



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

KNOWING JESUS

Following the Example of Jesus

A Beginner Guide to Learning From the Way He Lived

The short answer

Look to Jesus. Receive His grace. Learn His ways. Depend on the Holy Spirit. Then practice His humility, compassion, truth, prayer, obedience, service, courage, and love in the ordinary places of your life.

“He who says he remains in him ought himself also to walk just like he walked.”

1 John 2:6 WEB

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PART ONE · BEGINNER GUIDE

Jesus did not only tell us the way—He showed us

This Companion was not written to replace your Bible. It was written to help you fall in love with it. Every page is intended to send you back into God's Word with greater confidence, deeper understanding, and a clearer picture of Jesus Christ.

The Gospels let us watch Jesus pray, welcome people, speak truth, serve, obey the Father, endure suffering, and remain faithful. His life shows what perfect love for God and people looks like.

Begin with the Gospel

Following Jesus is not copying enough good behavior to earn God's love. Jesus first saves sinners by grace. Those who belong to Him are then changed by the Holy Spirit to become more like Him (Romans 5:6–8; 8:29; Ephesians 2:8–10).

Three truths to remember

01

Jesus is more than an example

He is the Son of God, Lord, Savior, and the only One whose death atones for sin.

02

His example is truly for us

Jesus calls His disciples to learn from Him and follow His pattern of love, humility, service, and obedience.

03

The Spirit forms His character in us

We cannot become like Jesus through willpower alone. Growth comes through abiding in Christ and walking by the Spirit.

How to use this guide

Read each Gospel passage in context. Ask what Jesus reveals, what is unique to Him, and what faithful response He models for His followers.



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A SIMPLE WAY TO BEGIN

Slow down and watch Jesus closely

When reading a Gospel story, it is easy to focus only on the miracle, conflict, or outcome. Pause and notice Jesus Himself—His priorities, words, emotions, actions, relationships, and dependence on the Father.

Ask four beginner questions

01

What does Jesus notice?

Who receives His attention? What need, sin, fear, faith, injustice, or opportunity does He see?

02

How does Jesus respond?

Does He comfort, question, teach, warn, heal, withdraw, forgive, confront, serve, or pray?

03

What does this reveal about His heart?

Look for compassion, holiness, patience, courage, truth, mercy, humility, and love.

04

What is mine to follow?

Ask how a disciple could reflect His character without pretending to possess His unique authority or role.

Keep the whole story in view

One scene may highlight gentleness and another strong correction. Jesus is never divided against Himself. His compassion is holy, His truth is loving, and His actions perfectly express the Father's character.

Beginner memory anchor

Watch Jesus. Know His heart. Receive His grace. Follow His way.



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JESUS AND THE FATHER

Live from a close relationship with God

Jesus lived in perfect fellowship with His Father. He sought the Father's will, spoke the Father's words, and completed the work the Father gave Him (John 4:34; 5:19; 8:28–29; 17:4).

What His example shows us

01

Know whose you are

Jesus' public ministry begins with the Father's declaration of love and delight (Matthew 3:16–17). Believers also live from a received identity, not a manufactured one.

02

Seek God's will

Jesus did not treat His own comfort as the highest good. He desired the Father's purposes above every competing pressure.

03

Trust God's timing

Jesus refused attempts to control His mission or force action outside the Father's appointed time (John 2:4; 7:6–8).

04

Finish faithfully

Jesus remained focused on the work entrusted to Him rather than chasing every demand or human expectation.

Our relationship is not identical to His

Jesus is the eternal Son by nature. Believers become God's children by grace through faith and adoption in Christ (John 1:12–13; Galatians 4:4–7). We follow His trusting obedience without confusing our identity with His.

Practice

Before making a decision, ask: What has God already made clear in Scripture? What response would honor Him here?



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A LIFE OF PRAYER

Jesus made room to be alone with the Father

The Gospels repeatedly show Jesus praying—before major decisions, after demanding ministry, in sorrow, for His disciples, and on the cross (Luke 3:21–22; 5:15–16; 6:12–13; 22:39–46; 23:34, 46; John 17).

