

WALKING
WITH
Jesus

*Growing
in Faith*



An aerial photograph of a tropical coastal town and bay. The town is built on a peninsula and several islands, with numerous buildings, roads, and green spaces. A large body of water surrounds the town, with a few boats visible. In the background, there are lush green mountains under a slightly hazy sky. The text "Growing up into Jesus" is overlaid in white serif font.

Growing up into Jesus



As you travel the world, you witness various practices that might seem somewhat strange to your own cultural norms, however when carefully considered, these practices can bring a new perspective and richness to your life.

Two such practices from the South Pacific Islands provide a very different perspective about what it means to “walk with Jesus”.

A particular custom relates to the rituals, songs and dances in New Guinea. In this instance, people would work themselves into a frenzy culminating in what is called “the murder song,” in which they shout before their gods the names of the people they wish to kill. When these people became Christian, the customs were modified to reflect their new God. The “murder songs” were no longer songs of hate for others, but their hatred of sin. With their deep love for God, the pagan customs had been captured for Christ.

Another such cultural practice comes from the island of Malaita in the Solomon Islands. When a person desired to join a new tribe, a ceremony would be held whereby the individual would crawl through the legs of the chief to symbolise the rebirth and acceptance of the individual into the new tribe. A new life had been born, new allegiances cemented. The individual was now living under the banner and protection of the chief and tribe.

New life is often spoken of not just in society, but also in the Bible. The Bible records many examples of people, who, after leading a life of heartache and pain, encountered Jesus and His transforming love, to begin a new walk of hope and purpose.

HOW DO WE GROW?

When we surrender our hearts to God, we become His children. The Bible describes this process as being “born again”, where we are then accepted and incorporated into a “new tribe”—the family of God.

Q1 *What will help us grow in our faith?*



□ 1 Peter 2:2



□ 1 Peter 1:23 □ Psalm 19:7

□ 1 Corinthians 3:1, 2 □ Hebrews 5:12, 13

In the same way, when we start our journey with God, we learn like new babies and young children. Every day, we mature in faith as our understanding of God deepens. God is our Creator and the giver of all life. Just as God created our world and all the plants, animals and people within, He will also create new hearts that will transform every part of our life.

“The Christian faith, simply stated, reminds us that our fundamental problem is not moral; rather, our fundamental problem is spiritual. It is not just that we are immoral, but that a moral life alone cannot bridge what separates us from God. Herein lies the cardinal difference between the moralising religions and Jesus’ offer to us. Jesus does not offer to make bad people good but to make dead people alive.” (*The Grand Weaver—How God Shapes Us*)

CHILDREN OF GOD

Q2

Why do we need God's help in order for us to grow spiritually?



□ 1 Corinthians 2:14

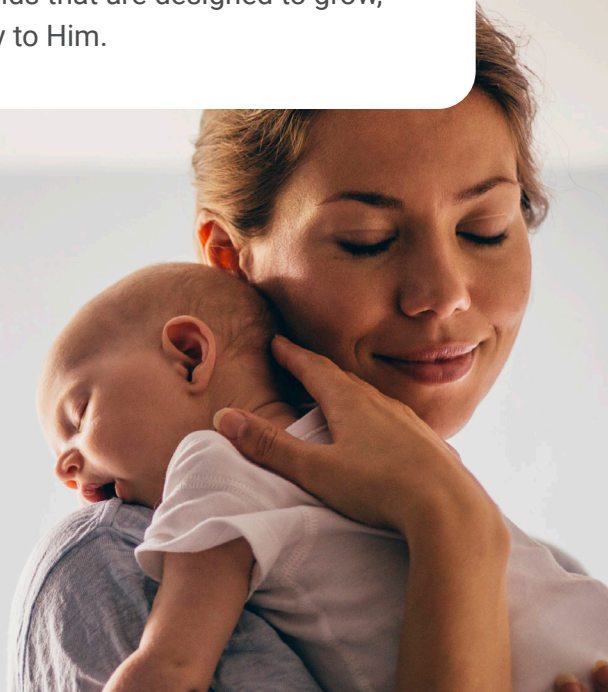


□ 1 Corinthians 1:18, 23, 25, 27

□ Matthew 13:11 □ John 3:6 □ Romans 8:5-8

Jesus told the story of a seed that was planted in good soil, and grew healthy, and produced fruit.

