

# Next Steps

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REAL HOPE  
NEW LIFE  
LASTING PURPOSE



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**To connect with us or  
to learn more about what  
we do, visit [np.church](http://np.church).**



# A word from our Lead Pastor.

You've just made the best decision of your life!

At North Pointe, our desire is that you experience Real Hope, New Life, and Lasting Purpose in Jesus Christ. There is no better way to journey through life than as a follower of Jesus. He comes to give us life and life to the fullest.

This booklet is meant to help you kickstart your relationship with Jesus through daily reading for the next seven days. You'll also find some helpful next steps to get you connected to what God is doing at North Pointe.

I am praying for you that you will grow in your relationship with Jesus, and that today will be the first day of the rest of your full life.

Thank you so much for taking the time to check out North Pointe. Know that you can always come as you are and be accepted into our church family.

God has a plan for you.



**Michael Voll**  
Lead Pastor

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# Your next four steps.



## 1. Come back next Sunday.

Regularly meeting with other followers of Jesus and hearing teaching from the bible will help you grow and develop your faith. Plan to come to one of our Sunday gatherings in the North or South Auditorium. We meet at 9:30am, 11:00am, and 12:30pm. If you aren't able to join us, visit [np.church/media](http://np.church/media).



## 2. Sign up to be baptized.

Baptism is a symbol of your new life in Christ, and it's something every believer is called to do. It's a public declaration that you are "dying" to your old self and are now alive in Jesus. To sign up, visit [np.church/nextsteps](http://np.church/nextsteps).

## 3. Register for Alpha.



Alpha is a 7-week course that explores the basics of Christian faith. It is conversational, relaxed, and all questions are welcomed. Plus, there is free dessert! To register or learn more, please visit [np.church/alpha](http://np.church/alpha).

## 4. Read the Bible and pray.



Reading the Bible is the best way to learn about who Jesus is and how to develop a relationship with Him. You can download the Bible App for your smartphone at [www.bible.com/app](http://www.bible.com/app) or pick up a Bible at our Next Steps area in the North Lobby.

Beginning a  
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The following reading plan has been borrowed with permission  
from *Start Here: Beginning a Relationship with Jesus* by David Dwight  
and Nicole Unice.

# Day 1:

Acts 4:13 and 1 John 4:8

## Rules vs. Relationship

If you do a quick search for a definition of Christianity, you are likely to find something about “following the teachings of Jesus.” And that’s true—Christianity is about following Jesus’s teachings. The problem is most people turn the idea of “following Jesus” into “following rules”—and that’s not the point.

The story of the Bible makes it clear that the point of knowing Jesus is for a relationship, not rules. As you begin to explore what God tells us about Himself through the Bible, you are going to find that being in a loving, committed relationship with Him is the main thing.

So saying that the main idea of Christianity is to follow teaching points is like saying that the main idea of marriage is to share your household bills. Not exactly what we hope for in a great love story!

This perspective of rules versus relationship is a great divide that distinguishes Christianity from other religions. Where most religions teach that the way to “be good” is through required practices and rigid beliefs, Christianity starts from a different place.

From the earliest times, Jesus’s followers weren’t known for following rules or “being good.” The thing that stuck out—the thing that was worth mentioning—was the mere reality that they had “been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13). Not that they acknowledged Jesus, not that they followed the behavioural system of Jesus, but that they were “with” Him.

Being with Jesus is what transformed these people from what the Bible calls “unschooled, ordinary men” into courageous, bold leaders. And that’s the same reality we are offered when Jesus invites us into a relationship: to “be with Him.”

# Day 2:

Genesis 3:8-9, John 1:35-39, Matthew 16:13-15,  
and John 11:25-26

## Questions

People who are gifted in the art of relationships are often people who ask some of the best questions. Here's where God is a pro.

Take a look at some of God's most profound questions:

### **Where are you? (Genesis 3:8-9)**

Right at the beginning of the Bible, God demonstrated this aspect of His character through His relationship with Adam and Eve—a trusting, transparent, daily relationship.

