

# JOURNEY TO JESUS

(Participant's booklet)

Living Hope Church of the Nazarene  
Surrey, British Columbia, Canada

*Journey to Jesus*

(Leader's guide and Participant's booklet)

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for

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## INTRODUCTION

*Journey to Jesus* is the starting place in the *Journey of Grace* series of studies. It provides a general yet comprehensive view of who Jesus Christ is and what His life means to mankind. It is designed to be a discussion guide for those new to the Christian faith and to Living Hope church of the Nazarene.

The purpose of the course is to provide a space for guided discussion that will allow participants to understand the implications of the gospel and to define his or her commitment to it. This is a workshop, not a series of lectures. The active participation of those attending is the key to success in all sessions. To prepare the sessions beforehand is a recommended practice that will give more time for active learning through discussion.

Your leader will guide you every session through a group discussion and your own analysis of what the Bible has to say about every topic. We trust this experience will show you the evidence and authority that Christianity enjoys as the only true faith.

## Session 1

### IS THIS IT?

Most probably you have asked yourself the purpose and meaning of life. Where do we come from, where are we going, why are we here and who says what is good or bad are fundamental questions. Even if we have not discussed them or thought about them, we all have our personal answers to those questions. Our answers define how we live; but what if the answer we have is wrong? Is there a way to know for sure what the true answer to these questions is? We want to welcome you in your search for truth and help you discover the evidence God presents. This will be done through discussions with the other participants, so let us start by introducing ourselves.

- Take turns to introduce yourself to the group by sharing your name, where you live and what brought you here.

#### DISCUSSION

Which of the following statements define your understanding best? Underline your answer.

- ➔ There is no God (Atheist)
- ➔ There is no way for us to know if there is a God or not (Agnostic)
- ➔ God created everything and set it in motion within rules but left it alone right after (Deist)
- ➔ God exists through and in everything, so He is one with the universe (Panthéist)
- ➔ There are many gods (Polytheist)
- ➔ There is only one God actively involved in His creation (Theist)

Share your answer with the group and why you believe it is right.

## ANSWERS FROM THE BIBLE

Consider the universe and your own body. Could it be the result of chance? Science deals with observation. What do we learn from looking at creation? Should we expect to find God in the universe? Is there an experiment we could run to prove the existence of God? Discuss the following passages with your group.

Psalm 8:1;3, LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth, You who have displayed Your splendour above the heavens!  
<sup>3</sup>When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have set in place;

Why has every generation that has ever existed developed a belief in a god?

Psalm 139:13-14, <sup>13</sup>For You created my innermost parts; You wove me in my mother's womb.<sup>14</sup>I will give thanks to You, because I am awesomely and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well.

We enjoy our smart phones. Are they the product of intelligence? How can we tell? Would the same reasoning apply to your body?

Psalm 19:1-2, <sup>1</sup>The heavens tell of the glory of God; And their expanse declares the work of His hands.  
<sup>2</sup>Day to day pours forth speech, And night to night reveals knowledge.

If everything is the product of a cause, where is the beginning?

Isaiah 66:1-2, <sup>1</sup>This is what the LORD says:  
 "Heaven is My throne and the earth is the footstool for My feet. Where then is a house you could build for Me? And where is a place that I may rest? <sup>2</sup>For My hand made all these things, So all these things came into being," declares the LORD. "But I will look to this one, At one who is humble and contrite in spirit, and who trembles at My word.

If God created the universe and everything that is in it, could He be physically part of it?

Do you believe George Washington existed? Why? Could we apply the same logic to the existence of God?

