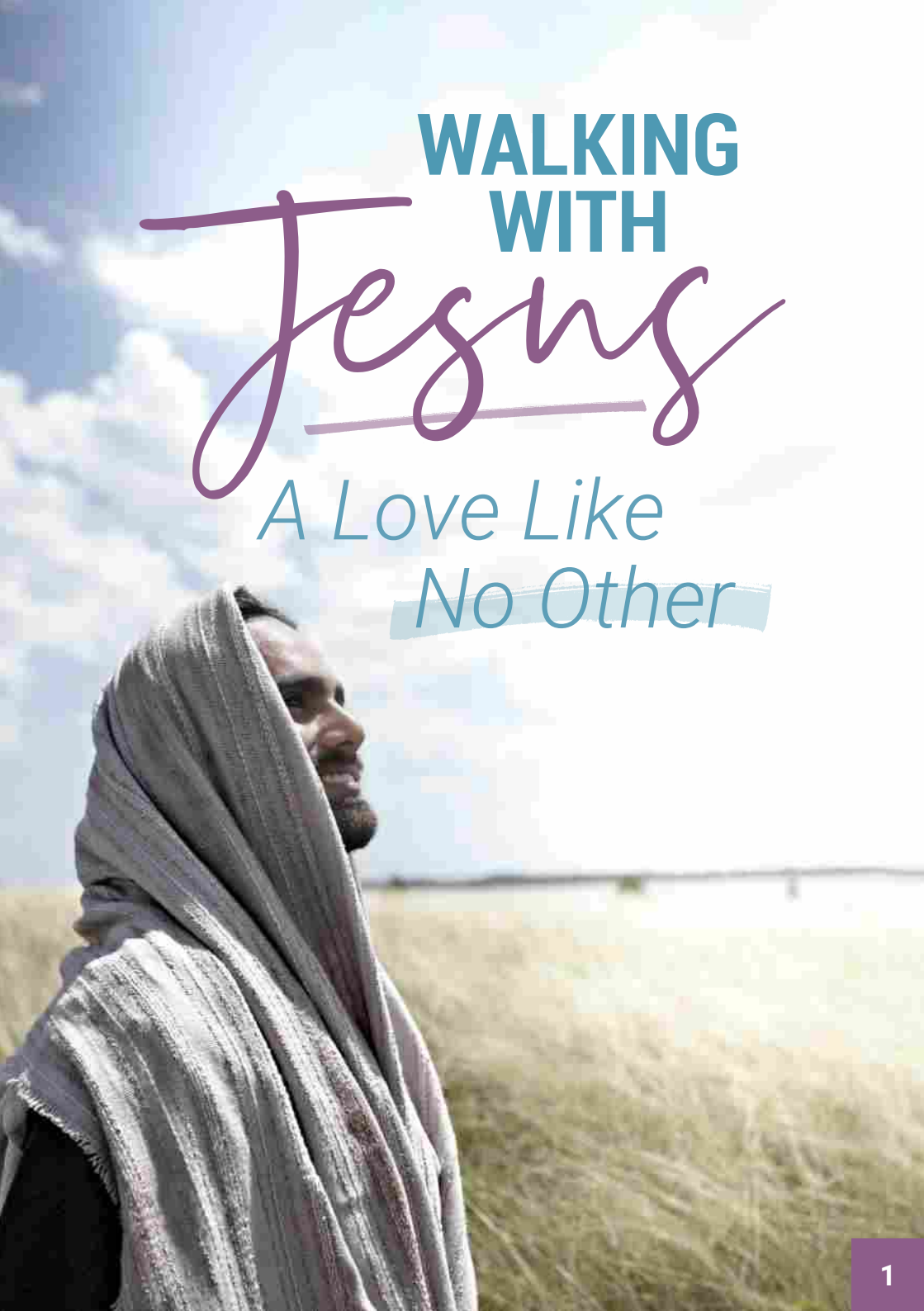
WALKING WITH
Jesus
A Love Like No Other

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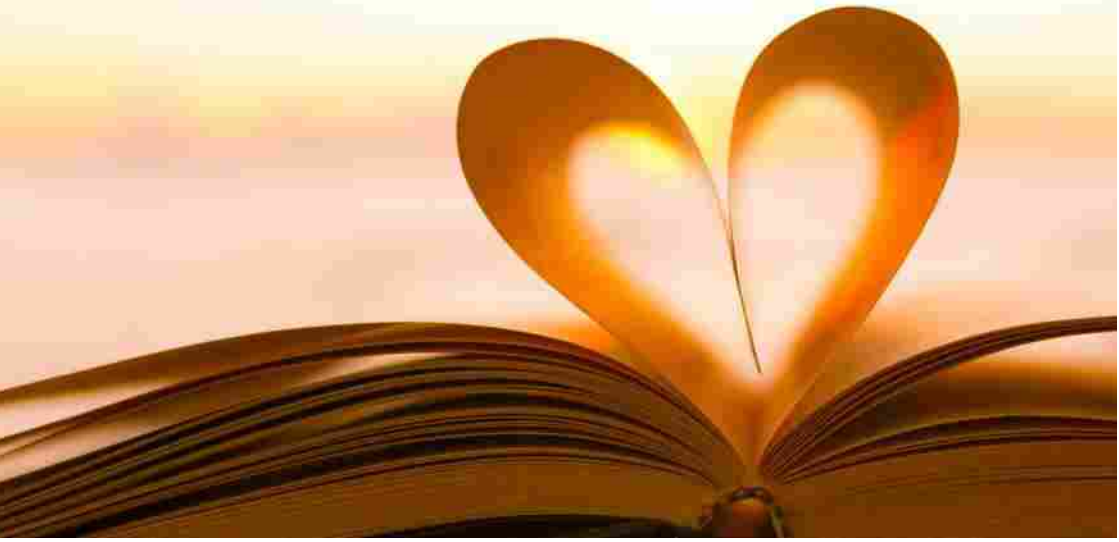

This booklet series is adapted from Steps to Christ by E.G. White and the Steps to Christ Bible Study Guide developed by Merlin Beerman, Revelation Publications.

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INTRODUCTION

IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE

This series—"Steps to Christ"— will lead you towards a better understanding of who Jesus is, what it means to "believe", and other important elements of what a relationship with Jesus means.

Like any steps we take in life, it's the first step that starts us on the journey, so congratulations on your decision to take it.

Whatever your level of familiarity with Jesus Christ, there's always more to discover about the radical love that Jesus represents—the love of God, for each of us.

Since it was first published in 1892, *Steps to Christ* has been inspiring and challenging those who read it, by its simple and clear depiction of who Jesus is, the love He represents, and understanding how we can experience this amazing love firsthand. This message is just as relevant today in a world filledl with people in need of love, hope and restoration.

This is a story about life-changing love, like you've never experienced before

The original book has now been translated into more than 150 different languages.

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HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THIS SERIES

As you read through each chapter, you'll notice some icons:

Q	*Question*

Read each question, take time to contemplate and understand what it is asking. Questions are included throughout the chapter, so you have the option of either answering as you go, or once you've finished the chapter. Feel free to write your answers in the workbook provided.

In order to answer the questions, you will need a Bible; if you don't have a printed Bible, there are many Bible apps you can download, or use your favourite online version.

	*Primary Bible verse*

This symbol refers you to a reference. For instance, John 3:16 refers you to the Book of John, (which is found in the New Testament) chapter 3, verse 16.

If you're reading the Bible for the first time, using a Bible app or online version is a great idea as it helps you to more quickly navigate the books and find the exact text you seek.

Further Study

While each question has a main text, there are also related texts that can help your study a little further. We hope you will take this opportunity to dig deeper and read more about the topic.

Use this time to reflect on what these answers mean to you and your life. The time and focus you put in will be rewarded: the more you put in, the more you'll get out of this Masterclass.

If you have questions about any of the concepts or topics throughout this series, or want to discuss anything further, contact our Hope Channel team as below.

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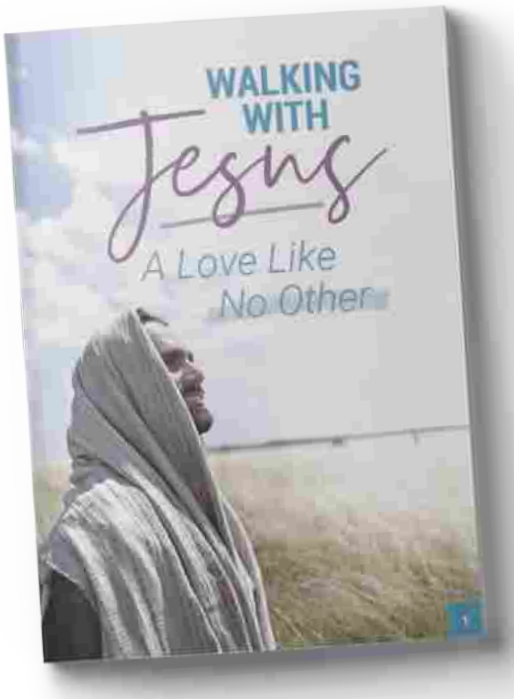


