jesus?

You said yes to Jesus—and we're really proud of you.

There are a lot of ways you might hear people talk about saying yes to Jesus. You might hear phrases like “committing your life to Jesus,” “becoming a Christian,” “getting saved,” or “choosing to follow Jesus.”

But what does it mean to follow Jesus? What changes and what doesn't? Why?

Those are some of the questions this book will help you answer.

So, let's start with that first question. **What does it mean to say yes to Jesus?**

Following Jesus means becoming like Him. But who is Jesus, and why would we want to be more like Him?

To answer that question, we need to go to the first book of the Bible, Genesis. It tells us that in the beginning, God made the world, humanity included. He gave us the job of enjoying and caring for what He made. But humanity made choices that hurt us, others, and the world. These choices—what the Bible calls sin—separated us from our perfect God and limited our ability to do the job He had given us.

Centuries later, God's Son entered the world as a baby named Jesus. Jesus lived around 33 years on Earth and spent that time showing us the best way to live—by loving God and loving others. Then He closed the separation between us and God, His Father, by dying on a cross and rising from the dead.

Why would Jesus, fully God and fully man, have made this kind of sacrifice for us? Before His death, Jesus sat down with a person named Nicodemus late one night. Nicodemus had lots of questions about what it meant to follow Jesus. As part of His response to Nicodemus' questions, Jesus shared some of His most famous words:



"For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him."
John 3:16-17 NLT

God's love for us is so great that Jesus was willing to die for our sins so we could be a part of His family forever. That's the kind of love that would make anyone want to say yes to His love, forgiveness, and new way of life.

Tomorrow, we'll talk about how that happens, but today, let's consider Jesus' answer as we talk with Him in prayer.

Pray with your own words, or try these:



God, I have decided to trust that Jesus is Your Son who came to save me and the world. I don't know everything about what this means yet, but I do want to follow Jesus and live His way. Thank You for loving me enough to send Jesus. Thank You for inviting me into Your family. Amen.

Day 02

What Happens After I Say Yes to Jesus?

Yesterday we ended with prayer, and today we'll start with it. God likes hearing from us anytime.

Pray with your own words, or try these:



God, thank You for the gift of salvation: saving me from myself and bringing me into a healing relationship with You. Use Your love to shape me today, in the coming weeks, and for the rest of my life. I'm trusting You to make me new. In Jesus' name, amen.

Christians finish prayers in Jesus' name because this is one of the ways Jesus told us to pray. **We're able to connect with God on a first-name basis because of Jesus' sacrifice for our sins.** And we need this kind of connection if we're going to live our lives His way and become more like Him.

Jesus lived His life with integrity. He loved His enemies, pushed back against injustice, and welcomed people that culture rejected. **After we say yes to Jesus, we start the lifelong process of following Him.** So, over time, we begin taking on those same traits. In fact, when Jesus summed up all of the commandments in the Bible, He asked us to love God with all we are and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

But is that process automatic, or is it something we have a role in making happen? It's not one or the other—it's both.



When he served as a sacrifice for our sins, he solved the sin problem for good—not only ours, but the whole world's. ... This is the only way to be sure we're in God. Anyone who claims to be intimate with God ought to live the same kind of life Jesus lived. 1 John 2:2, 5–6 MSG

Becoming more like Jesus is a process. God does the heavy lifting, but we can partner with Him in the work He's doing. And for the rest of our journey together, we're going to look at three ways we can do that:

Learning some of the basics of following Jesus—Who is God? What does it look like to talk to God and learn more about Him? What are some good next steps we can take? We'll spend the rest of this week answering important questions like these.

Living like Jesus lived—During Jesus' time on Earth, He modeled many ways of living that can bring us closer to God, help us connect with Him, and live like Him. These are called spiritual practices. We'll spend week two exploring some of these practices.

Loving like Jesus loved—Nothing makes us grow more like Jesus than loving like He loved. During week three, we'll take a look at what it means to put Jesus' love into practice.



Pause to consider:

Which parts of my life do I hope God will make new? How do I want to partner with God to care for others and the world around me?

Day 03

Who Is God?

Is God:

God the Father?

Jesus the Son?

The Holy Spirit?

All three in one?

