



FOLLOWING JESUS

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# YOUR NEXT STEPS

A photograph of a man and a woman smiling. The woman, in the foreground, has curly hair and wears glasses and a light-colored blazer. The man, in the background, has dark hair and a beard. The image is slightly overexposed, creating a bright, airy feel.

COME AS YOU ARE! ➤

# CONGRATULATIONS!

If you just said yes to a relationship with Jesus, we believe that **YOU'VE JUST MADE THE BEST DECISION OF YOUR ENTIRE LIFE.** All of heaven is rejoicing and we want to celebrate this exciting moment with you!

In the Bible, Jesus said, “*...and I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.*” Abundant life begins the moment you step into a relationship with Jesus Christ. The hope, joy, and peace that comes through abundant life is something that God desires for every man, woman, and child to experience through Him. But saying yes to a relationship with Jesus is just the first step.

## **SO WHAT'S NEXT?**

Our prayer is that this booklet serves as a guide to gaining a greater understanding of the decision you've just made and practical next steps you can take in your journey of faith as you grow in your relationship with Jesus.

# WHAT IS SALVATION?



From the beginning of creation, God's heart has always been set on intimate relationships with His people.



But God's people were deceived by Satan, and went against what God had said causing sin to enter the world.

Sin caused the once perfect relationship between God and Humanity to be broken. (Romans 3:23)

But, God's heart never changed for His people. Every human is born into sin which has a massive payment, death.

But, because of God's love for His people, He sent His son, Jesus, to take our place. (2 Corinthians 5:21)



Jesus died to pay the penalty for our sin, was buried in a sealed tomb, and on the third day, rose from the grave and won the victory for us.

(1 Corinthians 15:3-4)



Our part is to respond to what God has done for us by acknowledging that we cannot save ourselves and by believing in faith that Jesus came, lived a sinless life, and died the death that we deserved to make the payment for our sins. (Romans 10:9)

When you give your life to Jesus, you are given a new heart with a new purpose. (Ezekiel 36:26)

Every day of our lives, we continue to respond to what God did by giving our lives as a living sacrifice and walking in obedience to what He has called us to do.

It's the journey of a lifetime, and you are just getting started. You will continue to discover more about this journey throughout the following few pages.



WHAT'S NEXT? ➤

# BAPTISM

A life committed to following Jesus will be marked by obedience.

Obedience to God's Word and the Holy Spirit's direction in our life is what we are called to be as Jesus followers.

The first step of obedience that God calls us to as we enter a relationship with Him is baptism. God specifically commanded his disciples in Matthew 25 to go and make more disciples and to baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As followers of Jesus, our desire should be to follow the example that He set while He lived on earth. Before Jesus ever entered into public ministry, He was baptized by his cousin, John the Baptist.

Romans 6:4 gives us a clear picture of what baptism is: "We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in the newness of life." As we can see in this verse, baptism is a symbol of us dying to our sinful nature and rising to walk in the new life that God has given us in Christ.

If you have made the decision to follow Jesus, baptism is your first step of obedience.

To learn more about BAPTISM, visit [citychurchmadison.org/baptism](http://citychurchmadison.org/baptism) or scan the QR code.





COMMUNITY ➤

# LIFE IS BETTER TOGETHER

Not only did God create us for an intimate relationship with Himself, but He also created us for relationships with each other. At City Church, we believe that we are better together. This isn't just a catchy phrase to us. This is a way of life, and it is the way of life that Jesus modeled for us.

While Jesus was on earth, He lived life very closely with His 12 disciples. They did everything together. They traveled together, ate together, and grew together. They lived life together. And that is God's heart for us as well. God knew that we couldn't live this life alone. We need other followers of Jesus around us to encourage us, pray for us, hold us accountable, and so much more. Living life together is one of the most significant ways God grows us in our relationship with Him.

To learn more about CONNECT GROUPS at City Church visit: [citychurchmadison.org/groups](http://citychurchmadison.org/groups) or scan the QR code to find a group right for you.





SERVING ➤

# SERVING

When we respond to what Jesus did and enter into a relationship with God, we also take our place in the body of Christ, The Church. When God created us, He gave us specific skills and talents to be used for His glory within the body of Christ.

Romans 12:4-6 says: *“For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one Body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them...”*

As you are beginning to follow Jesus, it's essential to know that you have an indispensable role to play. The body is healthy and effective when every part functions together to accomplish the mission that Jesus called us to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

Serving at City Church gives you a way to take what God has put inside of you and use it to build the Kingdom of God so that we can reach every man, woman, and child with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

To learn more about SERVING at City Church, visit: [citychurchmadison.org/connect](http://citychurchmadison.org/connect), scroll to serve, and click on the sign up button. Or, scan the QR code to learn about the variety of ways you can serve at City Church.





