

Girls

**LIFE**  
**APPLICATION®**

Study Bible



New Living  
Translation®

Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.  
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# The Books of the Bible

## OLD TESTAMENT

|      |               |
|------|---------------|
| 3    | Genesis       |
| 66   | Exodus        |
| 118  | Leviticus     |
| 155  | Numbers       |
| 207  | Deuteronomy   |
| 249  | Joshua        |
| 280  | Judges        |
| 311  | Ruth          |
| 317  | 1 Samuel      |
| 358  | 2 Samuel      |
| 391  | 1 Kings       |
| 428  | 2 Kings       |
| 466  | 1 Chronicles  |
| 504  | 2 Chronicles  |
| 548  | Ezra          |
| 563  | Nehemiah      |
| 583  | Esther        |
| 595  | Job           |
| 634  | Psalms        |
| 732  | Proverbs      |
| 770  | Ecclesiastes  |
| 781  | Song of Songs |
| 791  | Isaiah        |
| 871  | Jeremiah      |
| 945  | Lamentations  |
| 954  | Ezekiel       |
| 1013 | Daniel        |
| 1033 | Hosea         |
| 1048 | Joel          |
| 1054 | Amos          |
| 1065 | Obadiah       |
| 1069 | Jonah         |
| 1073 | Micah         |
| 1082 | Nahum         |

|      |           |
|------|-----------|
| 1086 | Habakkuk  |
| 1091 | Zephaniah |
| 1096 | Haggai    |
| 1100 | Zechariah |
| 1112 | Malachi   |

## NEW TESTAMENT

|      |                 |
|------|-----------------|
| 1121 | Matthew         |
| 1167 | Mark            |
| 1197 | Luke            |
| 1246 | John            |
| 1283 | Acts            |
| 1327 | Romans          |
| 1348 | 1 Corinthians   |
| 1367 | 2 Corinthians   |
| 1381 | Galatians       |
| 1390 | Ephesians       |
| 1398 | Philippians     |
| 1405 | Colossians      |
| 1412 | 1 Thessalonians |
| 1417 | 2 Thessalonians |
| 1420 | 1 Timothy       |
| 1428 | 2 Timothy       |
| 1434 | Titus           |
| 1438 | Philemon        |
| 1441 | Hebrews         |
| 1457 | James           |
| 1464 | 1 Peter         |
| 1472 | 2 Peter         |
| 1476 | 1 John          |
| 1483 | 2 John          |
| 1485 | 3 John          |
| 1487 | Jude            |
| 1490 | Revelation      |

# The Books of the Bible

## IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

|      |               |      |                 |
|------|---------------|------|-----------------|
| 1283 | Acts          | 280  | Judges          |
| 1054 | Amos          | 391  | 1 Kings         |
| 466  | 1 Chronicles  | 428  | 2 Kings         |
| 504  | 2 Chronicles  | 945  | Lamentations    |
| 1405 | Colossians    | 118  | Leviticus       |
| 1348 | 1 Corinthians | 1197 | Luke            |
| 1367 | 2 Corinthians | 1112 | Malachi         |
| 1013 | Daniel        | 1167 | Mark            |
| 207  | Deuteronomy   | 1121 | Matthew         |
| 770  | Ecclesiastes  | 1073 | Micah           |
| 1390 | Ephesians     | 1082 | Nahum           |
| 583  | Esther        | 563  | Nehemiah        |
| 66   | Exodus        | 155  | Numbers         |
| 954  | Ezekiel       | 1065 | Obadiah         |
| 548  | Ezra          | 1464 | 1 Peter         |
| 1381 | Galatians     | 1472 | 2 Peter         |
| 3    | Genesis       | 1438 | Philemon        |
| 1086 | Habakkuk      | 1398 | Philippians     |
| 1096 | Haggai        | 732  | Proverbs        |
| 1441 | Hebrews       | 634  | Psalms          |
| 1033 | Hosea         | 1490 | Revelation      |
| 791  | Isaiah        | 1327 | Romans          |
| 1457 | James         | 311  | Ruth            |
| 871  | Jeremiah      | 317  | 1 Samuel        |
| 595  | Job           | 358  | 2 Samuel        |
| 1048 | Joel          | 781  | Song of Songs   |
| 1246 | John          | 1412 | 1 Thessalonians |
| 1476 | 1 John        | 1417 | 2 Thessalonians |
| 1483 | 2 John        | 1420 | 1 Timothy       |
| 1485 | 3 John        | 1428 | 2 Timothy       |
| 1069 | Jonah         | 1434 | Titus           |
| 249  | Joshua        | 1100 | Zechariah       |
| 1487 | Jude          | 1091 | Zephaniah       |

# HOW TO USE YOUR GIRLS LIFE APPLICATION STUDY BIBLE

**GOD'S WORD IS MEANT FOR YOU.** WHATEVER YOUR LIFE SITUATION IS TODAY, AND WHATEVER CIRCUMSTANCES YOU MAY ENCOUNTER IN THE FUTURE, GOD'S WORD IS HERE TO GUIDE YOU, COUNSEL YOU, ENCOURAGE YOU, AND HELP YOU. THE FEATURES IN THIS BIBLE ARE DESIGNED TO HELP YOU CONNECT WITH GOD'S WORD IN A WAY THAT IS MEANINGFUL, FRESH, AND FUN!

*so get ready for the "ADVENTURE"—*

GETTING TO KNOW GOD THROUGH HIS WORD—THAT WILL LAST A LIFETIME.



## FOUNDATIONS FOR YOUR FAITH

Inside you will find eight Foundations for Your Faith full-color sections that are designed to help you learn about the Bible, understand the Bible's big story, meet Jesus and know what it means to follow him, learn how to share your faith with others, and gain practical skills for living out what you believe.

## I survived



As you encounter new experiences, feelings, and situations, it helps to know that someone else has made it through those very same circumstances—and survived! These personal survival stories, collected from older teens across the country, tell how they made it through the situations that you are facing or may soon face. Each story includes a Life Application note and additional Bible verses that you can look up to find out more about that topic. (Note: When you look up these additional verses, you will find a Life Application note or a What Now? feature accompanying each one. Be sure to read those as well!)

**Check out the first one on page 69!**

## LIFE APPLICATION NOTES

The Life Application notes help explain specific Bible passages, show why they are important today, and help you apply them to your life.

Check out the first one on page 4!

### TRUE WORTH

(1:1-27) God created everything there is—the heavens, earth, plants, and animals. When God finished creating everything else, he then chose to make people in his image. This doesn't mean that God made us exactly like himself. It means that we are reflections of God's glory. We can reflect his characteristics, like love, patience, forgiveness, kindness, and faithfulness.

Our worth is not defined by possessions, achievements, physical attractiveness, or popularity. Instead, it is based on knowing that God created us in his likeness. Putting ourselves down is finding fault with what God has made. Because we are like God, we can feel good about ourselves and our abilities. Knowing that you are a person of infinite worth gives you the freedom to love God, know him personally, and make a valuable contribution to the lives of those around you.

WHAT  
NOW?

Have you ever wondered what to do when life gets complicated and you are faced with making difficult decisions? These stories will take you through a variety of real-life situations in which someone must make a decision, then point you to Bible verses that relate to the situation. Each What Now? also includes a Life Application note on the verses it refers to. These notes will help you learn how to apply the Bible and make good choices in tough times.

Check out the first one on page 7!

Is it OK to avoid people who are different from you? Is it OK not to like your life? What about getting a tattoo or dating? This feature is designed to give you a clear picture of what the Bible has to say about the questions that are really on your mind.



Check out the first one on page 8!

spotlight on



This feature gives you a window into the lives of women in the Bible. Each one tells a story and includes both a question to help you apply what you learn from their experiences to your life and an Express Yourself box where you can respond to the reading by writing or drawing right in your Bible.

Check out the first one on page 19!

MORE FUN ON NEXT PAGE

These overviews give you a summary of each Bible book and also include key points that are covered in each book, key facts about each book (who, where, when, why), and a key verse from each book.

[illegible]

Each book of the Bible has important lessons to teach us. The life lesson you find at the beginning of each book is one important idea to remember from that book. As you read each lesson, think about how you can apply it to your life!

## MEMORY VERSES

Throughout this Bible you will notice places where the Scripture text is highlighted and has an exclamation point next to it. Try to memorize these important verses. This is a way to let God's Word fill your life (see Colossians 3:16).

**Check out the first one on page 4!**



**ARABIA'S JOURNEY**

The Arabs in the Middle East were thought to be the first to use the Silk Road to trade goods across the continent.

0 100 200 300 400 500 km

0 100 200 300 400 500 mi

ARABIAN DESERT

Ctesion, Dura, Damascus, Hama, Aleppo, Maran

Persian Gulf, Red Sea

Sea Route, Land Route

Be on the lookout for special maps to help you locate important Bible places and charts to help you visualize big ideas.

**Check out the first one on page I5!**

# A NOTE TO READERS

The *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, was first published in 1996. It quickly became one of the most popular Bible translations in the English-speaking world. While the NLT's influence was rapidly growing, the Bible Translation Committee determined that an additional investment in scholarly review and text refinement could make it even better. So shortly after its initial publication, the committee began an eight-year process with the purpose of increasing the level of the NLT's precision without sacrificing its easy-to-understand quality. This second-generation text was completed in 2004, with minor changes subsequently introduced in 2007, 2013, and 2015.

The goal of any Bible translation is to convey the meaning and content of the ancient Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts as accurately as possible to contemporary readers. The challenge for our translators was to create a text that would communicate as clearly and powerfully to today's readers as the original texts did to readers and listeners in the ancient biblical world. The resulting translation is easy to read and understand, while also accurately communicating the meaning and content of the original biblical texts. The NLT is a general-purpose text especially good for study, devotional reading, and reading aloud in worship services.

