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# THE STORY OF YOUR LIFE

FOLLOW UP PACK

# **YOU WERE CREATED WITH LOVE AND FOR A PURPOSE.**

God made every tree, shaped every star, formed every animal, and decided the world still needed you. Your existence is not a mistake.

**But there's even more: God loves you and wants to have a friendship with you.**

We call this Good News.

# THE STORY OF GOD AND HIS PEOPLE

The Bible is written by people who were inspired by Jesus.

Think of the Bible as a library — filled with all different genres of books, including poetry, history, wisdom literature, prophecy, stories, and more. Every single book of the Bible — either indirectly or directly — speaks to how Jesus is always with us.

The first book, Genesis, explains the very beginning of heaven and earth, along with the earliest stages of people. On Page 1, we see God creating everything: the sky, the stars, broccoli, kale, elephants, sea turtles, golden retrievers. And then He made His favourite part of all: people. Genesis specifically shows how God was friends with the first two people, Adam and Eve. Together, they walked and talked and laughed.

God set up the world in a certain way, and part of that included something called “free will”. Free will is a fancy way to say that God gives us choices. God didn’t make us robots. Think of a vacuum robot — it is perfectly programmed to clean the carpet and doesn’t get a choice in the matter. But God didn’t make you that way. He made you with a body, mind, heart, and soul, and included in that is free will. God gives people the choice to accept His love and friendship, or the choice to reject Him and do our own thing. But the way of Jesus is the only way to human flourishing, it’s the only way to “the good life.”

We often think we know the way to “the good life.” We think we need to gain followers, become popular, achieve success, get tons of money, have sex with our boyfriend or girlfriend, or have more freedom or fun. We think that’s the way to “the good life.”

Adam and Eve fell for that lie too. They both wanted to become like God, to get power and control, and ended up rejecting God. They thought their way was better than God’s way. When they disobeyed God, their relationship with Him was severed, and they began to experience pain and suffering because of the consequences of their choices.

Adam and Eve’s choices affected us too. Like them, we often choose our own path towards “the good life” instead of Jesus’ way. And because of some of our choices, we often experience pain and suffering — either because of our own consequences or because of the consequences brought on by someone else.

**But there is good news: God has never given up on us. This alone shows the character of God: He is loving, slow to anger, rich in compassion, and overflowing with goodness. God pursues us relentlessly because His dream is to have a friendship with us once again.**

And God made a way for that to happen, through His Son, named Jesus.

# THE STORY OF HOW WE GOT HERE

The choice to live life without God is what we call sin — doing something that is wrong in God’s eyes. Sin is what causes separation from God, and is the source of all pain. Sin is choosing to trust ourselves over trusting in Jesus. When Adam and Eve sinned, their relationship with God was broken.

But God’s original design was for us to live life to its very fullest.

The Bible tells us that Jesus is the Son of God. Meaning, Jesus is fully human and at the same time fully God. Jesus came from heaven to earth, to be with humans and show them who God is. Jesus was a good man and a great teacher. He was compassionate, brilliant, justice-oriented and deeply loving. But He wasn’t only a great guy. He was God with skin on, and He had a plan in motion to save the world.

In Romans 6:23, the writer talks about how, “the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus.”

**Jesus chose to be murdered on a wooden cross so that we — the people He loves so much — could live forever with Him. Three days after Jesus was killed, He even defeated death itself, and rose from the dead. Jesus is restoring our lives to their very fullest.**

Jesus is alive, and there will be a day when He will return back to the earth and restore everything once again — restoring it to the vision Jesus had in Genesis, but even better.

**Revelation 21:4 says that Jesus will “wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.”**

When Jesus returns again, there will be no more pain. No more death. Pain and suffering have an expiry date.

When we believe all of this, our lives will be completely changed. We can have a relationship with Jesus that will last forever!

# BECOMING A FOLLOWER OF JESUS

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Jesus wants to have a friendship with you. He loves you beyond anything you can imagine — and this love was proven for you by what He did on the cross.

Jesus has been pursuing you since the day you were born. He has seen every moment, every painful decision, every heartbreak, every victory. When you decide to follow Jesus, your life is saved. John 3:16-17 says, “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.”

Following Jesus means that you decide to live under Jesus’ vision and His way of life.

**It will look different from a lot of your friends, from culture, from movies you watch and who you follow on social media. But Jesus is the way, the truth and the life.**

Deciding to follow Jesus will be the best but possibly the hardest decision of your life. Jesus Himself said that choosing to follow Him is going to be hard! He says in Luke 9:23-24, "If any of you wants to be My follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow Me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for My sake, you will save it."

