



To Be Like Jesus Overview for Parents



What does it mean to be a Christian? Contemporary culture has a very broad, fluid definition, one that easily adapts and conforms to changing norms and sensibilities. Numerous studies and polls attest to this by the high number of people who profess and identify as “Christians” while, at the same time, they deny and reject basic doctrines of the Christian faith. Knowing, embracing, and living out essential, unchanging, non-negotiable truths is radically out of step with the world. Yet, this last statement is the one that truly defines and shapes what it means to be a Christian. It is with this in mind that *To Be Like Jesus* has been written.

The church must be forthcoming and biblically thorough with our children and youth about the true meaning of the Christian life. We must provide intelligible and biblically sound explanations regarding the truth about who God is, what He is like, our identity as God’s image bearers, our duty to glorify God, the nature and purpose of God’s law, the depths our depravity and condemnation, the person and work of Christ, the essence of salvation, and the necessity of holiness in the Christian life evidenced by a growing conformity to Jesus and His ways. Apart from knowing and embracing these essential truths, our children and youth will never experience true, lasting joy. Yes, eternal joy is at stake. The command “to be like Jesus” (Romans 8:29, Ephesians 4:24) is a call to know, honor, and treasure God through Christ, so that we might glorify God and enjoy Him forever. That is what it means to be a Christian! May our children and youth come to know and embrace this glorious reality.

Using the Growing in Faith Together Pages

And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.—Deuteronomy 6:6-7

The primary responsibility and privilege of nurturing the faith of the next generation rests on parents. As parents, you have the greatest influence in your child’s life and are afforded daily opportunities to instruct them in the Christian faith. Furthermore, you are best suited and equipped to take advantage of “teachable moments” in which to apply God’s truth to everyday life. It is within this context that true spiritual transformation usually takes root in a child’s life.

To help you nurture your child’s faith and maximize the benefit of this study, the Growing in Faith Together (GIFT) Page you will receive each week includes the following:

MAIN IDEAS AND SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Main Ideas and Scripture references provide you with the main focus and biblical truths that were presented in the lesson. Carefully read these so that your mind and heart will be better prepared to help your child grasp these truths and apply them to his or her own life.

LESSON SUMMARY AND PRAYER POINTS

The lesson summary includes a brief introduction, written in devotional form, to encourage your own faith, as well as a brief synopsis of the lesson. In reading this, the hope is that interactions with your child will be well-informed and heartfelt. Each summary concludes with two suggested prayer points. As crucial as it is to give our children an increasing breadth and depth of Scripture, we must humbly acknowledge that true regeneration and saving faith is by God's sovereign grace, through the work of the Holy Spirit who makes us alive in Christ and then empowers us to grow in conformity to Christ. May these prayer points serve to encourage you in bringing specific requests for your children before the throne of our loving heavenly Father.

MEMORY VERSE

We encourage you and your family to join your child in memorizing each week. Scripture memorization is of vital importance in spiritual growth. The memorized Word provides us with unshakeable, life-giving truth, and is an ever-present counselor and effective weapon in the fight of faith. With your help, your child can have hundreds of verses learned by the end of adolescence, an amazing storehouse of truth for life! May God equip you to cultivate a lifelong habit of Bible memorization.

AS YOU WALK BY THE WAY

"As You Walk By the Way" is designed to provide parents with ideas for interactive discussions with your child based on the biblical truths learned in the lesson. Some of these will require doing brief Bible study together. Others pose real-life illustrations to help your child better grasp a certain biblical truth. All include a casual question-and-answer format to help encourage spiritual discussion between parent and child. These discussions give parents an important opportunity to share their own faith and walk with Christ as a means of encouraging and challenging their child.

ACTION STEPS

Your child will be challenged to take one action step in response to each lesson, with the hope that head knowledge of spiritual truth will become a heart response. Ask your child to record this action step, and then provide encouragement as you observe your child acting on the truth and applying it in daily life. By acting on the truth of God's Word, head knowledge will become heart response. Faith will grow as God is found to be faithful and true.

OTHER FORMATS

Growing in Faith Together Pages are also available as a spiral-bound booklet in quantities of 10, and as a GIFT Page App for use on smart phones and tablet devices. See childrendesiringGod.org for more information.

PARTNERING WITH YOU

We look forward to partnering with you this year so that the next generation may put their trust in God. If we may be of help to you in any way, please contact us.



Scope and Sequence

Lesson 1: Created in God's Image for His Glory

Memory Verse: 1 Corinthians 10:31

We have been created in a special way—in the image and likeness of God.
We have been created for a special purpose—to glorify God.

Lesson 2: Created to Be Holy and Righteous

Memory Verses: 1 Peter 1:15; Romans 7:12

God created us in a special way for a special purpose. We glorify God by living in conformity to His holy and righteous commands. We must be holy and righteous in order to enjoy eternal life with God.