We believe that the New Living Translation—which combines the latest biblical scholarship with a clear, dynamic writing style—will communicate God's word powerfully to all who read it. We publish it with the prayer that God will use it to speak his timeless truth to the church and the world in a fresh, new way.

## *The Publishers*

A full introduction to the NLT can be found at [www.TheNLT.com/NLTintro](http://www.TheNLT.com/NLTintro).  
A complete list of the translators can be found at [www.TheNLT.com/scholars](http://www.TheNLT.com/scholars).

# QUICK ANSWERS INDEX

Looking for answers to important questions? Check out the Scriptures under each topic.

## ABILITIES

|                   |      |
|-------------------|------|
| Matthew 25:14-30  | 1159 |
| Luke 12:48        | 1226 |
| 1 Corinthians 12  | 1360 |
| 1 Timothy 4:14-16 | 1424 |

(See also POTENTIAL)

## ADVICE

|                    |     |
|--------------------|-----|
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| Psalms 25:4-7      | 649 |
| Psalms 119:105     | 716 |
| Proverbs 3         | 735 |
| Proverbs 13:10, 13 | 747 |

(See also BELIEVING IN GOD, FUTURE, GOD'S WILL, PRAYER)

## ANGELS

|               |      |
|---------------|------|
| Matthew 18:10 | 1149 |
| Acts 12:5-7   | 1300 |

## ANGER

|                 |      |
|-----------------|------|
| Numbers 22:29   | 187  |
| 1 Kings 21:4-10 | 424  |
| Proverbs 12:16  | 746  |
| Mark 3:5-6      | 1172 |
| John 2:13-17    | 1249 |
| Romans 1:18-32  | 1328 |
| James 3:5-6     | 1460 |

(See also HATRED, REVENGE)

## APPEARANCE

|                  |      |
|------------------|------|
| Proverbs 19:22   | 754  |
| Matthew 6:25-34  | 1131 |
| Matthew 22:11-12 | 1155 |
| 1 Timothy 2:8-10 | 1422 |
| 1 Peter 3:1-5    | 1468 |

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|------------------|------|
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| Matthew 10:32-33 | 1137 |
| John 5:41-42     | 1254 |
| John 7:18        | 1258 |
| Acts 5:29        | 1290 |

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|                   |      |
|-------------------|------|
| Proverbs 15:13-15 | 749  |
| Matthew 5:3-12    | 1126 |

(See also THANKFULNESS)

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|                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
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| Matthew 28:18           | 1166 |
| Romans 13:1-7           | 1342 |
| Ephesians 5:22-32       | 1396 |
| Ephesians 6:1-3         | 1396 |
| 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 | 1416 |

(See also MARRIAGE, PARENTS)

## BELIEVING IN GOD

|                 |      |
|-----------------|------|
| Genesis 15:6    | 18   |
| 2 Kings 5:13-15 | 434  |
| Luke 12:8-9     | 1224 |
| John 20:24-31   | 1280 |
| Romans 1:18-20  | 1328 |
| Romans 10:9-10  | 1339 |

(See also ADVICE, BIBLE, ETERNAL LIFE/SALVATION, GOD'S WILL, OBEDIENCE, PRAYER, TIME WITH GOD)

## BIBLE

|                      |      |
|----------------------|------|
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| Romans 1:16-17       | 1328 |
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| Revelation 22:18-19  | 1512 |

(See also ADVICE, GOD'S WILL, TIME WITH GOD)

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(See CRITICISM, EXCUSES)

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(See also THANKFULNESS)

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(See also FREEDOM)

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|------------------------|------|
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1 John 4:17. . . . . 1480  
Revelation 20:14. . . . . 1510

### DECISIONS

(See CHOICES, FREEDOM)

### DEPRESSION

1 Kings 19. . . . . 421  
Job 3:1-26. . . . . 598  
Psalm 119:25. . . . . 713  
Proverbs 15:13. . . . . 749  
Proverbs 17:22. . . . . 752  
2 Timothy 2:3-13. . . . . 1430  
(See also SUFFERING, TROUBLES)

### DISCIPLINE (PUNISHMENT)

Deuteronomy 25:1-3. . . . . 235  
Proverbs 13:24. . . . . 747  
Matthew 7:22-23. . . . . 1132  
Hebrews 12:5-7. . . . . 1454  
(See also CONSEQUENCES)

### DISCIPLINE (SELF-CONTROL; TRAINING)

Luke 14:25-33. . . . . 1228  
1 Corinthians 9:24-27. . . . . 1357

### DISCOURAGEMENT

Psalm 23. . . . . 648  
Psalm 42:5-11. . . . . 661  
Isaiah 40:28-31. . . . . 836  
John 16:33. . . . . 1274  
Romans 8:35-39. . . . . 1337  
Galatians 6:9-10. . . . . 1388

### DIVORCE

Psalm 27:10. . . . . 651  
Malachi 2:16. . . . . 1115

### DOING RIGHT

Proverbs 1:1-3. . . . . 733  
Amos 5:24. . . . . 1060  
Mark 7:19. . . . . 1178  
John 8:12. . . . . 1260  
1 Timothy 4:12. . . . . 1424  
2 Timothy 3:16-17. . . . . 1431

### DOUBTS

Genesis 17:15-21. . . . . 20  
Matthew 11:1-6. . . . . 1138

|                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
| John 20:24-31 .....     | 1280 |
| James 1:5-8 .....       | 1458 |
| (See also FAITH, TRUST) |      |

## DRINKING

|                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
| Genesis 19:31-33 .....  | 23   |
| Esther 1:10-2:1 .....   | 584  |
| Proverbs 23:29-35 ..... | 759  |
| Proverbs 31:4-6 .....   | 768  |
| Romans 13:11-14 .....   | 1343 |
| Ephesians 5:18 .....    | 1396 |
| (See also PARTYING)     |      |

## DRUGS

|                             |      |
|-----------------------------|------|
| Proverbs 1:7-19 .....       | 733  |
| Proverbs 2 .....            | 734  |
| 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 ..... | 1354 |
| (See also PARTYING)         |      |

## ENEMIES

|                       |      |
|-----------------------|------|
| Psalm 3:1-8 .....     | 635  |
| Psalm 23:4-5 .....    | 648  |
| Psalm 31:4 .....      | 652  |
| Proverbs 16:7 .....   | 750  |
| Micah 7:1-7 .....     | 1079 |
| Matthew 5:43-48 ..... | 1129 |
| Luke 6:27-31 .....    | 1210 |
| Romans 5:10 .....     | 1333 |
| (See also HATRED)     |      |

## ENTHUSIASM

|                          |      |
|--------------------------|------|
| Jeremiah 20:9 .....      | 899  |
| Philippians 4:13 .....   | 1403 |
| Revelation 3:15-16 ..... | 1494 |

## ETERNAL LIFE/SALVATION

|                                               |      |
|-----------------------------------------------|------|
| Matthew 7:13-14 .....                         | 1132 |
| John 3:16 .....                               | 1250 |
| Ephesians 2:8-10 .....                        | 1392 |
| Romans 5-6 .....                              | 1332 |
| Revelation 3:5 .....                          | 1494 |
| (See also FAITH, FORGIVENESS, FUTURE, HEAVEN) |      |

## EVANGELISM

|                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
| Psalm 78:5-6 .....      | 684  |
| Matthew 5:13 .....      | 1126 |
| Matthew 28:19-20 .....  | 1166 |
| Acts 1:8 .....          | 1284 |
| Romans 10:15 .....      | 1339 |
| 2 Corinthians 3:3 ..... | 1370 |
| Philemon 1:15 .....     | 1439 |

## EVIL

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Genesis 3:1 ..... | 6 |
|-------------------|---|

|                      |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| 2 Kings 21:1-2 ..... | 459 |
| Psalm 101:2-3 .....  | 699 |
| Isaiah 14:12 .....   | 808 |

## EXCUSES

|                      |      |
|----------------------|------|
| Genesis 3:8-13 ..... | 6    |
| Luke 14:16-24 .....  | 1228 |
| Romans 1:20 .....    | 1328 |
| James 1:13-16 .....  | 1458 |
| (See also CRITICISM) |      |

## FAILURE

(See DEPRESSION, MAKING MISTAKES)

## FAIRNESS

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Psalm 58 .....          | 671 |
| Proverbs 16:11 .....    | 750 |
| Ecclesiastes 9:11 ..... | 777 |
| Isaiah 3:1-26 .....     | 794 |

## FAITH

|                          |      |
|--------------------------|------|
| Genesis 15:6 .....       | 18   |
| Matthew 8:5-13 .....     | 1133 |
| Matthew 9:18-30 .....    | 1136 |
| Luke 17:6 .....          | 1232 |
| Luke 18:35-43 .....      | 1234 |
| Romans 4:3-5 .....       | 1331 |
| Hebrews 11 .....         | 1452 |
| (See also DOUBTS, TRUST) |      |

## FAITHFULNESS

|                          |      |
|--------------------------|------|
| Isaiah 50:7 .....        | 851  |
| Daniel 6:4 .....         | 1023 |
| Revelation 3:15-16 ..... | 1494 |

## FAKING IT (HYPOCRISY)

|                       |      |
|-----------------------|------|
| Matthew 7:1-5 .....   | 1131 |
| Matthew 7:21-23 ..... | 1132 |
| Matthew 23 .....      | 1156 |
| Luke 12:1-5 .....     | 1224 |
| 1 Peter 2:1 .....     | 1466 |

## FALSE TEACHING

|                                    |      |
|------------------------------------|------|
| Deuteronomy 18:20-22 .....         | 229  |
| Jeremiah 23:9-10 .....             | 903  |
| Ezekiel 13:1-9 .....               | 966  |
| Matthew 7:15 .....                 | 1132 |
| 1 Thessalonians 5:21-23 .....      | 1416 |
| 2 Timothy 3:6-7 .....              | 1431 |
| 1 John 4:1-6 .....                 | 1480 |
| 2 John 1:1-13 .....                | 1484 |
| (See also BELIEVING IN GOD, BIBLE) |      |