## CONCLUSION

- ✓ "Atheism turns out to be too simple. If the whole universe has no meaning, we should never have found out that it has no meaning..." —C.S. Lewis
- ✓ "My argument against God was that the universe seemed so cruel and unjust. But how had I got this idea of just and unjust? A man does not call a line crooked unless he has some idea of a straight line. What was I comparing this universe with when I called it unjust?" —C.S. Lewis
- ✓ "suppose you want to get to know a human person. If he is determined not to let you, you will not get to know him. You have to win his confidence. In this case the initiative is equally divided-it takes two to make a friendship. When you come to knowing God, the initiative lies on His side. If He does not show Himself, nothing you can do will enable you to find Him." —C.S. Lewis
- ✓ "Every historical statement in the world is believed on authority. None of us has seen the Norman Conquest or the defeat of the Armada. None of us could prove them by pure logic as you prove a thing in mathematics. We believe them simply because people who did see them have left writings that tell us about them." —C.S. Lewis

## Session 2

### HAS GOD REVEALED HIMSELF?

One of the conclusions of our previous session is that God needs to reveal Himself in order for us to know Him. Through creation we can know of His existence and a little about His character, but it takes His direct revelation to know Him. Has He done that? Archaeological findings have confirmed over and over the trustworthiness of the Biblical account. The Bible includes the history of the Jewish people. It describes how and why they became a nation and how and why they have not disappeared as an ethnic group in spite of great adversity. Through their history, we have clear evidence of God, His character and purpose for humanity. Take turns to discuss about the Bible.

- Have you ever read the Bible?

#### DISCUSSION

Which of the following statements define your understanding best? Underline your answer.

- ➔ The Bible is a dangerous book, better not read it
- ➔ The Bible is a book filled with mythical stories
- ➔ The Bible teaches how to be good people
- ➔ The Bible is the word of God that reveals His plan of salvation for mankind

Share your answer with the group and why you believe it is right.

Exodus 19:9 says, <sup>9</sup>Then the LORD said to Moses, “I will come to you in a thick cloud, Moses, so the people themselves can hear me when I speak with you. Then they will always trust you.”

God's revelation to Moses was a collective experience. Why is this important?

## ANSWERS FROM THE BIBLE

What kind of God does the Bible describe? You can learn much about a community by knowing the kind of conduct they encourage or punish. The Bible describes humanity as a community with rules to follow. What do these rules say about God? Discuss the following passages with your group.

Hebrews 1:1, <sup>1</sup>God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,

Does the God of the Bible want a relationship with mankind?

Exodus 20:4-5, <sup>4</sup>“You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. <sup>5</sup>You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, [...]

Are the ten commands good advise for human relationships? Why?

Exodus 20:13-17, <sup>13</sup>“You shall not murder.<sup>14</sup>“You shall not commit adultery.<sup>15</sup>“You shall not steal.<sup>16</sup>“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.<sup>17</sup>“You shall not covet your neighbour’s house; you shall not covet your neighbour’s wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbour.”

What do the ten commands reveal about God's character?

1 John 4:8, <sup>8</sup>The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

Why is God love and how is that different from saying love is god? How do parents show love to their children?

Psalms 9:16, <sup>16</sup>The LORD has made Himself known; He has executed judgment. In the work of his own hands the wicked is snared.

Can someone be loving and just at the same time?

Isaiah 5:15-16, <sup>15</sup>So the *common* man will be humbled and the man of *importance* abased, The eyes of the proud also will be abased.<sup>16</sup>But the LORD of hosts will be exalted in judgment, And the holy God will show Himself holy in righteousness.

Why is judgment necessary?

How can we know the word of a prophet is from God?

## CONCLUSION

- ✓ God is not part of creation but keeps it and is actively involved in it, specially with mankind. He has revealed Himself throughout history in His works and specifically to the people of Israel through His word.
- ✓ His word reveals what He expects of every human being and in doing so, reveals His own character. God is loving and wants us to love each other; God is just and wants us to be righteous.
- ✓ Being righteous and loving is not only about our relationships with each other, but specially about our relationship with Him. We can't be righteous and loving apart from God since God is righteous and loving.
- ✓ Disobeying God in any of His commands calls for His judgment upon you.

### Session 3

## WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE WORLD?

Over time, mankind has developed ideas about what it means to live well and how to achieve it. The United States' Declaration of Independence of 1776 recognizes that all men "are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."<sup>1</sup>

Take turns to share your thoughts on the following questions.