In Genesis 3, we read about Adam and Eve choosing to turn from God and live life apart from Him. When the relationship was broken, God came looking for Adam and Eve. He didn't come to punish or shame them but to restore the relationship.

When you can sense God stirring in your life, you, too, are a person He's seeking out, so that you might be able to know Him and live in a relationship with Him.

### **What do you want? (John 1:35-39)**

In John 1, we see Jesus asking some curious men a question like God's question. He asked them, "What do you want?" (John 1:38).

The men avoided the question and changed the subject, asking Jesus, "Where are you staying?" Rather than give them an actual address, He answered them, "Come ... and see" (John 1:39). Rather than giving an answer, He gives an invitation.

Often, many of us are usually saying to God, "I want something from You," while God is saying to us, "I want to be with you."

### **Who do you say I am? (Matthew 16:13-15)**

This is where Christianity begins. Your answer to that question is your start here, because it's where you get clear about what you think of Jesus. Fortunately, what Jesus says about Himself is recorded in the Bible, including John 10:36, John 11:25, John 10:11, and John 8:58.

These are just some of Jesus's statements—how He would answer the question about His identity. But Jesus doesn't stop; He makes it even more personal.

### **Do you believe this? (John 11:25-26)**

Jesus always makes things personal. He said to His disciples, "But what about you—who do you say I am?" and He said to Martha in John 11:25-26, "Do you believe this?"

Jesus asks these same questions to us, too, and answering these questions is a part of being in a relationship with God, of finding God and finding the truth. And finding the truth starts with Jesus Christ.

**Jesus makes  
things personal."**

## Day 3:

John 14:6

# The Real Captain

One way to describe Jesus is as a rescuer on a rescue mission. When Jesus said, “I am the way and the truth and the life,” He didn’t say, “I am a way and a truth and a life.”

Our question to Him is similar to our questions to the captain of the plane or the ship we’re on because we want to know, “Are You really the captain (the Son of God)?”

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As life progresses, many of us gradually develop a disinterest toward this question. Most of us feel comfortable just trying to get a seat with enough legroom on the plane. And most of us aren’t facing our mortality with the kind of intensity that we would be on a sinking ship. But having confidence in the captain is the main question in both analogies.

On the ship, your belief (or not) in the captain would make all the difference. Same with Jesus. If it’s a rescue mission, we are less likely to say, “I can go whichever way I please.” Yes, you could if you would like, but if He really is the captain, the one who knows all of the nuances of human existence, then He really does know the way.

Or maybe as you start exploring what the Bible says about Jesus, you begin to ask yourself the question, “Do I believe He knows the way?”

If you're reading this plan, you may or may not yet have come to the point where you have said yes to this question. Or you may have said, "Yes, I believe. But I still have questions." If that's you, we're with you and we're for you. Keep the questions coming. Good questions are how we grow. Doubts and uncertainties are not unusual.

But let's say you agree that Jesus might know the way. If that's true, the first question you might have is, "What do I need to do to get going that way?"

And this is where Jesus surprises us. He doesn't say, "Follow this." He says, "Follow Me." The captain of the cruise ship didn't point us to a map; he pointed us to himself. Jesus also points to Himself, and He invites us to commit.

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# Day 4:

Mark 10:17-22

## The Offer

One of the remarkable aspects of Christian faith is that this relationship with Jesus is always an offer. It is never forced.

Once a young man ran up to Jesus, asking what he needed to “do” to inherit eternal life (Mark 10:17–22). As Jesus often did, He led the conversation to allow this man to see himself clearly.

So Jesus didn’t even ask this earnest guy a question. He just began listing out Jewish commandments, and the young man interjected, “Yes, yes, I’ve kept all of those!” But what happens next is most interesting. Mark 10:21 says, “Jesus looked at him and loved him.”

**Jesus looked.** He didn’t preach a sermon. He didn’t point fingers. Instead, He looked directly at this young man and turned the full attention of His heart and mind upon this person, inviting him to engage in a relationship.