## FAMILY

|                        |     |
|------------------------|-----|
| Proverbs 5:15-17 ..... | 738 |
|------------------------|-----|

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|                                     |      |
|-------------------------------------|------|
| Proverbs 11:29                      | 745  |
| John 1:12                           | 1247 |
| John 7:1-10                         | 1258 |
| 1 Corinthians 1:10-13               | 1349 |
| 1 Timothy 5:8                       | 1424 |
| 2 Timothy 1:5-8                     | 1429 |
| <i>(See also MARRIAGE, PARENTS)</i> |      |

### FEAR

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Genesis 15:1            | 18  |
| Joshua 1:6-9            | 250 |
| Psalms 25:12-14         | 649 |
| Psalms 27:1-14          | 650 |
| Psalms 46:1-11          | 664 |
| Proverbs 29:25          | 767 |
| <i>(See also WORRY)</i> |     |

### FOLLOWING GOD/JESUS

|                     |      |
|---------------------|------|
| Exodus 40:36        | 117  |
| Psalms 23:1-4       | 648  |
| John 8:12           | 1260 |
| John 10:27          | 1264 |
| Acts 4:37           | 1289 |
| Romans 1:18-19      | 1328 |
| Romans 9:21         | 1338 |
| 1 Corinthians 10:13 | 1358 |
| Galatians 1:6-7     | 1382 |
| Ephesians 3:20      | 1394 |
| Colossians 2:7      | 1407 |
| 2 Peter 1:3         | 1473 |

### FORGIVENESS

|                              |      |
|------------------------------|------|
| Isaiah 1:18                  | 793  |
| Ezekiel 36:25-27             | 996  |
| Matthew 18:15-35             | 1149 |
| Luke 3:3                     | 1204 |
| Acts 13:38-39                | 1304 |
| Romans 10:9-10               | 1339 |
| Hebrews 9:22-28              | 1449 |
| 1 John 1:8-9                 | 1477 |
| <i>(See also CONFESSION)</i> |      |

### FREEDOM

|                           |      |
|---------------------------|------|
| John 8:30-36              | 1260 |
| Romans 8:1-11             | 1335 |
| Romans 14:1-16            | 1343 |
| Galatians 5:1-6           | 1386 |
| <i>(See also CHOICES)</i> |      |

### FRIENDSHIP

|                  |     |
|------------------|-----|
| Exodus 33:11     | 108 |
| Ruth 1:6-22      | 312 |
| 1 Samuel 18:1-4  | 340 |
| Proverbs 11:9-10 | 744 |
| Proverbs 17:17   | 751 |

|                                             |      |
|---------------------------------------------|------|
| Proverbs 18:24                              | 753  |
| Proverbs 19:22                              | 754  |
| Proverbs 27:6                               | 763  |
| John 15:11-17                               | 1272 |
| Acts 9:26-29                                | 1297 |
| <i>(See also PEER PRESSURE, POPULARITY)</i> |      |

### FUN FACTS

|                    |      |
|--------------------|------|
| Exodus 16:14       | 87   |
| Leviticus 11:21-22 | 129  |
| Nehemiah 8:10      | 573  |
| Nehemiah 13:31     | 582  |
| Psalms 50:10-11    | 666  |
| Daniel 1:12        | 1015 |
| Mark 7:19          | 1178 |
| Acts 12:23         | 1302 |
| Revelation 3:15-16 | 1494 |

### FUTURE

|                                                  |      |
|--------------------------------------------------|------|
| Psalms 31:15                                     | 653  |
| Proverbs 24:14                                   | 760  |
| Jeremiah 29:11                                   | 910  |
| John 3:16                                        | 1250 |
| 2 Timothy 2:11-13                                | 1430 |
| <i>(See also ADVICE, ETERNAL LIFE/SALVATION)</i> |      |

### GIFTS

*(See ABILITIES)*

### GIVING

|                              |      |
|------------------------------|------|
| Genesis 4:4                  | 8    |
| Deuteronomy 14:22-23         | 225  |
| Deuteronomy 15:7-11          | 226  |
| Nehemiah 7:70-72             | 573  |
| Proverbs 22:9                | 757  |
| Malachi 3:8-10               | 1116 |
| 2 Corinthians 8-9            | 1374 |
| <i>(See also GOD'S WILL)</i> |      |

### GOALS

|                           |      |
|---------------------------|------|
| Psalms 20:4               | 646  |
| Psalms 37:5               | 657  |
| Psalms 97:10              | 698  |
| Ecclesiastes 12:13-14     | 780  |
| Philippians 3:12-20       | 1402 |
| James 4:13-16             | 1461 |
| <i>(See also SUCCESS)</i> |      |

### GOD'S COMMANDS

|                    |     |
|--------------------|-----|
| Exodus 20:3-17     | 91  |
| Leviticus 11:21-22 | 129 |
| Deuteronomy 5:19   | 215 |
| Deuteronomy 6:4-9  | 216 |
| Deuteronomy 15:11  | 226 |

|                      |      |
|----------------------|------|
| Deuteronomy 19:14    | 230  |
| Deuteronomy 27:16-18 | 237  |
| Proverbs 6:20-21     | 738  |
| 2 John 1:6           | 1484 |

## GOD'S CREATION

|                  |      |
|------------------|------|
| Genesis 1:1      | 4    |
| Genesis 1:27     | 5    |
| Job 12:7-9       | 606  |
| Psalms 8:3-5     | 638  |
| Psalms 50:10-11  | 666  |
| Psalms 139:13-14 | 725  |
| Jeremiah 1:5     | 872  |
| Galatians 3:28   | 1385 |

## GOD'S DISCIPLINE

|                |      |
|----------------|------|
| Judges 2:3     | 282  |
| Proverbs 1:1-3 | 733  |
| Amos 3:6-7     | 1057 |
| Zephaniah 2:2  | 1093 |
| Acts 12:23     | 1302 |

## GOD'S FAMILY

|                     |      |
|---------------------|------|
| 1 Chronicles 1:1-4  | 467  |
| Isaiah 43:1         | 840  |
| John 19:17-18       | 1279 |
| 1 Corinthians 12:12 | 1360 |
| Galatians 3:28      | 1385 |
| Ephesians 1:5       | 1391 |
| Hebrews 13:3        | 1455 |
| 1 John 5:18         | 1482 |
| Revelation 21:21    | 1511 |

## GOD'S LOVE

|                  |      |
|------------------|------|
| Exodus 28:29     | 102  |
| Psalms 17:8      | 643  |
| Psalms 27:10     | 651  |
| Psalms 56:8      | 670  |
| Psalms 127:3     | 720  |
| Psalms 136:1     | 723  |
| Psalms 139:13-17 | 725  |
| Isaiah 43:1      | 840  |
| Isaiah 49:1      | 849  |
| Jeremiah 1:5     | 872  |
| Lamentations 4:2 | 951  |
| Jonah 3:10       | 1072 |
| Malachi 3:17-18  | 1116 |
| Matthew 10:30    | 1137 |
| Matthew 18:10    | 1149 |
| John 3:14-16     | 1250 |
| John 19:17-18    | 1279 |
| Acts 14:21-22    | 1306 |
| Romans 5:8       | 1333 |
| Titus 3:4-5      | 1436 |
| Philemon 1:15    | 1439 |

## GOD'S PLANS

|                   |      |
|-------------------|------|
| Genesis 50:20     | 65   |
| 1 Samuel 10:21-22 | 329  |
| Esther 4:14       | 588  |
| Esther 8:1-2      | 591  |
| Psalms 37:23      | 658  |
| Jeremiah 29:11    | 910  |
| Romans 8:28       | 1337 |
| Romans 9:21       | 1338 |
| Ephesians 1:5     | 1391 |

## GOD'S POWER

|                  |      |
|------------------|------|
| Joshua 3:15-16   | 252  |
| 1 Kings 17:14-16 | 418  |
| Job 12:7-9       | 606  |
| Psalms 104:14    | 702  |
| Isaiah 40:31     | 836  |
| Zechariah 4:6    | 1103 |
| Luke 24:5-6      | 1243 |
| John 15:5        | 1272 |
| Acts 1:8         | 1284 |
| Ephesians 3:20   | 1394 |

## GOD'S PROTECTION

|                    |      |
|--------------------|------|
| Genesis 7:18       | 11   |
| Exodus 2:3         | 67   |
| Exodus 16:14       | 87   |
| 2 Samuel 22:29     | 386  |
| 1 Chronicles 14:10 | 484  |
| Esther 8:1-2       | 591  |
| Psalms 18:30       | 644  |
| Psalms 23:1-4      | 648  |
| Psalms 62:6-7      | 673  |
| Hosea 11:4         | 1043 |
| Nahum 1:7          | 1083 |
| Matthew 11:28-29   | 1139 |

## GOD'S VOICE

|                |      |
|----------------|------|
| Exodus 3:4     | 70   |
| Mark 1:10-11   | 1168 |
| John 10:27     | 1264 |
| Romans 1:18-19 | 1328 |

## GOD'S WILL

|                  |      |
|------------------|------|
| Exodus 20        | 91   |
| Micah 6:8        | 1079 |
| Matthew 22:37-40 | 1156 |
| 1 Peter 4:1-3    | 1470 |

(See also BELIEVING IN GOD, BIBLE, ADVICE, PRAYER)

## GOSSIP

|                 |     |
|-----------------|-----|
| Exodus 23:1     | 95  |
| Leviticus 19:16 | 142 |

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|                                                 |      |
|-------------------------------------------------|------|
| Proverbs 11:13                                  | 745  |
| Proverbs 25:13                                  | 761  |
| 1 Timothy 5:13                                  | 1424 |
| Titus 3:2                                       | 1436 |
| <i>(See also COMMUNICATION, HONESTY, LYING)</i> |      |