- What is happiness for you?
- How can you achieve happiness?

### DISCUSSION

Which of the following statements agree best with your understanding on how to achieve happiness.

- ➔ According to Aristotle, happiness consists in achieving, through the **course of a whole lifetime**, all the goods – health, wealth, knowledge, friends, etc. – that lead to the perfection of human nature and to the enrichment of human life.
- ➔ Buddhism pursues happiness by **using knowledge and practice to achieve mental equanimity**. In Buddhism, equanimity, or peace of mind, is achieved by detaching oneself from the cycle of craving
- ➔ Marx's theory of happiness advocated attaining true happiness through hard work and sweat.
- ➔ "There is only one happiness in this life, to love and be loved." –George Sand
- ➔ "To be good is to be happy." –Nicholas Rowe

Share your answer with the group and why you believe it is right.

<sup>1</sup> <https://thefounding.net/the-unalienable-right-to-pursue-happiness/>

## ANSWERS FROM THE BIBLE

Should happiness be our goal? The Bible shows happiness is a by product of having the right relationship with God and others. Discuss the following passages with your group.

Genesis 1:31, <sup>31</sup>God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Why is it important to know God regarded what He created as very good?

Genesis 3:17, <sup>17</sup>Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life.

What is the difference between good and bad?

Romans 3:23, <sup>23</sup>for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

What is the difference between good and bad?

Romans 3:10-11, <sup>10</sup>as it is written, "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; <sup>11</sup>THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;

Can we be good without God?

Isaiah 64:6, <sup>6</sup>For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; And all of us wither like a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

What is the role of disobedience in our relationship with God?

Matthew 5:48, <sup>48</sup>Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

How good should we be to be in the right with God?

## CONCLUSION

- ✓ To be good means to be in tune with our Creator. This was broken by the first couple that was created; Adam and Eve. Since then, all human beings have inherited a broken relationship with God, so we cannot be good regardless of what we do or don't do.
- ✓ Good or bad is defined by God. Whatever is in tune with His will is good. Whatever is contrary to His will is bad.
- ✓ Disobedience, or running contrary to God's will, is the source of evil.
- ✓ God demands perfect obedience.

## Session 4

### WHO AM I?

In the previous session we discussed that we can call something good only if it is in line with the will of God. Noticing what is wrong around us is somehow easy. We clearly see some flaws in society or the government, but what about ourselves? Could it be that we are not as good as we thought after all?

Take turns to share your thoughts on the following questions.

- What is wrong with our society today?
- Have you ever broken a law?

#### DISCUSSION

Which of the following statements apply to you either in full or partially.

- ➔ I have been angry with someone but they were right.
- ➔ I have called people names like; fool, stupid or worse.
- ➔ I have seen a man or a woman with lust intent.
- ➔ I have lied, or promised I would do something and finally didn't.
- ➔ I have stolen something. This includes time. (i.e. leaving early, arriving late or not showing up at all.)

Share your answer with the group.

Do the group's answers surprise you?

## ANSWERS FROM THE BIBLE

Has God explained the way He wants us to behave? How many good deeds are needed to outweigh our wrongs? What happens if we don't meet His expectations? Discuss the following passages with your group.

<p>Matthew 22:36-39,  <sup>36</sup>“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?”  <sup>37</sup>And He said to him, “‘You SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’”  <sup>38</sup>This is the great and foremost commandment.  <sup>39</sup>The second is like it, ‘You SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOURSELF.’</p>	<p>God commands love, what does it mean and why is it important?</p>
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<p>1 John 1:10, <sup>10</sup>If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.</p>	<p>Are you guilty of sin? If you were to die today and face God's judgment, how would you do?</p>
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<p>1 John 2:16, <sup>16</sup>For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.</p>	<p>How would you define sin?</p>
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<p>1 John 1:6, <sup>6</sup>If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;</p>	<p>How can you tell someone is sinning?</p>
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<p>Romans 2:5-6, <sup>5</sup>But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, <sup>6</sup>who WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS:</p>	<p>Should a just judge consider the previous good deeds done by a murderer in the trial for it?</p>
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<p>Romans 2:8-9, <sup>8</sup>but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. <sup>9</sup><i>There will be</i> tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek,</p>	<p>How does the Bible describe the punishment due to sinners?</p>
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Romans 12:2, <sup>2</sup>And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

What is the will of God for you?

