



# JOURNEY

NEW BELIEVER'S GUIDE

# JOURNEY SERIES

## 7-Week New Believer's Guide

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# INTRODUCTION

**This 7-week series is designed to help strengthen and deepen your new found faith.**

This guide allows to interact with the series content in several different ways:



**Read about the different topics in this e-book**



**Watch 3-5 minute videos discussing each week's topic**

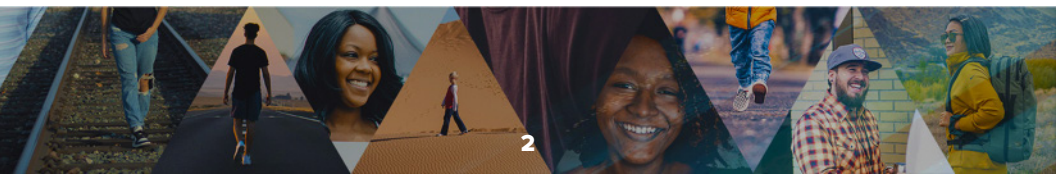


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# INTRODUCTION

**Presenter: Nathan Teegarden**

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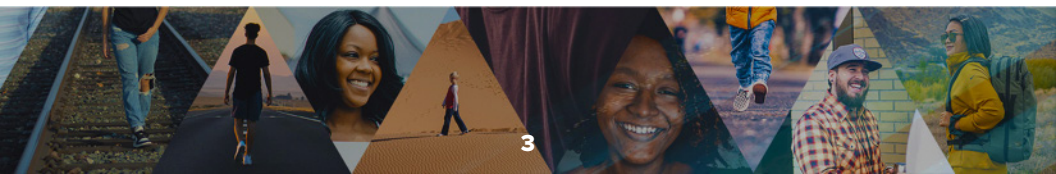
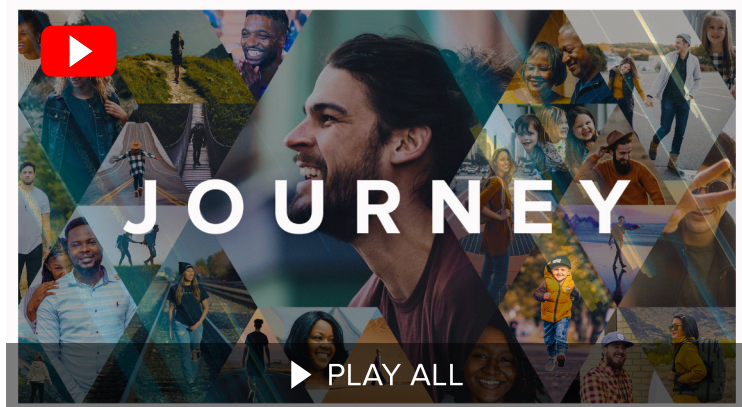
Welcome to the Journey Series. These short videos and devotionals are meant to help you learn more about what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

We know that following Jesus is a journey! There are things you can do to help you along this adventure, and we want to help! So, whether you just started following Jesus or you want to start taking some real steps in your faith, our hope is these videos will encourage and strengthen your walk with God!

Each video is going to cover a different area of your spiritual journey concluding with a challenge to move forward on your adventure with Jesus.

Be sure to finish the whole series! You'll be glad you did!

**Okay let's go on a journey together!**





WEEK - 1

# TRAILHEAD

**Presenter: Larry Weathers**

[Watch Video Here](#)

Welcome to the trailhead! This is the start of your journey with Jesus. As we get started, we need to ask the question, what just happened? Maybe you went back to church for the first time in a long time or maybe you went to a summer camp or maybe you just realized you needed God in your life and reached out for Jesus.

However you came to faith in Jesus, we know this: something GOOD just happened! And I want to take a moment to explain what that good thing is.

Jesus said these powerful words, “The thief’s purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.” (John 10:10 NLT) There’s a devil who wants to destroy God’s plan for humanity. He’s the puppet master behind all the evil in the world, but Jesus came to undo all that.

That’s what makes this such good news -- it undoes the evil that was done from the beginning! And the beginning is how we got into this mess to start!

From the beginning, Adam and Eve; the first two humans created by God in perfection. But they blew it; they disobeyed God. The reality is, so have we. We’ve all sinned. This is how the Bible puts it. “For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard.” (Romans 3:23)

This is the bad news.