In the same way that God created nature to bloom and bring beauty to the world around us, God created us with hearts and minds that are designed to grow, mature and bring glory to Him.



GOD IS THE SOURCE OF LIFE

Q3

What symbols from nature does God use to represent how He will help us grow?



Psalm 84:11 Hosea 14:5



Malachi 4:2 Micah 5:7 John 1:9–12; 8:12
 Revelation 21:23; 22:17

Just as living plants need the right conditions to grow—sunlight, soil and water—we also need to be aware of our surroundings and our connection to God, the source of all life.



“Apart from Him you have no life. You have no power to resist temptation or to grow in grace and holiness. Abiding in Him, you may flourish.” *Ellen G. White*

Q4

Why is it so important for us to stay close to Jesus?



John 15:5



John 15:4–7 Colossians 2:6 Romans 6:22
 Psalm 91:1 John 14:16

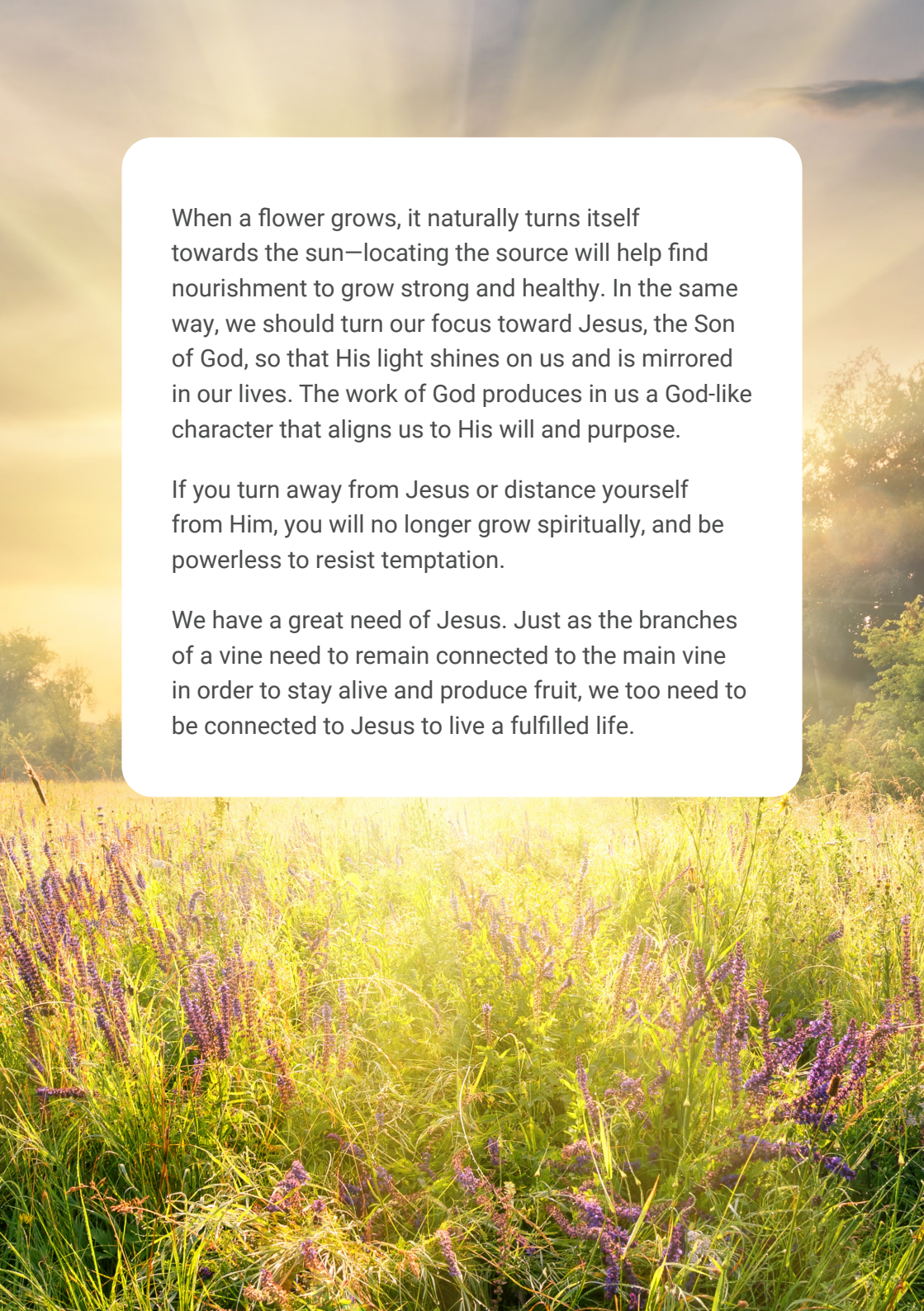
No amount of worry, anxiety or effort on our part will grow our spiritual life—only God and His life-giving care will help us grow. That is why it is so important to remain connected to God.