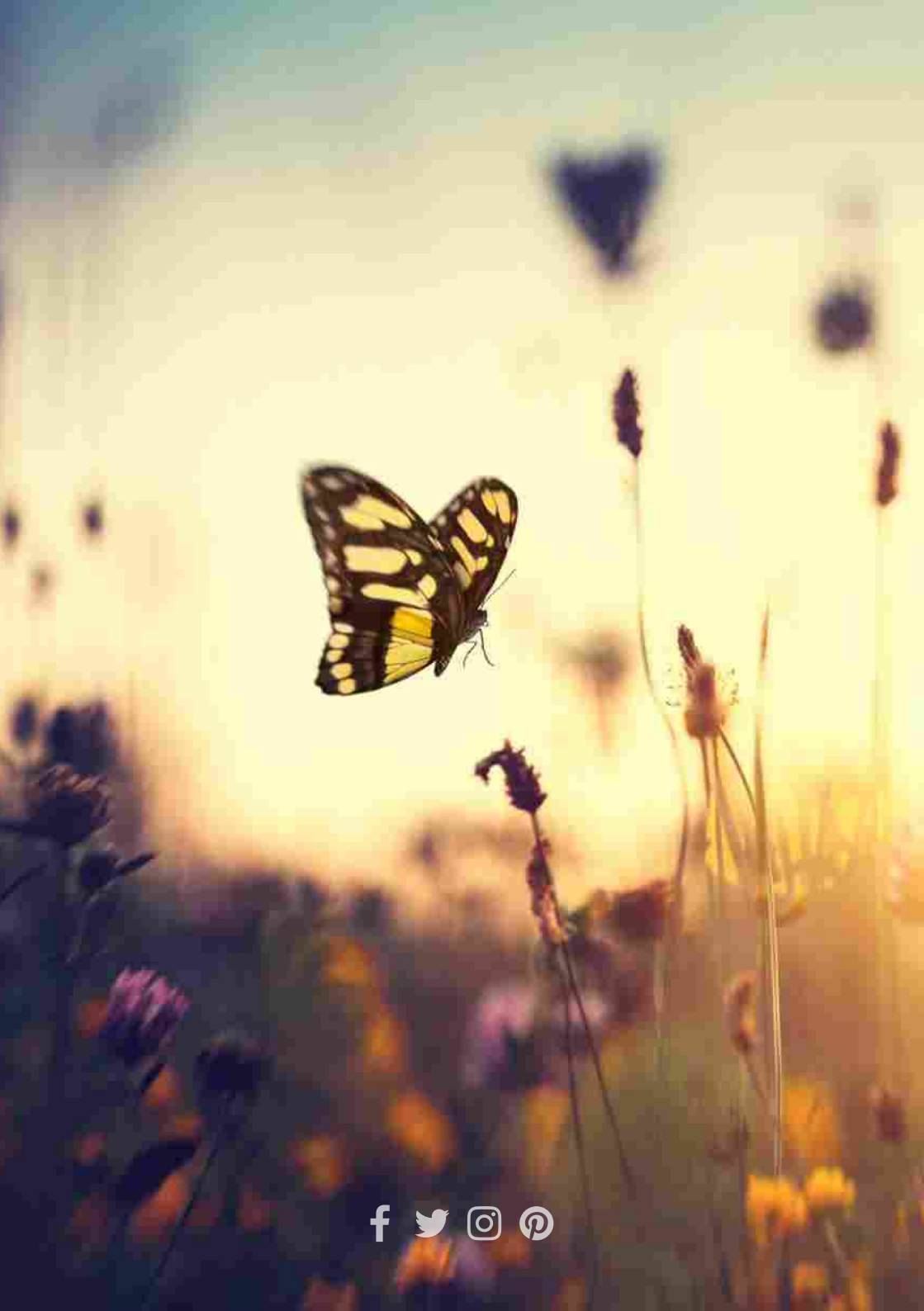

God's Love For Us

Love is a word that we to use frequently. How many times this week have you used it to describe how you feel about someone or something? You might say you *love* your mother or your best friend; but then in the next breath say that you *love* your car, your song, a favourite flavour of ice-cream, or TV show.

Still, if you are asked to reflect on your life and who has loved you the most, your reply will be a person, not an inanimate thing. That person who has loved you is special to you, because they are someone who's made you feel truly valued. It's likely that they are someone that you really *love*, also.

Love—real *love*—is something that is given and received. That's how it was designed. And we were designed to be loved, with hearts ready to *love* others.

So - where did this *love* come from?



THE ORIGIN OF LOVE

Q1 *What does the Bible say about love?*

☐ *1 John 4:16*

Let's go back to the beginning—the very beginning. In six days God created the world, and it was perfect. When God created the earth, there was not a trace of death or decay in it.

God designed the natural wonders of our world to enjoy and experience. This wasn't just a lofty mountain ranges, but every flower and blade of grass testify and reveal God's character. The natural world reveals a creative God who delights in timeless beauty and a love that has no boundaries.



"God's global aim in creation AND redemption is not only the glory of His name, but also the gladness of the people."

— John Piper

WHAT GOD'S LOVE IS LIKE

Q2	*What are some attributes of God's character?*
	▢ *Micah 7:18*
	▢ *Exodus 34:6, 7* ▢ *Psalms 103:9; 112:4; 145:8; 71:19; 86:5*

The Bible provides an incredible picture of God that reveals His unending love and mercy, which draws our hearts to Him. God delights to reveal Himself through nature, and the love we feel within a relationship. However, even all these incredible experiences and joys fall short of showing the whole picture of God's love.

A DEMONSTRATION OF LOVE

It's one thing to describe love, but another to show love through action. Fortunately for us, God does both: the Bible is the story of God's love in action. In Genesis 3, we read how a perfect world was polluted by sin. Adam and Eve, the first humans, chose to exercise their freedom of choice and disobeyed God and followed their own inclinations. This act of disobedience led to misery and the introduction of death not just to themselves but to future generations. You need not look too far to see the impact of sin and suffering in the world. However, even in the midst of any crises, God's love is very clear.

With the entry of sin, the life God had planned for humanity changed dramatically— future generations would now experience difficulties and trials. Where there had once been blessings, now the very fabric of creation was cursed as a result of sin. It's important to note that

God didn't make these trials happen, but rather they were the result of humankind utilising their freedom of choice and the natural world breaking down as a consequence of sin. In allowing humankind to exercise their free choice, humanity began to understand the magnitude and results of sin.

Even though the world suffered the results of sin, God's love can still be seen in the flowers that grow amid the thistles and the roses amongst the thorns. One glance from the window still reveals the beauty and character of God—He is still with us.

When you think of God, what or who, do you picture? Do you see a stern judge? A police officer? Satan (God's opponent) works to blind our mind's eye from seeing all the good God has given to us, causing us to look at God in fear. Satan has deceived many people into thinking that God's main objective is to punish and inflict us with pain. This is a false picture of God: God is a God of love, and that's exactly why Jesus came to earth—to actively demonstrate and reveal the incredible love God has for each of us.

Q3	*List God's characteristics that are revealed by the prophet in Micah 7.*
	☐ *Micah 7:17–20*
	☐ *Exodus 15:14–16* ☐ *Joshua 2:9–11* ☐ *Isaiah 64:2* ☐ *Jeremiah 33:9* ☐ *Revelation 6:15–17*





JESUS ON A MISSION

Q4	*How do we know God's true character is?*
	☐ *John 14:7*
	☐ *John 17:4-8, 26; 5:19, 20* ☐ *1 Timothy 3:16* ☐ *Colossians 1:15*

The Bible teaches that Jesus came to earth to show us God to us. When Philip, one of the disciples asked, "Show us the Father," Jesus answered, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not known me, Philip? He that has seen me has seen the Father; and how can you say then, 'Show us the Father?' " (John 14:8, 9).

The birth of Jesus revealed God's love to those who were experiencing suffering and trials. Philippians 2:5–8 describes the humility of Jesus in leaving the very presence of God in ordwe to reveal His true character.

During His time on earth, Jesus visited many places caring for those He met. The Bible makes specific mention of villages where He healed every disease. In fact, there were whole villages where there was not a moan of sickness in any house, for He had passed through healing all their sick. Now that is an amazing picture of Jesus and a loving God.

Love, mercy, and compassion were shown in every act of Jesus life; His heart went out in sympathy to all. Jesus left heaven and became one with us in order to reveal God's true character and demonstrate how we could live in God's image. The Bible clearly states that even the poorest and humblest of people were not afraid to approach Jesus.

Little children liked to be around Him. They loved to climb onto His lap and look into His face, and see love reflected in His eyes (Mark 10:13–16).

Q5	*Why did Jesus come to Earth?*
	☐ *Luke 4:18, 19*
	☐ *John 17:4–8, 26; 5:19, 20* ☐ *Matthew 1:21–23, 11:5* ☐ *Isaiah 29:18, 19; 35:5, 6* ☐ *Psalm 147:3; 107:13–20*

Jesus always spoke in love and truth. He never condemned people for their weaknesses. Instead, Jesus exposed the hypocrisy of those who merely pretended to be righteous, unveiling the unbelief and wickedness of many professed religious leaders while championing the cause of the oppressed and overlooked.

We see the heart of Jesus and the love of God when Jesus wept over Jerusalem, the city He loved. He wept for all those who refused to accept Him as the way, the truth and the life. Even the people who rejected, scorned and persecuted Jesus were treated with compassion. To Jesus, every person was precious.