But here’s the GOOD news. Jesus came to solve our sin problem. The reality is, sin is an incurable disease for us humans. But Jesus did what we could never do.



The Bible says it like this, “He [God] sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin’s control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins.” (Romans 8:3b NLT)

In legal terms, Jesus’ death satisfied the debt we owed God for all our sins! In medical terms, he administered a cure for our sin disease.

Jesus did this by dying on the cross, taking the punishment of all our sins upon himself. The one person who didn’t deserve to die because he’d never sinned, took the punishment of our sin!

We’ve been freed from this terrible disease because of what Jesus did for us! It gets even better! This salvation is a free gift! You can’t earn this forgiveness! That might seem counterintuitive, but it’s true. It’s a GIFT!

The Bible says, “God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.” (Ephesians 2:8-9 NLT)

God sent Jesus to save us from the disease of sin and we accept this gift by faith—free of charge!

Now that’s amazing and that’s what **JUST HAPPENED!**

You’re forgiven. You now have hope, and can look forward to heaven one day—guaranteed! Plus, you get to experience the joy of walking with Jesus today through all life’s adventures! And you know what? You’re just getting started!!

## CHALLENGE

Here’s what I’d like you to do this week. Thank God each day for this gift of salvation. Thank him for forgiveness and the freedom to know and walk with Jesus. Try not to miss a single day!

**Okay, we’re at the trailhead, you ready?  
Let the journey begin!**





**WEEK - 2**

# HIKING BAG



**Presenter: Nathan Teegarden**

[Watch Video Here](#)

You've made the decision to make Jesus Lord of your life. That's amazing news! Now what? Well, Jesus tells us, and he actually made it really simple. He told people to follow him. Over and over again in the Bible, Jesus called people to follow him:

- **He told Andrew...follow me**
- **He told Peter...follow me**
- **He told Matthew the tax collector...follow me**
- **He told all of his disciples, multiple times...follow me**
- **He told the crowds who followed him...follow me**

Here's the thing about following Jesus: it's so much more than a moment. It's the continual decision to keep following, trusting and believing in Jesus. It's like a—you guessed it—a journey!

And listen, when I say “following” Jesus, it isn't like following someone on Instagram. This is all about learning from, and being close to, Jesus. It's like having a new best friend.

As we follow Jesus, he begins to teach us all about who he is. This is where God starts to transform our hearts and we start to live more like Jesus did. We start to love and serve others like Jesus did.

This is why the Bible says, “...And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.” (2 Corinthians 3:18b) This means as we spend time with the Lord through prayer, Bible reading, church attendance and small group involvement, we become more and more like him!

Now let's talk about what you need for this journey. Think of this as your hiking bag. It's the thing that holds all the stuff you will need to keep going on the journey.

**Here's something you need in your spiritual journey — FAITH!**

Faith is what keeps you going in your relationship with God. It gives you what you need to climb the spiritual mountain, even when life is really hard.

So where do you get more faith? Know this, faith isn't something you can find, but it is something you build. Just like muscles need to have resistance to actually become stronger — it's the weight that builds your muscles.

The Bible says this, “Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. 3 For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. 4 So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.” (James 1:2-4 NLT)

You might be thinking, that doesn't sound like fun! Well, honestly, sometimes it's not in the moment. But the result is totally worth it!

You're building endurance for the journey ahead. It builds your faith muscle! Just like...going to the gym...hitting your nutrition goals...studying hard and getting that degree.

It's through this same process that faith is built. It's when you continue to say yes to God—even when it's hard— that your faith muscle begins to grow; when you trust, when things are confusing! You lean into God when something disappointing happens rather than turning away from him.

When your faith grows, not only do you have what you need for the journey ahead, but it also becomes easier to say yes to God the next time. You've watched how he helped you before and it gives you the faith for the next challenge ahead. You're building a history with God!

## CHALLENGE

Try this over the next 7 days:

- ▶ Identify two challenges in your life that God could be using to build your faith muscle
  - It could be something at work or in your marriage or raising kids
  - Maybe you're a student and it's related to your school work
  - Maybe it's something with your health or the health of a loved one
  - Maybe it's a past event or a present addiction
- ▶ Each time you think of your challenge or are actively in the middle of it, say a prayer to God, asking for his help.