1 Thessalonians 4:3, <sup>3</sup>For this is the will of God, your sanctification;

What is the will of God for you?

## CONCLUSION

- ✓ Since the will of God includes the right relationship with Him and among each other, at all times, nobody has kept His will.
- ✓ The punishment we deserve is death and God's wrath.
- ✓ I (your name) have broken God's law and deserve punishment for it.
- ✓ There is no amount of good deeds I can do to outweigh my sins.
- ✓ I need God's mercy to solve my sin problem.

## Session 5

# WHO IS JESUS?

Our previous session concluded with acknowledging all human beings that have been born and all those who will ever be, have a problem called sin. This problem brings us to our death both physical and spiritual since we are told in the Bible there will be a judgment at the last day. We also concluded there is nothing anyone can do to be saved so we all rely in God's mercy. Jesus claimed to be that Saviour; He actually claimed to be God Himself. How can this be?

Take turns to share your thoughts on the following statements.

- Jesus must be God because He claimed to be God.
- Jesus must be God because others claimed He was God.
- Jesus must be God because of what He did.

### DISCUSSION

Which of the following statements agree best with your understanding about Jesus.

- ➔ I don't know if Jesus ever existed.
- ➔ Jesus was a moral teacher and nothing more.
- ➔ Jesus must have been a man blessed by God to do miracles.
- ➔ Jesus must have been God in the spirit with the appearance of a man.
- ➔ Jesus is God and man in every way.

Share your answer with the group and why you believe it is right.

## ANSWERS FROM THE BIBLE

What is the evidence to claim Jesus is God? Why would God come in the form of a man? Discuss the following passages with your group.

Isaiah 7:14, <sup>14</sup>Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel. (*God with us*)

This announcement was made nearly 650 years before it happened. Why is it important?

Isaiah 9:6, <sup>6</sup>For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

How does this verse add to the previous?

Luke 1:26-27;31, <sup>26</sup>Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. <sup>31</sup>And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus.

Can you see prophecy fulfilled in this passage?

Micah 5:2, <sup>2</sup>"But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity."

This prophecy was made nearly 400 years before it happened. What is the significance of the last sentence?

Luke 2:4-6, <sup>4</sup>Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, <sup>5</sup>in order to register along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth.

Can you see prophecy fulfilled in this passage?

John 8:57-58, <sup>57</sup>So the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?" <sup>58</sup>Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am."

What does this passage say about Jesus?

John 12:45-47, <sup>45</sup>He who sees Me sees the One who sent Me. <sup>46</sup>I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness. <sup>47</sup>If anyone hears My sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.

Why does it matter to know God came and lived among us?

John 20:1, <sup>1</sup>Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw the stone *already* taken away from the tomb.

How did Jesus demonstrate He is God?

John 20:19-20, <sup>19</sup>So when it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and *said* to them, "Peace *be* with you." <sup>20</sup>And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

How did Jesus demonstrate He is God?

Does knowing that God came demand anything from you?

## CONCLUSION

- ✓ The life and death of Jesus are unique because they fulfilled many prophecies.
- ✓ Jesus' life and death are proof of His deity and His humanity.
- ✓ Jesus' life and teachings show the will of God for us in our relationship with Him and with others.

## Session 6

### WHO KILLED JESUS?

When we read the biblical account, we find that Jesus was arrested by the Jewish authorities and tried under Jewish law. After found blameless, He was declared guilty of blasphemy and then taken before the Roman authorities to be sentenced to death. There He was also found blameless but nevertheless sentenced to death by crucifixion.