Lesson 3: All Have Sinned

Memory Verse: Romans 3:20

God requires perfect obedience to His holy and righteous commands. God's commands show us our sin. It is impossible for us to gain eternal life through our own obedience.

Lesson 4: Jesus, God's Holy and Righteous Son

Memory Verse: Hebrews 4:15

It is impossible for sinners to receive eternal life through our own efforts. God sent His Son into the world to save sinners. Jesus is fully God and became fully man. Jesus is holy and righteous—He is without sin.

Lesson 5: The Gospel: Salvation in Jesus

Memory Verses: John 3:16-17

Jesus is holy and righteous—He did everything required to gain eternal life. The Gospel is the good news that there is salvation in Jesus. The Gospel commands sinners to repent and believe in Jesus.

Lesson 6: Salvation: Chosen and Called by God

Memory Verses: Ephesians 1:4; John 10:27

By His sovereign will, God has chosen whom He will save. Salvation is by grace—a free gift from God apart from any merit of our own. God desires that the Gospel be proclaimed to all people. When God calls His chosen people, they respond in belief.

Lesson 7: Salvation: New Spiritual Life

Memory Verses: Ephesians 2:4-5

In our sinful nature, we are unable to respond to the Gospel in belief. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, God gives His people new spiritual life, drawing us to believe in Jesus.

Lesson 8: Salvation: Faith and Repentance (Conversion)

Memory Verses: John 20:31; 2 Corinthians 7:10a

Salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus alone. Faith includes a right understanding of certain facts about who Jesus is and what He has done, and a complete dependence on Him. Faith is always accompanied by repentance—a deep-felt sorrow and hatred of sin, such that you turn to Jesus and commit to follow Him.

Lesson 9: Salvation: Justification

Memory Verses: 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 5:1

All people are guilty before God and deserve God's just punishment. Jesus died as an atoning sacrifice for sin in order to satisfy the justice of God. Justification is a legal act whereby God forgives sin, gives His people Jesus' righteousness, and declares them righteous. Justification is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus alone.

Lesson 10: Salvation: Adoption

Memory Verses: Ephesians 1:4b-5a; 1 John 3:1a

Adoption is an act of God in which He makes someone His beloved child. Everyone who repents and believes in Jesus is made a child of God. God's children enjoy a special and intimate relationship with Him. God's children are heirs to all His good promises.

Lesson 11: Salvation: Sanctification

Memory Verses: Ephesians 4:24; 1 Peter 1:14-15

God requires that His children be holy and righteous. God's children are to grow up into the likeness of His Son, Jesus. Sanctification is the ongoing work of God in His children in which they strive to become more and more like Jesus.

Lesson 12: Jesus Says, "Follow Me"

Memory Verses: 1 John 2:3, 6

Sanctification is the ongoing work of God in His children in which they strive to become more and more like Jesus. Children of God are to be disciples of Jesus—recognizing His authority such that they submit to Him, learn from Him, obey His commands, and follow Him throughout their lives.

Lesson 13: God Gives His Children the Holy Spirit*Memory Verses: John 14:15-17a*

God gives His children the Holy Spirit to guide and empower them in following Jesus.

Lesson 14: God Gives His Children His Word*Memory Verses: 2 Timothy 3:16-17*

Christians are sanctified through the work of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God.

All Scripture is God-breathed truth, and it teaches, rebukes, corrects, and trains us in righteousness.

Lesson 15: God Gives His Children the Gift of Prayer*Memory Verses: Matthew 6:9-13*

God desires to have an intimate relationship with His children. Prayer is the means by which God's children come into His presence and speak to Him, growing in their relationship with Him.

Jesus has given us an example of how we are to pray.

Lesson 16: Love God Most of All*Memory Verse: Mark 12:30*

God has given His children everything they need for a life of godliness. If we love God, we will obey His commands. Loving God most is our greatest duty and joy.

Lesson 17: Worship God in Spirit and Truth*Memory Verse: Hebrews 12:28b*

Worship involves recognizing the truth about God. Worship involves expressing a right, heartfelt response to God. God's children are to worship Him at all times and in all situations.

Lesson 18: Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness*Memory Verses: Ephesians 5:8b-10*

Jesus tells His disciples to long for righteousness—always seeking to do what is pleasing to God.

Through the Bible, God guides us in what is righteous to do in every situation.

Doing what is pleasing to God brings about happiness and contentment.

Lesson 19: Trust God in All Circumstances*Memory Verses: Philippians 4:5b-6*

God has provided His children with their greatest need by sending Jesus to die. God is a sovereign heavenly Father who continually watches over His children and provides for their every need.

Jesus commands His disciples to trust God daily for every need and in every situation.

Lesson 20: Be Content*Memory Verse: Hebrews 13:5*

God generously provides His children with everything they need for their good.

God's children are to be content with what they have and not be envious of others.