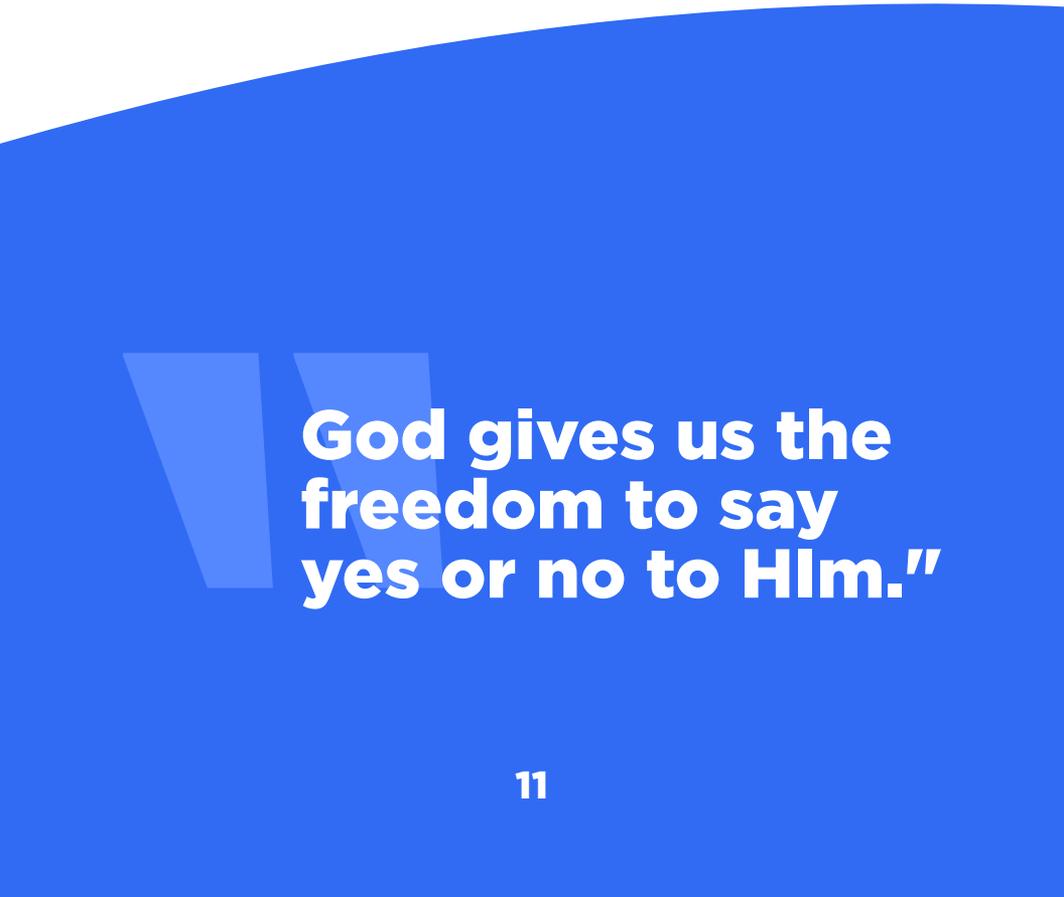
**Jesus loved.** It was in the looking that love developed. It wasn’t in the young man’s stringent keeping of the rules or in the amazing deeds. Jesus looked and loved him just for being himself.

It’s clear that the young man really liked the idea of Jesus and wanted to make a good choice. But when Jesus made the offer for relationship, He did so in the context of full commitment: “Go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me” (Matthew 19:21).

When Jesus looked and loved this man, He knew exactly what He needed to ask him to reveal his true heart. By pressing the issue of possessions, Jesus cut right to the heart of the matter for this particular individual.

So Jesus looked at him, loved him, and laid before him a choice for relationship. Yet the young man walked away. This is the surprise of God. God holds all the power in a relationship with each of us, but surprisingly, He gives us the freedom to say yes or no to Him.