Take turns to share your thoughts on the following questions.

- Since God is all powerful and Jesus is God, why did He die?
- Jesus achieved many things through His short life, did He achieve anything through His death?

#### DISCUSSION

Which of the following statements agree best with your understanding of Jesus' death.

- ➔ The death of Jesus was a defeat to His movement.
- ➔ Jesus only appeared to be dead.
- ➔ Jesus gave Himself up but wasn't planning on dying.
- ➔ Jesus died willingly.

Share your answer with the group and why you believe it is right.

## ANSWERS FROM THE BIBLE

Jesus died in order to save humanity. Why is His death the way to salvation? Could there be another way? Discuss the following passages with your group.

John 3:16, <sup>16</sup>“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Why did Jesus come to live among us?

Hebrews 9:22, <sup>22</sup>And according to the Law, *one may* almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

Why did Jesus die?

John 10:18, <sup>18</sup>No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.”

Who authorized His death?

Romans 5:6,8, <sup>6</sup>For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>8</sup>But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Did you have any part in Jesus' death?

Romans 6:23, <sup>23</sup>For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

How does Jesus' death help you?

Romans 10:13, <sup>13</sup>for “WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.”

What do you need to do to get that help?

## CONCLUSION

- ✓ Jesus came to live among us and die for us out of His love. Romans 5:8 says, *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*
- ✓ Jesus came to save you from your eternal death. Romans 10:9 says, *that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;* If you have not yet made a commitment to follow Him and receive the gift of salvation, ask your leader to guide you to confess your sin, express your repentance and surrender to God's leadership in your life.
- ✓ Your salvation gives you eternal life. Just as Jesus resurrected, you will resurrect to an everlasting life. Revelation 21:3-4 says, *...God Himself will be among them, <sup>4</sup>and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.”*

## Session 7

# WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO ME?

If in the previous session you prayed to God to forgive you of your sins, claimed the death of Christ on the cross as the payment for your transgressions and committed your life to obedience in humility, you are now what people call a believer. You are now a Christian.

Take turns to share your thoughts on the following questions.

- What comes to your mind when you think of a fresh start, a new beginning?
- What area of your life needs a fresh start the most?

## DISCUSSION

Consider the following statements of people that found a new beginning in Christ.

- ➔ "The real story of Lewis's conversion, then, is not about dramatic changes in a man's career but about dramatic changes in the man." —*David Downing on C.S. Lewis*
- ➔ "I was always angry with God. I couldn't understand how a God could make me without my legs. [...]Years later when I was out in Colorado springs training, I felt God truly work in my heart. I was raised the right way, but I still had to come to Christ on my own." —*Jessica Long (Paralympic gold medallist)*
- ➔ Through prayer and Scripture, I began to let God in. I started to open my heart and accepted Jesus. I cannot say that my life has totally changed, but I now have a focus. A guiding light. An inner peace. I know that I cannot do this life on my own.—*Andrew (Unfolding faith, episode 3)*

How would you describe your turn to Christ?

## ANSWERS FROM THE BIBLE

When you wholeheartedly accept Christ as Lord and Saviour, the change in you is severe and profound. What happened? How are you to respond? Discuss the following passages with your group.

Ezekiel 36:27, <sup>27</sup>I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.

What does it mean to have a restored relationship with God?

2 Timothy 1:14, <sup>14</sup>Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to *you*.

Where is the Holy Spirit to be found?

Romans 8:9, <sup>9</sup>However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

Where is the Holy Spirit to be found?

Romans 8:15, <sup>15</sup>For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"

What does it mean to be adopted into God's family?

1 Corinthians 6:19-20, <sup>19</sup>Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? <sup>20</sup>For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

What does it mean to live a life of obedience?

1 John 2:25,29, <sup>25</sup>This is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life. <sup>29</sup>If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him.

What does it mean to practice righteousness?

Matthew 28:19-20, <sup>19</sup>Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

What is your next step?