Lesson 21: Serve God with Your Abilities*Memory Verses: Colossians 3:23-24*

God has given His children a variety of abilities to be used in service to Him.

Whatever work we do, it should be done with the mindset of serving Jesus.

Service to God blesses us and is used by God to help others and further His kingdom.

Lesson 22: Store Up Treasures in Heaven*Memory Verses: Matthew 6:20-21*

Jesus' disciples are not to put their hope in earthly treasures; they are to store up heavenly treasures instead.

Everything done in loving obedience to Jesus will reap a heavenly reward.

Lesson 23: Guard Your Heart*Memory Verse: Proverbs 4:23*

Jesus' disciples are to be vigilant in guarding against the indwelling influence of sin and Satan's temptations.

God has given His children everything they need to guard their hearts against sin and Satan.

Lesson 24: Obey and Honor Your Parents*Memory Verses: Ephesians 6:1-3a*

God is a perfect heavenly Father. Parents are to reflect God's good and loving character to their children.

Children are commanded by God to honor and obey their parents.

Lesson 25: Love Your Neighbor*Memory Verse: Matthew 22:39b*

Next to loving God most of all, the second most important command is to love your neighbor. Loving your neighbor involves treating him as you yourself would want to be treated. Your neighbor includes all kinds of people.

Lesson 26: Love Your Enemies*Memory Verses: Luke 6:27b-28*

God commands His children to love their enemies. Loving your enemies includes praying for them, blessing them, and doing good to them.

Lesson 27: Forgive Others*Memory Verse: Ephesians 4:32*

We have all wronged God immeasurably because of our sin. God forgives all who repent and trust in Jesus alone for salvation. We are to forgive others and not keep account of wrongs done against us.

Lesson 28: Be a Humble Servant*Memory Verse: Philippians 2:3*

Jesus commands His disciples to follow His example of true humility. Being a humble servant to others is great in God's eyes. We are to consider the needs of others and seek to serve them.

Lesson 29: Be Merciful*Memory Verse: Luke 6:36*

God is merciful and wants His children to be merciful, too. Mercy sees people in distress, feels compassion for them, and acts to help them. Jesus set the example of mercy that His disciples are to follow.

Lesson 30: Give Cheerfully and Generously*Memory Verses: 2 Corinthians 9:6-7*

Jesus has designed that the needs of His church be met through the giving of His people. Jesus wants His disciples to give cheerfully and generously. God promises spiritual blessing for those who give cheerfully and generously.

Lesson 31: Care for One Another*Memory Verses: John 13:34-35*

The church is the community of God's people—all those trusting in Jesus. Jesus commands that His church love one another in a special way. Jesus has given the church specific "one another" commands.

Lesson 32: Seek for Lost Sinners*Memory Verse: 1 Peter 3:15*

Jesus came to seek and save lost sinners. Jesus wants His disciples to follow His example and look for opportunities to share the hope of the Gospel.

Lesson 33: Go into All the World*Memory Verses: Matthew 28:18-20a*

Jesus commands His disciples to spread the message of the Gospel throughout the world. All Christians are to participate in this mission—either by going or sending.

Lesson 34: Let Your Light Shine*Memory Verse: Matthew 5:16*

Jesus' disciples are to be like lights that shine and draw attention to the greatness and worth of Jesus. We should look for opportunities to do good deeds and speak words of hope.

Lesson 35: Rejoice in Persecution*Memory Verses: Matthew 5:11-12a*

Followers of Jesus will experience persecution in this world. For the child of God, this suffering is temporary and cannot compare with the everlasting joy to be experienced in the future. Jesus commands us to keep this perspective and rejoice in our sufferings.

Lesson 36: Lose Your Life to Gain Your Life*Memory Verses: Luke 9:23-24*

The Christian life is a daily dying to self, surrendering our wills to Jesus, and walking in obedience to Him wherever He may lead. Jesus promises eternal life for all who follow Him.

Lesson 37: Salvation: Perseverance of Believers*Memory Verse: Philippians 1:6*

Only those who persevere to the end of their lives and remain faithful are true disciples of Jesus. God is faithful and will surely empower His children to persevere to the end.

Lesson 38: Salvation: Death and Glorification*Memory Verses: Philippians 3:20-21*

For Christians, God uses the death of the physical body as a means of completing their salvation. Jesus has promised to transform His people and give them glorified bodies after death. Glorification is the final step of salvation in which God makes His children perfectly righteous and holy like Jesus.

Lesson 39: Glorifying God Forever*Memory Verse: Psalm 86:12*

We were created in a special way for a special purpose—to glorify God forever. Through the complete gift of salvation, God enables His chosen people to clearly and fully see the greatness and worth of Jesus so that they might rightly know, love, and worship Him forever.

Lesson 40: Come, Look, Abide*Memory Verse: John 15:5*

The evidence of true belief in Jesus will be seen through a love for His commands. The Christian life involves coming to Jesus, looking to Jesus, and abiding in Jesus.