Q6	*How did Jesus present Himself and His purpose on earth?*
	☐ *John 1:14*
	☐ *John 1:16, 17* ☐ *Psalm 45:2; 85:10, 11* ☐ *Colossians 1:19* ☐ *1 Timothy 1:14*

The character of God the Father was revealed in the very way Jesus lived His life on earth. In fact, Jesus was God made “manifest in the flesh” in order to bridge the gap between humankind and a holy God.

The Word became flesh
and made His
dwelling among us.

We have seen His glory,
the glory of the
one and only Son,
who came from the Father,
full of grace and
truth. John 1:14



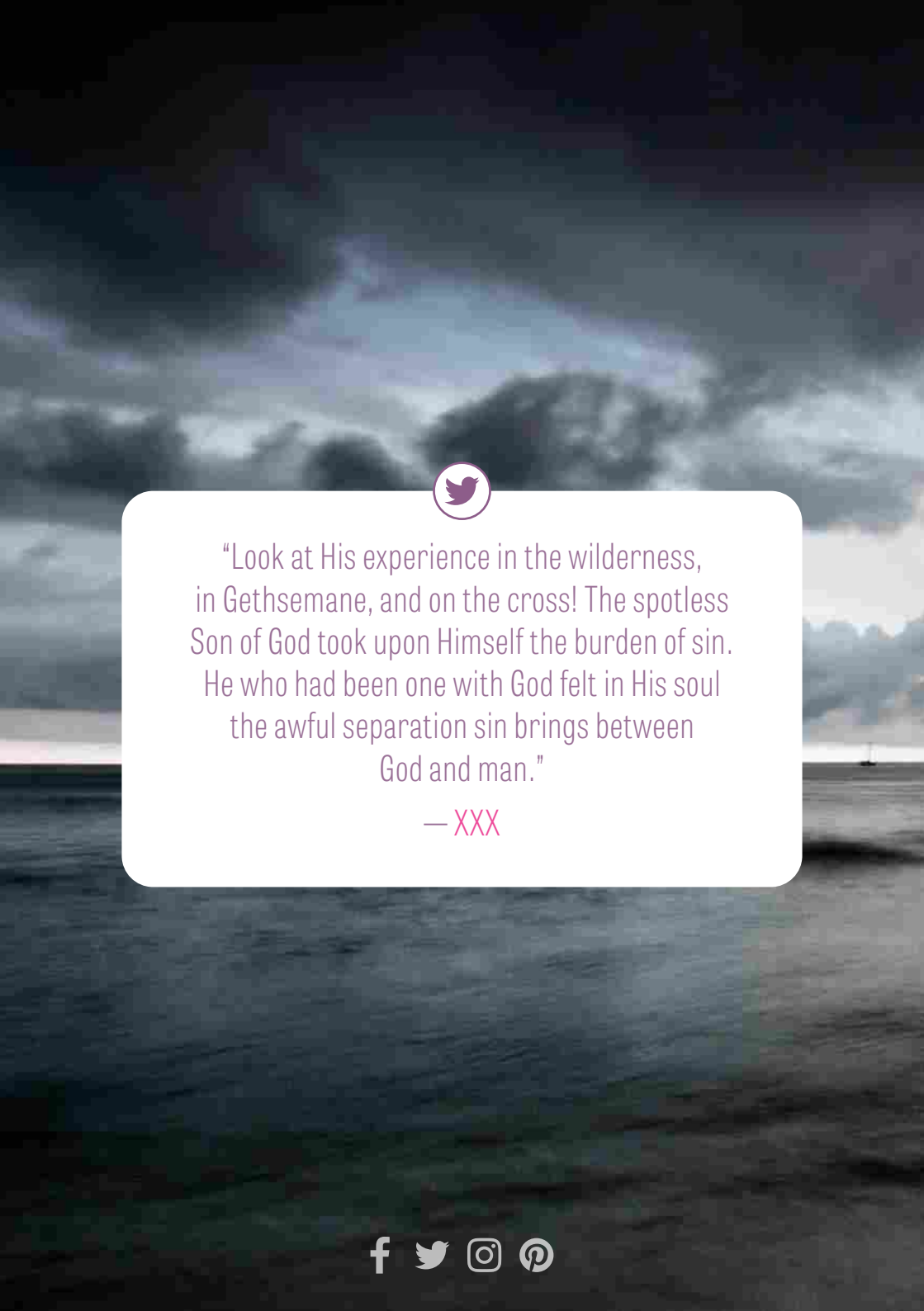
THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE

Q7	*How was Jesus treated on earth for our sake?*
	▢ *Isaiah 53:3–5, 11, 12*
	▢ *Matthew 26:67, 68; 27:39–44* ▢ *Mark 15:15–20* ▢ *John 1:10, 11* ▢ *Romans 4:25* ▢ *1 Peter 3:18; 2:23, 24*

Jesus lived, suffered and died to save us. The Bible says He became a "man of sorrows" (Isaiah 53:3), so that we could have everlasting life. God permitted His only son to leave the indescribable glory of heaven to live in a world darkened with the shadow of death. In leaving heaven, Jesus left the presence of God and the worship of angels to suffer shame, insult, humiliation, hatred, and ultimately death.

Q8	*What words did Jesus cry out in agony to the Father?*
	▢ *Matthew 27:46*
	▢ *Luke 23:34* ▢ *Isaiah 59:2* ▢ *Proverbs 15:8, 29* ▢ *Jeremiah 5:25* ▢ *Micah 3:4*

It was the burden of sin, the sense of its terrible effects and consequences, the separation of the soul from God that broke the heart of Jesus, the Son of God.



"Look at His experience in the wilderness, in Gethsemane, and on the cross! The spotless Son of God took upon Himself the burden of sin. He who had been one with God felt in His soul the awful separation sin brings between God and man."

— XXX

SAVED FROM SIN

Q9	*What are two key reasons why God sent His Son to this earth?*
	☐ *John 3:16* ☐ *2 Corinthians 5:19*
	☐ *2 Corinthians 5:19* ☐ *John 17:23; 1:29* ☐ *Romans 3:23–26; 5:8,10, 11* ☐ *1 John 2:1, 2; 4:10* ☐ *1 Peter 4:14* ☐ *2 Corinthians 5:18–21*

God did not make this great sacrifice in order to create a love for us in His own heart or to become willing to save us. No! "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son."

Secondly, God doesn't love us because of this sacrifice—He provided this great sacrifice because He loved us. Jesus was the medium through which God could pour out endless love upon our fallen world. God suffered with His Son in the agony of Gethsemane and death on Calvary. God's heart of incredible love paid the price so that we could be saved.




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

THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD

Q10	*How willingly did Jesus offer His life for humanity?*
	☐ *John 10:17,18*
	☐ *Philippians 2:6–9* ☐ *Titus 2:14* ☐ *John 17:4, 5, 21–26* ☐ *Hebrews 2:9, 14, 15*

No-one but Jesus could save the sin stricken world. Jesus was the only person who could enter a sinful world and redeem humanity from the grasp of sin. Only Jesus could fully reveal the love of God. Jesus knew the height and depth of God's love, and nothing less than the infinite sacrifice of Jesus could reveal the Father's love to a world impacted by sin. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son." God gave Jesus to the world, not only to live among us and reveal His character, but to bear our sins and to die in our place. Jesus came to identify Himself with the interests and needs of those who live on this earth.

ADOPTED INTO GOD'S FAMILY

Q11	*What is Jesus not ashamed to call us?*
	▢ *Hebrews 2:11*
	▢ *Matthew 12:48–50; 25:40* ▢ *John 17:21; 20:17* ▢ *Romans 8:29*

By walking among us, Jesus forever linked Himself to humanity. He is our sacrifice, our defender and our brother, now representing us before God's throne. He did all of this so that we might be raised up from the damage and shame of sin, to experience and reflect the love of God and share the joy of holiness.

Q12	*In His amazing love, what great honour has the Father bestowed upon us?*
	▢ *1 John 3:1*
	▢ *2 Corinthians 6:18* ▢ *Galatians 4:5, 6*

In order to save us, God made the ultimate sacrifice in giving His Son. This gives us a greater understanding of what we may become through Jesus.

When the disciple John saw the great height and depth of the Father's love toward a sinful world, he was filled with adoration and reverence. He could not even find the words to express the greatness and tenderness of God's love: "Behold, what manner of love the Father has

given us, that we should be called the sons of God." We feel the same sense of wonder, as we reflect on a perfect being who died for each imperfect individual that lives in this broken world.

CHILDREN OF GOD

Q12	*How do we become children of God?*
	▢ *John 1:12*
	▢ *Romans 8:14–17, 21* ▢ *Galatians 3:26* ▢ *Jeremiah 3:14, 19, 22*

Because of sin, we came under the control of Satan, but by faith in the saving sacrifice of Jesus, we become children of God. By taking on human nature, Jesus lifts us up from the pit of sin. By assuming human nature, Jesus restored humanity into a right relationship with God and we are once again found worthy to be called "children of God." There is no greater love than God's invitation to each of us to become His child.

In a world filled with broken promises, disappointment and terror, here is a sure anchor point—the unchanging, relentless, ceaseless love of God for you. The more we study the Bible, the more examples we find of God's love, the more clearly we will see evidence of His infinite love. This love goes beyond the boundaries of human love. Love as we know it can fail and disappoint, however God's love is constant and perfect. God's love stretches from heaven to earth; the same love Jesus demonstrated when He paid the ultimate sacrifice so we could be reconciled to God.