### GRATITUDE

*(See THANKFULNESS)*

### GREED

|                                                 |      |
|-------------------------------------------------|------|
| Numbers 16:8-10                                 | 178  |
| Proverbs 28:22, 25                              | 765  |
| Isaiah 56:9-12                                  | 858  |
| Luke 12:15                                      | 1224 |
| Ephesians 5:5                                   | 1395 |
| <i>(See also GIVING, MONEY AND POSSESSIONS)</i> |      |

### GROWING AS A CHRISTIAN

*(See SPIRITUAL GROWTH)*

### GUIDANCE

*(See ADVICE)*

### GUILT

|                                           |      |
|-------------------------------------------|------|
| Leviticus 4:3                             | 121  |
| Psalms 19:12-13                           | 646  |
| Psalms 51                                 | 667  |
| John 15:21-22                             | 1272 |
| Acts 13:38-39                             | 1304 |
| Romans 3:21-24                            | 1331 |
| <i>(See also CONFESSION, FORGIVENESS)</i> |      |

### HANDICAPS

|                  |      |
|------------------|------|
| 2 Samuel 4:4     | 363  |
| Philippians 4:13 | 1403 |

### HATRED

|                                           |      |
|-------------------------------------------|------|
| Genesis 37                                | 46   |
| Leviticus 19:17                           | 142  |
| Esther 5:9-14                             | 588  |
| Psalms 139:21-24                          | 725  |
| Proverbs 6:16-19                          | 738  |
| Proverbs 10:12                            | 742  |
| Ecclesiastes 3:8                          | 772  |
| John 15:18-25                             | 1272 |
| <i>(See also ANGER, ENEMIES, REVENGE)</i> |      |

### HEALING

|               |      |
|---------------|------|
| Matthew 8:8-9 | 1133 |
| Matthew 17:20 | 1148 |
| James 5:14-15 | 1462 |

### HEAVEN

|                                          |      |
|------------------------------------------|------|
| Isaiah 25:8                              | 818  |
| Matthew 5:18-20                          | 1128 |
| Matthew 7:13-14                          | 1132 |
| Luke 13:29                               | 1227 |
| John 14:1-7                              | 1269 |
| Colossians 3:1-6                         | 1408 |
| Revelation 21-22                         | 1510 |
| <i>(See also ETERNAL LIFE/SALVATION)</i> |      |

### HELL

|                       |      |
|-----------------------|------|
| Matthew 7:13-14       | 1132 |
| Luke 16:19-31         | 1231 |
| John 14:6             | 1270 |
| Romans 2:1-9          | 1329 |
| 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 | 1418 |
| Revelation 1:17-18    | 1491 |
| Revelation 20:14      | 1510 |

### HELPFULNESS

|                |      |
|----------------|------|
| Judges 5:16-18 | 288  |
| Nehemiah 13:31 | 582  |
| Mark 9:41      | 1182 |
| Galatians 2:10 | 1383 |
| Galatians 6:2  | 1388 |

### HOLY SPIRIT

|                       |      |
|-----------------------|------|
| Judges 3:10           | 284  |
| 1 Samuel 16:13        | 338  |
| Matthew 12:31-32      | 1140 |
| John 3:6-8            | 1250 |
| John 14:26            | 1270 |
| John 16:5-15          | 1273 |
| Acts 2:1-4            | 1285 |
| Romans 8:2            | 1335 |
| 2 Corinthians 5:16-17 | 1372 |

### HONESTY

|                                    |      |
|------------------------------------|------|
| Psalms 24:1-6                      | 648  |
| Proverbs 6:16-17                   | 738  |
| Proverbs 19:1                      | 753  |
| Proverbs 28:6                      | 765  |
| Romans 12:3                        | 1341 |
| <i>(See also INTEGRITY, LYING)</i> |      |

### HONOR (RESPECT OR PRAISE)

|                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
| Deuteronomy 5:16        | 215  |
| Ezra 7:27-28            | 557  |
| Psalms 29:1-2           | 651  |
| Romans 12:10            | 1342 |
| 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 | 1416 |

### HOPE

|                |     |
|----------------|-----|
| Psalms 42:5-11 | 661 |
|----------------|-----|

|                             |      |
|-----------------------------|------|
| 1 Corinthians 15:51-58..... | 1364 |
| Revelation 22:12-21 .....   | 1511 |
| (See also FAITH)            |      |

## HUMILITY

|                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
| Psalms 131.....         | 721  |
| Proverbs 11:2 .....     | 744  |
| Matthew 20:20-28 .....  | 1152 |
| Luke 14:7-11 .....      | 1228 |
| Philippians 2:5-11..... | 1400 |
| James 4:10 .....        | 1461 |
| 1 Peter 5:5 .....       | 1471 |

## INFERIORITY

|                          |      |
|--------------------------|------|
| Psalms 139:13-18 .....   | 725  |
| Matthew 10:29-30 .....   | 1137 |
| Mark 8:37.....           | 1180 |
| Philippians 3:12-14..... | 1402 |
| (See also SELF-WORTH)    |      |

## INTEGRITY

|                                       |      |
|---------------------------------------|------|
| Psalms 101:3-8 .....                  | 699  |
| Psalms 119:113-117 .....              | 716  |
| Proverbs 3:1-4 .....                  | 735  |
| Proverbs 20:11 .....                  | 754  |
| Matthew 5:33-37 .....                 | 1129 |
| Matthew 6:1-4 .....                   | 1130 |
| Romans 5:3-4 .....                    | 1333 |
| Philippians 3:17 .....                | 1402 |
| James 5:12 .....                      | 1462 |
| (See also HONESTY, LEADERSHIP, LYING) |      |

## JEALOUSY

|                           |      |
|---------------------------|------|
| Genesis 37 .....          | 46   |
| Proverbs 14:30 .....      | 748  |
| Song of Songs 8:6 .....   | 789  |
| 2 Corinthians 11:1-2..... | 1377 |
| Galatians 5:19-20.....    | 1387 |
| (See also COMPARISONS)    |      |

## JESUS' DEATH

|                       |      |
|-----------------------|------|
| Leviticus 1:4 .....   | 119  |
| Leviticus 16:10 ..... | 138  |
| John 19:17-18 .....   | 1279 |
| Romans 5:8 .....      | 1333 |

## JESUS, GOD'S SON

|                    |      |
|--------------------|------|
| Mark 1:10.....     | 1168 |
| John 1:14 .....    | 1247 |
| John 3:14-16 ..... | 1250 |
| John 5:18 .....    | 1254 |
| John 14:6 .....    | 1270 |
| 1 John 5:18.....   | 1482 |

## JESUS' LIFE

|                        |      |
|------------------------|------|
| Matthew 4:10-11 .....  | 1125 |
| Matthew 8:8-9 .....    | 1133 |
| Matthew 18:21-22 ..... | 1150 |
| Mark 1:10.....         | 1168 |
| Mark 11:8-9 .....      | 1185 |
| Mark 12:10 .....       | 1186 |
| Luke 4:17-18 .....     | 1206 |
| Luke 9:62 .....        | 1219 |
| Luke 17:15-17 .....    | 1232 |
| Luke 18:16 .....       | 1233 |
| Luke 24:5-6 .....      | 1243 |
| John 1:14 .....        | 1247 |
| John 4:17-18 .....     | 1251 |
| John 6:9 .....         | 1256 |
| John 6:48 .....        | 1257 |
| John 8:12 .....        | 1260 |
| John 15:5 .....        | 1272 |

## JESUS' RESURRECTION

|                   |      |
|-------------------|------|
| Luke 24:5-6 ..... | 1243 |
|-------------------|------|

## JESUS' RETURN

|                               |      |
|-------------------------------|------|
| 1 Corinthians 15:52 .....     | 1364 |
| 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 ..... | 1415 |
| 2 Peter 3:8-9 .....           | 1475 |
| Revelation 22:13.....         | 1511 |

## JOY

|                            |      |
|----------------------------|------|
| Nehemiah 8:10.....         | 573  |
| Psalms 1:1-3 .....         | 635  |
| Habakkuk 3:17-18 .....     | 1090 |
| Luke 10:21 .....           | 1220 |
| 2 Corinthians 4:17-18..... | 1371 |

## JUDGING OTHERS

(See CRITICISM)

## JUSTICE

|                 |      |
|-----------------|------|
| Amos 5:24 ..... | 1060 |
|-----------------|------|

## KIDS

|                     |      |
|---------------------|------|
| Luke 10:21 .....    | 1220 |
| Luke 18:16 .....    | 1233 |
| 1 Timothy 4:12..... | 1424 |

## KINDNESS

|                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
| Deuteronomy 15:11 ..... | 226  |
| 2 Kings 7:9-10 .....    | 438  |
| John 6:9 .....          | 1256 |
| Acts 4:37 .....         | 1289 |
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# JOHN

**H**e spoke, and the universe came into existence. Order was created out of chaos. Planets and stars, plants and animals, human beings—everything was created by him. Eternal, infinite, unlimited—he was, is, and always will be the Maker and Lord of all that exists.

And then something amazing happened. The Creator became a part of the creation, limited by time and space and susceptible to aging, sickness, and death. But love propelled him, so he came to rescue and save those who were lost and to give them the gift of eternity. He is the Word; he is Jesus, the Messiah.

It is this truth that the apostle John brings to us in his Gospel. John's Gospel is not just a biography of Jesus; it is a powerful argument that God became a human being. John shows us that Jesus is the Son of God and the only source of eternal life.

As you read John's Gospel, commit yourself to believe in and follow Jesus.

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**WHO** Jesus, John the Baptist, the disciples, Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, Mary, Martha, Lazarus, Jesus' mother Mary, Pilate, and Mary Magdalene.

