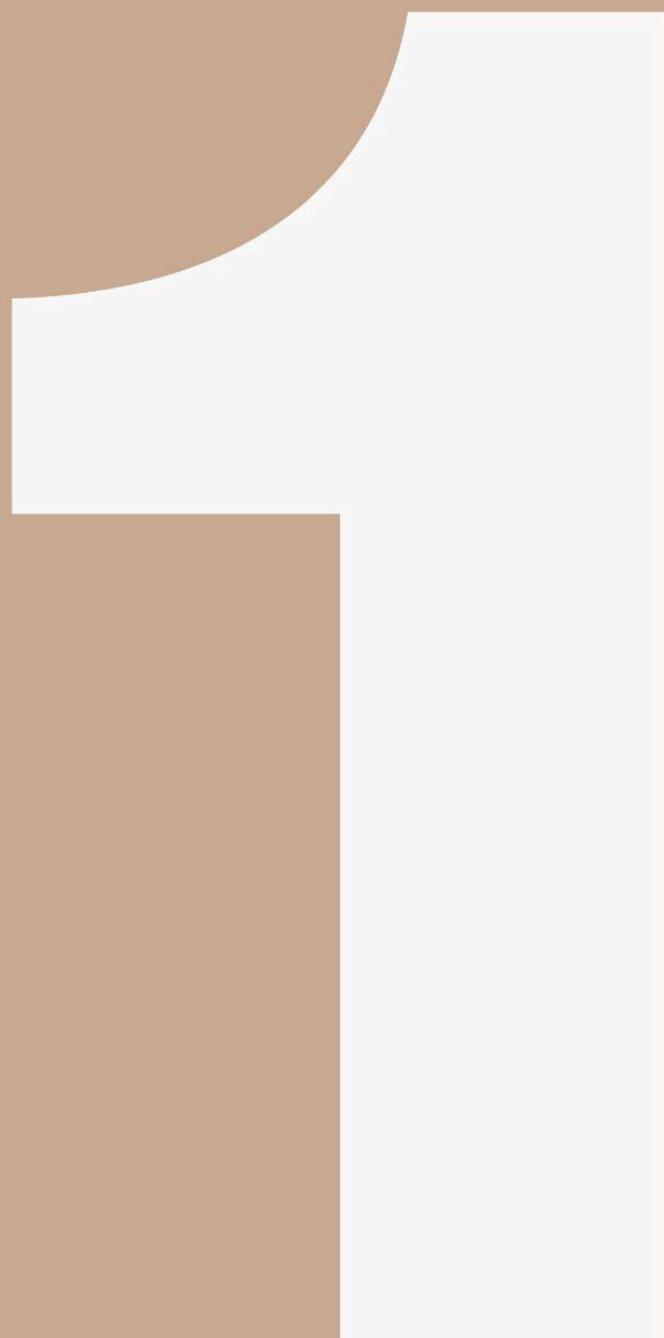


Handbook
v1



The Good News of Jesus

The Truth About Life



The Reality:

Life Feels Overwhelming and Unfair



The Bible validates our feeling that the world is broken and that we are groaning for something better.

"We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time."

(Romans 8:22)

Validates the "gut instinct" that the world is in pain.

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

(John 16:33)

Jesus acknowledges that life here is hard and full of trouble.

"He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end."

(Ecclesiastes 3:11)

Explains why we feel unsatisfied—we have "eternity" in our hearts but live in a temporary world.

"The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."

(Psalm 34:18)

God is near in overwhelming pain.

The Design:

Your Original Purpose



The Bible tells us that we are not accidents, but masterpieces created with intent.

"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well."

(Psalm 139:13-14)

Directly addresses the complexity of the body and the personal touch of the Creator.

"Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness...." So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them."

(Genesis 1:26-27)

The foundational text for human worth

"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."

(Jeremiah 29:11)

Counters the idea that we are random accidents; God has pre-thought plans for us.

"For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago."

(Ephesians 2:10)

Reinforces the idea of being "designed" to function a certain way.



“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you”

(Jeremiah 1:5)

God planned your life before you existed.

Why We Need Saving



The Dysfunction:

How Sin Caused Suffering



The Bible explains that "sin" isn't just rule-breaking, but a violation of our design that leads to self-sabotage.