REFLECTION

I am grateful to our God for the beauty of nature and providing for my needs and the needs of all living creatures.

YES **UNDECIDED**

I am filled with love as I come to realise the mercy, long-suffering and compassion that God has shown me in the gift of Jesus, His son.

YES **UNDECIDED**

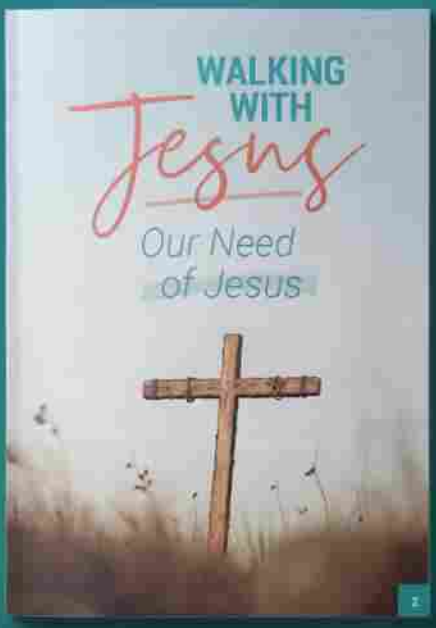
I am amazed to realize how Jesus came to this earth and showed His love by healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, comforting the broken-hearted, and giving His life to redeem fallen humanity.

YES **UNDECIDED**

It is my desire to spend more time learning about God so that I may better understand His love and how I can become His child.

YES **UNDECIDED**





CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY IN PART 2:

OUR NEED OF JESUS

Ever wondered why the world is so broken? In the next chapter, we'll learn more about the damaging consequences of sin in the world and the problems it's created—problems we could never hope to solve for ourselves. And thus why we need a Saviour.



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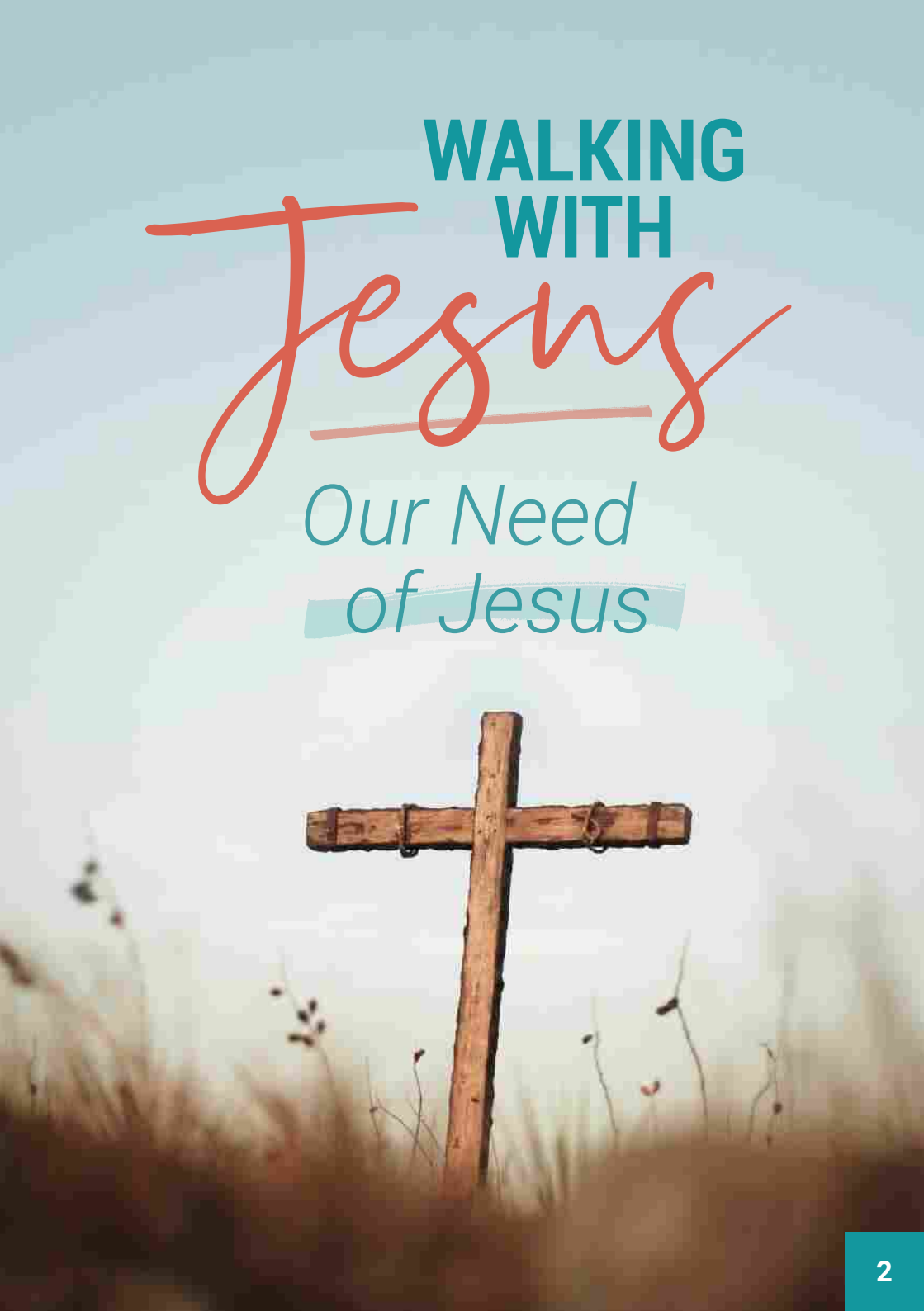
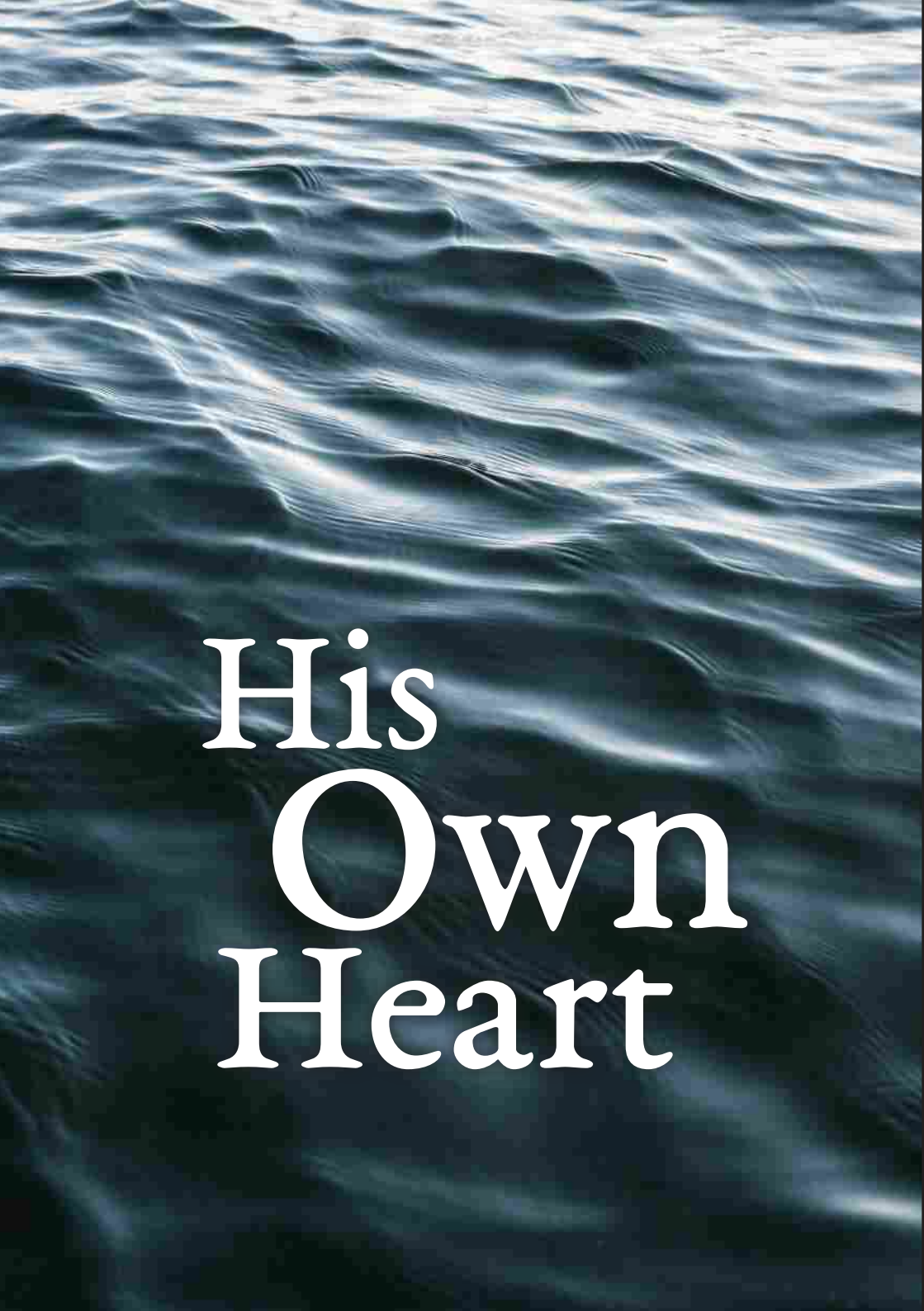
WALKING WITH Jesus

Our Need of Jesus




His
Own
Heart



One of the most powerful stories on the nature of the human heart is told by author and social commentator Malcolm Muggeridge.