**A cross was the exact method of how Jesus died. In His culture, it was considered a torture device. Not exactly the most uplifting message to hear! But the idea is that when we choose to follow Jesus, we choose to follow Him 100%. Jesus is saying that the way to human flourishing is to put Him first in our lives. When Jesus is first, everything else falls into its correct place.**

Following Jesus may be hard, but it will be worth it. Jesus will never leave you nor forsake you. Jesus said He will be with you always, even until the end of time.

# FOLLOW JESUS TODAY

Today, Jesus is inviting you into life to its fullest. He's inviting you to follow Him, which means reorienting your life to Jesus' way and His vision. Jesus truly has your very best in mind. He loves you more than anyone.

Here's how you can begin following Jesus today:

Talk to Jesus the same way you'd talk to a friend. Tell Him you know you've sinned, and ask Him for forgiveness. (Spoiler alert: Jesus will forgive you.)

Trust in Jesus, and choose to believe that Jesus loves you and died on the cross for you and rose again. Trusting in Jesus is a lifelong process. We all trust things — we trust our car to get us from Point A to Point B; we trust the couch to hold us up when we're watching Netflix and snacking on Doritos. Trusting in Jesus is choosing to surrender every part of our lives to Him, every day. Trusting in Jesus is choosing to believe that no matter what, He has the best in mind for us.

When we trust in Jesus, we decide that He is the Lord of our lives, or that He is the King, or that no matter what comes, we'll choose to follow Him.

Once we believe in the great and unfathomable love Jesus has for us, now it's up to us to show that same love to others. Our actions should change because of how Jesus changes our lives.

As you trust Jesus every day, your life will be transformed.

Will you pray to Jesus and choose to follow Him?

**JESUS, I ENTRUST MY LIFE TO YOU. I BELIEVE YOU CAME FROM HEAVEN TO EARTH. I BELIEVE YOU DIED ON THE CROSS FOR ME AND ROSE AGAIN. I WANT TO TURN AWAY FROM HOW I USED TO LIVE AND FOLLOW YOUR LEAD INSTEAD. I DON'T WANT TO LIVE FOR ME ANYMORE, BUT INSTEAD I CHOOSE TO LIVE FOR YOU. I KNOW YOU LOVE ME UNCONDITIONALLY AND THAT NOTHING COULD EVER TAKE YOUR LOVE AWAY.**

# THE NEW STORY OF YOUR LIFE

Welcome to the family of Jesus! Jesus said that when we decide to follow Him, we are welcomed into a big, beautiful family — where everyone is welcome. Once we're a part of the family, there are a few things we need to do.

## **LOVE JESUS WITH EVERYTHING YOU'VE GOT.**

In Jesus' way of life, He gives a new command — a command to love. First, we are called to love Jesus which we can do through the following ways...

- Talking to Jesus in prayer and listening for His voice. (Sometimes His voice sounds like our own, like a thought inside our heads. The more we get to know Jesus, the more we'll know when He is speaking to us.)
- Reading the Bible to learn more about Jesus and His way of life.
- Live a life that strives to do what Jesus wants you to.
- Have a heart of gratitude, and thank Jesus for all He has done and continues to do.
- Hang out with other followers of Jesus who will help you grow in your relationship with Jesus.

## **LOVE OTHERS AS YOURSELF.**

We are called to love others in the way Jesus loves us. Jesus paid the ultimate price for all people, which means we should want to show others His love by our actions toward them. Before we can love others we need to remember that we are important to God and take care of ourselves as well. Here are some ideas...

- Pray that others would experience the love of Jesus and commit to love Him in return.
- Find ways to serve the needs of others and their interests.
- Stay healthy physically, mentally and emotionally so you can help others.

## **SHARE THE GREAT NEWS.**

Jesus wants to use you to help Him spread this message to everyone everywhere. This is great news! Here are some tips on how to share the love of Jesus...

- Pray and look for opportunities with the people around you.
- Share your personal story.
- Show them how they can start a relationship with Jesus by using this or other tools.
- Answer their questions. (If you don't know the answer, that's okay! Study your Bible, spend time in prayer, and ask your youth pastor, pastor, or other followers of Jesus who might know.)
- Ask them if they want to become a follower of Jesus as well and come alongside them as they choose to follow Him.

## **HELP OTHERS GROW WITH GOD.**

Now that you have helped someone follow Jesus, you'll have the privilege of helping them grow in their relationship with Jesus! This is really simple, all you have to do is be committed to help them...

- Love Jesus with everything they got.
- Love others as themselves.
- Share the great news!
- Help others to grow with Jesus.

# FIND A CHURCH

A local church is the best example of joining the family of Jesus. Church services are where people gather every single week to grow in their relationship to Jesus. We aren't meant to follow Jesus alone — we need to be surrounded by people who also love and follow Jesus.

We'd love to help you find a local church to connect with! If you need help finding a church, feel free to contact Change Conference. We would love to help you!

**[info@changeconference.com](mailto:info@changeconference.com)**

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