01

Pray before important choices

Jesus spent the night in prayer before choosing the twelve apostles (Luke 6:12–13).

02

Pray when life is busy

As crowds gathered, Jesus still withdrew to deserted places to pray (Luke 5:15–16).

03

Pray honestly in distress

In Gethsemane, Jesus expressed deep anguish while submitting to the Father's will (Matthew 26:36–46).

04

Pray for other people

Jesus prayed for His disciples' protection, holiness, unity, and future witness (John 17:6–26).

Prayer did not remove every difficulty

Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane did not remove the cross. Prayer strengthened His faithful surrender within the Father's saving purpose. We may ask boldly while trusting God's wisdom with the answer.

A simple pattern

Pause. Tell the Father the truth. Ask for what you need. Submit to His will. Receive strength for the next faithful step.



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COMPASSION

Jesus saw people others overlooked

Jesus was moved with compassion for hungry crowds, grieving families, sick people, confused seekers, and those who were spiritually lost (Matthew 9:35–36; 14:13–21; 20:29–34; Luke 7:11–17).

His compassion was personal and practical

01

He stopped

Jesus allowed a suffering person to interrupt the expected flow of the day (Mark 5:25–34).

02

He listened and asked

He often invited people to name what they wanted or believed rather than treating them as problems to manage.

03

He moved toward need

Jesus touched people considered unclean and welcomed those pushed to the margins (Mark 1:40–42).

04

He met deeper needs

Physical care mattered, but Jesus also addressed sin, faith, truth, reconciliation, and eternal life.

Compassion needs wisdom

Following Jesus does not mean meeting every request, ignoring safety, or assuming we can fix every problem. It means seeing people as image-bearers, responding with love, and seeking their true good.

Practice

Ask God to help you notice one person today. Listen before assuming. Then choose one truthful, practical act of care.



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GRACE AND TRUTH

Jesus welcomed sinners and called them to change

Jesus received people whom religious society often rejected. He ate with tax collectors and sinners, defended the vulnerable, and offered forgiveness. He also called people to repent, leave sin, and follow Him (Mark 2:13–17; Luke 19:1–10; John 8:10–11).

His example holds together what we often separate

01

Grace without pretending sin is harmless

Jesus' mercy never required Him to rename darkness as light.

02

Truth without contempt

He could expose sin while treating the person before Him as someone worth pursuing.

03

Welcome with an invitation to follow

Jesus met people where they were, but His call led them toward repentance, faith, and a new direction.

04

Patience without passivity

He taught imperfect disciples repeatedly while also correcting unbelief, pride, and hardness of heart.

A needed guardrail

We do not possess Jesus' perfect knowledge of another person's heart. Speak truth from Scripture with humility, examine yourself first, and avoid using "truth" as permission for cruelty (Matthew 7:1–5; Ephesians 4:15).

Watch Jesus hold both together

At Jacob's well, Jesus treated a Samaritan woman with dignity, offered living water, and spoke honestly about her life. He neither shamed her nor avoided the truth; the conversation led her toward recognizing who He is (John 4:4–30, 39–42).

Memory anchor

Welcome the person. Tell the truth. Point to grace. Invite the next faithful step.



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HUMILITY AND SERVICE

Jesus took the place of a servant

Although Jesus is Lord, He did not use greatness for self-exaltation. He washed His disciples' feet and told them to follow His example (John 13:1–17). He came “not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45 WEB).

01

Use strength for another's good

Jesus' authority became an occasion for service, protection, teaching, healing, and sacrifice.

02

Do unnoticed work

Foot washing was lowly work. Christlike service does not need applause to have value.

03

Refuse status competition

Jesus corrected disciples who argued about greatness and placed a child among them (Mark 9:33–37).

04

Serve with willing love

Biblical service is not people-pleasing or enabling harm. It seeks God's honor and another person's good.