**WHERE** The disciple John wrote the book in Ephesus before he was exiled to the island of Patmos.

**WHEN** After the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

**WHY** To prove without a doubt that Jesus is the Son of God and that all who believe in him will have eternal life.

THE WORD  
GAVE LIFE TO  
EVERYTHING THAT  
WAS CREATED,  
AND HIS LIFE  
BROUGHT LIGHT  
TO EVERYONE.

JOHN 1:4

## KEY POINTS

**ETERNAL LIFE** Because Jesus is God, he can offer us eternal life. This personal, eternal relationship with him begins now and will continue after our lives end here on Earth.

**MIRACLES** John records specific signs or miracles that prove Jesus' identity as God's promised Savior. These signs encourage us to believe in him.

**HOLY SPIRIT** Jesus told his disciples that after he returned to heaven, the Holy Spirit would come. The Holy Spirit would guide and comfort all believers. The Holy Spirit draws us to Jesus in faith.

**RESURRECTION** On the third day after Jesus died, he rose from the dead. The Resurrection gives us hope for the future, which transforms our decisions for today.

## PROLOGUE: CHRIST, THE ETERNAL WORD



<sup>1</sup> In the beginning the Word already existed.

The Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.

<sup>2</sup> He existed in the beginning with God.

<sup>3</sup> God created everything through him,  
and nothing was created except  
through him.

<sup>4</sup> The Word gave life to everything that  
was created,\*  
and his life brought light to  
everyone.

<sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness can never  
extinguish it.\*

<sup>6</sup> God sent a man, John the Baptist,\*

<sup>7</sup> to tell about the light so that everyone  
might believe because of his testimony.

<sup>8</sup> John himself was not the light; he was  
simply a witness to tell about the light.

<sup>9</sup> The one who is the true light, who gives  
light to everyone, was coming into the  
world.

<sup>10</sup> He came into the very world he cre-  
ated, but the world didn't recognize him.

 <sup>11</sup> He came to his own people, and even  
they rejected him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who be-  
lieved him and accepted him, he gave the  
right to become children of God. <sup>13</sup> They  
are reborn—not with a physical birth re-  
sulting from human passion or plan, but  
a birth that comes from God.

 <sup>14</sup> So the Word became human\* and  
made his home among us. He was full  
of unfailing love and faithfulness.\* And  
we have seen his glory, the glory of the  
Father's one and only Son.

<sup>15</sup> John testified about him when he  
shouted to the crowds, "This is the one I  
was talking about when I said, 'Someone  
is coming after me who is far greater than  
I am, for he existed long before me.'"

<sup>16</sup> From his abundance we have all  
received one gracious blessing after

1:3-4 Or and nothing that was created was created except through him. The Word gave life to everything. 1:5 Or and the darkness has not understood it. 1:6 Greek a man named John. 1:14a Greek became flesh. 1:14b Or grace and truth; also in 1:17. 1:16 Or received the grace of Christ rather than the grace of the law; Greek reads received grace upon grace. 1:18 Some manuscripts read But the one and only Son. 1:19 Greek and Levites. 1:21 Greek Are you the Prophet? See Deut 18:15, 18; Mal 4:5-6. 1:23 Isa 40:3.

## Life Lessons

GOD SENT JESUS  
TO GIVE US LIFE.

another.\* <sup>17</sup> For the law was given through Moses, but God's unfailing love and faithfulness came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup> No one has ever seen God. But the unique One, who is himself God,\* is near to the Father's heart. He has revealed God to us.

## THE TESTIMONY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

<sup>19</sup> This was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders sent priests and Temple assistants\* from Jerusalem to ask John, "Who are you?" <sup>20</sup> He came right out and said, "I am not the Messiah."

<sup>21</sup> "Well then, who are you?" they asked. "Are you Elijah?"

"No," he replied.

"Are you the Prophet we are expect-  
ing?"\*

"No."

<sup>22</sup> "Then who are you? We need an answer for those who sent us. What do you have to say about yourself?"

<sup>23</sup> John replied in the words of the prophet Isaiah:

"I am a voice shouting in the  
wilderness,

'Clear the way for the LORD's  
coming!'"\*

## SO COMPLEX

*(1:3-5) Do you ever feel as though your life is so complex that God would never understand? Remember, God created the entire universe—nothing is too complex for him to understand. He created you, he is alive today, and his love is greater than any problem you may face.*

<sup>24</sup>Then the Pharisees who had been sent <sup>25</sup>asked him, “If you aren’t the Messiah or Elijah or the Prophet, what right do you have to baptize?”

<sup>26</sup>John told them, “I baptize with\* water, but right here in the crowd is someone you do not recognize. <sup>27</sup>Though his ministry follows mine, I’m not even worthy to be his slave and untie the straps of his sandal.”

<sup>28</sup>This encounter took place in Bethany, an area east of the Jordan River, where John was baptizing.

## JESUS, THE LAMB OF GOD

<sup>29</sup>The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

<sup>30</sup>He is the one I was talking about when I said, ‘A man is coming after me who is far greater than I am, for he existed long before me.’ <sup>31</sup>I did not recognize him as the Messiah, but I have been baptizing with water so that he might be revealed to Israel.”

<sup>32</sup>Then John testified, “I saw the Holy Spirit descending like a dove from heaven and resting upon him. <sup>33</sup>I didn’t know he was the one, but when God sent me to baptize with water, he told me, ‘The one on whom you see the Spirit descend and rest is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’ <sup>34</sup>I saw this happen to Jesus, so I testify that he is the Chosen One of God.”\*

## THE FIRST DISCIPLES

<sup>35</sup>The following day John was again standing with two of his disciples. <sup>36</sup>As Jesus walked by, John looked at him and declared, “Look! There is the Lamb of God!” <sup>37</sup>When John’s two disciples heard this, they followed Jesus.

<sup>38</sup>Jesus looked around and saw them following. “What do you want?” he asked them.

### HUMILITY

**(1:30)** Although John the Baptist was a well-known preacher and attracted large crowds, he was content for Jesus to take the higher place (see also John 3:22-36). This is true humility, the basis for greatness in anything we do for God. When you are content to do what God wants you to do and let Jesus be honored for it, God will do great things through you.

They replied, “Rabbi” (which means “Teacher”), “where are you staying?”

<sup>39</sup>“Come and see,” he said. It was about four o’clock in the afternoon when they went with him to the place where he was staying, and they remained with him the rest of the day.

<sup>40</sup>Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, was one of these men who heard what John said and then followed Jesus. <sup>41</sup>Andrew went to find his brother, Simon, and told him, “We have found the Messiah” (which means “Christ”\*)).

<sup>42</sup>Then Andrew brought Simon to meet Jesus. Looking intently at Simon, Jesus said, “Your name is Simon, son of John—but you will be called Cephas” (which means “Peter”\*)).

<sup>43</sup>The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Come, follow me.” <sup>44</sup>Philip was from Bethsaida, Andrew and Peter’s hometown.

<sup>45</sup>Philip went to look for Nathanael and told him, “We have found the very person Moses\* and the prophets wrote about! His name is Jesus, the son of Joseph from Nazareth.”

<sup>46</sup>“Nazareth!” exclaimed Nathanael. “Can anything good come from Nazareth?”

“Come and see for yourself,” Philip replied.

<sup>47</sup>As they approached, Jesus said, “Now here is a genuine son of Israel—a man of complete integrity.”

<sup>48</sup>“How do you know about me?” Nathanael asked.

Jesus replied, “I could see you under the fig tree before Philip found you.”

<sup>49</sup>Then Nathanael exclaimed, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God—the King of Israel!”

<sup>50</sup>Jesus asked him, “Do you believe this just because I told you I had seen you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than this.” <sup>51</sup>Then he said, “I tell you the truth, you will all see heaven open and the angels of God going up and down on the Son of Man, the one who is the stairway between heaven and earth.”\*

1:26 Or in; also in 1:31, 33. 1:34 Some manuscripts read the Son of God. 1:41 Messiah (a Hebrew term) and Christ (a Greek term) both mean “anointed one.” 1:42 The names Cephas (from Aramaic) and Peter (from Greek) both mean “rock.” 1:45 Greek Moses in the law. 1:51 Greek going up and down on the Son of Man; see Gen 28:10-17. “Son of Man” is a title Jesus used for himself.

## THE WEDDING AT CANA

**2** The next day\* there was a wedding celebration in the village of Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, <sup>2</sup>and Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the celebration. <sup>3</sup>The wine supply ran out during the festivities, so Jesus' mother told him, "They have no more wine."

<sup>4</sup>"Dear woman, that's not our problem," Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come."

<sup>5</sup>But his mother told the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

<sup>6</sup>Standing nearby were six stone water jars, used for Jewish ceremonial washing. Each could hold twenty to thirty gallons.\* <sup>7</sup>Jesus told the servants, "Fill the jars with water." When the jars had been filled, <sup>8</sup>he said, "Now dip some out, and take it to the master of ceremonies." So the servants followed his instructions.

<sup>9</sup>When the master of ceremonies tasted the water that was now wine, not knowing where it had come from (though, of course, the servants knew), he called the bridegroom over. <sup>10</sup>"A host always serves the best wine first," he said. "Then, when everyone has had a lot to drink, he brings out the less expensive wine. But you have kept the best until now!"

<sup>11</sup>This miraculous sign at Cana in Galilee was the first time Jesus revealed his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

<sup>12</sup>After the wedding he went to Capernaum for a few days with his mother, his brothers, and his disciples.

## JESUS CLEARS THE TEMPLE

<sup>13</sup>It was nearly time for the Jewish Passover celebration, so Jesus went to Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup>In the Temple area he saw merchants selling cattle, sheep, and doves for sacrifices; he also saw dealers at tables exchanging foreign money. <sup>15</sup>Jesus made a whip from some ropes and chased them all out of the Temple. He drove out the sheep and cattle, scattered the money changers' coins over the floor, and turned over their tables. <sup>16</sup>Then, going over to the people who sold doves, he told them, "Get these

things out of here. Stop turning my Father's house into a marketplace!"