**Coming up in the next lesson, we'll give two more faith builders to help you build an even stronger faith!**



WEEK - 3

# FOOD & FIRE

**Presenter: Matt Anderson**

[Watch Video Here](#)

In the last video, we talked about how important FAITH is for your new journey with God. We talked about how challenges in life actually build our faith stronger as we continue to trust God through the challenge.

Now sometimes, the challenge isn't just some random life event, it's Satan trying to discourage you. Satan can tempt us to doubt God's goodness. Maybe he's already trying to get you to doubt the decision you recently made to follow Christ, possibly tempting you to go back to an old way of life.

As a defense, we can use our FAITH to protect us. This is why the Bible says, "In addition to all of these, hold up the **shield of faith** to stop the fiery arrows of the devil." (Ephesians 6:16 NLT)

Your faith can stop the enemy from piercing you with discouragement. That's why in this video, I want to give you two more ways to build your faith because the stronger your faith, the better your defense! Think of these faith builders as Food and Fire for your spiritual journey.

The first is to read the Bible. Now the Bible might seem overwhelming to you if you've never read it before, but let me just simplify it for you. It's God's love letter to us. It's a continual story of God working his plan to redeem his most prized possession in all creation -- you and me.

The Bible has 66 books in it that are authored by 40 different people over a period of about 1500 years. They all speak consistently about God, which is pretty amazing if you think about it. Getting two people to speak consistently about something today is hard enough, much less 40 people! Yet they were all writing the same things about God--his character, his plans, his desires, his expectations of us.

Now I won't be able to dive into all the details, but I do want to hit a few big points about the Bible. The Bible has two major parts, the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament is everything before Jesus and the New Testament is when Jesus comes to earth and after.



As you get to know it better, you'll see that both Old and New point to Jesus: the Old Testament is Jesus foretold, the New Testament is Jesus proclaimed; the Old Testament looks forward to Jesus, the New Testament explains the finished work of Jesus. The books of the Bible come in different forms – some are stories, some poetry, some are prophecies and warnings, and some are letters written to Christians from church leaders; others are Jewish laws for the nation of Israel.

The big overarching point of the Bible is telling a story about how God wants a relationship with us, and how he made that possible through his Son, Jesus. It's God's message of hope and love to you and me.

NOW here's an important thing to remember about the Bible: The Bible isn't like any other book. God will speak to you through the Bible. That's why Christians will read it over and over and over again, and why it's called "living" – because there are different things that will pop out each time you read it. God can, through the Bible, speak something that you need to hear for that very day.

Think of the Bible as food for your soul. You probably have eaten the same kind of food over and over again and yet every time it gives you the nutrition you need. When you consume what God is speaking to you, it gives you life for your spirit!

In fact, Jesus said this about God's Word, "But Jesus told him, "No! The Scriptures say, 'People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" (Matthew 4:4 NLT)

## CHALLENGE

I want to encourage you to do two things when it comes to reading the Bible:

- ▶ Download the YouVersion Bible App. Life.Church created this app and it's amazing. Go there and find a reading plan and dive in! See if you can read the Bible everyday. Download it in your app store today.
- ▶ Start with reading the Gospel of John. It's the fourth book in the New Testament. It's okay if you don't understand everything, but it will tell you the story of Jesus when he was here on earth. Be sure to use an easy translation to understand, like the New International Version (NIV) or the New Living Translation (NLT).

## **Fire for the Journey**

The second way to build your faith is PRAYER. Prayer isn't some mystical, weird exercise. It's a conversation between you and God. It might seem a little forced or unfamiliar at first, but the key is to trust that God is hearing you.

The Bible says this about prayer, "Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done." (Philippians 4:6 NLT) Think of prayer as an antidote for worry. So pray about everything that you're concerned about -- your family, your work, your future, your feelings, your struggles, your fears -- all of it.

And the key to prayer is to simply trust that God hears you and that he wants to help you. This is where faith and effective prayer meet.

Don't get discouraged if God doesn't "answer" your prayer right away. Here's what God does: he always answers our prayers. He might say "yes," he might say "no," or he might say, "wait." But he always answers. This is where journaling your prayers and their answers can really help. You can see how God has helped you! There's nothing more fun and faith-building than watching your prayers become a reality. It can be like a fire for your faith!