## HOW TO GROW IN YOUR FAITH ➤

# LISTEN

To live a life of obedience, it is essential to get to know God's heart, His character, and what He has said. We get to know these things by spending time in The Bible. Scripture is the foundation for all truth in our lives. It's where we get to see God's character through every story and see His heart for His people throughout all 66 books of the Bible. When we get to know God's heart, we learn to trust His ways. And the more that we trust His ways, the more we will listen and live a life of obedience.

God gave us His Word not only to get to know Him, but also as a guide for our lives. Psalm 119:105 says: "Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path." We can see God's desire for our lives when we dig into the pages of scripture. We learn that His way is better as we take the time to study His Word, listen and apply it to our daily lives.

We want to help you grow in your relationship with God through His Word from the very beginning. Included in this booklet is a guide to help you get into scripture each day while reading through the book of John. Use this guide to help you get started as you learn to love God's Word for the gift that it is.

You can also access our weekly services on the City Church website and HEAR powerful messages about God and His love for us any time you want! Click on the QR code or visit: [citychurchmadison.org/media](http://citychurchmadison.org/media)



# PRAYER

Prayer is simply communication with God. Isn't it incredible that because of what Jesus did, we now have direct access to talk to God. At any moment, you can have a conversation with the creator of the universe. Take a minute to really think about that: it's incredible, right?

There is no fancy wording or correct formula to pray; however, Jesus does give us a clear example of what prayer looks like in Matthew 6:9-15. He says, "Pray then like this: "Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

# WORSHIP

**Romans 12:1 says:** "I appeal to you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship."

Worship is the proper response to experiencing God. **Psalm 29:2 says,** "Honor the Lord for the glory of His name. Worship the Lord in the splendor of His holiness." Every Sunday, City Church gathers with believers from all across the world to worship God, discover His plan for our lives, and learn how to live out His priorities. Worship also takes place every day of your life. When we see God for who He is and everything He has done for us, we can't help but live a life of worship. Worship is us choosing every day to honor God and walk in obedience to His Word and the Holy Spirit's leading in our lives.

## SHARE

Chances are, you began your relationship with God because someone took the time to share the Gospel with you. And that is exactly how God designed it. Jesus, before ascending back into Heaven after He rose from the dead, commanded His disciples to “go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19; 20)

We are not meant to keep this Good News to ourselves. Jesus has commanded us to share this gift of Salvation with the people we come into contact with within our everyday lives.

As followers of Christ, we know the gift of having our lives changed by the power of God through what Jesus did on the cross. And out of love for those around us, we should want to share that gift so that they, too, can experience the abundant life of following Jesus.

# THE S.O.A.P. METHOD

As a new believer, the most important thing you can begin to do is study God's Word. The SOAP method is a simple technique that can help you begin the discipline of Bible study. We want to teach and encourage the SOAP method of Bible Study for everyone at City Church.

The SOAP method of Bible study is not simply reading the Bible. You will soon see that it helps you interact with God's Word and helps you discover life principles and truths for your daily walk with the Lord. You will need a Bible, a pencil, a notebook, and about 15 minutes. Before you know it, you will be digging into God's truth for yourself.

## **S - Scripture**

The "S" stands for Scripture. You need to write out the Scriptures in your notebook. If you read a large passage of Scripture, just write out the verses that stood out to you.

## **O - Observation**

The "O" stands for observation. This step encourages you to interact with the Scriptures that you have written out in your notebook. What do you see? What stands out? What didn't you notice before? Is there repetition, comparison or contrast? During this step you basically ask yourself, what do I see and what does it mean?

## **A - Application**

The "A" stands for application. This step encourages you to make God's Word personal in your life. What is God saying to me today? How can I apply what I have just read to my walk with the Lord. Do I need to make changes? Do I need to take action?

## **P - Prayer**

The "P" stands for prayer. This step involves thanking God for what you read today: asking God to work in your life concerning the truths you've just discovered in your Bible reading, and to give you the wisdom, courage, strength and discipline to apply them to your walk with the Lord.

# THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

The Gospel of John is a good book of the Bible to read as you begin your spiritual journey. John presents Jesus as the Son of God with a clear purpose: to reveal His divine nature and inspire faith in those who read His account. You will also discover that John's gospel is topical, not primarily chronological, and it revolves around seven miracles and seven "I am" statements of Christ. You will enjoy reading this Gospel ("Good News") account of the life of Jesus Christ!