<sup>17</sup>Then his disciples remembered this prophecy from the Scriptures: "Passion for God's house will consume me."\*

<sup>18</sup>But the Jewish leaders demanded, "What are you doing? If God gave you authority to do this, show us a miraculous sign to prove it."

<sup>19</sup>"All right," Jesus replied. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

<sup>20</sup>"What!" they exclaimed. "It has taken forty-six years to build this Temple, and you can rebuild it in three days?"

<sup>21</sup>But when Jesus said "this temple," he meant his own body. <sup>22</sup>After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered he had said this, and they believed both the Scriptures and what Jesus had said.

## JESUS AND NICODEMUS

<sup>23</sup>Because of the miraculous signs Jesus did in Jerusalem at the Passover celebration, many began to trust in him. <sup>24</sup>But Jesus didn't trust them, because he knew all about people. <sup>25</sup>No one needed to tell him about human nature, for he knew what was in each person's heart.

**3** There was a man named Nicodemus, a Jewish religious leader who was a Pharisee. <sup>2</sup>After dark one evening, he came to speak with Jesus. "Rabbi," he said, "we all know that God has sent you to teach us. Your miraculous signs are evidence that God is with you."

<sup>3</sup>Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, unless you are born again,\* you cannot see the Kingdom of God."

<sup>4</sup>"What do you mean?" exclaimed Nicodemus. "How can an old man go back into his mother's womb and be born again?"

<sup>5</sup>Jesus replied, "I assure you, no one

### ANGER

**(2:15-16)** Jesus obviously was angry with the merchants who conducted business in the Temple. Although there is a difference between uncontrolled rage and righteous indignation, both are called anger. How we use the powerful emotion of anger makes all the difference. Jesus used his anger for good instead of evil. Do you feel angry? How can you use your anger to bring about positive changes?

<sup>2:1</sup> Greek On the third day; see 1:35, 43. <sup>2:6</sup> Greek 2 or 3 measures [75 to 113 liters]. <sup>2:17</sup> Or "Concern for God's house will be my undoing." Ps 69:9. <sup>3:3</sup> Or born from above; also in 3:7.

can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit.\* <sup>6</sup>Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life.\* <sup>7</sup>So don't be surprised when I say, 'You\* must be born again.' <sup>8</sup>The wind blows wherever it wants. Just as you can hear the wind but can't tell where it comes from or where it is going, so you can't explain how people are born of the Spirit."

<sup>9</sup>"How are these things possible?" Nicodemus asked.

<sup>10</sup>Jesus replied, "You are a respected Jewish teacher, and yet you don't understand these things? <sup>11</sup>I assure you, we tell you what we know and have seen, and yet you won't believe our testimony. <sup>12</sup>But if you don't believe me when I tell you about earthly things, how can you possibly believe if I tell you about heavenly things? <sup>13</sup>No one has ever gone to heaven and returned. But the Son of Man\* has come down from heaven. <sup>14</sup>And as Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, <sup>15</sup>so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life.\*



<sup>16</sup>"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. <sup>17</sup>God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him.

<sup>18</sup>There is no judgment against anyone who believes in him. But anyone who does not believe in him has already been judged for not believing in God's one and only Son. <sup>19</sup>And the judgment is based on this fact: God's light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil. <sup>20</sup>All who do evil hate the light and refuse to go near it for fear their sins will be exposed. <sup>21</sup>But those who do what is right come to the light so others can see that they are doing what God wants.\*"

## JOHN THE BAPTIST EXALTS JESUS

<sup>22</sup>Then Jesus and his disciples left Jerusalem and went into the Judean countryside. Jesus spent some time with them there, baptizing people.

<sup>23</sup>At this time John the Baptist was baptizing at Aenon, near Salim, because there was plenty of water there; and

people kept coming to him for baptism. <sup>24</sup>(This was before John was thrown into prison.) <sup>25</sup>A debate broke out between John's disciples and a certain Jew\* over ceremonial cleansing. <sup>26</sup>So John's disciples came to him and said, "Rabbi, the man you met on the other side of the Jordan River, the one you identified as the Messiah, is also baptizing people. And everybody is going to him instead of coming to us."

<sup>27</sup>John replied, "No one can receive anything unless God gives it from heaven. <sup>28</sup>You yourselves know how plainly I told you, 'I am not the Messiah. I am only here to prepare the way for him.' <sup>29</sup>It is the bridegroom who marries the bride, and the bridegroom's friend is simply glad to stand with him and hear his vows. Therefore, I am filled with joy at his success. <sup>30</sup>He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less.

<sup>31</sup>"He has come from above and is greater than anyone else. We are of the earth, and we speak of earthly things, but he has come from heaven and is greater than anyone else.\* <sup>32</sup>He testifies about what he has seen and heard, but how few believe what he tells them! <sup>33</sup>Anyone who accepts his testimony can affirm that God is true. <sup>34</sup>For he is sent by God. He speaks God's words, for God gives him the Spirit without limit. <sup>35</sup>The Father loves his Son and has put everything into his hands. <sup>36</sup>And anyone who believes in God's Son has eternal life. Anyone who doesn't obey the Son will never experience eternal life but remains under God's angry judgment."

## JESUS AND THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

**4** Jesus\* knew the Pharisees had heard that he was baptizing and making more disciples than John <sup>2</sup>(though Jesus himself didn't baptize them—their disciples did). <sup>3</sup>So he left Judea and returned to Galilee.

3:5 Or and spirit. The Greek word for Spirit can also be translated wind; see 3:8. 3:6 Greek what is born of the Spirit is spirit. 3:7 The Greek word for you is plural; also in 3:12. 3:13 Some manuscripts add who lives in heaven. "Son of Man" is a title Jesus used for himself. 3:15 Or everyone who believes will have eternal life in him. 3:16 Or For God loved the world so much that he gave. 3:21 Or can see God at work in what he is doing. 3:25 Some manuscripts read some Jews. 3:31 Some manuscripts do not include and is greater than anyone else. 4:1 Some manuscripts read The Lord.

<sup>4</sup>He had to go through Samaria on the way. <sup>5</sup>Eventually he came to the Samaritan village of Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. <sup>6</sup>Jacob's well was there; and Jesus, tired from the long walk, sat wearily beside the well about noontime. <sup>7</sup>Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Please give me a drink." <sup>8</sup>He was alone at the time because his disciples had gone into the village to buy some food.

<sup>9</sup>The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans.\* She said to Jesus, "You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?"

<sup>10</sup>Jesus replied, "If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water."

<sup>11</sup>"But sir, you don't have a rope or a bucket," she said, "and this well is very deep. Where would you get this living water? <sup>12</sup>And besides, do you think you're greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us this well? How can you offer better water than he and his sons and his animals enjoyed?"

<sup>13</sup>Jesus replied, "Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. <sup>14</sup>But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life."

<sup>15</sup>"Please, sir," the woman said, "give me this water! Then I'll never be thirsty again, and I won't have to come here to get water."

<sup>16</sup>"Go and get your husband," Jesus told her.

<sup>17</sup>"I don't have a husband," the woman replied.

Jesus said, "You're right! You don't have a husband—<sup>18</sup>for you have had five husbands, and you aren't even married to the man you're living with now. You certainly spoke the truth!"

<sup>19</sup>"Sir," the woman said, "you must be a prophet. <sup>20</sup>So tell me, why is it that you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place of worship, while we Samaritans claim it is here at Mount Gerizim,\* where our ancestors worshiped?"

4:9 Some manuscripts do not include this sentence.  
4:20 Greek on this mountain.



**T**he Samaritan woman was an outcast. Samaritans were despised by Jews, and women in that culture had a lower status than men. Because of her reputation, this Samaritan woman went to draw water alone. That's where she met Jesus. Jesus knew everything about her, and he still wanted to talk to her! The Samaritan woman had been looking for love in all the wrong places; but Jesus showed her God's love, and that was all she needed. Sometimes we look to everyone but God for love and acceptance, but God's love is all we need.

**Discover more about  
the Samaritan Woman  
in John 4:4-42.**



*How have you  
experienced God's love?*

<sup>21</sup>Jesus replied, “Believe me, dear woman, the time is coming when it will no longer matter whether you worship the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem. <sup>22</sup>You Samaritans know very little about the one you worship, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes through the Jews. <sup>23</sup>But the time is coming—indeed it’s here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. <sup>24</sup>For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.”

<sup>25</sup>The woman said, “I know the Messiah is coming—the one who is called Christ. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”

<sup>26</sup>Then Jesus told her, “I AM the Messiah!”\*

<sup>27</sup>Just then his disciples came back. They were shocked to find him talking to a woman, but none of them had the nerve to ask, “What do you want with her?” or “Why are you talking to her?” <sup>28</sup>The woman left her water jar beside the well and ran back to the village, telling everyone, <sup>29</sup>“Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah?” <sup>30</sup>So the people came streaming from the village to see him.

<sup>31</sup>Meanwhile, the disciples were urging Jesus, “Rabbi, eat something.”

<sup>32</sup>But Jesus replied, “I have a kind of food you know nothing about.”

<sup>33</sup>“Did someone bring him food while we were gone?” the disciples asked each other.

<sup>34</sup>Then Jesus explained: “My nourishment comes from doing the will of God, who sent me, and from finishing his work. <sup>35</sup>You know the saying, ‘Four months between planting and harvest.’ But I say, wake up and look around. The

fields are already ripe\* for harvest. <sup>36</sup>The harvesters are paid good wages, and the fruit they harvest is people brought to eternal life. What joy awaits both the planter and the harvester alike! <sup>37</sup>You know the saying, ‘One plants and another harvests.’ And it’s true. <sup>38</sup>I sent you to harvest where you didn’t plant; others had already done the work, and now you will get to gather the harvest.”