## **CHALLENGE**

Okay this week, try praying for at least five minutes a day. It might help to make a prayer list. This can be a note on your phone that lists the things you're grateful for, the closest people in your life, and the needs you have. The power isn't in impressive "religious" words, but in the fact that you believe God is hearing your every word. God cares most about your heart. Five minutes a day, you got this.

Alright, it's time to build your faith so you can be strong for the journey -- no matter if a challenge, a trial, the enemy or anything else comes against you, you'll have the faith to press forward.

**The next lesson is all about the Holy Spirit! Stay on the journey! You got this!**





**WEEK - 4**

# COMPASS

**Presenter: Ray Hudson**

[Watch Video Here](#)

Have you ever been lost? Like physically lost? It's not fun. It doesn't happen as much anymore because our phones will tell us where we are pretty much anywhere in the world. It serves as our modern-day compass.

Being lost physically is one thing, but being lost spiritually is another. This is where each of us was before putting our faith in Jesus. We were lost—we did not know where God was or even how to find a way to him. It was like our spiritual world was in complete darkness.

I remember feeling as though I had a hole so big, so dark and so deep in my heart, that nothing could fill it, no matter what I tried. Until I met Jesus. This is why the Bible says, "For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son," (Colossians 1:13 NLT)

Jesus turned the light on in our spiritual lives, BUT he didn't stop there. He put a spiritual compass in our hands to guide us. He gave us the Holy Spirit.

Now the Holy Spirit is God, just like God is God and Jesus is God. You might be saying, wait isn't that three gods? Think of it like this. Let's say there's a person named Amanda. She's one person, right? But she might be a mom, a nurse, and a wife. Those are three specific, unique roles, but she's still just one person, so it is with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

### **Now the Holy Spirit has several roles:**

- ▶ He empowers us to share Jesus with others
- ▶ He leads us away from sin and to righteousness
- ▶ He comforts us in times of difficulty



Here's what's amazing—the Holy Spirit actually lives inside of every follower of Jesus! The Bible says, "Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God?" (1 Corinthians 6:19a NLT) What a gift!

One of the things the Holy Spirit does is help us make the right choices. Let me show you what I mean. There is this really cool illustration in the Bible that Jesus used to describe our relationship with him. It's one that those living in that day would have been familiar with.



It's found in John chapter 15:1-8. Jesus says he's like a grapevine and we are the branches coming off that vine. When we're connected to the vine, that is when we produce "fruit" -- meaning good works or deeds for God and others.

Verse 6 says this, "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing." (John 15:6 NLT) Jesus is saying to produce the fruit that God desires, we have to be connected to him.

So, how do we do that? We stay close to God through worship, prayer, Bible reading, connecting with another Christian, going to church, and dwelling on God and his goodness. But, let's be honest: this is a continual challenge in a world of distractions and temptation. To use the hiking illustration, it's like there are all kinds of side paths to take us off the one path that God has for us. But when we remain connected in our relationship with God, something powerful happens. We start to produce fruit.

Obviously, not physical fruit, but spiritual fruit. In fact, this is what the Holy Spirit helps us produce. All of a sudden our hearts, minds, and lives start to look, think and act differently. They start to more closely resemble Jesus. This is how the Bible says it in Galatians 5, "So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives." (Galatians 5:16 NLT)

As you stay connected to God and as you let the Holy Spirit guide your life, you start to produce the fruits of the Spirit. The Bible says this just a few verses later in Galatians 5, "But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." (Galatians 5:22-23 NLT) This will help you start to see the transformation that has taken place on the inside come out.

**In summary:** The Holy Spirit is a gift from God, who now lives in you. He guides, encourages, and strengthens you on this faith journey. As we stay connected to God, we start producing the fruit of the Holy Spirit and have transformed hearts and lives.

## CHALLENGE

Here's your assignment this week: Ask God to help you produce the fruits of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23. Do this by first listening to God's voice and then work to act in accordance with that list. The goal isn't perfection, but the direction of your journey. You got this!

**Our next lesson talks about not traveling alone. Don't miss it!**



**WEEK - 5**

# DON'T TRAVEL ALONE

# DON'T TRAVEL ALONE

**Presenter: Crystal Colp**

[Watch Video Here](#)

Most people don't go hiking alone. In fact, most journeys are much more fun with someone else, right?! This is what makes the church, the gathering of believers, so meaningful. The Church is the community of those moving in the same direction. It's a group going on the faith journey with you, and it can make all the difference in the world.