“The plants and flowers grow not by their own care or anxiety or effort, but by receiving that which God has furnished to minister to their life.

The child cannot, by any anxiety or power of its own, add to its stature. No more can you, by anxiety or effort of yourself, secure spiritual growth.”

— *Ellen G. White*



A photograph of a field of purple flowers and green grass under a bright, hazy sky. The flowers are in the foreground, and the grass is in the middle ground. The sky is a mix of yellow and white, suggesting a bright sun or light source. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

When a flower grows, it naturally turns itself towards the sun—locating the source will help find nourishment to grow strong and healthy. In the same way, we should turn our focus toward Jesus, the Son of God, so that His light shines on us and is mirrored in our lives. The work of God produces in us a God-like character that aligns us to His will and purpose.

If you turn away from Jesus or distance yourself from Him, you will no longer grow spiritually, and be powerless to resist temptation.

We have a great need of Jesus. Just as the branches of a vine need to remain connected to the main vine in order to stay alive and produce fruit, we too need to be connected to Jesus to live a fulfilled life.

FINDING HOPE IN JESUS

Q5 *Where does our hope come from?*



□ *Hebrews 12:2*



□ *Ephesians 2:8* □ *Luke 17:5* □ *Micah 7:7*

□ *Hebrews 2:10* □ *Isaiah 8:17; 45:22*

As we have trusted Jesus to forgive our sins, we can also trust Him to lead and guide us each day of our life.

 “Our growth in grace, our joy, our usefulness—all depend upon our union with Christ. It is by communion with Him, daily, hourly—by abiding in Him that we are to grow in grace.” *Ellen G. White*

As we follow Jesus, our lives will be filled with meaning, purpose and a deep sense of joy as we experience His amazing grace. The Bible tells us that Jesus is the “Author and the Finisher of our faith”—He has started something incredible in our lives, and He will stay with us every step of the way, creating a faith that He also makes perfect.

 “I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.” (*Psalms 16:8*)

In Romans, Paul makes it clear, when God is for us, who can be against us! With this understanding, your life will change dramatically—your perspective, your understanding of self and others will be transformed.


Q6 *How are we to walk with Jesus?*

 *Colossians 2:6,7*

 *Colossians 1:30* *1 John 5:11, 12, 20* *John 14:6*
 2 Corinthians 5:7

When we make the decision to follow Jesus, it is not a one-off decision but a daily choice to continue our walk with Him. Christ must be first, last and always.


When you accepted Jesus, you recognised your need of a Saviour; you also recognised that by your own efforts, you could not make yourself right with God. Because of Jesus, you are able to come to God, and grow in your faith.

