

SESSION ONE

YOUR BEST LIFE

= *in God* =

WE ARE FACED WITH SO MANY DECISIONS IN OUR LIVES BUT ACCEPTING JESUS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT DECISION WE CAN MAKE. IT'S THE BEGINNING OF A BRAND NEW LIFE IN GOD.

THIS COURSE IS DESIGNED TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND.

FOR GOD *so loved* THE
WORLD THAT HE
gave HIS ONE AND ONLY SON,
THAT WHOEVER *believes* IN
HIM SHALL NOT PERISH BUT
HAVE *eternal life.*

JOHN 3:16

WHY AM I HERE?

Welcome to the beginning of Your Best Life. You may be asking yourself, “How did I get here?” and there could be many reasons like:

It may have been a long, thought-out decision – some people know something is missing in their lives.

It may have been a spontaneous decision – knowing straight away that “yes, Jesus is the answer”.

You may be absolutely sure about the choice you have made.

You may still feel unsure.

Jesus has given us the freedom to choose what we want. This course will teach you the basics on your choice to follow Him!

YOU WERE BORN FOR A PURPOSE

We have all been created to have a personal relationship with God. He knew us before we were born and has a plan for our lives. He knows everything about you. From how many hairs are on your head, to what you were doing yesterday, and what you will be doing tomorrow.

“FOR I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU,” DECLARES THE LORD, “PLANS TO PROSPER YOU AND NOT TO HARM YOU, PLANS TO GIVE YOU HOPE AND A FUTURE. THEN YOU WILL CALL ON ME AND COME AND PRAY TO ME, AND I WILL LISTEN TO YOU. YOU WILL SEEK ME AND FIND ME WHEN YOU SEEK ME WITH ALL YOUR HEART. I WILL BE FOUND BY YOU,” DECLARES THE LORD.
JEREMIAH 29:11-14

God saw you before you were even born! You are here because He wanted you to be and He made in His image. You are unique and can achieve the purpose God put you on this earth for.

You are an amazing person and you are here for a reason!

FOR YOU CREATED MY
INMOST BEING; YOU KNIT ME
TOGETHER IN MY MOTHERS
WOMB. I PRAISE YOU BECAUSE
I AM FEARFULLY AND
WONDERFULLY MADE; YOUR
WORKS ARE WONDERFUL, I
KNOW THAT FULL WELL. MY
FRAME WAS NOT HIDDEN
FROM YOU WHEN I WAS MADE
IN THE SECRET PLACE, WHEN
I WAS WOVEN TOGETHER
IN THE DEPTHS OF THE
EARTH. YOUR EYES SAW MY
UNFORMED BODY; ALL THE
DAYS ORDAINED FOR ME
WERE WRITTEN IN YOUR BOOK
BEFORE ONE OF THEM CAME
TO BE.

PSALM 139:13-16

WHY DO WE NEED JESUS?

*FOR THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH, BUT
THE GIFT OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE IN
CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD.*

ROMANS 6:23

The reason we are all found in this state goes back to the Garden of Eden where Adam & Eve first disobeyed God (see Genesis 3). The consequence of their choice is separation of all people from God. You may ask “how come we are paying for their mistake?” The answer is: we would all make the same mistake because God has given us all the power to choose.

WHAT IS SIN?

- Anything that separates you from God
- Running things my way and not God's way – living for yourself
- Putting yourself before others – having a ‘me’ attitude in heart & life
- Denying God's right to be God in your life
- Breaking His laws

RESULT OF SIN

*FOR ALL HAVE SINNED AND FALL
SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD.*

ROMANS 3:23

Running life our way leads to death and separation from God forever. God wants us to feel His presence and live with Him forever

Sin (and selfishness) is why the world is in the state it is in and the cause of all problems in the world – pain, misery and death

Sin makes us feel guilty, ashamed and alone

Sin makes us live by feelings instead of what's right

THERE IS A COST TO SIN

As mentioned above “the wages of sin is death”, there are no exceptions to this. Sin will always cost you your life.

BUT the good news is that Jesus, who was sinless, paid for all our sins (the full price) with His own life. He died to forgive us from our sins; how awesome is that!

SALVATION

God's plan from the time Adam & Eve sinned was to provide a way for people to return to a relationship with Him of their own free will.

