

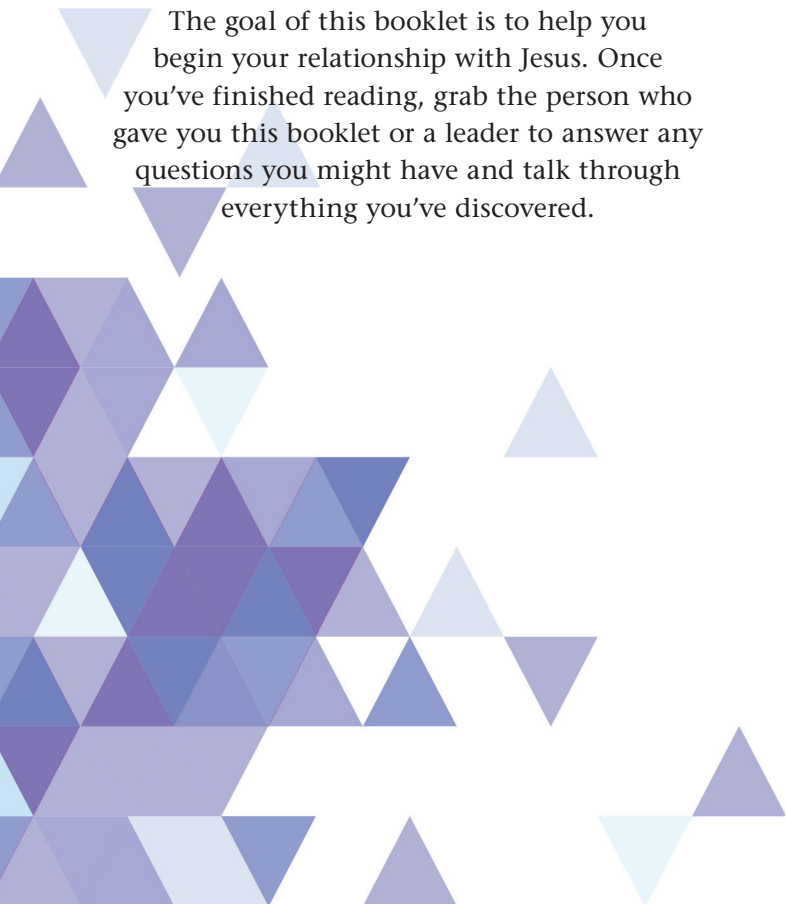


CONTENTS

Welcome!	7
1. A Relationship with God	9
2. Learning to Follow	13
3. Conversations with God	17
4. God's Message to You	21
5. Relationships with Others	23
6. Your Next Steps	26
7. Tell Your Story	28

The booklet is divided into seven main sections. You can either read one per day for a week or at a speed you find comfortable.

The goal of this booklet is to help you begin your relationship with Jesus. Once you've finished reading, grab the person who gave you this booklet or a leader to answer any questions you might have and talk through everything you've discovered.





WELCOME!

Deciding to make Jesus part of your life is one of the best decisions you'll ever make! Jesus loves you very much, and He's had a special plan for your life since the beginning.

As you enter this new phase of your life, you probably have a lot of questions. You're not alone! Every person who has chosen to follow Jesus, no matter how young or old, has been where you are. This booklet was created to help you find answers and navigate this exciting new journey.

If you have a Bible, you'll want to use it as you read along. Becoming familiar with it is an important first step as a Christian. If you don't have one, ask the person who gave you this booklet to provide a Bible for you. That person should also be able to help you understand how to navigate your Bible and help you with questions as you read through this booklet.

Don't hesitate to ask questions if you have them. The person who cared enough to give you this booklet will also care enough to help you find answers to the many questions you'll likely have.

Just like with anything new in life, you have to start somewhere. Today is the day you begin learning how to trust and follow Jesus. By the time you finish this booklet, you'll have a much better understanding of what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

Congratulations and welcome to a new chapter in your life!



1 A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Becoming a follower of Jesus is a life-changing experience. Whether you accepted Him at church, alone, or with a friend, your life is now moving a new direction. It's a direction toward God—the One who created everything and everyone—and His Son, Jesus. It's the direction you were born to go.

You may be wondering, *What just happened?* You took the first step in a relationship with the One who created you. God cares for you and has amazing plans for your life. He loves you so much that He sent His Son, Jesus, to bring you closer to Him. That probably raised even more questions, and that's okay! This booklet will help you begin to understand what's next in your new relationship with God. Your spiritual journey begins now!

GETTING CLOSE TO GOD

Becoming close to God requires building a relationship with Him. And like with any friend, building a relationship with God means things like talking to Him, spending time with Him, and learning more about Him. People who have a relationship with God, through Jesus, are called Christians. And now, you're a Christian!

? Think about your closest friendships. What makes those friendships special?

? What things do you do to keep your friendships on track? Are there any of those things that might relate to being a friend of God?

One of the first things a new Christian needs to do is to carve out time in your day to spend with God. That time should be spent in daily prayer and Bible study so that you can begin to discover what's important to Him.

Every time you pray and read your Bible, your relationship with God will deepen.

GOD'S GIFT TO YOU

Building healthy relationships requires giving on both sides. In your case, you gave your life to God when you asked Jesus into your heart. In turn, God forgave your sins and brought you closer to Him. Sin is when you choose to do something wrong, and those wrong acts keep you from a close relationship with God.

The Bible, God's message to His people, has a few things to say about sin.

But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.

Isaiah 59:2

So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.

James 4:17 (ESV)

Everyone has done things they know aren't right. Maybe you cheated. Maybe you've lied.

Those things separated you from the God who created you. But that is the past. Today is a new day, and God has forgiven all of your past sins!

That isn't the end of sin. Every day you will have to make right choices and avoid sinning. But you aren't alone! As you walk with God, He will give you strength to overcome sin and change you for the better.

You will make mistakes along the way, but don't get discouraged! Even through mistakes, God can teach you valuable lessons if you're willing to learn. There are lots of things to learn on this new journey in life. One of the first steps is making time for God and godly things in your life. You'll learn more about that in the next section.

? What are some ways you can make time for God in your busy life?

? What are two ways you imagine you can deepen your relationship with God?