



Lesson One: Road Map

Becoming who God wants you to be does not happen overnight. It happens over a lifetime as we walk with Him. God's plan for you is to become just like Jesus. Romans 8:29 tells us that God had this plan in mind for you even before you were born. It says, "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." That word, *predestinate*, means determined ahead of time. According to verse 29, what did God determine ahead of time that you are to do? _____ Our desire here at Good News is to help you on this journey in becoming just like Jesus, and this lesson gives the map that you should follow on this path.

We have three words that we use to describe the path that we want you to follow in becoming who God wants you to be: Gather, Grow, and Go. Each of these words represents certain steps that you can take in your walk with God, and in your relationships with other Christians and those who do not yet know Jesus as their Savior. Each of these words also represents important information that we believe to be critical in taking the next step that you need to take. What are the three words that we use at Good News to describe the path that we want you to follow in becoming who God wants you to be? _____, _____, _____

Gather

The first word to describe this journey that you have begun is Gather. Gather represents an introduction. It is an introduction to God and who He is. We have designed our services here at Good News in such a way that you can meet God and get to know Him. Hebrews 11:6 tells us, "...for he that cometh to God, must believe that He is...". This verse tells us that if anyone is going to come to God, they first must do what? _____ So, if someone is going to believe in God, then the first step for them is meeting Him and getting introduced to Him.

After being introduced to God, we learn about what His wants and expectations are. As the Creator of all things, God has the right to tell us how to live, that includes what we should do and what we shouldn't do. When we choose to live contrary to how God wants us to live, the Bible calls that sin. Sin is doing wrong things that God doesn't want us to do. It also is refusing to do the good things that God wants us to do. Let's take a look at Romans 3:23 and see exactly who has done wrong against God. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;". In that verse, who has sinned? _____ Not only does God tell us who has sinned, but He tells us what the punishment is for that wrongdoing. The first half of Romans 6:23 says, "The wages of sin is death;..." The payment that we have earned because of our sin is death. That speaks of physical death, but much more than that, it includes an eternal spiritual death as well.

Once we are introduced to our sin, we can then appreciate meeting Jesus. He is God's Son. Jesus loves you! He loves you so much that He came to this earth for the sole purpose of paying the price for your sin, so that you don't have to. He lived a sinless life, but chose to take your sin upon Himself and be judged by God in your place.

He died to make the payment for your sin. But the good news is that Jesus didn't stay dead! He rose again, conquering death. And because He was victorious over death, He offers us the gift of eternal life.

Jesus is a wonderful person to meet! And in meeting Him, we are introduced to what God tells us about salvation. Salvation deals with the payment of our sins. A lot of people try to use many different things to pay for their sins. Some try church attendance, others baptism, some trust in doing good things or keeping a list of rules, but Jesus tells us that there is only one acceptable payment for our wrongdoing. John 14:6 records those words for us, "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." What did Jesus say was the only acceptable payment? _____ Have you trusted in Jesus to save you from your sins? _____ If not, why not? _____

The next member of the Godhead that we meet is the Holy Spirit. He is the One that reveals our sin to us, and helps us to see that Jesus is the way to eternal life. Upon putting our faith in Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes to live in us. Immediately He begins to transform us into the person that God wants us to be. He also gives us the strength to overcome sin and live the victorious Christian life.

What five things are we introduced to in the Gather? _____,
_____, _____, _____,

Grow

Meeting God and coming to faith in Jesus for salvation is only the beginning of our journey as a Christian. God does not want us to remain the way that we are, but He wants us to grow in our relationship with Him, with other Christians, and with those who have not trusted Jesus as their Savior. Remember what Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the way". It is journey that we have started. And the first step in that journey is baptism. In baptism we publicly identify Jesus to be our Savior.

Another important aspect in our growth as a follower of Jesus is the Bible. The Bible reveals who God is and what He how He expects us as Christians to live. It is our lifelong pursuit to study it and put it into practice in our lives. As we live out God's Word in our day to day lives, we become more like Jesus.

The Bible is how God speaks to us, and prayer is how we speak to Him. Just as no earthly relationship can flourish if there is only one-sided communication, our relationship with God will not be what it should be unless we are talking to God and He is talking to us.

Another thing that God has instructed us to do to encourage spiritual growth is fasting. Fasting is withholding food, and other things for a time to more seriously seek God and show our dependence upon Him. There are a number of reasons why fasting is an important part of the Christian life, and we will cover them in more detail further in our study.

The last topic that we will cover concerning our journey in spiritual growth is the church. The church is not a building, but a people. It is made up of all of those who have put their faith in Jesus for salvation. We are to love

and support one another. The Christian life is not intended to be walked alone! We are to walk, live, and grow together. That is why church attendance and LIFE Group involvement is so important, because your spiritual growth, and the spiritual growth of those around you depends upon it. When we neglect the church, we neglect the people that Jesus gave His life for.

What five things help us to Grow? _____,
_____, _____,

Go

Our personal growth is not the end goal. We Grow so that we can be equipped to Go. The first way that we are to Go is by telling others about the way of salvation through Jesus. As a Christian, we have been commanded by Him to go and proclaim the good news to the people that we come in contact with. Mark 16:15 says, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Here at Good News, we encourage you to start with one. Pick one person that you want to see come to faith in Jesus for salvation, and begin by telling them about Him and what He has done for you.

When we came to faith in Jesus, the Holy Spirit gave us talents and abilities to use in service to Him. We call these spiritual gifts. Every Christian has them. And by understanding what gifts you have been given, you can better understand what God wants you to do in service to Him and His church. Later in our study we will identify exactly what spiritual gifts you have been given and how you can use them to serve Him.

Once we know our spiritual gifts, we are to use them in service to Him. We are to serve God, serve the church, and serve those who have not yet trusted Jesus as their Savior, so that they will come to faith in Him. Serving is not an optional thing. It is commanded and expected of all Christian.

Another way that we Go is by giving. God is a giving God. Jesus is a giving Savior. He has blessed us, and He expects us to give back to Him. We give to show our appreciation for what He has done for us. We give to show our dependence upon Him. We give so that the church can reach our community with the gospel of Jesus. We also give so that we can support other Christians who are taking the gospel of Jesus all around the world. By giving so that they can go, we partner with them in the work that God is doing through them.

The last way that we Go is through discipleship. As we have mentioned, the Christian life is a lifelong journey that we are on. And it is not a journey that we are to take alone. Every single one of us is supposed to be leading someone else along in this journey. As a Christian, you are to lead someone else through the Gather, Grow, Go. Who do you need to be introducing to God? _____ Who do you need to help grow in their faith? _____ Who do you need to encourage to Go?

What five ways are we to Go? _____,
_____, _____,

Conclusion

So now that you have taken a look at the road map, where are you at in this journey? _____

What do you need to work on? _____ What step do you need to take?

_____ If you are still not sure, that is ok! As we explore each of these things deeper in the lessons to come, I believe that things will become a lot clearer for you as you begin this journey.