Sin was dealt with through Jesus death, but God still desired that people choose to come to Him, otherwise He might as well have created robots or puppets who had to love Him. (You might like to read 2 Corinthians 5:14-21 in your own time.)

When we do choose to come to Him, the Bible tells us the only way we is through His Son Jesus. Not through anyone or anything else.

*JESUS ANSWERED, "I AM THE WAY
AND THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE. NO
ONE COMES TO THE FATHER EXCEPT
THROUGH ME.*

JOHN 14:6

Even though sin has been paid for in full for all people, not everyone is reconciled with God; reconciliation is completed when we choose to believe the verse above and others like it. The way this works is described in Romans 10:9

IF YOU DECLARE
WITH YOUR MOUTH,
Jesus is Lord
AND BELIEVE IN
YOUR HEART THAT GOD
RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD,
YOU WILL BE SAVED.
ROMANS 10:9

So we must respond by believing and confessing:-
You will be doing this course because you responded to an invitation to invite Christ into your life. We have found the best way to help people on the journey to believe and confess involves the following:

ADMIT

You have been separated from God;
that is you admit you have sinned.

REPENT

Turn from your sinful ways. It is not just saying sorry to God, but also a change of heart and change of direction.

BELIEVE

Jesus died for you and rose again

INVITE

Jesus into your heart as your Saviour
and Lord

The four steps above are done in the form of a prayer, which you could have done on your own, with the help of a friend, or at church or youth during an altar call. However it happened, it must be a prayer that is prayed aloud – your confession.

IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS,
HE IS FAITHFUL AND JUST
AND WILL FORGIVE US OUR
SINS AND PURIFY US
FROM ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS
1 JOHN 1:9

YOU ARE A NEW CREATION

*THEREFORE, IF ANYONE IS IN CHRIST,
THE NEW CREATION HAS COME: THE
OLD HAS GONE, THE NEW IS HERE!
2 CORINTHIANS 5:17*

At the moment we receive Christ we are a brand new person on the inside.

We have assurance that we are forgiven, and because He has forgiven us we also need to forgive others.

We are not to hold things against other people but to forgive them as God has forgiven us.

Read Matthew 18:21-35 for further information on forgiveness.

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

DO YOU BELIEVE JESUS HAS FORGIVEN
ALL YOUR SIN?

HOW DOES THAT MAKE YOU FEEL?

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU THINK HE
CAN'T FORGIVE?

WHO CAN YOU THINK OF THAT YOU
NEED TO FORGIVE?

IS THERE SOMETHING MORE WHEN WE DIE?

The Bible says when you place your faith in Christ you are given eternal life. When your physical body dies your spirit will go and live with God forever.

There will come a day when Jesus will return. Each person will stand before God and give an answer for how they lived their life. We will give account for everything we did and if our names are written in the Book of Life we will go to heaven to be with God forever in a place He is preparing for us right now. Even the most beautiful things we have seen on earth can't compare to what He has prepared for us.

The Bible tells us that those whose names aren't in the Book of Life will spend eternity in hell. God's desire is that all people would know Him and spend eternity with Him but because of sin, and people's capacity to not choose God but live life their own way, the reality is that not everyone will go to Heaven.

ENTER THROUGH THE
NARROW GATE.
FOR WIDE IS THE GATE AND
BROAD IS THE ROAD
THAT LEADS TO
DESTRUCTION, AND MANY
ENTER THROUGH IT.
BUT SMALL IS THE GATE
AND NARROW THE ROAD
THAT LEADS TO LIFE, AND
ONLY A FEW FIND IT.
MATTHEW 7:13-14

BELIEVING IN SOMETHING YOU CAN'T SEE

NOW FAITH IS BEING SURE OF WHAT
YOU HOPE FOR, AND CERTAIN OF
WHAT WE DO NOT SEE.

HEBREWS 11:1

Faith is believing in a God we can't see and can't understand with our mind. He is so much bigger than what we can comprehend. He created the whole universe and the complexity of humans and our world. He doesn't fit into what our minds can imagine about him.

We need faith to keep walking with God no matter what happens. We also need faith to believe He will supply all our needs as He has promised. The reason we can have a relationship with God is because of faith – not by anything that we can do. Salvation is a free gift and comes to us just because we put our faith in Jesus. Many religions believe it's what we do and the acts that we perform that bring us closer to God. Christians believe it is by faith in Jesus and not works that we are saved.