## CONCLUSION

- ✓ Repentance of your sins and submitting to Christ as Lord restores your relationship with God and grants you eternal life.
- ✓ God the Holy Spirit now lives in you to teach you and guard your ways; it is your debt of love to pay attention to His lead.
- ✓ To love God is to obey Him; to love others is to share Christ. Go and share what God has done for you!
- ✓ Your first step of obedience in your new life is to be baptized before a congregation of Christians that will look after you.

## Session 8

### NOW WHAT?

We have discussed so far that the most important manifestation of our love for Christ is obedience and this love is necessarily demonstrated in action. Your baptism is your first act of obedience and serving others in the name of Christ should now be your priority.

Take turns to share your thoughts on the following questions.

- What do you like doing the most?
- Is there something else you think you are specially talented to do?

#### DISCUSSION

Consider the following definitions and think how they apply to you.

- ➔ Joy is a feeling of great pleasure.
- ➔ Peace is freedom from anxiety or distress.
- ➔ Patience is the capacity to accept or tolerate trouble, or suffering without getting upset.
- ➔ Kindness is the quality of being friendly, generous, and considerate.
- ➔ Faithfulness is the quality of remaining loyal.
- ➔ Self-Control is the ability to control one's emotions and desires or the expression of them in one's behaviour, especially in difficult situations.

Share with the group if anything has changed for you after confessing Christ.

## ANSWERS FROM THE BIBLE

What is baptism? Why do we serve others in the name of Christ? Discuss the following passages with your group.

Mark 1:4-5, <sup>4</sup>John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>And all the country of Judea was going out to him, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

Why is baptism a public event?

Matthew 3:11, <sup>11</sup>“As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

Why is baptism important?

Romans 6:3-4, <sup>3</sup>Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? <sup>4</sup>Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

What does getting baptized with water stand for?

Matthew 28:19-20, <sup>19</sup>Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Is baptism optional?

Matthew 20:26-28, <sup>26</sup>It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, <sup>27</sup>and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; <sup>28</sup>just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

Why is serving others important?

1 Corinthians 12:4-7, <sup>4</sup>Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. <sup>5</sup>And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. <sup>6</sup>There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all *persons*. <sup>7</sup>But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

How can you serve?

1 Corinthians 12:18-20,26, <sup>18</sup>But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. <sup>19</sup>If they were all one member, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup>But now there are many members, but one body. <sup>26</sup>And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if *one* member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

What are the implications of not serving?

Are baptism and acts of service a way to share your faith?

Why is sharing your faith important?

## CONCLUSION

- ✓ Baptism is your first act of obedience and a manifestation of your love for Christ.
- ✓ Baptism is an opportunity to share your faith with those you know.
- ✓ Serving others, at church or elsewhere, in the name of Christ is the best way to grow in your relationship with God.
- ✓ You have been given special gifts that will help others grow.

“YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOURSELF.”

**Congratulations!** You have finished the course but this is just the first step in an exciting Journey of Grace. Although we have prepared other courses that will help you in your walk with Jesus, your personal commitment to grow in your relationship with God is far more important. This is what you will need to commit yourself to do.

### Action Plan

➔ Read your Bible.

- If you don't have a Bible ask your leader for one. It is a gift from your family at Living Hope Church of the Nazarene.
- Follow a Bible reading plan. You can access many electronic options at <https://faithlife.com> or <https://www.biblegateway.com/reading-plans/> or ask for a hard copy of a Bible reading journal to your leader.

➔ Pray.

- There are no rules to prayer, it is your personal time with God and He wants to hear you! The Bible commands us to do it continually, so get at it!

➔ Come to worship.

- Our service is held Sundays at 10:30 a.m. We will be happy to see you!

➔ Get baptized.

- Discuss with your leader how to prepare for baptism. The closest date available to do it is: \_\_\_\_\_.

➔ Share your faith.

- Tell others what Christ has done for you.

➔ Serve.

- Ask your leader or the pastor about ministry options and how to get involved.