## MANY SAMARITANS BELIEVE

<sup>39</sup>Many Samaritans from the village believed in Jesus because the woman had said, “He told me everything I ever did!”

<sup>40</sup>When they came out to see him, they begged him to stay in their village. So he stayed for two days, <sup>41</sup>long enough for many more to hear his message and believe. <sup>42</sup>Then they said to the woman, “Now we believe, not just because of what you told us, but because we have heard him ourselves. Now we know that he is indeed the Savior of the world.”

## JESUS HEALS AN OFFICIAL’S SON

<sup>43</sup>At the end of the two days, Jesus went on to Galilee. <sup>44</sup>He himself had said that a prophet is not honored in his own hometown. <sup>45</sup>Yet the Galileans welcomed him, for they had been in Jerusalem at the Passover celebration and had seen everything he did there.

<sup>46</sup>As he traveled through Galilee, he came to Cana, where he had turned the water into wine. There was a government official in nearby Capernaum whose son was very sick. <sup>47</sup>When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and begged Jesus to come to Capernaum to heal his son, who was about to die.

<sup>48</sup>Jesus asked, “Will you never believe in me unless you see miraculous signs and wonders?”

<sup>49</sup>The official pleaded, “Lord, please come now before my little boy dies.”

<sup>50</sup>Then Jesus told him, “Go back home. Your son will live!” And the man believed what Jesus said and started home.

<sup>51</sup>While the man was on his way, some of his servants met him with the news that his son was alive and well. <sup>52</sup>He

## AN ACTIVE BELIEF

**(4:43-54)** This government official not only believed that Jesus could heal, he also demonstrated his faith in Jesus by returning home at Jesus’ request. It isn’t enough to say that we believe Jesus can take care of our problems; we need to act on that belief. When you pray about a need or a problem, do your actions show that you believe Jesus can do what he says?

4:26 Or “The ‘I AM’ is here”; or “I am the LORD”; Greek reads “I am, the one speaking to you.” See Exod 3:14.  
4:35 Greek white.



## WHO'S DIFFERENT—YOU OR ME?

**R**ecently some kids from another ethnic group called Kaitlyn names as she walked home from school. Kaitlyn got angry. She decided she didn't like "those kinds" of people. Then she got an invitation to a party. Kaitlyn wanted to go to the party, but she knew that "those kinds" of kids would be there. What would you do if you were Kaitlyn? How should you treat people whose skin is a different color from yours or whose cultural background is different?

**READ JOHN 4:1-26 TO SEE HOW JESUS RELATED TO A WOMAN WHO WAS FROM A DIFFERENT ETHNIC GROUP—AND WASN'T EVEN LIKED BY HER OWN PEOPLE.**

*This woman (1) was a Samaritan, a person of mixed heritage whom the Jews normally avoided, (2) had a bad reputation, and (3) was in a public place. No respectable Jewish man would talk to a woman under such circumstances. But Jesus didn't let these excuses stop him from talking to the woman. Would you have done the same? Is there someone you normally avoid for various reasons? Like Jesus, are you prepared to cross all barriers to share the Good News?*

asked them when the boy had begun to get better, and they replied, "Yesterday afternoon at one o'clock his fever suddenly disappeared!" <sup>53</sup>Then the father realized that that was the very time Jesus had told him, "Your son will live." And he and his entire household believed in Jesus. <sup>54</sup>This was the second miraculous sign Jesus did in Galilee after coming from Judea.

## JESUS HEALS A LAME MAN

**5** Afterward Jesus returned to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish holy days. <sup>2</sup>Inside the city, near the Sheep Gate, was the pool of Bethesda,\* with five covered porches. <sup>3</sup>Crowds of sick people—blind, lame, or paralyzed—lay on the porches.\* <sup>5</sup>One of the men lying there had been sick for thirty-eight years. <sup>6</sup>When Jesus saw him and knew he had been ill for a long time, he asked him, "Would you like to get well?"

<sup>7</sup>"I can't, sir," the sick man said, "for I have no one to put me into the pool when the water bubbles up. Someone else always gets there ahead of me."

<sup>8</sup>Jesus told him, "Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk!"

<sup>9</sup>Instantly, the man was healed! He rolled up his sleeping mat and began walking! But this miracle happened on the Sabbath, <sup>10</sup>so the Jewish leaders objected. They said to the man who was cured, "You can't work on the Sabbath!

5:2 Other manuscripts read *Beth-zatha*; still others read *Bethsaida*. 5:3 Some manuscripts add an expanded conclusion to verse 3 and all of verse 4: *waiting for a certain movement of the water, for an angel of the Lord came from time to time and stirred up the water. And the first person to step in after the water was stirred was healed of whatever disease he had.*

### TRAPPED

**(5:6)** Jesus' question to a sick man, "Would you like to get well?" might have seemed strange. Of course he would want to get well . . . wouldn't he? But after thirty-eight years, this man's problem had become a way of life. He had no hope of ever being healed and no desire to help himself. Have you ever felt trapped like that? Many have. Unfortunately, a loss of hope has led some people to wonder if God cares at all. But God wants his people to keep on asking (Matthew 7:7) and to be willing to stick with him (John 15:4-8). God may have special work for you to do in spite of your condition, or even because of it. Many have ministered effectively to hurting people because they have triumphed, with God's help, over their own hurts.

The law doesn't allow you to carry that sleeping mat!"

<sup>11</sup>But he replied, "The man who healed me told me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.'"

<sup>12</sup>"Who said such a thing as that?" they demanded.

<sup>13</sup>The man didn't know, for Jesus had disappeared into the crowd. <sup>14</sup>But afterward Jesus found him in the Temple and told him, "Now you are well; so stop sinning, or something even worse may happen to you." <sup>15</sup>Then the man went and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had healed him.

## JESUS CLAIMS TO BE THE SON OF GOD

<sup>16</sup>So the Jewish leaders began harassing\* Jesus for breaking the Sabbath rules.

<sup>17</sup>But Jesus replied, "My Father is always working, and so am I." <sup>18</sup>So the Jewish leaders tried all the harder to find a way to kill him. For he not only broke the Sabbath, he called God his Father, thereby making himself equal with God.

<sup>19</sup>So Jesus explained, "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself. He does only what he sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son also does. <sup>20</sup>For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything he is doing. In fact, the Father will show him how to do even greater works than healing this man. Then you will truly be astonished. <sup>21</sup>For just as the Father gives life to those he raises from the dead, so the Son gives life to anyone he wants. <sup>22</sup>In addition, the Father judges no one. Instead, he has given the Son absolute authority to judge, <sup>23</sup>so that everyone will honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Anyone who does not honor the Son is certainly not honoring the Father who sent him.

### JUST LIKE HIM

*(5:19-23) Jesus told a crowd of people that he did whatever he saw the Father do. In other words, he imitated the Father's actions. Many people imitate the actions of their parents. For example, some may play a musical instrument or have the ability to fix cars because their parents have done so or encouraged them to do so. But Jesus' example encourages us to imitate the actions of another parent—our heavenly Father. The questions "What would Jesus do?" and "What would Jesus have me do?" can help us make the right choices.*

<sup>24</sup>"I tell you the truth, those who listen to my message and believe in God who sent me have eternal life. They will never be condemned for their sins, but they have already passed from death into life.

<sup>25</sup>"And I assure you that the time is coming, indeed it's here now, when the dead will hear my voice—the voice of the Son of God. And those who listen will live. <sup>26</sup>The Father has life in himself, and he has granted that same life-giving power to his Son. <sup>27</sup>And he has given him authority to judge everyone because he is the Son of Man.\* <sup>28</sup>Don't be so surprised! Indeed, the time is coming when all the dead in their graves will hear the voice of God's Son, <sup>29</sup>and they will rise again. Those who have done good will rise to experience eternal life, and those who have continued in evil will rise to experience judgment. <sup>30</sup>I can do nothing on my own. I judge as God tells me. Therefore, my judgment is just, because I carry out the will of the one who sent me, not my own will.

## WITNESSES TO JESUS

<sup>31</sup>"If I were to testify on my own behalf, my testimony would not be valid. <sup>32</sup>But someone else is also testifying about me, and I assure you that everything he says about me is true. <sup>33</sup>In fact, you sent investigators to listen to John the Baptist, and his testimony about me was true. <sup>34</sup>Of course, I have no need of human witnesses, but I say these things so you might be saved. <sup>35</sup>John was like a burning and shining lamp, and you were excited for a while about his message. <sup>36</sup>But I have a greater witness than John—my teachings and my miracles. The Father gave me these works to accomplish, and they prove that he sent me. <sup>37</sup>And the Father who sent me has testified about me himself. You have never heard his voice or seen him face to face, <sup>38</sup>and you do not have his message in your hearts, because you do not believe me—the one he sent to you.

<sup>39</sup>"You search the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life. But the Scriptures point to me! <sup>40</sup>Yet you refuse to come to me to receive this life.

<sup>41</sup>"Your approval means nothing to me, <sup>42</sup>because I know you don't have

5:16 Or persecuting. 5:27 "Son of Man" is a title Jesus used for himself.



# I survived



BRITTANY // 14

My sister and her friend were trying to fix me up. Their plan was to walk downtown with their boyfriends and me and “accidentally” meet this guy they had picked out for me.

When I realized what was happening, my mind started racing—thinking about what I could do and say to make this guy think I was cool. I wanted to make a good impression on him and get him to like me.

Then I changed my mind—why should I pretend to be something that I’m not just to get him to find me attractive. I decided I was going to be myself and let him like me or not like me for who I really was—not someone I was pretending to be.

Jesus refused to play the approval game by trying to impress the religious leaders. Their approval meant nothing to him. His only goal was to please God (his Father in heaven) and do what God sent him to earth to do.