Humility is not pretending you have no value

Jesus knew who He was and where He was going before He washed the disciples' feet (John 13:3–5). Secure identity made lowly service possible. Humility is truthful self-forgetfulness under God—not self-hatred.

Practice

Choose one useful act that may not be noticed. Do it faithfully for God, without keeping score.



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GENEROSITY, JOY, AND CELEBRATION

Jesus received people with openhearted grace

Jesus attended a wedding, shared meals, welcomed children, received hospitality, and used pictures of feasts and celebration to describe God's kingdom (John 2:1–11; Luke 5:27–32; 10:38–42; 15:1–32; 18:15–17). His holy life was not cold, joyless, or detached from ordinary human relationships.

What His example shows us

01

Receive ordinary gifts with gratitude

Meals, friendships, celebrations, beauty, rest, and hospitality can be received as gifts from God rather than treated as spiritually unimportant.

02

Make room at the table

Jesus shared meals with people others avoided. Hospitality can communicate dignity, welcome, attention, and truth.

03

Give without needing repayment

Jesus taught His followers to be generous toward people who could not improve their status or return the favor (Luke 14:12–14).

04

Celebrate repentance and restoration

In Luke 15, heaven's joy over a sinner who repents is pictured through searching, welcome, recovery, and a feast.

Joy and holiness belong together

Jesus never used celebration as an excuse for sin or self-indulgence. He shows a joy rooted in the Father, a generosity directed toward another person's good, and a holiness that remains full of love.

Practice

Offer one gift of attention, encouragement, hospitality, time, or practical help without expecting recognition or repayment.



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RELATIONSHIPS AND LIMITS

Jesus loved deeply without being controlled by every demand

Jesus welcomed crowds, invested closely in the twelve, shared particular moments with Peter, James, and John, and maintained meaningful friendships. He also withdrew, moved on, said no, and refused manipulation.

01

Love people without living for approval

Jesus cared about people but did not entrust Himself to human praise or pressure (John 2:23–25; 5:41–44).

02

Make room for close community

He invited disciples to share daily life, meals, ministry, questions, correction, and rest.

03

Step away to pray and rest

Jesus sometimes left the crowd and called His disciples to rest (Mark 1:35–38; 6:30–32).

04

Do not cooperate with manipulation

He declined traps, exposed false motives, and remained governed by the Father's mission.

Boundaries can be loving

A boundary is not automatically rejection or selfishness. Wise limits can protect time, truth, health, safety, responsibility, and the work God has actually entrusted to us.

Practice

Ask: Is this request mine to carry? Can I respond with both kindness and truth? What limit would protect faithful love?



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COURAGE AND INTEGRITY

Jesus obeyed God when faithfulness was costly

Jesus spoke truth before religious leaders, rulers, crowds, friends, and enemies. He did not shape His message to preserve popularity (Matthew 23; Mark 8:31–33; John 18:33–38).

Christlike courage is

01	Rooted in truth Courage is not confidence in our opinions. Jesus' words and actions perfectly agreed with the Father.
02	Governed by love Jesus could confront strongly without personal revenge, contempt, or delight in another's downfall.
03	Willing to be misunderstood He remained faithful when crowds left, leaders accused Him, and even disciples struggled to understand.
04	Free from needless provocation Jesus did not avoid necessary conflict, but neither did He create conflict to appear bold.

He also knew when to remain silent

Before some accusers, Jesus answered briefly or not at all (Matthew 26:62–64; 27:11–14). Faithfulness may require speaking, asking a question, waiting, leaving, or refusing to argue.

Memory anchor

Courage is faithful love under pressure—not volume, anger, or the need to win.



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TEMPTATION AND OBEDIENCE

Jesus answered temptation with trust in God's Word

After His baptism, Jesus was tempted in the wilderness. He refused to use power for self-serving independence, test the Father, or gain kingdoms through worshiping evil (Matthew 4:1–11; Luke 4:1–13).