The first Church started shortly after Jesus rose from the dead. All the believers began to meet together at the temple to hear the apostles' teaching and then met in smaller groups in homes. And while there are some things that look different from how they did Church, we do many of the same things in church today. We meet together in a larger gathering for worship and learning from the Bible, and then we meet in small groups.

God started the church because he knew not only would we need the Holy Spirit living inside of us, but we would need a physical person to walk with us. This is what the church did then, and it's what the church should do today.

Even from the beginning when God made Adam, he said, "It's not good for man to be alone." (Genesis 2:18) Everything else was good. The sun, the moon, the trees, the animals. It was all good. Plus, Adam had God with him!! You would think if he had God, you wouldn't need anything else! While that statement is true: God is all we need, God has chosen for us to live our faith journey's in the context of a community of other believers. We aren't meant to do life alone, especially not faith.

For Adam, marriage was the solution, but marriage is just one example of how God helps us do this journey of faith with others. God can use a friendship, a family member, co-worker, mentor or small group.

When you're connected to others there's a layer of protection from the enemy's attack on your life, and a friend to help you when you're discouraged and struggling. It's these relationships that provide accountability and the example that we all need to remind and encourage us to keep on the journey.

The primary way we stay in a community of believers is a local church. This idea of meeting together was so important when the church first started, that the Bible specifically mentioned church attendance!

The Bible says, “And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.” (Hebrews 10:25 NLT)

We know that belonging to a church is so much more than attending, it is the heart of being engaged with other like-minded people. It's not just about showing up but being involved with others.

## CHALLENGE

Two questions for you:

1

Are you engaged with a church? The church should be a community strong enough to miss you when you AREN'T there. If you don't know people, introduce yourself and make some friends! Get involved in the church.

2

Second question, are you in a small group? Are you taking time to meet with other believers outside the church walls? This is how you share your life with others. This is how godly friendships are built.

**This journey of life is too challenging to go it alone. Take those next steps. You'll be glad you did.**

**The next lesson is all about telling others about your journey with Jesus! Be sure to watch it!**



**WEEK - 6**

# SHARING THE JOURNEY

**Presenter: Nathan Teegarden**

[Watch Video Here](#)

If you've ever been camping or hiking with a group you can always see who people really are. You usually see some things that they're good at, and how they act when they are worn out. You usually have the "fire guy." It's the dude who always knows how to start a fire. You usually have the "cook" -- the person who can tell you how to cook a steak to perfection. Then you have a person who suggests one crazy idea after another. You have the safety person who follows the rules and complains about the crazy idea person!

Then there's the person who always seems to know everything about nature, teaching everyone else all the different kinds of trees, plants, and animals around them. What makes those camping trips so amazing is everyone using their gifts and passions to help the group as a whole.

This is exactly what God wants us to do in the Church. In fact, the Bible talks about it in detail in 1 Corinthians 12. This passage talks about how a group of Christians who gather is like a human body. There are all kinds of different parts of the body that serve different functions, so it is with the Church.

You have a gift-- it's not just for you. It's to encourage another Christian in their faith. As each person brings their gift to the group, the whole benefits. Each of us using our gifts for the benefit of others is an expression of love. That's why the very next chapter in 1 Corinthians, chapter 13, is all about love! How are you using your gifts to serve others?

You might have extra time to lend a hand or administrative skills, or you might be really friendly, or you might like teaching others about the Bible, or you might like meeting care needs. Maybe

## CHALLENGE

Let me encourage you to think about the things that come easy to you. What are the things others tell you you're good at? Write those down. Then ask God: how can I use this to bless others? Ask your Small Group Leader or Pastor about opportunities that align with your giftings. Then start serving and watch God use you!

Not only does God want us to share our talents with others, but God calls us to share our financial resources with others.

The first Christians did this from the beginning. It says this in Acts, "And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. 45 They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need." (Acts 2:44-45 NLT)

# SHARING THE JOURNEY

Now that's generosity!! Here's what is even more amazing -- These people had not been believers long and yet they were so generous!