The real love that’s most important to me comes from God, who accepts me even though he knows I’m not perfect. When I talk to him about my faults, he doesn’t get upset. He helps me do better. I want his approval more than anything a boyfriend can give me.



*Jesus tells us what he thinks of gaining others’ approval in John 5:41-44. Whose praise do you seek? The religious leaders enjoyed great prestige in Israel, but their stamp of approval meant nothing to Jesus. He was concerned about God’s approval. This is a good principle for us. If even the highest officials in the world approve of our actions and God does not, we should be concerned. But if God approves, even though others don’t, we should be content.*



- Made in God’s image, see Genesis 1:1-27.
- Valuable in God’s sight, see Luke 12:7.

# HOW CAN I *share* WHAT I **BELIEVE?**

## HAVE YOU EVER FOUND YOURSELF IN ONE OF THESE SITUATIONS?

- \* A friend has heard about your church and its youth programs. She knows you go there and asks something like this: "What does that church teach? What do you believe at that place anyway?" You're not sure how to put the important aspects of your beliefs into words that won't turn your friend off or make you and your church sound weird.
- \* Someone at school learns about your faith and begins to make fun of you. You want to answer in a kind and thoughtful way, but you're not sure what to say.
- \* A close friend is hurting. You want to encourage her and tell her about Jesus' love and forgiveness, but you don't know how.
- \* Your friend is telling you about her religion. Then she asks you what you believe. You wonder how you can tell her about Jesus without offending her.

In each of these situations, you feel compelled to share what you believe because . . .  
(turn the page)

# THE MOTIVATION

You know the truth about Jesus and his message of salvation, and you want to share it with others.

You know that people can't have eternal life with God if they don't know Jesus. You want them to know the forgiveness, peace, and purpose that you have found in the Savior.

You know that Jesus told his followers to spread the word about him (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8).

You know that the love of God, which he has shown to us in Jesus, can completely change people's lives, meet their needs, and heal their hurts.



*And you will be my  
witnesses, telling  
people about me  
everywhere.*

ACTS 1:8

## THE APPROACH

BEFORE GETTING INTO THE SPECIFICS OF WHAT YOU MIGHT SAY WHEN YOU SHARE YOUR STORY OF FAITH WITH OTHERS, WE NEED TO LOOK AT **WHAT** THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT **HOW** WE SHOULD SAY IT. FIRST PETER 3:8-16 LAYS EVERYTHING OUT CLEARLY:

Verse 8 says, "Keep a humble attitude." This means we shouldn't claim to have all the answers or act as though Christians are better than nonbelievers.

According to verse 9, we should not "repay evil with evil" or "retaliate with insults." In other words, we should keep our tempers in check and not respond in anger when we are put down for what we believe. Beyond this, we should be different than the world around us and act like Jesus. And we should pray that others will be attracted to him through how we live.

Verse 15 says, "Worship Christ as Lord of your life." This means that we should be living for Jesus (he's number one!) and looking for opportunities to serve him.

Verse 15 also tells us that we should "always be ready to explain" our faith "if someone asks about [our] hope as a believer." "Be ready" means that we may have to think through and practice what we will say. "Hope as a believer" refers to the eternal life we have through Christ.

Then in verse 16 we read, "Do this in a gentle and respectful way." This means we shouldn't be loud, argumentative, or pushy.



# TELLING YOUR STORY



EVERYONE HAS THEIR OWN PERSONAL STORY—AND YOURS IS IMPORTANT, NOT BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU HAVE DONE, BUT BECAUSE YOU ARE PART OF GOD'S BIG STORY. SHARING YOUR STORY WITH SOMEONE MIGHT SEEM A LITTLE SCARY, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO SHARING WHAT YOU BELIEVE. BUT IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE. HERE ARE SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN YOU HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO TELL YOUR STORY:

## YOU HAVE A STORY WORTH TELLING

It's okay if your story doesn't seem very exciting. You are a child of God, and your story with him is unique and wonderful.

## YOUR STORY IS STILL BEING WRITTEN

Since your story with God is ongoing, it's okay if it doesn't wrap up neatly. And you probably won't tell it the same way twice. Growth and new experiences will both add to the story and shape your perspective on it.

## EVERYONE'S STORY IS DIFFERENT

You don't have to make your story with God fit a certain formula or sound like someone else's. Tell it from your heart.

SO WHAT SHOULD YOU TALK ABOUT AS YOU TELL YOUR STORY? THERE ISN'T ONLY ONE CORRECT WAY TO DO IT, AND YOUR STORY IS UNIQUE, BUT HERE ARE SOME IDEAS TO GET YOU STARTED:

### YOU ARE PART OF GOD'S BIG STORY.

Your story is bigger than you. You could talk about how God created a good world, how sin infected the world, and how God sent his Son, Jesus, to save us from sin and to make it possible for us to live with God. (See "The Bible's Big Story: Old Testament," pages 2.1–2.8, and "The Bible's Big Story: New Testament," pages 3.1–3.8.)

### YOUR SINS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN.

Because Jesus died for us, when we believe in him, our sins are forgiven and we don't have to face the punishment we deserve.

### YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED TO SOMETHING, NOT JUST FROM SOMETHING.

Jesus didn't just die for our sins; he rose again so that we could live forever with God. For believers, that life with God has already started! Through the power of the Holy Spirit, you can live a transformed life **now**. God wants to be part of every aspect of your life, changing your thoughts, priorities, actions toward others—all of you!

### YOUR STORY IS GOING SOMEWHERE.

One day, Jesus will return, and this world will be renewed. Sin and death will be gone, and we will be with God forever.



For more on the basics of what Christians believe, see "What We Believe," page 6.8.

*Anyone who belongs to Christ  
has become a new person.  
The old life is gone;  
a new life has begun!*

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

# TELLING YOUR STORY (CONTINUED)

IN ADDITION TO TALKING ABOUT GOD'S BIG STORY THAT SHAPES WHAT YOU BELIEVE, YOU CAN TALK ABOUT THE SPECIFICS OF YOUR OWN PART IN THAT STORY:

## HOW DID YOUR STORY WITH GOD BEGIN?

For some people, their story with God has a clear starting point. Do you remember the first time you heard the Good News about Jesus? If you do, talk about it. Who was involved? What happened? How did you feel? For others, getting to know God is a gradual process; that's okay too. If this was your experience, you could talk about the people in your life who have shared God's love with you and some key events along the way that have been meaningful in your growing relationship with God.

## WHERE ARE YOU IN YOUR STORY WITH GOD NOW?

Is there anything in your life right now that is especially exciting or challenging? Is God teaching you anything specific through his Word, your church, or other believers?

## WHAT HOPES AND GOALS DO YOU HAVE FOR THE FUTURE?

While we never know for sure where God will take us in the future, we do know that he will be there with us.

Also, *listen to your friend*. Just because you're telling your story doesn't mean you need to do all the talking. Your friend might have questions for you, and she might want to share her own thoughts and experiences with you. If your friend is interested in finding out how to begin a relationship with God, pages 5.1–5.3 will help.

SHARING YOUR STORY WITH SOMEONE DOESN'T NEED TO END AFTER ONE CONVERSATION. HERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU CAN DO AFTER YOU TELL A FRIEND YOUR STORY:

### PRAY FOR YOUR FRIEND.

Ask God to change her life and to help her understand how much he loves her.



### DON'T GIVE UP.

At first, your friend might not be interested in what you have to say. Don't lose heart. Remember that changing someone's life is God's job, not yours.

### BE AVAILABLE, BUT NOT PUSHY.

Your friend might be ready to talk more about having a relationship with God when you least expect it. Wait for a conversation to develop naturally; don't force anything. Meanwhile, keep praying, and focus on being a good friend (see "How to Be a Good Friend," page 8.1).

### LIVE IT OUT.

Telling your story isn't the only way to share with others what God is doing in your life. As you get to know God better and live in a way that honors him, other people will catch glimpses of the way God is changing you. (For several practical ways to honor God with your life, see "Faith Skills," pages 7.1–7.8, and "Life Skills," pages 8.1–8.8.)



# WHAT WE BELIEVE

IN ADDITION TO TELLING THE STORY OF HOW YOU CAME TO FAITH IN CHRIST, YOU MAY ALSO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE THE BASICS OF WHAT CHRISTIANS BELIEVE ABOUT . . .

**GOD:** God not only exists and created the universe, including all human beings, but he also loves all people, no matter what they have done (see John 3:16). God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—one God, three persons (the Trinity).

**THE BIBLE:** God has revealed himself in his Word, the Holy Scriptures. Through the Holy Spirit, God inspired writers to faithfully record what he wanted his people to know. Everything in the Bible is true (see 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

**JESUS:** God the Father sent his Son, Jesus, to the earth (see Philippians 2:5-11). He was born as a baby to the Virgin Mary. He lived as a full human being but never sinned, even though he was tempted in every way (see Hebrews 4:15). Eventually he was falsely accused and condemned to death. Then on the cross, he suffered and died for the sins of all who would believe in him, taking their place. He was buried, but he rose from the dead on the third day and now lives in heaven (see Acts 2:22-24, 32-33). Eventually he will return to earth to set up his Kingdom (see Acts 1:9-11).

**HOLY SPIRIT:** Jesus promised he would send his Spirit to live in believers and work through them in the world (see John 16:5-15). All who have trusted in Christ as Savior have the Holy Spirit in them (see Ephesians 1:12-14; 1 John 4:4).

**SALVATION:** All people are separated from God because of sin (see Romans 3:23; 6:23; Ephesians 2:1-3). But God, in his love, provided the way to forgiveness and eternal life by sending his Son to die on the cross and be raised to life (see Romans 4:25; 1 John 4:9-10). Now, those who trust in Christ as Savior have their sins forgiven and are adopted into God's family (see John 1:10-13; Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 1:3-8).