Notice His pattern

01	He recognized the lie beneath the offer Each temptation invited Jesus to distrust the Father or reach a good end through an unfaithful path.
02	He answered from Scripture Jesus quoted Deuteronomy in context as the truth governing His loyalty and choices.
03	He refused shortcuts He would receive the kingdom through obedience and the cross—not through compromise.
04	He endured rather than negotiated Jesus did not explore how close He could come to sin. He remained loyal to the Father.

Jesus' victory is first good news

Jesus resisted where Israel and all humanity have failed. We do not save ourselves by imitating His wilderness victory. We trust the victorious Savior, then learn to resist temptation through Scripture, prayer, the Spirit, and wise action (Hebrews 4:14–16).

Practice

Name the temptation. Identify the lie. Find the truth in context. Choose the next obedient action and seek help early.



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FAITHFULNESS IN SUFFERING

Jesus entrusted Himself to the Father

Jesus experienced betrayal, false accusation, abandonment, humiliation, violence, and death. He did not repay evil with evil. He entrusted Himself to the One who judges justly (Luke 23:34; 1 Peter 2:21–24).

01

He told the truth about sorrow

Jesus said His soul was deeply grieved and asked trusted disciples to remain near (Matthew 26:36–38).

02

He asked the Father honestly

He prayed that the cup might pass while surrendering to the Father's will.

03

He refused sinful retaliation

Jesus did not answer cruelty with cruelty or abandon His saving mission.

04

He held suffering within future hope

He endured the cross with the joy set before Him and was raised in victory (Hebrews 12:2).

Following His example does not mean remaining in abuse

Jesus sometimes escaped danger, confronted wrongdoing, appealed to truth, and entrusted justice to God. Seeking safety, medical care, counseling, church help, legal protection, or law enforcement can be wise and faithful.

Forgiveness and justice can coexist

Releasing personal vengeance does not call evil good, erase consequences, guarantee restored trust, or forbid appropriate protection.



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PURPOSE AND MISSION

Jesus stayed focused on why He came

Jesus described His mission in several ways: to seek and save the lost, call sinners, proclaim good news, reveal the Father, serve, give His life, and bear witness to the truth (Mark 1:38; 2:17; 10:45; Luke 4:16–21; 19:10; John 18:37).

His example helps us live on purpose

01

Know the central mission

Jesus came to accomplish redemption. His followers now make disciples and bear witness to Him (Matthew 28:18–20; Acts 1:8).

02

Do good without confusing the Gospel

Compassionate service displays God's love, while the good news names Jesus' death, resurrection, lordship, and call to faith.

03

Stay faithful to your assignment

Jesus did not meet every demand in every town. He completed the work the Father gave Him.

04

Send and serve together

Jesus formed a people who would continue His witness in the Spirit's power—not isolated spiritual consumers.

You are a witness, not the Savior

We can speak truth, love people, pray, serve, and invite a response. Only Jesus saves, and only the Holy Spirit can awaken a heart (John 6:44; 16:7–11; 1 Corinthians 3:5–7).

Practice

Pray for one person by name. Ask God for a natural opportunity to listen, serve, and speak honestly about Jesus.



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PRACTICAL TOOL · A WEEKLY RHYTHM

Learn one trait of Jesus at a time

01	Choose a Gospel scene Read one complete paragraph or story slowly at least twice.
02	Observe Jesus Write what He notices, feels, says, does, refuses, and prioritizes.
03	Name the trait Compassion, humility, courage, patience, truth, prayer, obedience, service, or another quality may stand out.
04	Connect it to the Gospel How does this scene reveal why you need Jesus or what He has done for you?
05	Choose one response Make it specific: a conversation, apology, prayer, boundary, act of service, truth to remember, or sin to confess.
06	Ask the Spirit for help The Spirit directs us to Jesus, reminds us of His words, renews our desires, and produces Christlike fruit (John 14:26; 16:13–14; Galatians 5:16–25).
07	Review with grace Notice growth, confess failure, receive forgiveness, and continue following.

Dependence is part of the practice

Following Jesus requires the Spirit's power. Remain in Christ through Scripture and prayer, respond as He leads, and take one small faithful step (John 15:4–5; 2 Corinthians 3:18).