Sometimes people say, “If God wants all of us to have a relationship with Him, why didn’t He just pre-program us so we would?” But love cannot be preprogrammed. If we were forced to say yes to Jesus, forced to become Christians, this would go against the grain of God’s character and the central theme of Christianity—mainly that Jesus’s offer is based on love, the purest form of love.



**God gives us the  
freedom to say  
yes or no to Him.”**

# Day 5:

Mark 1:11 and 2 Corinthians 5:17

## New Identity

The right to become God's children is made possible by Jesus, and the incredible news is that because of Jesus, God now says the same thing about us He said about Jesus. Ready for it? Here you go: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased" (Mark 1:11).

Because of Jesus, God says the same thing about you that He said about Jesus. In this one statement, God gives us an incredible supply of affirmation for the identity deficits that we all feel—that gnawing, deep craving for belonging, love, and approval. Note the three distinct elements in this statement of promise:

### 1. You are My son ...

When God says, "You are My son," He is identifying Himself with us. He is saying that He wants to be associated with us, that we are together.

Point number one of this new identity is that we are people with whom God is pleased to be associated. He's saying, "Yep, that's My daughter; that's My son." He never dissociates Himself from us once we have become His children. Pretty flattering that He'd be so kind, despite our sometimes lousy behaviour!

### 2. Whom I love ...

Sometimes in a family relationship, we might not always like each other, let alone love each other. If you have a family member whom you don't like, you might feel, Yes, I have to claim that he's my brother, but I don't like him.

But God is not this way. Not only is God saying, "Yes, that's My son," but He's also claiming, "I love this son. He has My affection. My heart is with him and it's for him."

### **3. With you I am well pleased.**

God tops off this statement of promise by adding, “I’m so pleased with you.” The God who set the stars in place is saying He’s proud of you. Not of some other person—but you.

As we grow into understanding the depth of God’s heart for us, these affirmations begin to slowly fill the identity-deficit places in our souls. All those things we’ve been doing to look for affirmation, to try to be important, to feel important, to be admired, to be thought of highly—now we have an answer. And not from people, not from material things that don’t fill our hearts, not from titles or positions ... but from God.



**I’m so pleased  
with you” -God**

# Day 6:

1 Corinthians 8:6, Revelation 1:8, Matthew 28:19,  
Genesis 1:26-28, 2 Samuel 22:31, Matthew 5:48

## Who is God?

Understanding a few main things about God will help you as you begin to follow Him. Let's talk about four of God's characteristics:

### **God is eternal**

God uses every word there is to describe Himself as outside of time: everlasting, eternal, forever, is, was, and is to come. God is eternal. Eternal doesn't mean a really, really long time. It means "timeless." It means "outside the dimension of time."

### **God is relational**

The Bible teaches in many places that God exists as three persons together in perfect unity. This is called the Trinity. Rather than being a solo God figure, the God of the Bible is God the Father, God the Son (Jesus Christ), and God the Holy Spirit. They are three distinct persons, but they live and work in perfect oneness.

### **God is perfect**

God is not flawed and is never in need of improvement. He has no shortages—of character, purity, knowledge, power, or ability. Especially in contrast to us, God is perfect morally. The Bible says, "God is light; in him there is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5).

### **God is "omni"**

God is omnipresent, He is omnipotent, and He is omniscient. These words mean (in order) that God is "all-present," that He is "all-powerful," and that He is "all-knowing." He is able to be everywhere simultaneously, He is powerful over all things, and He knows all things.

### **So why does all of this matter?**

Understanding God's eternity gives me hope. Knowing He's relational means I can enter into conversation with Him. Knowing God is perfect means that even when I do not understand, I can trust God. And knowing He is all means that He is the one who holds the power, that He has not left us alone, and that everything that is evil will be defeated.

So who is God? He's the one who made you, He's the one who loves you beyond your wildest dreams, and He's the one who gave up His own Son, Jesus Christ, to death so He could have an eternal relationship with you.

Knowing God changes our view of people—we start to see them as eternal souls, not temporary bodies.

Knowing God helps us face difficulties differently. Knowing God means we never have to feel like life is out of control.

