



Do you have any questions from last week?

Recap

In Week 1, as we explored JESUS' LIFE, we saw...

- The three main sources of information about Jesus.
- The authority of Jesus demonstrated in the way that he called people to follow him, taught, forgave, healed, and raised people from the dead.

In Week 2, as we explored JESUS' MESSAGE, we saw...

- That Jesus came to proclaim 'Good News' that God's Kingdom was bursting into the world through him, the long-awaited King.
- That everyone is invited to become a member of God's Kingdom by turning back to God.

Last Week, as we explored JESUS' DEATH, we saw...

- Jesus knew that part of his mission was to die for us.
- That his death addresses the problem of sin along with our deepest need for forgiveness.
- That through his death, a way for relationship with God is opened up to us.

Jesus' Invitation to Us

Jesus didn't come into the world in order that we would remain distant, but he died for us in order to open up a way for life and relationship with God. We're reminded of this by what he asked of those who first came into relationship with him.



Read Mark 1:14-18

14 After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. **Repent** and **believe** the good news!” As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. “Come, **follow** me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” 18 At once they left their nets and followed him. (Mark 1:14-18)

Note the three key verbs: repent, believe, follow.

A. Repent

The greek word for ‘repent’ simply means to ‘change your mind’ or do a 180° turnaround. A military person defecting from one leader to another leader was, *in effect*, ‘repenting’.

There are many examples of people repenting in the New Testament, of which the prodigal son is famous.

Example of the Prodigal Son

Then Jesus said, “There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.” ’ So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate. (Luke 15:11-24)

What do you find most amazing about this story?

Who do you most identify with in this story?

To Repent Means

- Change your mind to bring it into line with God's
- Change of mind about what is appropriate in God's eyes
- Change of mind about rebellion against God
- Change of mind about who Jesus really is
- Will involve humility and saying sorry to God
- Is a change of heart that is reflected in a change of life

Reflecting on his own conversion experience, one of the earliest and most significant church leaders, shares his repentance story as:

...the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost. But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience, making me an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life. (1 Timothy 1:14-16)

B. Believe

When we think of ‘believing’ we can have all sorts of ideas! But the biblical understanding of what it means to ‘believe’ is actually very clear and specific.

To Thankfully Trust in God’s Grace and Invitation

Faith ≠ ‘believing what we know ain’t true’
≠ ‘a leap in the dark’

Belief = Trust in Jesus’ words
= Trust in Jesus’ death and resurrection
= Trust in the significance of the facts

From one of the New Testament letters by an unknown author:

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. (Hebrews 11:1)

Trust – in all of what we’ve seen in this course so far – the Bible is trustworthy, Jesus is who he said he is, he said what he is reported to have said; he came to reveal God and die our death; by his death and resurrection we can have forgiveness and eternal life and he invites us in to relationship with him.

C. Follow

The Cost of Following Jesus



Read Mark 8:34-37

What do you think Jesus means by this?

Following Jesus will involve:

- Self-denial
- Laying down the right to run your life your way
- Laying down your life in the service of Jesus
- Growing more like Jesus

From one of the New Testament letters by Paul:

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.
(Romans 12:1)



Read Mark 10:29-30

Is this too much? No. Because, not only has God already given us so much, but we have so much to look forward to.

God Helps Us to Follow Him

The promise to every single person who follows Jesus is not only that we receive the forgiveness of sin, but also that we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit takes up residence and gets to work transforming you.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. (Galatians 5:22-23)

A Prayer for a Fresh Start with God

Dear Heavenly Father, I am so sorry that you have not had the place in my life that you deserve. So often, I've ignored you, put other things first and been more interested in following my own ways instead of you. I'm sorry for the things that I've done wrong and recognise that I cannot possibly fix things myself. Please forgive me.

Thank you that Jesus died for me and rose again and that through his death and resurrection that I can be saved. Lord, I put my trust in you and receive the gift of forgiveness that you promise.

Please fill me with your Holy Spirit, equip me, shape me, and guide me that I might live a life pleasing to you and in accordance with your good purposes for the world. Please help me to be faithful in reading the Bible, listening to you in prayer, serving you with my life, and sharing your Good News with the world.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Next Steps from Here



Following Jesus Course

Now that you have completed the 'Introducing Jesus' course, we'd love to invite you to take part in another four-week course, called, 'Following Jesus'. This course explores key parts of following Jesus every day, through the Bible, Prayer, Serving, and Proclamation.

Other Helpful Resources

A Study Bible

A Study Bible is an important resource for every follower of Jesus. These Bibles contain not only all of the various books of the Bible, but helpful explanatory text on each page, along with other cross-references. They often will also contain helpful indexes by topic along with maps and timelines. These are available in a wide variety of languages. A good translation to get started with is the NIV (New International Version).

The Jesus Lifestyle (by Nicky Gumbel)

A practical exploration of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount and how his followers are called to live their lives differently for him.

According to Plan (by Graeme Goldsworthy)

A very helpful book that equips the reader to understand the unity of the Bible and what difference it makes.