Yes!

Choosing to follow Jesus is a three-in-one decision:

You are accepting the invitation through **Jesus** (the Son of God) to become a child of God the **Father**, filled with the **Holy Spirit**, and empowered to live as a daughter or son of God. **God is three in one.**

We can see God reflected this way, as the Trinity, all throughout the Bible. The Spirit of God was present with God the Father from the beginning of Creation, as seen in the first two sentences of the Bible.



*In the beginning **God** created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the **Spirit of God** was hovering over the waters.* Genesis 1:1-2 NIV

Later, the author of John retells the story of Creation. This time, Jesus is also mentioned and the author refers to Him as God's Word. You'll definitely want to get a Bible or download the Bible App from YouVersion to read all of the book of John soon. Here are few verses from John 1 that describe the three parts of God's being:



*In the beginning was the **Word**, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with **God** in the beginning. ... to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God ... The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the **Father**, full of grace and truth. ... No one has ever seen God, but the one and only **Son**, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known. ... “The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the **Holy Spirit**.’ I have seen and I testify that this is God’s Chosen One.”*

John 1:1-2, 12, 14, 18, 33-34 NIV

That’s a lot. Here’s the takeaway: Jesus, God the Father, and the Holy Spirit are One, and Jesus came not just to show us what God is like, but to give us direct access to the Father forever, through the Holy Spirit.

Pray with your own words, or try these:



God, help me to know You as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Father, You are my Provider. Jesus, You are my Savior. Holy Spirit, You are my Guide. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Day 04

How Does God Guide Us?

Yesterday we prayed: God, help me get to know You as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. **Holy Spirit, You are my Guide.**

Who is the Holy Spirit, and how does He guide us? Do we have to act really spiritual to get the Spirit's attention? Jesus promised something different.

Jesus described the Holy Spirit as a comforter, advocate, helper, and friend. Do you know anyone like that? Maybe a mentor, mother, or wise friend? As you read Jesus' words, think about the Holy Spirit as your Comforter, Advocate, Helper, and Friend.



*"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the **Spirit of truth**. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. **But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.**" John 14:16–17 NIV*

Jesus made this promise to His followers while telling them He would soon leave to be with the Father.



"So let me say it again, this truth: It's better for you that I leave. If I don't leave, the Friend won't come. But if I go, I'll send him to you." John 16:7 MSG

His followers might have felt confused, worried, or even abandoned, but Jesus clarified that His physical leaving was less about going away and more about coming closer.



"I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you."
John 14:18-20 NIV

Jesus was coming closer because the Holy Spirit would not only be with us, but in us: The Spirit did what Jesus promised and came to fill His followers with the same comfort, power, and love that filled Jesus.

By saying yes to living Jesus' way, we invite the Holy Spirit to help, comfort, and advocate for and through us.



"The Friend, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send at my request, will make everything plain to you. He will remind you of all the things I have told you." John 14:26 MSG

God chooses to live within us and guide us. In the coming weeks, we will identify practices for becoming more hospitable to God's presence in our lives.

Pray with your own words, or try these:



God, thank You for the Holy Spirit. Will You continue to help me know You as Comforter, Helper, Advocate, and Friend? I trust You to guide me as I follow the way of Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen.

Day 05

What Is Baptism?

In the last few days, we've learned about God's three-in-one nature—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and how God lives in us today through the Holy Spirit. Today, we'll read another story from the Bible with all three parts of the Trinity.

The main topic we're exploring today is baptism. **Baptism is a public way Jesus followers declare their decision to follow Jesus.** A pastor or trusted friend stands with you in a pool (or other body of water) and helps you lean back into the water and come right back up and out.

But why go underwater? It's a symbol representing Jesus' death, resurrection, and new life through Him.

- Leaning back under the water symbolizes your sins being washed away through Jesus' death.
- Being raised out of the water is a picture of being brought back to a new life, like Jesus was raised back to life.

This public declaration of our new life with Jesus is similar to the way Jesus Himself was baptized.



