

Follow - Participant's Guide
Know Jesus Like Never Before

WEEK 1: Welcome to the Adventure

Bible Passage(s) for Group Discussion: Colossians 1:15-22; Hebrews 1:1-3
HIS Story (*book*): Read Chapter 1

Our desire is for you ... me ... us together to grow in following Jesus. To know Him like never before – we want to recognize and join intentionally His mission and kingdom. We want to know His life and character and we want to respond - to be changed, transformed in the process of following Him.

WEEK 2: Jesus' Mission Begins

Bible Passage(s) for Group Discussion: John 4:4-38
HIS Story (*book*): Read Chapter 2 and discuss pages 41-44.

As Jesus began His ministry He invited people to come and see who He was. He answered questions, attended weddings with friends and family, and demonstrated who He was and what He was about. As people grow in their understanding and belief of who Jesus is their lives change and rearrange so they can follow Him, become like Him and be involved with what He values.

WEEK 3: Jesus Calls Disciples

Bible Passage(s) for Group Discussion: John 5:1-11
HIS Story (*book*): Read Chapter 3 and discuss pages 49-50

Jesus was intentional and consistent in proclaiming the good news and the kingdom of God. He demonstrated compassion and kindness. Jesus met people where they were at and invited them to join Him. We are invited to follow Him and this will bring change to our lives.

WEEK 4: Jesus' Revolutionary Teaching

Bible Passage(s) for Group Discussion: Matthew 5:1-18
HIS Story (*book*): Read Chapter 4 and discuss pages 67-69

Jesus lived and taught how the Kingdom of God was different than what the world or what the religious practices of the day said was the way to live, This began to cause trouble with the religious leaders. When we follow Jesus He becomes the authority on how life is to be lived. We trade what we have believed, or what the world around us says, for His Way, Truth and Life.

THE PURPOSE OF COMMUNITY GROUPS

We exist to reach the world for Jesus, one person at a time. We feel that is best done in small, relational environments, where biblical disciples can be made. Community groups are the primary vehicle by which we may carry out the vision of Victory.

VISION:

Reaching the world for Jesus, one person at a time.

MISSION:

We will be a church that makes disciples, who make disciples of Jesus

METHODOLOGY & STRATEGY:

We will create Biblical disciples in relational environments.

John 15:4: *Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.*

Matthew 22:37:39: *Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.”³⁸ This is the first and great commandment.³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’*

Matthew 28:18-20: *And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.*

Acts 2:42-47: *And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. ⁴³ Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common,⁴⁵ and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. ⁴⁶ So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.*

Follow - Week 1
Welcome to the Adventure

During The Week: Make time daily with God to know Him and His heart through time in His Word, prayer and reflection. Read the passages below throughout the week prior to community group.

Daily Reading Plan:

Colossians 1:15-22 - Jesus: The visible image who reconciles

Hebrews 1:1-3 - God speaks to us through Jesus

Ephesians 1:19-23 - Jesus, now and the age to come.

His Story (the Book) - Chapters 1-2

DISCUSSION IDEA: *The target for today's group discussion:*

This is the introduction week for the FOLLOW series. For the next 14 weeks we will be studying and discussing Jesus, His mission and kingdom, His life and character and our response. This content will help you lead your people through the purpose, the tools and their part in this adventure.

WELCOME TO THE SERIES - FOLLOW: Know Jesus Like Never Before!

Our desire is for you ... me ... us together, to grow in following Jesus. To know Him like never before. We want to recognize and join more intentionally His mission and kingdom. We want to know His life and character and we want to respond; to be changed, transformed in the process of following Him.

We get to know and love better the God incarnate we have committed to follow as Lord and trust as Savior. We want to mature as individuals, as families, as groups, as a body so that God is glorified, our homes and communities are changed and through our lives we reach the world for Jesus one person at a time.

There are two critical components to the FOLLOW journey:

COMPONENT #1: The tool that we will be using - HIS Story

HIS Story is a chronological harmony of the life of Jesus, using the NLT version of the Bible. We chose and adapted *HIS Story* as a tool to help us grow in following Jesus. There are Adult, Youth and Family versions of the *HIS Story* book.