## **6 WEEKS THROUGH THE GOSPEL OF JOHN**

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The Deity of Christ

**DAY 1** - John 1:1-28

Jesus, the Lamb of God, Calls the First Disciples

**DAY 2** - John 1:29-51

Jesus Performs First Sign: Turns Water to Wine

**DAY 3** - John 2:1-12

Jesus Clears the Temple

**DAY 4** - John 2:13-25

Jesus Witnesses to Nicodemus

**DAY 5** - John 3:1-21

John the Baptist Witnesses Concerning Christ

**DAY 6** - John 3:22-36

Jesus Witnesses to the Woman at the Well

**DAY 7** - John 4:1-26

Jesus Witnesses to the Disciples and Samaritans

**DAY 8** - John 4:27-45

Jesus' Second Sign: Heals the Nobleman's Son

**DAY 9** - John 4:46-54

Jesus' Third Sign: Heals the Paralytic Man

**DAY 10** - 5:1-47

Jesus' Fourth Sign: Feeds 5,000

**DAY 11** - John 6:1-14

Jesus Fifth Sign: Walks on Water

**DAY 12** - John 6:15-21

“I Am the Bread of Life”

**DAY 13** - John 6:22-71

The Opposition at the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem

**DAY 14** - John 7:1-53

A Woman Caught in Adultery

**DAY 15** - John 8:1-11

Jesus Announces, “I Am the Light of the World”

**DAY 16** - John 8:12-59

Jesus' Sixth Sign: Heals the Blind Man

**DAY 17** - John 9:1-41

Christ Announces, “I Am the Good Shepherd”

**DAY 18** - John 10:1-21

The Opposition at the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem

**DAY 19** - John 10:22-42

Illness and Death of Lazarus

**DAY 20** - John 11:1-18

Jesus' Seventh Sign: Raises Lazarus from the Dead

**DAY 21** - John 11:19-44

The Pharisees Plan to Kill Jesus

**DAY 22** - John 11:45-57

Mary Anoints Jesus' Feet

**DAY 23** - John 12:1-11

The Opposition at Jerusalem

**DAY 24** - John 12:12-50

Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

**DAY 25** - John 13:1-17

Jesus Announces Judas' Betrayal and Peter's Denial

**DAY 26** - John 13:18-38

Jesus Comforts His Disciples

**DAY 27** - John 14:1-31

The Relationship of Believers to Christ

**DAY 28** - John 15:1-11

The Relationship of Believer to Each Other

**DAY 29** - John 15:12-17

The Relationship of Believers to the World

**DAY 30** - John 15:18-25

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

**DAY 31** - John 15:26-16:15

The Prediction of Jesus' Death and Resurrection

**DAY 32** - John 16:16-33

Jesus Prays for Himself and His Disciples

**DAY 33** - John 17:1-19

Jesus Prays for All Believers

**DAY 34** - John 17:20-26

Jesus is Betrayed and Arrested

**DAY 35** - John 18:1-14

Peter's Denial and Jesus' Trial

**DAY 36** - John 18:15-40

Jesus Sentenced to Death

**DAY 37** - John 19:1-16

Jesus' Crucifixion

**DAY 38** - John 19:17-42

Jesus' Resurrection

**DAY 39** - John 20:1-10

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene, His Disciples and to Thomas

**DAY 40** - John 20:11-31

Jesus Appears to Seven Disciples; and John Explains Why He  
Wrote This Gospel

**DAY 41** - John 21:1-12

Jesus Challenges Peter; and, the Conclusion of John's Gospel

**DAY 42** - John 21:13-25

# WANT TO GET MORE CONNECTED?

So you've read this book and are ready to take one (or more) of the provided next steps that you've discovered. If so, we want to invite you to hop on the Next Steps Track. The Next Steps Track is the perfect place to meet others who are taking similar next steps in their faith journey.

Over the course of three Sundays, you can develop connection and community with others who are taking Next Steps at City Church by attending the following classes:

**STEP 1: Connect** - where you'll find out about our story, our mission and beliefs, and how to connect in relationships at City Church. Sign up for our membership class.

**STEP 2: Serve** - where you'll find out more about why we serve, where to serve, and join a serve team at City Church.

**STEP 3: Grow** - where you'll learn more about salvation, baptism, groups, giving, and growing in your faith at City Church by participating in classes offered: Alpha, School of the Bible, Christian Life College, and our many Connect Groups.

To learn more about Next Steps at City Church, visit [citychurchmadison.org/nextsteps](http://citychurchmadison.org/nextsteps), or or scan the QR code.



## NOTES:

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