"I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do."
(Romans 7:15)

A perfect description of the internal battle and self-sabotage mentioned in the lesson.

"We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way..."
(Isaiah 53:6)

Defines sin as "turning to our own way" rather than following the Shepherd/Design.

"Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness."
(1 John 3:4)

Ties into the idea of ignoring the "moral code" or law of our design.

"If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them."
(James 4:17)

Simples definition of sin—going against your conscience.

"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."
(Romans 3:23)

We've all lived outside our design.



“There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.”

(Proverbs 14:12)

Following our impulses often leads to destruction.

“but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”

(James 1:14–15)

Sin grows and produces consequences.

“For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.”

(Galatians 5:17)

The internal battle in our conscience between good and bad.

The Disconnect:

Why Sin Leads to Death



The Bible lays out the logic that separation from the Source leads to death.

'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'

(Acts 17:28)

God is the source of our life

"But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear."

(Isaiah 59:2)

Explains that the core problem is separation/disconnection.

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

(Romans 6:23)

The "law of gravity" concept—the natural result (wage) of sin is death.

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

(John 15:5)

The source of inspiration for the "branch and tree" analogy used in the course.

"Say to them, 'As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live.'"

(Ezekiel 33:11)

Proves that God does not want us to die; death is not His desire.



“Friendship with the world means enmity against God.”

(James 4:4)

Sin shifts our loyalties away from God.

Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?” He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”

(Genesis 3:8-10)

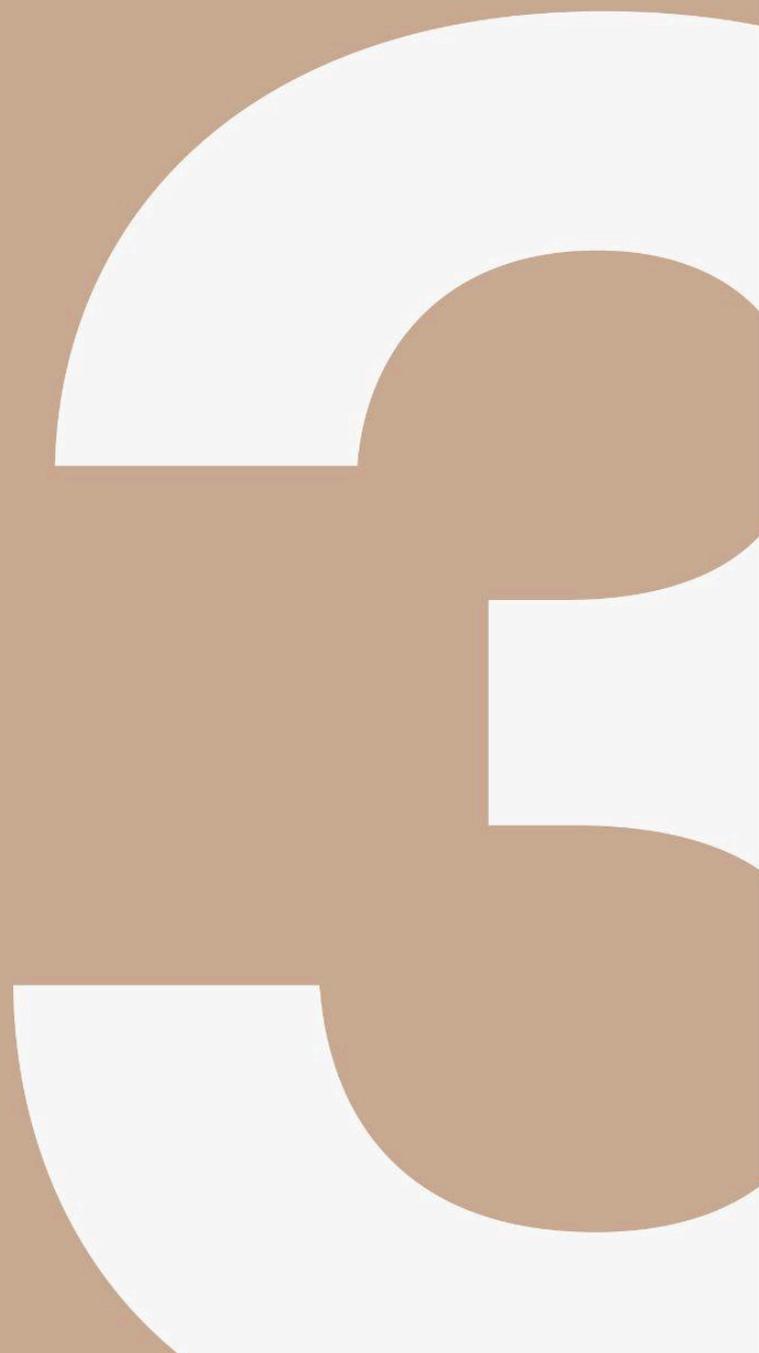
Sin makes us run from the One we were designed to be close to.