 "If I am to wholly follow the Lord Jesus Christ, I must forsake everything that is contrary to Him." *Aiden Wilson Tozer*


STARTING EACH DAY WITH GOD

Q7 *What will we find if we seek God?*

 *Proverbs 8:17*

 *Psalms 143:8–10; 91:14–16* *2 Corinthians 3:18*
 Matthew 5:6; 6:33; 7:7–11


One of the best habits you can adopt is to start your day with God each morning. When you wake up, pray to God and ask Him to be with you and guide you through the day. Dedicate your plans for the day to God and ask Him to help you spend your day in a way that will honour Him.

 “Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, ‘Take me, O Lord, as wholly yours. I lay all my plans at your feet. Use me today in your service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in you.’ This is a daily matter. Surrender all your plans to Him.” *Ellen G. White*

By doing this, you will remind yourself each day of the commitment you have made to live your life as a follower of Jesus and thus your life will be moulded more and more after the life of Christ.

Q8 *What will we experience once we put our trust in God?*

 *Isaiah 26:3,4*

 *2 Corinthians 3:18* *Romans 5:1* *Isaiah 57:19–21*
 John 14:27; 17:3 *Ephesians 2:14–16*

Jesus promises us peace that we have never before experienced. It is not the type of temporary peace that we might be used to, which may be disrupted at any moment. The peace that Jesus offers is a peace that transcends all understanding.

Jesus invites us to put our faith and trust in Him because He will never let us down or disappoint. We can always be confident in His strength and His steadfast love.

“Your weakness is united to His strength, your ignorance to His wisdom, your frailty to His enduring might. So you are not to look to yourself, not to let the mind dwell upon self, but look to Christ. Let the mind dwell upon His love, upon the beauty, the perfection of His character.” *Ellen G. White*

Q9

How will Satan try to distract us to keep us from following Jesus?