Working as a journalist in India, he left his residence one evening to go to a nearby river for a swim. As he entered the water, across the river he saw the silhouette form of an Indian woman who had come for her evening bath. Muggeridge impulsively felt the allurement of the moment, and temptation stormed his mind. He had lived with this kind of struggle for years but had somehow fought it off in honour of his commitment to his wife, Kitty. On this occasion, however, he wondered if he could cross the line of marital fidelity. He struggled just for a moment and then swam furiously toward the woman, literally trying to outdistance his conscience. His mind fed him the fantasy that stolen waters would be sweet, and he swam the harder for it. Now he was just a metre from her, and as he emerged from the water, any emotion that may have gripped him paled into insignificance when compared with the devastation that shattered him as he looked at her.

"She was old and hideous . . . and her skin was wrinkled and, worst of all, she was a leper. . . .This creature grinned at me, showing a toothless mask," he recalled. The experience left Muggeridge trembling and muttering under his breath, "What a dirty, lecherous woman!"

But then the rude shock of it dawned upon him—it wasn't the woman who was lecherous; it was his own heart.

Can Man Live Without God? (Word Publishing, Dallas: 1994, pp. 136, 137)

A ONCE-PERFECT WORLD

God's original plan for us was to live in perfect harmony with Him as our creator, in a perfect world He had designed. He created the first humans, Adam and Eve, with the ability to think, to reason and to love.

Q1	*Who is God and what is His relationship with humanity?*
	☐ *Revelation 4:11, John 1:12*
	☐ *1 Samuel 12:24* ☐ *Psalm 111:10* ☐ *Proverbs 1:7; 9:10* ☐ *Job 28:28* ☐ *Deuteronomy 4:5, 6*

Sadly the perfection God had intended was not to last. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, their mental and moral abilities were corrupted because of their disobedient action. Perfect love was replaced by selfishness. Their characters and morality were critically weakened and fatally undermined as a result of sin.

Because of their sin, under their own strength, it was impossible for them to resist the power of sin and resulting wickedness. They had fallen under the influence of Satan, the source of all sin. It would have remained this way if God had not made a plan to rescue them.

Satan, God's adversary, desired to bring an end to the perfect world God had created. Satan filled the world with emptiness, grief and suffering. He didn't want people to feel joy, hope or fulfilment. Instead, Satan wanted people to look at all the suffering, darkness and evil he had caused and blame God.


God's
mercy
is bigger
than any of your
mistakes.
Lamentations 3:22-23

SINNERS IN NEED OF JESUS

Until we ask God to renew us, our lives are no longer in tune with His will and purpose. We need God to recreate our hearts and help us see the world the way He sees it. Unselfish love rules in heaven.

Heaven is a place of perfect love—not the type of love we are used to here on this earth, which is conditional and imperfect, but one that know no limit.

Without God giving us new hearts, we are not able to comprehend, understand or even respond to this kind of love.

Our thoughts, interests and motivations would be completely opposite to the perfection of heaven, and like Adam and Eve, we too would flee from God, desiring to be anywhere but in the presence of God.

Likewise, people who have not accepted Jesus as Saviour would not be happy in God's presence. God doesn't shut sinners out of heaven; sinners demonstrate by their own choices that they do not wish to live in the presence of God.

Until our hearts are made new, heaven would be of little interest to us because such perfection and holiness would be so foreign, and we being sinful, could not live in the presence of God.

God's greatest wish for everyone is to be saved and to live with Him in heaven one day. However, because God created us with freewill, the choice is ours: Do we accept or reject God's offer to be saved?

Q3	*What is the true condition of our heart?*
	☐ *Jeremiah 17:9*
	☐ *Job 14:4* ☐ *Romans 5:12* ☐ *Psalm 51:1–5* ☐ *Matthew 15:19*

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

So, as humans, sin has damaged our hearts, separating us from God. Since the time of Adam and Eve, this has been the condition we've each been born into, and no matter how hard we might try, by our own efforts there's nothing we can do to change that. It's simply the way we are.

Even if you were the most disciplined person with the strongest willpower and the most determination, you could not change your heart. Willpower and determination are certainly powerful forces, however this is not something we can ever overcome.

We can attempt it—we can act a certain way, make an effort to do the right thing—and if we look solely at our actions, it may even appear that we are succeeding in living a good life. However, beneath the surface, the truth is, our thoughts and motivations are still underpinned by selfishness. Sin is still in our hearts, in fact, tangled so deep and instinctual it's not something we can remove, no matter how hard we try, because it's coded into our deepest core.

This is why Jesus talks about giving us a "new heart"—because the old one is broken. We don't need a repair, we need a replacement.

"I received Christ into my heart and my life began to change. But it was a gradual change. And I didn't see any flashing bulbs. I didn't hear any thunder. There was no great emotional experience. It was just saying: Yes, Lord Jesus, I want you to be the lord of my life."

— Billy Graham



A NEW HEART

Q4	*What change needs to take place for us to enter God's kingdom?*
	▢ *John 3:3, 16, 17*
	▢ *Acts 2:38* ▢ *1 Peter 1:18–23*

"It is impossible for us, of ourselves, to escape from the pit of sin in which are sunken. Our hearts are evil and we cannot change them. . . . There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before we can be changed from sin to holiness. That power is Christ." *Ellen G. White*

The power to change our heart is not possible by your own efforts; it comes from Jesus working in us. This is how you are transformed from your sinful state to being born again in Christ. Only Jesus has the power to give you a new heart, and by His grace, bring you to a oneness with God. In this state of oneness, we respond to His love and appreciate His holiness the way we were originally designed to as His creations.

Jesus tells us that unless we are ready to receive the new heart, we won't even be able to see the kingdom of God—because we wouldn't be able to comprehend it.

"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, [they] cannot enter the kingdom of God." *(John 3:5)*

SEEING WITH NEW EYES

Q5	*How can we see the world through God's eyes?*
	☐ *1 Corinthians 2:10*
	☐ *1 Corinthians 2:14* ☐ *1 John 2:27* ☐ *Romans 8:5–7* ☐ *Matthew 16:17*

The only way to understand spiritual matters is to see the world the way God does—which we can do when we accept this gift of a new heart. The Holy Spirit guides our understanding convicts us of our sin and His truth and righteousness.

In 1 Corinthians 2:14, the apostle Paul writes: "The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit."

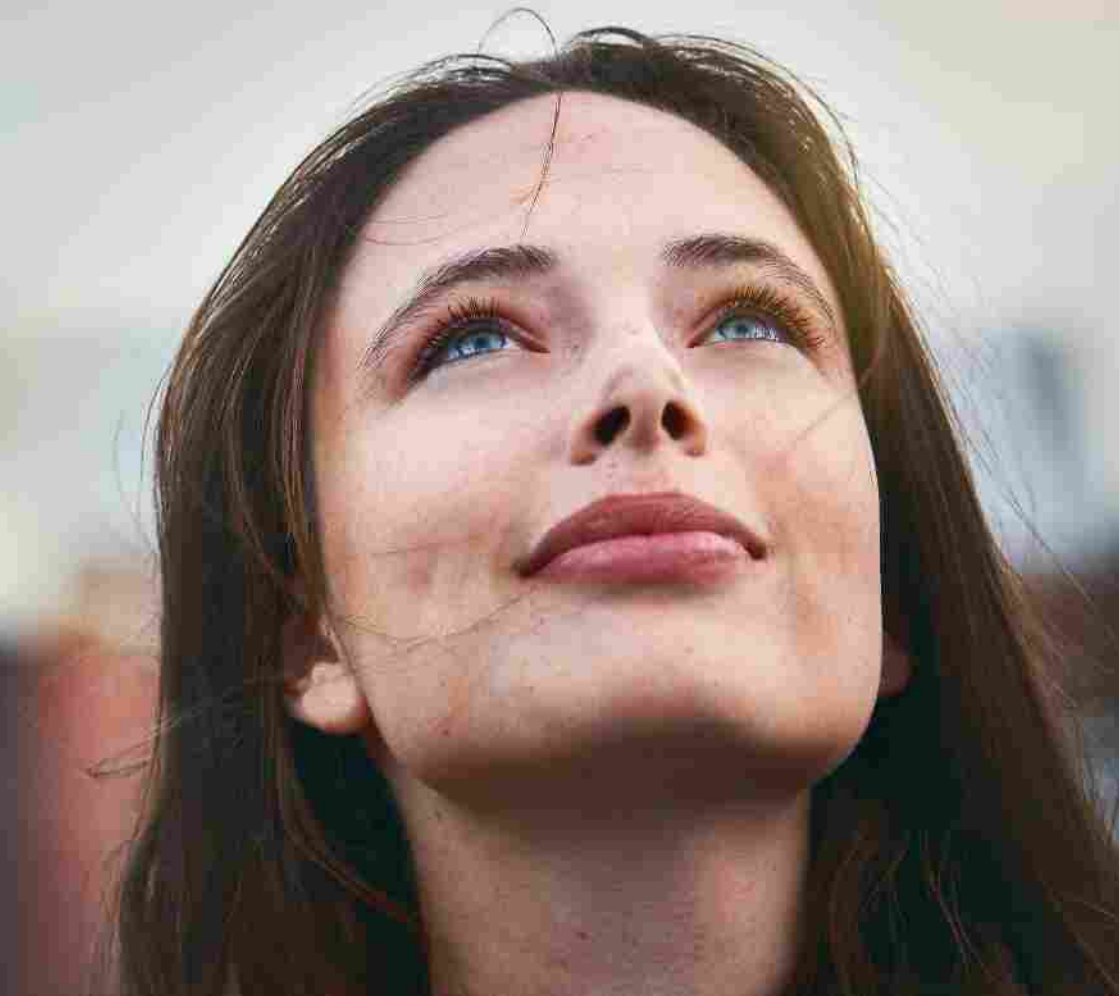
Imagine trying to read a book written in a language you don't know. You wouldn't be able to understand it—the lines on the page would look completely meaningless. You would see it but not understand a word.