Jesus then appeared, arriving at the Jordan River from Galilee. He wanted John to baptize him. John objected, "I'm the one who needs to be baptized, not you!" But Jesus insisted. "Do it. God's work, putting things right all these

centuries, is coming together right now in this baptism.” So John did it. The moment Jesus came up out of the baptismal waters, the skies opened up and he saw God’s Spirit—it looked like a dove—descending and landing on him. And along with the Spirit, a voice: “This is my Son, chosen and marked by my love, delight of my life.”
Matthew 3:13–17 MSG

Now, reread the story and imagine yourself as the person being baptized by John. What’s the water like? How does it feel to hear God’s approval? What does God’s voice say to you specifically? How do you notice the Holy Spirit’s presence?

At the end of Jesus’ time on Earth, He gathered His followers together and shared this mission:



“Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life, marking them by baptism in the threefold name: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” Matthew 28:19 MSG

When you’ve said yes to Jesus’ way of life, baptism is one of the next steps you’re invited to take. Remember, it’s a public declaration that says to the world, “I have decided to follow Jesus!”



Pause to consider:

Have you been baptized? What would it be like for you to take this next step of following Jesus? What questions do you still have about baptism?

Day 06

How Do I Get to Know God?

How do you get to know someone? Most of us get to know a new friend by asking questions, spending time together, and sharing meaningful stories from our lives.

But interacting with God can feel a little different than getting tacos and talking with your friends.

So how do we get to know God?

1. We spend time with God through prayer.

Prayer is a great way to share experiences, conversations, excitement, needs, and trust-building moments with God.

How do you pray? Prayer is communicating with God. You might thank Him for who He is, ask for support, or simply be silent in God's presence. Prayer isn't a performance, so you don't need to worry about saying the "wrong" things. Instead, it's a way to relate to God, who loves you. So be honest. If it matters to you, then share it with God.

Finally, God's Spirit lives in you, so pay attention to ways God may be trying to get your attention as you pray and throughout your day.

2. We read the Bible.

The Bible is a collection of books written by people thousands of years ago. So, why should we read it today?

We'll talk more about the Bible later, but here are some basics. The Bible helps us to see what God is like and how people like us have come to know Him. Its authors, guided by the Holy Spirit, tell stories of God's goodness, ask relatable questions, and engage with the hardest parts of life.

Throughout the Bible, we get to see God's qualities, like His kindness, forgiveness, and justice. And we get to see those qualities lived through the life of Jesus.

3. We gather with other Jesus followers.

Getting to know God is about "Jesus and me" and "Jesus and we." The Bible reminds us very practically how to follow Jesus and get to know God together.



Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together ... Hebrews 10:24-25 NLT

We get to know Him better by hearing stories of God's faithfulness, listening to wisdom from the Bible, and singing songs about God's love.

A very doable way to build a habit of meeting with Jesus followers is to regularly attend church. It's an opportunity to make friends, share how God's working in your life, and practice serving and encouraging others.

If you haven't yet, make a plan to meet others at church this week. Consider inviting a friend, family member, or neighbor so they can experience the life-changing way of Jesus.

Day 07

What Am I Learning?

Congratulations! You've made it to the end of week one. We're so proud of you for taking intentional steps to grow in your faith.

Deciding to follow Jesus is a big decision, and it's probably stirred up some new ideas, questions, and perhaps doubts. That's okay. Remember, **following Jesus is a lifelong journey, so we don't need to have all the mysteries of faith figured out after one week.**

With all of that in mind—how are you doing?

Below, there's space for you to write down two or three words or phrases to describe how you feel about your faith journey. Maybe you feel excited and expectant, or you might feel a little uncertain. You might not even be able to describe exactly how you're feeling.

Don't worry about having a "right" answer. Your honest answer is the best answer.

You don't need to share these words with anyone; this is simply a chance for you to reflect.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

In the past week, we've seen that God loves us, forgives us, and provides us with a purpose—to become more like Jesus every day. We've also seen that He wants to have a close relationship with us, so He's provided us with ways to relate to Him.

We've only scratched the surface of all there is to know about following Jesus, and we're excited to continue this journey together.

As we conclude week one and get ready for week two, think about and write down a question or two you might have about God, faith, or the Bible. Then, **share your question with a pastor or trusted friend sometime this week.**

Read the verse below and think about it for a minute or two before talking with God about what you wrote above.



... he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. Philippians 1:6 NIV

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