We wanted a resource that read smoothly and easily, so it could be read like novel. But, because *HIS Story* is not an ordinary story, we also wanted to provide you the opportunity to interact with God's Word in a different way. We have adapted the adult version to have daily reading format with reflection questions.

COMPONENT #2: Your Active Participation

READ...REFLECT...DISCUSS...LIVE

A key ingredient to this *FOLLOW* series is developing the habits of reading and reflecting on God's Word. This is an important part of spiritual growth and maturity. We have adapted *HIS Story* to help us do that, providing the opportunity to interact with God's Word in a different way; to read and reflect – allowing His story to move from your head to your heart!

READ: Read *HIS Story* daily, one chapter a week. Carve out a regular time and space in your world each day for this special appointment with God.

REFLECT: Reflect on what you are reading – moving it from your head to your heart. Each chapter is broken into smaller daily readings. Taking time to reflect on God's Word, to linger and soak it up like a good marinade, greatly enhances and changes the flavor of your experience. Don't just read the book *HIS Story*; interact with it. Underline it. Write your own thoughts in the margins. Make it yours, personalize it.

DISCUSS: Discuss what you discover in your home and with your community group.

Community Groups: In your home group you will discuss a portion of what you read. The discussion will be aimed at knowing Jesus like never before. We want to look at Jesus' mission, Jesus' character and our response to Him.

LIVE: Live your life more like Jesus as you follow and know Him like never before. As we come to know Jesus more intimately, we will be changed by Him as we respond in love and obedience to what His Spirit and Word show us. In the midst of relationships we get to live out becoming more like Christ, reflecting His character and mission

BIBLE PASSAGE(S) FOR DISCUSSION: *Colossians 1:15-22; Hebrews 1:1-3*

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How do these passages describe Jesus?
2. At this point in your life, what is impactful, intriguing, curious, comforting, or challenging about Jesus to you?
3. How can we help each other as individuals, families, and community groups engage and participate in Read, Reflect, Discuss, and Live?

NEXT WEEK:

Read & Reflect - Chapter 2 - *His Story*

Jesus' Mission Begins:

Bible Passage for Next Community Group Discussion: ***John 4:4-38***

Follow - Week 2
Jesus' Mission Begins

During The Week: Make time daily with God to know Him and His heart through time in His Word, prayer and reflection. Read the passages below throughout the week prior to community group.

Daily Reading Plan:

His Story - Chapter 2
John 4:4-38

DISCUSSION IDEA: *The target for today's group discussion:*

As Jesus began His ministry He invited people to come and see who He was. He answered questions, attended weddings with friends and family, and demonstrated who He was and what He was about. As people grow in their understanding and belief of who Jesus is their lives change and rearrange so they can follow Him, become like Him and be involved with what He values.

BACKGROUND: *Setting the stage for today's passage:*

John prepared the way for Jesus' ministry to begin by baptizing and pointing others to Him. After Jesus spent time in the wilderness He began His mission by drawing followers and demonstrating who He was through miracles and clearing the temple. He challenged Nicodemus' understanding of the source of eternal life. Then in a poignant encounter with the woman at the well he revealed who He was, why He was here and demonstrated what He was like.

BIBLE PASSAGE(S) FOR DISCUSSION: John 4:4-38 (HIS Story: pages 41-44)

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What do you notice about Jesus? (from this or what you read this week)
2. As he speaks with the woman at the well, what does Jesus communicate about what is important?
3. What does he share with the disciples when they join him?
4. If you had an encounter with Jesus like this woman, what would you want to talk to him about?
5. As you have read about Jesus in *HIS STORY* this week what has Jesus shown you about himself and yourself?

6. What does it mean to you that Jesus says he is Messiah?
7. The woman at the well left her water jar. What are you being challenged to leave as you respond to Jesus?
8. What can you share with us about who Jesus is and what he means to you?

NEXT WEEK:

Read & Reflect - Chapter 3 - *His Story*

Jesus Calls Disciples:

Bible Passage for Next Community Group Discussion: ***John 5:1-11***

Follow - Week 3
Jesus Calls Disciples

During The Week: Make time daily with God to know Him and His heart through time in His Word, prayer and reflection. Read the passages below throughout the week prior to community group.