In the same way, with your naturally sinful heart, you are unable to understand spiritual matters clearly. However, once you accept the gift of a new heart, you will begin to understand the life God has prepared for you.

The disciple John describes Jesus as the light of the world (John 8:12) who came to bring us out of the darkness we were born into, so that we can walk with Him and see things clearly.

"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to [us] by which we must be saved."

— Acts 4:12

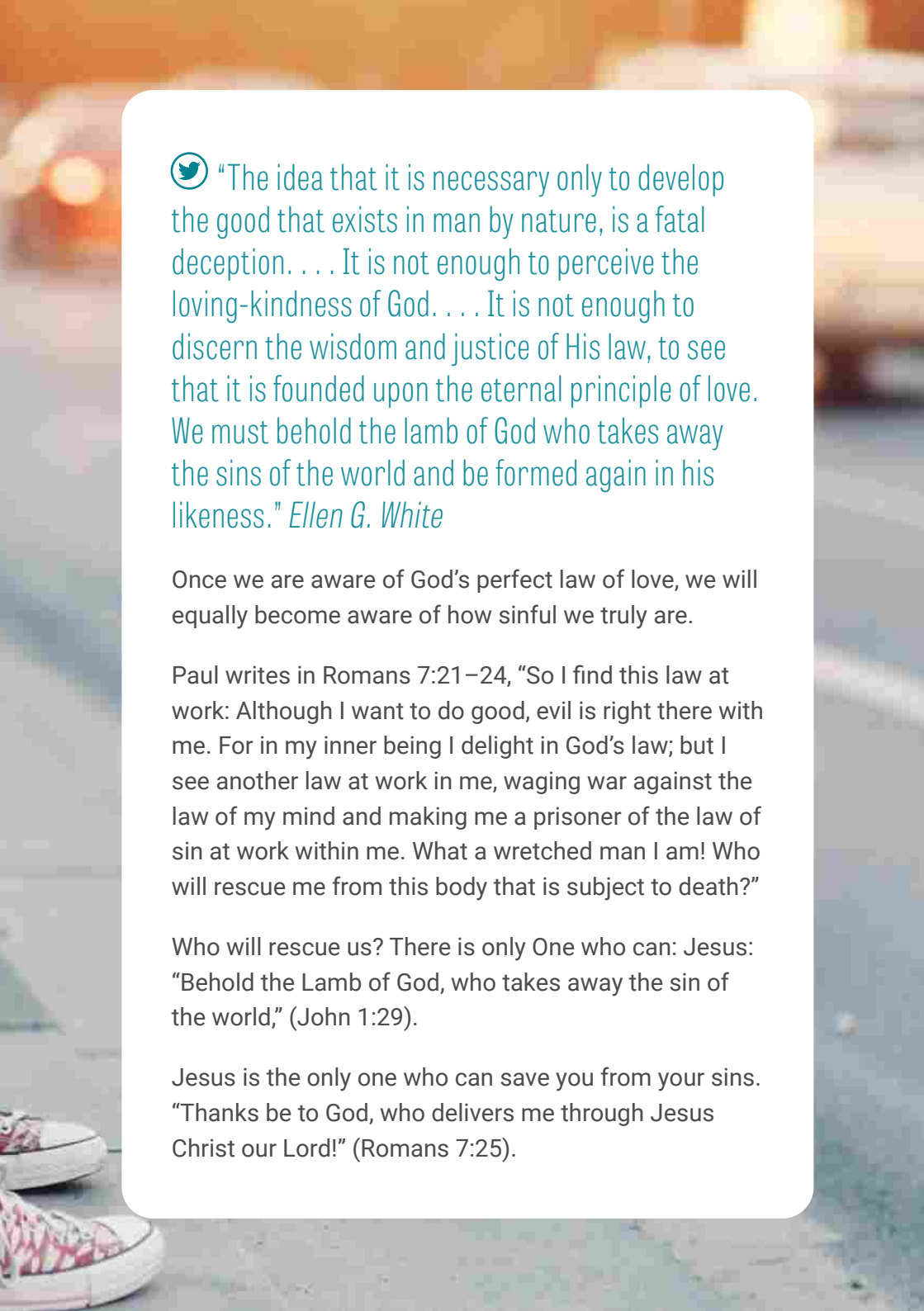




STRUGGLING WITH SIN

Q6	*Why do we still struggle with sin?*
	☐ *Romans 7:14–17*
	☐ *Isaiah 50:1; 59:2* ☐ *Romans 5:12–14; 8–22* ☐ *Jeremiah 17:9; 13:23*

It's not enough just to understand God's kindness and love. It's not enough to notice that He is wise and just. Knowledge alone does not bring holiness. We can appreciate that God's law is good, holy and just, however that doesn't mean we will always be able to follow it.



"The idea that it is necessary only to develop the good that exists in man by nature, is a fatal deception. . . . It is not enough to perceive the loving-kindness of God. . . . It is not enough to discern the wisdom and justice of His law, to see that it is founded upon the eternal principle of love. We must behold the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world and be formed again in his likeness." *Ellen G. White*

Once we are aware of God's perfect law of love, we will equally become aware of how sinful we truly are.

Paul writes in Romans 7:21–24, "So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?"

Who will rescue us? There is only One who can: Jesus: "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world," (John 1:29).

Jesus is the only one who can save you from your sins. "Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Romans 7:25).

JESUS MAKES A WAY

Q7	*Who can restore our relationship with God?*
	☐ *1 Timothy 2:5*
	☐ *Hebrews 9:15* ☐ *Romans 5:1, 2* ☐ *John 17:3* ☐ *1 Corinthians 8:6*

The Holy Spirit reveals in many different ways how God's salvation can free us from the guilt we carry. One example of this is in the story of Jacob, found in the Bible. Jacob, feeling guilty about deceiving his brother Esau, ran away from his home. He was lonely, separated from everything he valued and everyone close to him. His mind was very troubled, and the thought that worried him the most was the fear that his sin had cut him off from God and that God had abandoned him.

"It is not the absence of sin, but the grieving over it which distinguishes the child of God from empty professors." *A. W. Pink*

Exhausted and filled with sadness, he lay down to rest under the stars of the night sky. As he was sleeping, a strange light came into view. From where he lay, he could see a huge stairway seeming to lead up to heaven. He could see God's angels climbing up and down these stairs, and he heard a heavenly voice speak from above with a message of comfort and hope. Jacob was longing for a saviour and the promise of heaven and that is what he found in the midst of his despair. Jacob was filled with joy at being shown how he, a sinner, could still be accepted by God. The stair he saw in his dream represented Jesus, the means of communication between us and God.

Q8	*What is the only way we can come to God?*
	☐ *John 14:6*
	☐ *John 10:9* ☐ *Romans 5:10* ☐ *Ephesians 2:18* ☐ *Acts 4:12* ☐ *Matthew 11:27*

From the moment Adam and Eve sinned, humans were cut off from heaven, separated from God. It was such a vast distance that it seemed there would be no possibility of communication—the distance was simply too great, and there was no way of bridging it. However because of Jesus, we can once again be connected with God in heaven.

Jesus lived a perfect life and bridging the gap sin had caused. The good news is, we no longer need to be separated from God. Even though we are weak and helpless, Jesus' sacrifice stands in place for us giving direct connection to God through this wonderful gift.

Q9	*Why is it not possible for us to save ourselves?*
	☐ *Ephesians 2:8, 9*
	☐ *Romans 6:23: 3:20, 23* ☐ *Galatians 2:16* ☐ *2 Timothy 1:9*

No matter how much we dream of being good people, or how much we earnestly desire to improve ourselves and the world around us, these dreams will never be realised unless Jesus is the foundation of our faith. Jesus is the only true source of help and hope for us as sinners.

"I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept His claim to be God.

"That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic . . . or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice.

"Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon or you can fall at His feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronising nonsense about His being a great human teacher.

"He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to." *C.S. Lewis*



GOD'S PLAN FOR US

"Every good gift and every perfect gift" is from God (James 1:17). There is no true excellence of character apart from Jesus: the only way to God is through Jesus.