“This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed.”

(John 3:19–20)

People push God away to avoid conviction.

The Hope Jesus Offers



The Sacrifice:

Jesus Our Only Hope



The Bible describes how Jesus stepped in as our Big Brother to save us.

"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

(Romans 5:8)

God made the first move while we were still "enemies."

"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. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."

(John 3:16-17)

The clearest statement of God's sacrificial love.

"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

(2 Corinthians 5:21)

The "Great Exchange" — He took our darkness, we got His light.

"But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed."

(Isaiah 53:5)

A powerful prophecy describing Jesus taking the physical and mental blow for us.

"Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends."

(John 15:13)

Reframes the sacrifice as an act of friendship and protection.



“He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.”

(1 Peter 2:24)

Jesus took full responsibility for our wrongs.

“Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death— that is, the devil— and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.”

(Hebrews 2:14–15)

Jesus confronted and defeated the “enemy of death.”

“But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.”

(Acts 2:24)

Jesus did not stay dead in the tomb, but rose to life again.

“For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time.”

(1 Timothy 2:5–6)

Jesus is the bridge between broken humanity and God.

The Restart:

A Fresh Start in Life and With God



The Bible promises us a "Clean Slate" and the power of the Holy Spirit.

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"

(2 Corinthians 5:17)

The definition of the "Fresh Start."

"As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us."

(Psalm 103:12)

Describes how thorough the forgiveness is—total removal of guilt.

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh."

(Ezekiel 36:26)

The promise of an internal upgrade/transplant, not just behavior modification.

"But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."

(John 14:26)

Introduces the "Personal Life Coach" living inside us.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

(1 John 1:9)

God's forgiveness is complete, not partial.



“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.”

(John 14:26)

Your 24/7 life coach.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”

(Galatians 5:22–23)

The “Real You” God brings out.

“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.”

(Romans 8:1-2)

The guilt and shame of the past are completely removed.

“Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.”

(Colossians 3:9-10)

The new life is a process of transformation.

The Future:

A New, Restored World



The Bible describes the physical reality of the New Earth.

"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth... 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.'"

(Revelation 21:1, 4)

The foundational promise of the New World.

"They will build houses and dwell in them; they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit. No longer will they build houses and others live in them, or plant and others eat. For as the days of a tree, so will be the days of my people; my chosen ones will long enjoy the work of their hands.."

(Isaiah 65:21-23)

We will do real work, build real houses, and have real bodies.

"The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them."

(Isaiah 11:6)

Describes the harmony of nature—hiking with lions.

"What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived—the things God has prepared for those who love him."

(1 Corinthians 2:9)

Validates that our imagination cannot even scratch the surface of how good it will be.



“See, I will create new heavens and a new earth.”

(Isaiah 65:17)

God's plan is restoration, not escape to clouds.

“But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.”

(Philippians 3:20–21)

Our bodies will be made new like Jesus' body

“For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.”

(1 Thessalonians 4:16–17)

The reunion with loved ones you describe.

“My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”

(John 14:2–3)

Jesus personally prepares our eternal homes.

“Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.”

(1 Corinthians 15:51-53)

All God's people will get a new body at Jesus' coming.

“For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling”

(2 Corinthians 5:1-2)

The new bodies [tents] are made by heaven.

The Start of Your Journey



The Bible invites you to make a decision.

"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me."

(Revelation 3:20)

Jesus does not force Himself into your life, He waits for you to let Him in.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

(Matthew 11:28)

The invitation is not to "work harder," but to come and find rest.

"...choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve... But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

(Joshua 24:15)

Emphasizes the power of choice.

"Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God."

(John 1:12-13)

Through Jesus we can become part of God's family.