□ *Mark 4:19*

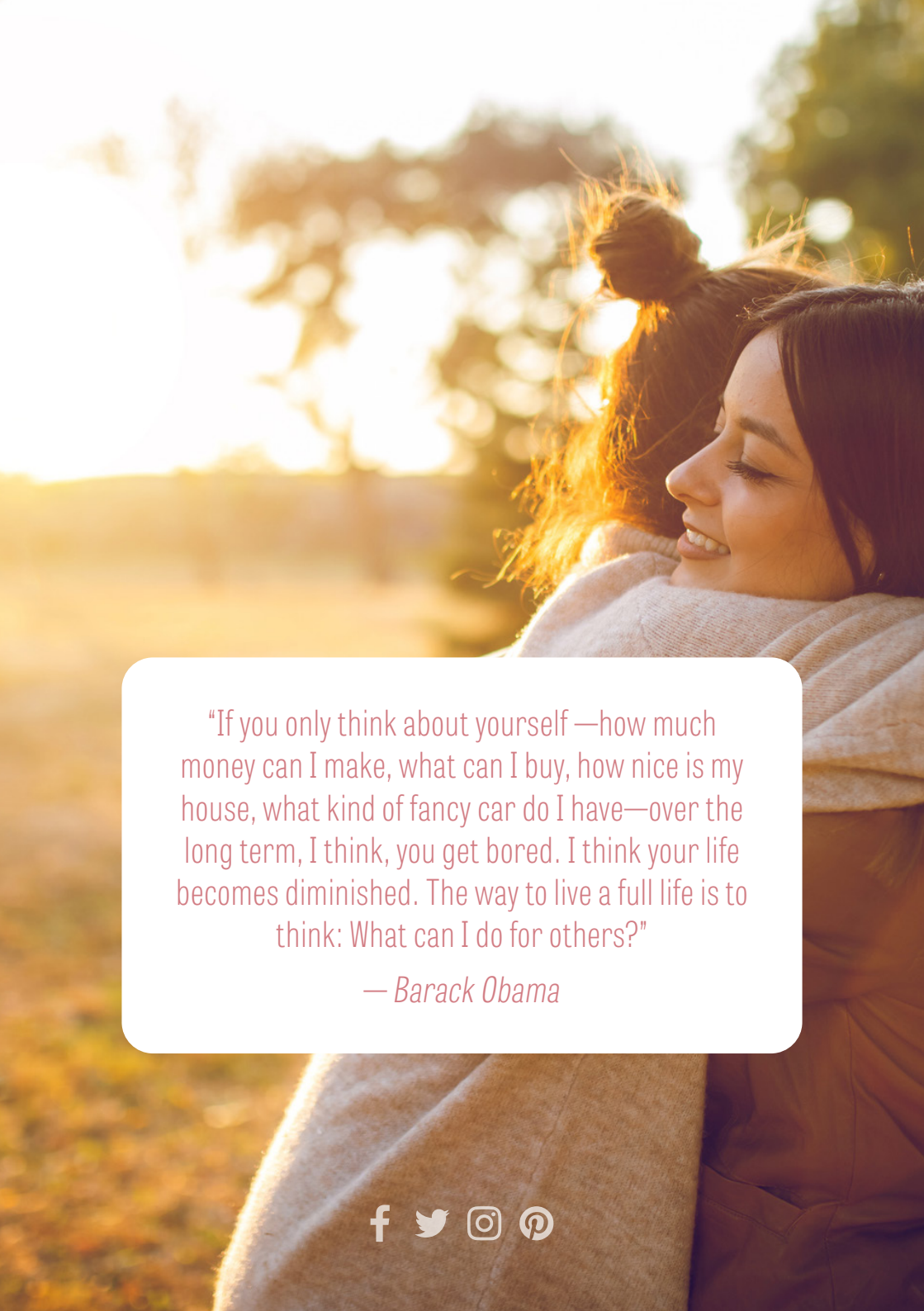


□ *1 Timothy 6:9, 10, 17* □ *1 John 2:15–17*
□ *Luke 14:18-20; 21:34–36*

If we are focused on ourselves, we won't be focused on Jesus. Satan would like nothing more than for us to be distracted and grow distant from Jesus. Satan's continued effort to keep our attention diverted away from Jesus towards self prevents us growing closer with God.

Satan will seek to distract you with either the temporary pleasures of this world or to discourage you with the faults of others or feelings of your own failures and inadequacies.

Do not be misled by his devices. Do not let Satan cause you to lose your focus on Jesus and the decision you've made to follow Him.

A woman with dark hair is smiling and hugging another person from behind. They are in a field with trees in the background, and the scene is bathed in the warm, golden light of a sunset. The woman's hair is blowing in the wind.

“If you only think about yourself —how much money can I make, what can I buy, how nice is my house, what kind of fancy car do I have—over the long term, I think, you get bored. I think your life becomes diminished. The way to live a full life is to think: What can I do for others?”

— *Barack Obama*



TRUSTING JESUS

Q10 *How can we be confident that we have eternal life?*



□ 1 John 5:12,13



□ John 17:2; 3:16–18; 10:28, 29; 1:12; 6:54-58; 15:4–6

□ 2 John 9 □ Isaiah 41:10

Jesus has promised, that if we believe in Him and accept His gift of salvation, we will be saved. Do not doubt this promise. Once we have accepted Jesus, we don't need to be anxious over whether or not we are saved. Trust in Jesus the same way you put your faith in Him when you first believed. The victory is already won: Jesus has fought our battle. Because of Jesus, sin has lost its hold on us and we no longer need to be held by its power.

 "The Son of God became a man to enable men to become sons of God." *C.S. Lewis*

Q11 *What will be the consequence if we turn away from God and return to sin?*



□ Ezekiel 18:24



□ Ezekiel 18:20-23; 3:20, 21; 33:12–19 □ 1 Samuel 15:11

□ Hebrews 10:29, 38, 39; 6:4–6 □ Psalm 125:4, 5

□ 2 Peter 2:20–22 ; 1:10

Satan tempts us because he knows that once we have accepted Jesus, we will not be alone. Continue to fix your eyes upon Jesus and let Him

be your source of strength. Talk often of Jesus and think always of Him. Put away your doubts; dismiss your fears and rest in God; He is able to keep that which you have committed to Him. When we leave ourselves in His hands, He promises to make us “more than conquerors” through His immense love for us (Romans 8:37).

