

STEP 1: FOLLOW

Let's talk about what it means to follow Jesus. This step is all about the gospel (what Jesus did), salvation (what we receive), baptism (how we respond), and how to grow in your faith (think marathon, not sprint).

Will you give your life to Jesus? The greatest decision you can ever make is to follow Jesus.

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

If you were to read all of the Bible, you would quickly discover a story that is woven throughout its pages. Today, this story still impacts us. This story is the gospel, and the gospel is good news for us. Pastors and theologians describe this grand story in various ways. At Vintage, we explain God's story using a helpful tool called **3 Circles**.

GOD'S DESIGN - The Bible tells us that God originally planned a world that worked perfectly—where everything and everyone fit together in harmony. God made each of us with a purpose—to worship and walk with him.

“And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.” Genesis 1:31a

SIN - Life doesn't work when we ignore God and His original design for our lives. We selfishly insist on doing things our own way. The Bible calls this sin. We all sin and distort God's original design. The consequences of our sin is separation from God—in this life and for all eternity. ***For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, Romans 3:23. For the wages of sin is death, Romans 6:23a.***

BROKENNESS - Sin leads to a place of brokenness. When we realize life is not working, we begin to look for a way to fix it. We tend to go in many different directions trying different things to figure it out on our own. Brokenness leads to a place of realizing a need for something greater. ***There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death. Proverbs 14:12***

GOSPEL - At this point we need a remedy. Because of His love, God did not leave us in our brokenness. Jesus, God in human flesh, came to us and lived perfectly according to God's design. He took our sin, paying the penalty of our sin by his death on the cross. Jesus was then raised from the dead, rescuing and restoring our relationship with God. ***For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16***

REPENT & BELIEVE - Simply hearing the Gospel is not enough. We must admit our sinful brokenness and stop trusting in ourselves. We must ask God to forgive us—turning from sin to trust only in Jesus. Believing we receive new life through Jesus and God turns our lives in a new direction. ***(Mark 1:15, Ephesians 2:8–9, Romans 10:9)***

RECOVER & PURSUE - When God restores our relationship to him, we begin to discover meaning and purpose in a broken world. Because of Jesus, we can pursue God's Design in all areas of our lives. ***(Philippians 2:13, Ephesians 2:10)***

WHAT IS THE BEST RESPONSE TO MY SALVATION?... BAPTISM!

This initial act of obedience serves as the believer's public profession of faith in Jesus and is an outward symbol of the believer's forgiveness of sin and new life in Jesus Christ. The act of baptism should closely follow faith and repentance. Only those who have been saved by Jesus can be baptized. Vintage Church believes all Christians should be baptized by being fully submerged underwater in the presence of other believers. When you are baptized, you are being obedient to Jesus and proclaiming to the world that you belong to Him. ***(Acts 2:37-41, Romans 6:3-4, Colossians 2:12, Matthew 28:18-20)***

HOW DO I GROW?

Read the Bible - It's impossible to have a relationship with someone when you don't know much about them. God's word is the primary way God communicates to us and the primary way we learn about God and how He wants us to live. It is important to regularly read the Bible. The Bible is described as “breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness” ***(2 Timothy 3:16)***.

Pray - If Scripture is the primary way God communicates with us, prayer is the primary way we communicate with God. Jesus teaches his disciples about prayer and how to pray (Matthew 6:5–15). Paul tells the church at Thessalonica to “pray without ceasing”. ***(1 Thessalonians 5:17)***. Even Jesus would get away to pray by himself ***(Matthew 14:23, 26:36–46, Luke 5:15–16, 6:12, 22:40–46)***.

How do I pray? - Praise God for who He is and what He has done in your life, confess your sins to God, asking for forgiveness, pray for others and their needs, and ask God to send you out to love others and share the Gospel with them.

Tell Others - The word Gospel literally means good news, and Jesus doesn't want us to keep this good news to ourselves. Can you believe that we are God's plan for spreading this good news to those around us? This is called evangelism. We, ourselves actually grow in Christ too when we tell others about His work in our life because we are obeying Him and reminding ourselves of all that He has done. “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.” ***(Mark 16:15)***

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steps at Vintage Church!*

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