Here's why they could be so generous with their money: it's because they knew how generous God had been to them first. Let's say you were having a good day, like a really good day and you gave me your house and it just happened to be on the beach and also paid off. Then you gave me your car to go with it! It must have been a really, really good day for you, right?! But a month later you're not having a good day and you've actually come on hard times, and you need a couple hundred bucks...If you asked me for some money, what do you think I would say? Of course! What's a couple hundred bucks compared to what you've already given me?!

Here's something to remember: An understanding of what we've been given will produce generosity in our lives. Why? Because that understanding transforms the heart. This is why we can give the tithe, 10% of our income. Maybe you've heard this term tithe before.

This was a standard for the people of God in the Old Testament and has been a norm for the church through the centuries. It was an act of obedience, out of love and gratitude.

Now that 10% might scare you! Don't let it. Instead, let me encourage you with this: Start being generous with your time, gifts, energy, and financial resources and watch God bless you in return. And, don't let the number or percentage stop you. Start where you can, now. And, watch as God shows you new ways to generously bless those around you.

I'll finish this video with this from the Bible: 2 Corinthians 9:6, "Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop."

Using a farming illustration, The Bible talks about giving. If we give generously, God will see that generosity and bless it in proportion to the sacrifice. Look what verse 10 of that same chapter says, "For God is the one who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you." (2 Corinthians 9:10 NLT)

Now sometimes that blessing is financial, many times it is not. Either way, you can know this: you can't out-give God and your needs will always be met as you're generous to others! This is the reality of being generous: It's what God does!

## CHALLENGE

This week, try it. Give something. Let it stretch your faith! But be on the watch for God's blessing headed your way as you share on your journey!

In our next lesson, we talk about inviting others with you on your journey. Be sure to check it out!



WEEK - 7

# INVITING OTHERS



**Presenter: Nathan Teegarden**

[Watch Video Here](#)

Every great journey has a mission, right? Usually, it's to get to the mountain top or finish the race or hit some other goal.

For this faith journey you've just begun there is one big mission that Jesus left to us: to invite others on this faith journey. He actually said it like this in Matthew 28 "Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 28:19 NLT)

**In other words, tell those around you about how Jesus has changed your life.** Let them know about this amazing God who loves them and has a plan for their life! You might feel like you're not qualified to do this....isn't that the pastor's job? Nope, it's for all of us! In fact, just your story of what God has done in your life, even if it's just been one day of following Jesus, is all you need to share Jesus with others!

There's a story in the Bible in John 4 about a woman who didn't know God personally, but she met Jesus at a well, and they started talking. She quickly realized she wasn't talking to an ordinary person because she never met him before, yet Jesus knew so much about her life.

At the end of their conversation, Jesus reveals to her he's the Savior of the world. She believes, and look at what she does, "The woman left her water jar beside the well and ran back to the village, telling everyone, 'Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah?'" (John 4:28-29 NLT) She had just met Jesus and she's already telling her whole village about him!!



# INVITING OTHERS

What about you? Who needs to hear about Jesus around you? Who needs to experience the life transformation that you've experienced? You don't have to know the whole Bible, you just have to know Jesus. Tell your story of how you came to faith; then invite them to church.

God loves people so much, he doesn't want anyone to miss out on his gift of salvation — and he's going to use people like you and me to reach everyone.

## CHALLENGE

I want to encourage you to make a list of 3 people you could be praying for over the next two weeks. Pray for an opportunity to serve them and even to talk to them about the Lord. Be sensitive to each person and where they are in their journey. Sometimes, you might only help them take one step closer. That's okay. Someone else will pick up where you left off. Your job is to simply do your part in their journey.

**Don't forget, God has a mission for you and it's to help others find Jesus!**



# NEXT STEPS!

**Presenter: Nathan Teegarden**

[Watch Video Here](#)

You did it! You finished the Journey Series! We want to encourage you to take a few next steps.

- 1** First is to be water baptized. This is simply an outward expression of the inward transformation that has taken place in your life. It lets everyone know about your decision to follow Jesus. And plus, Jesus was baptized!
- 2** We also want to encourage you to get connected in a Group! This will be a place where you can make a friend and find that community we talked about earlier.
- 3** Take advantage of several resources to help make daily interaction with God simple -- things like the RightNow Media.
- 4** Final encouragement: Keep Coming to Church! And the more you attend, look for ways to be connected -- find a place to serve! This is so important!

**Keep on the Journey of Faith  
and watch God do amazing things  
in your life! God Bless!**