## APPENDIX 1

### HOW TO PREPARE YOUR TESTIMONY

Luke 8:39 says, <sup>39</sup>*“Return to your house and describe what great things God has done for you.”* So he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him. What God has done in your life is nothing short of a miracle. During the course, we described it as a new birth. Your life has indeed been transformed and sharing what God has done in your life is a powerful tool to share your faith. When you share it with believers, you show how God is still actively expanding His Kingdom. When you share it with non-believers, you are opening the door to conversations that could lead to someone turning to Christ. Probably the best part of it is that you are sharing something that happened to you, so you don't need to be a Bible expert to do it. These steps might help you to be prepared when the time comes.

1. Pray. John 14:26 says, <sup>26</sup>*But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.* Ask God to give you wisdom as you write.
2. Describe. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, <sup>17</sup>*Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.*
  - a) What was your life like before becoming a believer?
  - b) How did you hear about Christ and how did you come to believe in Him as Saviour and Lord? (Who, where and what influenced your decision?)
  - c) What has changed? (Habits broken or taken, feelings lost or gained)
3. Use the Bible. Isaiah 55:11 says, <sup>11</sup>*So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.* Is there a verse that shows the power of the change you have gone through? Share your favourite Bible verse.
4. Read it over and make changes if needed.

### Important tips as you write your testimony

- Remember at all times that this is your story and has a simple message behind it: God saves. Just as in the Bible, your story is meant to glorify Him, not yourself.
- Remember you want to share God's love. Keep the message simple and short.
- Choose your words. You may have already picked up words Christians use but are not part of every day language. Avoid them as much as possible. Terms like *born again*, *saved*, *blessed*, etc. Are words that have little meaning in today's world.
- This is about God and you. Avoid talking about churches, denominations, or even other beliefs; specially in a derogatory way.
- This is life at its best but not perfection. Following Christ is the best thing that can happen to anyone but it doesn't mean life's problems are over. John 16:33 says, *<sup>33</sup>These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.*"
- Remember you are sharing, not preaching. You know that you have been saved of a terrible destiny but that is the outcome of a love you found. What you want people to do is to find that love for themselves. You can't share this love through fear, argumentation or pressure.
- Pray often for those who hear your story.

**APPENDIX 2**  
**LIST OF MINISTRIES AT LIVING HOPE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE**  
(LAST UPDATE: SEPTEMBER, 2025)

- *Greeting.* Our team of greeters welcome our visitors, hand out bulletins and are prepared to direct people to places or people within the church staff or other ministries. They are readily available for prayer.
- *Prayer.* Meetings over Whatsapp please contact the pastoral staff for more information.
- *Small groups.* Want to host a small group but don't want to lead the study? Want to lead a study but don't want to host? Want to do both? Please contact the pastoral staff for more information on resources and methodology.
- *Men's and women's groups.* Meetings every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month for devotionals, activities and fellowship. Please contact the pastoral staff for more information.
- *Sunday school.* Hosting from grade 1 to 12. Meeting every Sunday during service.
- *Food bank & Compassionate fund.* Be the hands of Christ sharing His provision with a caring hand. Ideas on new ways to do it are always welcome.
- *Building and Maintenance.* Our building is always in need of care, please consider being a helping hand.

### APPENDIX 3

#### THE *Journey of Grace* SERIES

*All courses are work shops where participants actively discuss their points of view under the guidance of a facilitator.*

- *Journey to Jesus.* Is an eight session study that explores what a world view is, the implications of the gospel and why a commitment to Christ changes lives.
- *Journey to the Christian Faith.* The second step in the Journey of Grace series of studies. We discuss the character of God, the problem of sin, who is the Church and how to live a Christian life that will enable us to enjoy our eternal future.
- *Christianity 101.* Is an eight session study that explores the basics of Christianity; God in three persons, Sin and salvation, the church, the Bible, prayer and the promised future.
- *The fruit of the Spirit.* Is a seven session study that touches on how to live a life empowered by the Holy Spirit to grow in love, joy, peace, patience and goodness, kindness and gentleness, faithfulness and self-control.