Q10	*What is God's plan to save us?*
	☐ *Hebrews 9:26*
	☐ *Hebrews 9:12; 7:27* ☐ *1 Peter 2:24; 3:18* ☐ *John 10:11*

God loves us more than anything. He created us giving us life, and even when we sinned, He still gave us the greatest and most costly gift of all—Jesus, His only Son. All of heaven is represented in this one gift. Jesus came to earth to live and die in order that we might be rescued from a world of sin. Heaven's angels look out for us, the Holy Spirit works in us, and God is ready to accept us as soon as we accept His gift of salvation.

"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)*

What an amazing sacrifice has been made for you, in order that you might be saved!

The Bible reveals the good things that will come to those who follow God: the joy of heaven, the closeness and love of God and His Son and experiencing true wisdom and perfect peace. This is the joy for those receive Jesus as Saviour and serve God, our Creator and Redeemer.

In contrast, the Bible warns that those who keep sinning and refuse God's salvation will never be free from sin. Their sin will ensnare them and ultimately ensure a permanent death. The Bible makes it clear we are all doomed by sin and sentenced to death, unless we make the choice to accept God's rescue plan.

God has loved us with an amazing love. Even while we were lost in sin and separated from God, He offered us a second chance through Jesus to restore us to Him.

If you follow God's plan and accept His mercy, you have the certain promise of being transformed into the same image to be like Him.

 "The Lord has appeared of old to me, saying: 'Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with loving-kindness I have drawn you.' " *(Jeremiah 31:3)*

REFLECTION

I understand how sin destroyed the perfect life that God intended for us. Because of our sinful natures, without God we are unable to resist evil through our own efforts.

YES **UNDECIDED**

I realise that my sin has separated me from God, and that the only way back to God is through Jesus.

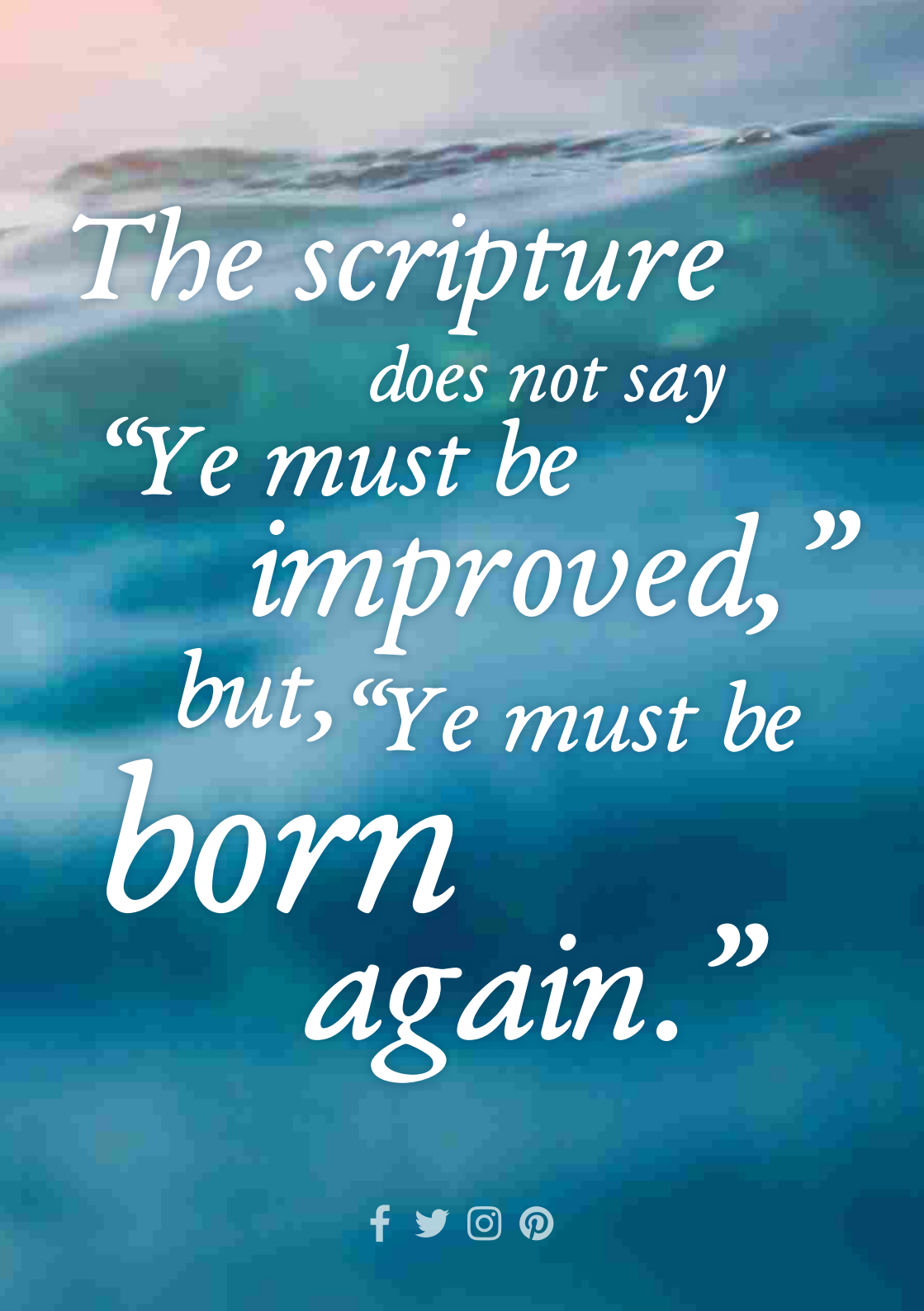
YES **UNDECIDED**

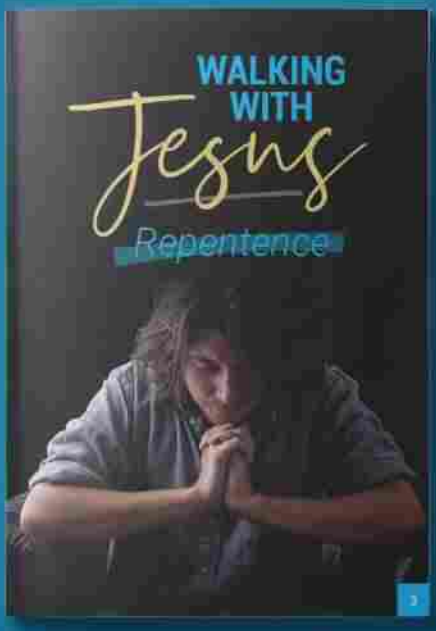
I know I am unable to save myself by my own efforts and that I need Jesus as my Saviour.

YES **UNDECIDED**

I am thankful for God's love and His plan to redeem me. I want to accept the salvation that He has freely offered to me.

YES **UNDECIDED**


The scripture
does not say
"Ye must be
improved,"
but, "Ye must be
born
again."



CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY IN PART 3:

REPENTANCE

Once we have recognised our need to be saved, what are the next steps? How do we come before Jesus, admit what we've done wrong, and be forgiven? Our hearts are sinful, but there is hope, because Jesus has promised to transform our lives by giving us a new heart.



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WALKING WITH Jesus

Repentance



Repentance in the White House





In 2001, Tim Goeglein started running the White House Office of Public Liaison, providing him almost daily access to then President George Bush for seven years. Then it all ended abruptly on February 29, 2008. A well-known blogger revealed the startling fact that 27 out of 39 of Goeglein's published articles had been plagiarised. By mid-afternoon the next day, Goeglein's career in the White House was over.

Goeglein, who admitted his guilt, said that this began “a personal crisis unequalled in my life, bringing great humiliation on my wife and children, my family, and my closest friends, including the President of the United States.”

Goeglein was summoned to the White House to face the President. Once inside the Oval Office, Goeglein shut the door, turned to the President and began, “I owe you an . . . ”

President Bush simply said: “Tim, you are forgiven.”

Tim was speechless. He tried again: “But, Sir . . .”

The President interrupted him again, with a firm “Stop!” Then President Bush added, “I’ve known grace and mercy in my life, and you are forgiven.” After a long talk, a healing process was launched for Goeglein, which included repentance and reflection, then spiritual growth.

“Political power can lead to pride,” Goeglein later reflected. “That was my sin—one hundred percent pride. But offering and receiving forgiveness is a different kind of strength. That’s the kind of strength I want to develop now." *(Warren Cole Smith, "Wins & Losses," World magazine, 10-23-10, p. 11)*.



HOW DO WE COME TO JESUS?

How is a sinner made right with God? It is only through Jesus that we can come close to God and are made holy. But how does one come to Jesus?

"When the crowd following the disciples became convicted of their sin, they cried out: 'What shall we do?' The disciple Peter answered: 'Repent.' Not long after that, he said, "Repent . . . and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." (Acts 3:19)

Q1	*How can we be cleansed of our sins?*
	☐ *Acts 2:38*
	Further study: ☐ *Acts 3:19* ☐ *Proverbs 28:13* ☐ *Ezekiel 36:31; 20:43* ☐ *2 Corinthians 7:9-11* ☐ *Psalm 38:18*

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO REPENT?

Repentance includes sorrow for sin and turning away from it. Until we are convicted of the damage and hurt that our sin causes and are wholeheartedly resolved to turn away from it, there won't be any real change or repentance in our lives.