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PART TWO · WANT TO DIG DEEPER? · INTERMEDIATE

Imitate Jesus without flattening His identity

This section is optional

The beginner guide is complete without this page. Continue when you are ready to think more carefully about how narrative, Christ's unique identity, and discipleship fit together.

Not everything Jesus did is ours to reproduce

Jesus is the eternal Son, sinless Messiah, final Prophet, great High Priest, King, Creator, Judge, and Savior. His atoning death and resurrection are unique and unrepeatable. We imitate His self-giving love and obedience; we do not imitate His identity or claim His authority as our own (Colossians 1:15–20; Hebrews 7:23–28).

Narrative describes before it commands

A Gospel account tells what happened. To apply it faithfully, ask whether Jesus or another biblical writer commands, commends, or interprets the action as a pattern for believers. John 13:12–17 and 1 Peter 2:21 make imitation explicit.

Philippians 2:5–11 calls us to His mindset

Paul presents Jesus' humble self-giving as the pattern for Christian relationships. The passage does not teach that Jesus stopped being God. It shows the eternal Son refusing self-exalting advantage, taking the form of a servant, and obeying to the cross.

Jesus fulfilled His mission in the Spirit's power

The Gospels present Jesus as conceived by the Spirit, anointed by the Spirit, led by the Spirit, and ministering in the Spirit's power (Luke 1:35; 3:21–22; 4:1, 14, 18). Believers remain dependent creatures, but His Spirit now indwells and forms His people.

Intermediate memory anchor

Distinguish His unique saving work from His imitable character; then follow the pattern Scripture itself commends.



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REVIEW AND REFLECTION

Look to Jesus—and take one faithful step

Which Gospel scene helps me see Jesus more clearly? _____

What quality of His character stands out? _____

What does this reveal about the Father's heart? _____

How is Jesus more than an example in this passage? _____

What part of His example am I called to follow? _____

Where do I need grace, repentance, wisdom, or courage? _____

What is one specific response I will practice? _____

Who could pray with me or help me follow through? _____

A simple prayer

Jesus, thank You for saving me and showing me the Father. Help me know You more truly and follow You more closely. By Your Spirit, form Your humility, compassion, truth, courage, prayerfulness, obedience, and love in me. Show me one faithful step today, and give me grace to take it. Amen.

One faithful summary

Jesus is not merely our example—He is our Savior and Lord. Because He has loved and saved us, we can learn His ways and depend on the Holy Spirit to make our lives increasingly look like His.

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THE MOST IMPORTANT INVITATION

Would you like to begin following Jesus?

Jesus' perfect example is beautiful, but it also shows how far every one of us falls short. We cannot save ourselves by trying harder or copying His behavior. All have sinned and need the Savior (Romans 3:23).

God did for us what we could not do for ourselves. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, lived without sin, died for our sins, and rose from the dead. Through Him, God offers forgiveness, reconciliation, and eternal life as a gift of grace (Romans 5:6–8; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:3–4; Ephesians 2:8–9).

How do we respond?

01

Turn toward God

Repentance means turning from sin and self-rule toward God. It is not becoming perfect before you come to Him (Acts 3:19).

02

Believe in Jesus

Trust that Jesus is Lord and that His death and resurrection are sufficient to save you (John 3:16; Romans 10:9–10).

03

Call on Him

Confess your need, place your trust in Jesus, and ask Him to forgive and lead you. "Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Romans 10:13 WEB).

A prayer can express your faith

Jesus, I know that I have sinned and cannot save myself. I believe You died for my sins and rose again. I turn to You, ask for Your forgiveness, and trust You as my Savior and Lord. Help me follow You and grow in Your Word. Amen.

A prayer is not a magic formula—the words themselves do not save us. Jesus saves everyone who truly comes to Him in faith. If you have trusted Christ, begin reading His Word, tell another faithful Christian, connect with a Bible-believing local church, and learn about baptism and discipleship (Matthew 28:18–20; Acts 2:38–42).