Daily Reading Plan:

His Story - Chapter 3
John 5:1-11

DISCUSSION IDEA: *The target for today's group discussion:*

Jesus was intentional and consistent in proclaiming the good news and the kingdom of God. He demonstrated compassion and kindness. Jesus met people where they were at and invited them to join Him. We are invited to follow Him and this will bring change to our lives.

BACKGROUND: *Setting the stage for today's passage:*

During His first year of ministry Jesus traveled around the Galilee region to places like Capernaum, Nazareth, and the Sea of Galilee. He spoke and taught a message of calling people to repent from sin and to believe in the Good News. He proclaimed that the Kingdom of God was near as he healed many, forgave sins and asked people to follow Him. As we look at this specific passage remember this is not His first interaction with these four fishermen.

BIBLE PASSAGE(S) FOR DISCUSSION: John 5:1-11 (HIS Story: pages 49-50)

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What does it show about Jesus when he got into Peter and Andrew's boat or when he found James and John at the shore were they were working?
2. After this encounter with Jesus what changed in these men's hearts and lives?
3. What did it mean to be a disciple at the time Jesus was physically on earth? What does it mean now? Compare what is similar and different.
4. What does it look like for you to follow Jesus, today? What has changed/is changing or being challenged to change in your heart and lifestyle?
5. Jesus met people where they were at; he climbed into their boat and directed where to fish! Is there an area of your life where Jesus is asking to be involved in?

6. As you follow Jesus, how are you meeting people where they are at and encouraging them to see Jesus?
7. Pray for your work place, neighborhood, your home group. Identify someone you will take more steps in building an intentional relationship to encourage and build up, particularly in following Jesus. (This could be someone who doesn't yet know Jesus that way!)

NEXT WEEK:

Read & Reflect - Chapter 4 - *His Story*

Jesus' Revolutionary Teaching:

Bible Passage for Next Community Group Discussion: ***Matthew 5:1-18***

Follow - Week 4
Jesus' Revolutionary Teaching

During The Week: Make time daily with God to know Him and His heart through time in His Word, prayer and reflection. Read the passages below throughout the week prior to community group.

Daily Reading Plan:

His Story - Chapter 4
Matthew 5:1-18

DISCUSSION IDEA: *The target for today's group discussion:*

Jesus lived and taught how the Kingdom of God was different than what the world or what the religious practices of the day said was the way to live, This began to cause trouble with the religious leaders. When we follow Jesus He becomes the authority on how life is to be lived. We trade what we have believed, or what the world around us says, for His Way, Truth and Life.

BACKGROUND: *Setting the stage for today's passage:*

Returning to Jerusalem Jesus continued to demonstrate compassion, mercy and authority as He healed people. He challenged the leaders of the Israelites in their understanding of God and the law as rigid rules to be performed. As tension mounted and crowds gathered He returned to the Galilee region. There He chose twelve men out of His disciples to invest in more intentionally and to give them greater responsibility in His mission. Jesus gathered His disciples and taught them how God the Father sought to direct their hearts, not just their outward behavior.

BIBLE PASSAGE(S) FOR DISCUSSION: Matthew 5:1-18 (HIS Story: pages 67-69)

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Jesus intentionally teaches His followers, particularly those he asked to walk intimately with Him. What do you notice about what he teaches them?
2. What of Jesus' teaching surprises you or stands out to you? Why?
3. What do you see Jesus communicating about God's heart?
4. What are you challenged to view differently or believe different as you follow Jesus? Be as specific as you can be.
5. As you reflect on the things Jesus teaches what would you ask Him to do in your own heart?

6. Jesus is directed and motivated by His relationship with His Father. How is your understanding of God impacting you and your relationships?
7. What does being salt and light look like for you in your world?
8. Who needs to experience God's goodness through your attitude and actions towards them? What will that look like this week.

NEXT WEEK:

Read & Reflect - Chapter 5 *His Story*

Crowds Grow As Jesus Power Is Revealed.