Knowing God grounds us in humility and purpose. Knowing God helps life make sense.

**Knowing God helps  
life make sense."**

# Day 7:

1 Corinthians 1:2, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, Philippians 4:6, Mark 10:5, Psalm 10

## Now What?

Being a Christian is about “being in” Jesus. Put most plainly, you begin a life of “abiding” in Him and “remaining” in Him. What does that mean? It means you seek to grow into your relationship with Him by bringing your heart, soul, mind, and strength fully into the relationship (Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27).

**Here are five ways we stay “in relationship” with Jesus Christ:**

### **1. In relationship with other Christians**

The church is people who have entered into a relationship with Jesus and therefore have been forgiven by Jesus and want to live for Jesus. Growing in a relationship with Jesus is helped by being in a church. It’s here in the church, with other believers, where we learn, grow, ask questions, serve, and seek and worship God together.

### **2. In God’s guidance by reading and learning the Bible**

As you grow in your relationship with Jesus Christ, you will begin to learn more about the Bible. The Bible is God’s Word, and it’s one of the most important ways that He has revealed Himself and His desire and design for life to us. The more you know the Bible, the more you will get to know God Himself.

### **3. In conversation with God through prayer**

The purpose of prayer is the same as the purpose of other intentional conversations: to grow closer together in a meaningful relationship. This means prayer covers a wide number of topics. Prayer involves sharing ideas, listening, asking questions, asking for help, expressing so you can be understood, confessing and saying you are sorry, saying thank you, or just being together.

#### **4. In taking action through serving**

Taking action by serving, by caring, by stepping outward toward people is expressing the heart of God's love to people, and it is also a significant way that you will grow in your own relationship with Jesus. Why? Because this is what Jesus did. Jesus said, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve" (Mark 10:45).

#### **5. In expressing love for God through worship**

Worship is our intentional expression of appreciation and gratitude and wonder to God. Worship can be done alone or in a stadium with thousands of others. It can take place in a church building or in a mountain meadow. Worship is your authentic and honest expression toward God.



**Worship is your  
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# KEEP READING

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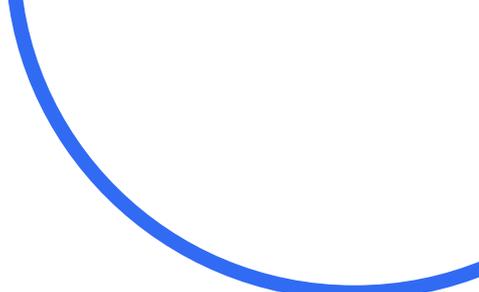
You have started reading the Bible over the last 7 days, but there is more (we say that a lot). Here are some ideas for what to read next:

1. Read an entire Gospel. There are four gospels (meaning "good news") in the Bible. They are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. They are eyewitness accounts of the life of Jesus.

2. Start a Bible reading plan. You can access the plan we follow here at North Pointe by visiting us at [www.np.church/media](http://www.np.church/media)

Other helpful reading plans can be found at [www.bible.com/reading-plans](http://www.bible.com/reading-plans)

For more Christian resources, please visit our Next Steps area in the North Lobby after a service.



# Take the Growth Track.

At North Pointe, we want people to experience Real Hope, New Life, and Lasting Purpose in Jesus Christ. In order to help that happen, we offer a three-week class that happens on Sundays during the service time of your choice.

During these three weeks, we will talk about Bible principles that will help you grow, as well as introduce you to the mission and vision of North Pointe. This is an important class to get you on the same page as everyone else in the church. If you would like to sign up for our next Growth Track, please visit [www.np.church/gt](http://www.np.church/gt)

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## There is more!

We hope you're discovering that a life with Jesus is a life of growth that leads to so much more. You will discover new things about yourself, others, and Jesus as you journey along. There are many opportunities to serve and develop, and we want to help you along the way. Please feel free to reach out; we are just a conversation, phone call, or email away.

Once again, for more info, please visit us online at [www.np.church](http://www.np.church).



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