This week Read Hebrews 11. Take note of all the people who lived by faith. There are many more today who live by faith all around the world.

AND MY GOD WILL
MEET ALL YOUR NEEDS
ACCORDING TO THE
RICHES OF HIS GLORY IN
CHRIST JESUS.
PHILIPPIANS 4:19

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND OTHER RELIGIONS

Christianity is not like any other religion it is not a system of rules for people to follow. Jesus Christ is the only true way to God because Christianity is about having a relationship with Him.

We are not saved by works.

The Christian walk is a lifestyle a way of life, and we are transformed as we go on in God.

Every other religion is basically a 'do-it-yourself' a work for salvation deal in order to find favour with a god (and in some religions, many different gods). For example, religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Islam and even nominal Christianity, result in a mixture of fear and works - which means having to do the right thing, both publicly and privately to show others that you meet the requirements.

All other religious systems are like a set of swimming instructions for a drowning person: holding out the hope that if you do everything right and try really hard you can be saved - despite the fact that land is too far away for any normal person to swim to.

Christianity is like a lifeboat. If you come on board under the control of the captain Jesus Christ He'll get you to safety and security.

Jesus' desire for your life is to lead you to a place where you can know you will fulfill the purpose you were born for. We come to Jesus unworthy and unclean all our righteous acts are like filthy rags. (See Isaiah 64 v 6). It is only by the Spirit of God and faith in Jesus Christ that we are saved.

WE DON'T LIVE BY FEELINGS ALONE

We all experience feelings, it's part of our human condition. Our feelings do not always accurately reflect the truth of a situation. (i.e. you can feel lonely even when surrounded by your friends)

Being a Christian is not about whether we can feel God or not. Knowing God is real and is near us is not discerned by feelings, but by faith. There will be times when you feel God is close to you and other times that you don't feel Him at all. But He has promised to always be with us no matter what we feel.

“NEVER WILL I LEAVE YOU;
NEVER WILL I FORSAKE YOU.”
HEBREWS 13:5

As Christians, we live by faith, not by our natural senses. We need to learn to talk to God when we don't feel Him, to ask Him to help us, guide us etc. This is the journey of faith. It is us who move away from Him not God moving away from us. He is always there. Moods, attitudes and feelings will always be part of our human condition. Our job is to not let them stop us from having faith in God.

DOUBTS WILL COME, HOW WILL YOU RESPOND?

Often when we have given our lives to God we have doubts that come against us – “Why do I need this? Is this really real? Did I make it all up?” or anything else which may try to lead us off the journey we have started with God.

THE THIEF COMES ONLY TO STEAL
AND KILL AND DESTROY;
I HAVE COME THAT THEY MAY HAVE
LIFE, AND HAVE IT TO THE FULL.
JOHN 10:10

The devil is an enemy who is alive and active in our world. He works subtly through feelings, mindsets, doubts and planting things into our minds to try and lead us away from God and away from the destiny God has for us. He wants to destroy the faith of every believer. The most powerful way to overcome the devil's lies is the Word of God.

Check out some examples of how God tells us to deal with doubts:

1 Peter 5:8-9

1 Corinthians 15:58

Romans 10:9

SESSION ONE REVIEW

GOD WANTS US TO LIVE A GREAT LIFE FOR HIM. HE HAS GIVEN US KEYS TO DO THIS:

YOU WERE BORN FOR A PURPOSE

WE NEED JESUS BECAUSE SIN SEPARATES US FROM GOD

YOU ARE A NEW CREATION

THERE'S MORE TO COME AFTER WE DIE.

FAITH IS BEING CERTAIN OF WHAT WE DO NOT SEE

RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS IS NOT BY WORKS BUT BY FOLLOWING HIM

WE CAN LIVE WITHOUT OUR EMOTIONS RULING US

DOUBTS WILL COME BUT WE GET TO CHOOSE LIFE

WHAT'S NEXT?

In the remaining sessions of this Your Best Life Course you will learn:

To read and understand the bible

How to pray

Where church fits

How to live a life for Jesus

PRAYER

Dear Jesus,

Thank you for sacrificing your life for me so that I can have eternal life with you.

I am so thankful that I can begin this journey with you. Reveal yourself to me as I begin to pray and read your word.

I want to know you more and understand how I can live my life serving you. In Jesus name I pray,
Amen