Q12 *When does God promise we will find Him?*



Jeremiah 29:13



Jeremiah 29:11–14 *Isaiah 55:6, 7*
 Deuteronomy 4:29-31; 30:2–6

When Jesus was living on Earth, His followers were drawn to Him. They heard the words He spoke and saw the amazing things He did and they wanted to be with Him and to learn from Him. The plans they originally had for their lives paled in comparison with the glimpse they saw of Jesus. It was enough to make them want to leave their old lives behind and follow Him.

 “When those disciples heard the words of Jesus, they felt their need of Him. They sought, they found, they followed Him.”

Ellen G. White

Q13 *What will be a struggle for everyone who wants to follow God, and where should we look to for help and hope?*



Romans 7:19



Galatians 5:17 *Psalms 119:5* *Philippians 2:13; 1:6*

Our sinful nature wars with the new heart that God has given to us. Oswald Chamber wrote:

“It is only when God has transformed our nature and we have entered into the experience of sanctification that the fight begins.

The warfare is not against sin; we can never fight against sin—Jesus Christ conquered that in His redemption of us.

The conflict is waged over turning our natural life into a spiritual life. This is never done easily, nor does God intend that it be so. It is accomplished only through a series of moral choices. God does not make us holy in the sense that He makes our character holy.

He makes us holy in the sense that He has made us innocent before Him. And then we have to turn that innocence into holy character through the moral choices we make.” (*My Utmost for His Highest*)

Spiritual giants of the Bible—the prophets, kings, and even Jesus’ closest followers—all faced the same common struggles: the battle against self. We read of pride, selfishness, bitterness, anger, jealousy and doubt.

They broke promises and put themselves first, but they also humbled themselves when they realised their failures. When they repented and asked God for forgiveness, He forgave them and cast their sins into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:19).

The power of the love of Jesus is what brings about this transformation of character. When Jesus abides in the heart, the whole nature is transformed.

Q17

What will our lives look like when we are filled with the love of Jesus?



□ *Ephesians 4:15*



□ *1 Peter 1:22; 2:2* □ *John 15:5* □ *1 John 3:18, 19, 22*
□ *Proverbs 11:25*

When we have Jesus in our hearts, He will work in us—in our thoughts, words and actions—and we will grow more like Him.

In this way, we will always be learning and the Holy Spirit will shape our character to become more like Jesus.

 “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” (*Romans 12:2*)

REFLECTION

I know that once I come to Jesus, He will begin to change my life.

YES

UNDECIDED

I recognise that I need Jesus to help me grow spiritually—I can't grow my faith on my own or apart from Him.

YES

UNDECIDED

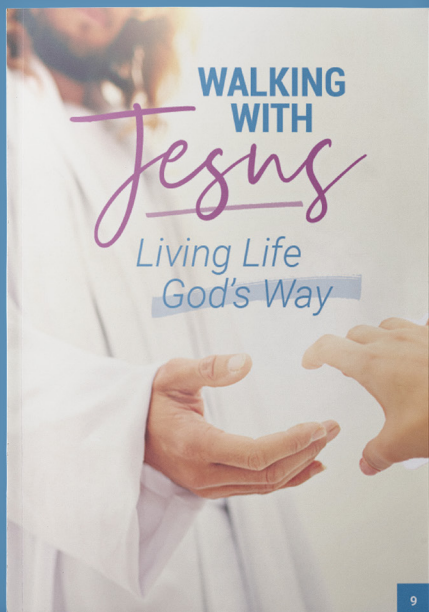
I want Jesus to help me grow in Him.

YES

UNDECIDED

*Living
in Jesus,
we grow
more like Him
each day.*





CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY IN PART 9 - **LIVING LIFE GOD'S WAY**

Good news is worth sharing. As you recognise how God has changed your life for the better, extend that same happiness and peace with others around us. As you grow in faith and live a life that honours God, you will become more like Jesus each day as you follow His example.

SHARING

If you have found this course helpful you can help share the message. Where ever you see the following social media symbols the digital content can be found at hopechannel.com/inspire for sharing:



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