"Genuine repentance must bear the seal of a corrected life. *Lewis Korns*

Sometimes we may feel badly because we have sinned, and perhaps even resolve to do better in the future because we are afraid of the consequences or possible punishment. This isn't the kind of repentance that the Bible teaches, as it doesn't involve a complete change of heart. Instead, this type of repentance is motivated by fear.

Today, we are inclined to lament suffering rather than sin.

We see examples of this throughout the Bible. Esau, the son of Abraham, made a hasty decision that resulted in the loss of his inheritance. Esau felt regret but not true repentance. When Balaam saw an angel standing in his path holding a sword, he admitted he was wrong, but that was motivated from fear he would die, not because he truly repented of his actions.

Pharaoh was the ruler of Egypt when God's people the Israelites were enslaved around the year 1300BC (scholars vary in their dating the Exodus). God sent plagues on the land to convince Pharaoh to free the Israelites.

Pharaoh admitted his sin in order to escape further punishment, but as soon as the plagues stopped, his rebellious attitude returned.

Judas Iscariot, the disciple who betrayed Jesus Christ, exclaimed: "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood" (Matthew 27:4). Although Judas was consumed by guilt and felt an awful sense of shame for his wrongdoing, his focus was on himself and he did not feel sorrow that he had indeed betrayed the Saviour.

All these people felt some degree of sorrow for the results of their sin, but they did not show sorrow or contrition for the sin itself.

BY THE LIGHT OF JESUS

Q2	*The Bible describes Jesus as the "'true light" that has come into the world. What does this mean?*
	☐ *John 1:5–9*
	☐ *John 12:46; 8:12* ☐ *2 Corinthians 4:6* ☐ *1 John 2:8* ☐ *1 Thessalonians 5:5* ☐ *Matthew 6:23*

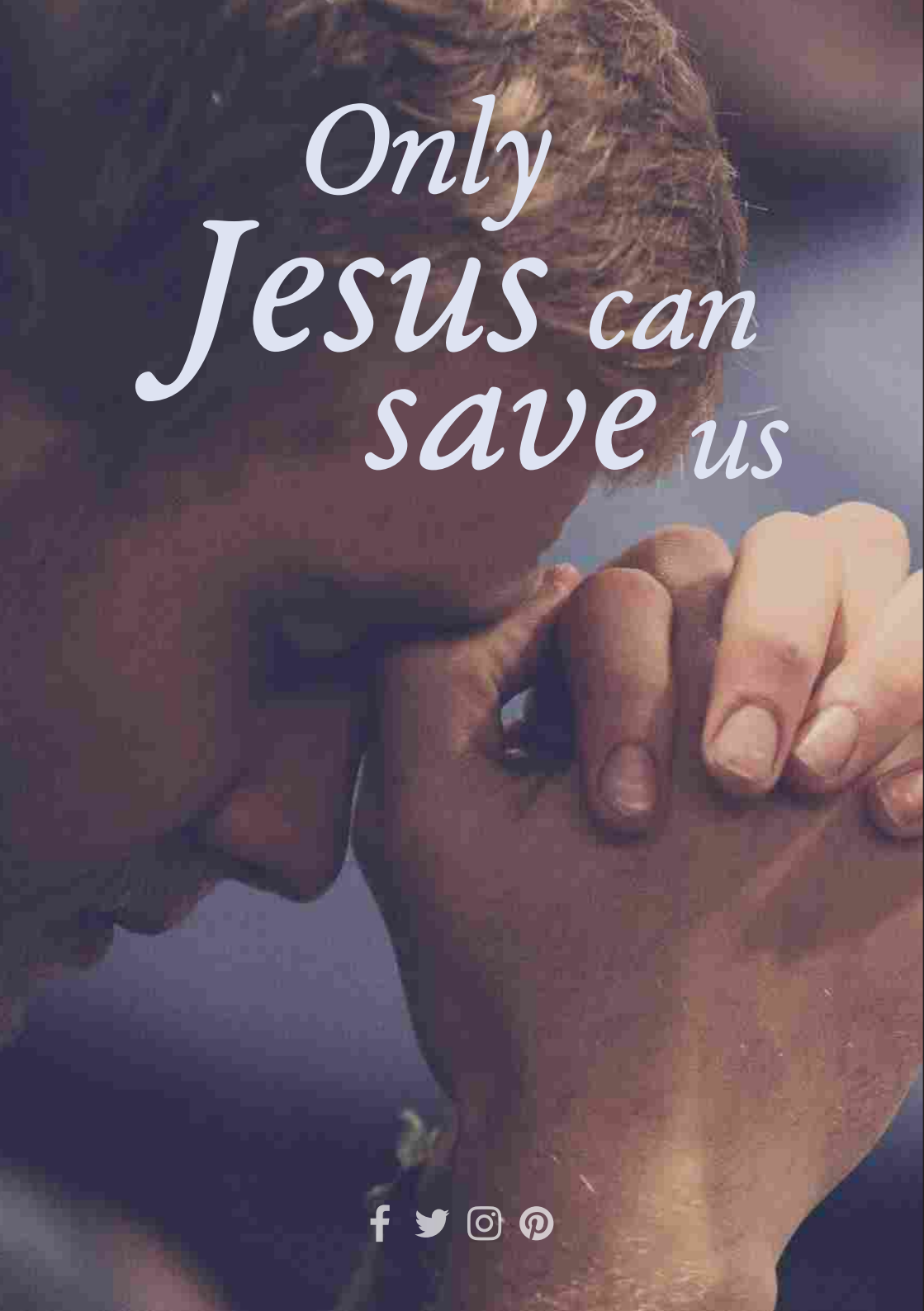
When we accept Jesus as our Saviour, we begin to see the depth and holiness of God's character as revealed in His law.

The "perfect light" of Jesus will reveals all the secret places of our soul. It will bring hidden things out into the light. Our true motivations and desires will be revealed. By the light of Jesus, we will see clearly and become aware of our need to be saved.



"But that we are so totally depraved,
is a truth which no one ever truly learned
by being only told it."

— John Newton (Select Letters of John Newton)


Only
Jesus can
save us

By this light, we will know how far we fall short of God's desire for us, but we will also see God's love, holiness and perfect purity. We will see how much He longs for us to be cleansed of our sins, and be drawn to Him.

"Conviction takes hold upon the mind and heart. The sinner has a sense of the righteousness of Jehovah and feels the terror of appearing before the searcher of hearts . . . and longs to be cleansed and restored to communion with Heaven." *Ellen G. White*

A PRAYER FOR A NEW HEART

Q3	*What is the correct response when we learn of our sinfulness?*
	▢ *Psalm 51:1–4, 10*
	▢ *Psalm 32:5; 38:18* ▢ *Ezekiel 36:31; 20:43* ▢ *1 John 1:7–9*

A repentance like this is beyond the reach of our own power to accomplish; it is obtained only from Jesus, who ascended to heaven and has given gifts to us. This kind of prayer represents genuine repentance: it acknowledges the pain and sorrow caused by our sin. There is no effort to cover guilt or to escape punishment. It is a recognition of the enormity of sin and of seeing and hating the sin that exists in us.

In Psalm 51, King David is praying not only for forgiveness but for a new heart. He expresses his longing to be cleansed and to be made holy, so that he can be brought into a close relationship with God.

"If you can't see the sun you will be impressed with a street light. If you've never felt thunder and lightning, you'll be impressed with fireworks. And if you turn your back on the greatness and majesty of God, you'll fall in love with a world of shadows and short-lived pleasures." *John Piper*

Q4	*What happens when we truly repent?*
	☐ *Psalm 32:1–11*
	☐ *Isaiah 1:18* ☐ *Psalm 128:1* ☐ *Deuteronomy 5:33; 11:13–15* ☐ *Matthew 5:8* ☐ *Micah 7:18, 19*

Q5	*What needs to happen before we confess our sins?*
	☐ *Matthew 11:28, 29*
	☐ *Isaiah 55:1–3; 45:22–25* ☐ *John 6:37* ☐ *Revelation 22:17* ☐ *1 Peter 5:7*

Only Jesus can cleanse us of our sin and make us right with God. On this point, many people err. They think they cannot come to Jesus until they first repent. It is true that repentance does proceed forgiveness of sins for it is only the broken and contrite heart that will feel the need of Jesus. It is important to know that the Bible does not teach that the sinner must first repent before they can accept the invitation to walk with Jesus.

Jesus gives an open invitation for everyone to draw near to Him: "Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Just think about the depth of that invitation for a moment.

Confessing your sins shouldn't be a barrier that keeps you from Jesus. Jesus invites you to meet Him as you are, where you are, to begin your faith journey.

Q6	*Where does the sorrow for our sins come from?*
	☐ *Jeremiah 31:31–33, Acts 5:30, 31*
	☐ *Acts 3:26; 11:18* ☐ *Ezekiel 36:25–31* ☐ *Zechariah 12:10* ☐ *Romans 11:26, 27* ☐ *2 Timothy 2:25, 26*

JESUS, A PERFECT FRIEND

As we become aware of the love of Jesus, He leads us to understand true sorrow for our sins. The disciple Peter states that God exalted Jesus ". . . to His right hand to be Prince and Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31).

Without Jesus, there can be no repentance. Similarly, the Holy Spirit works on our hearts to lead us to repentance.

Jesus is the source of every good, perfect and noble desire. He is the only one who helps us see sin in all its ugliness and depravity.

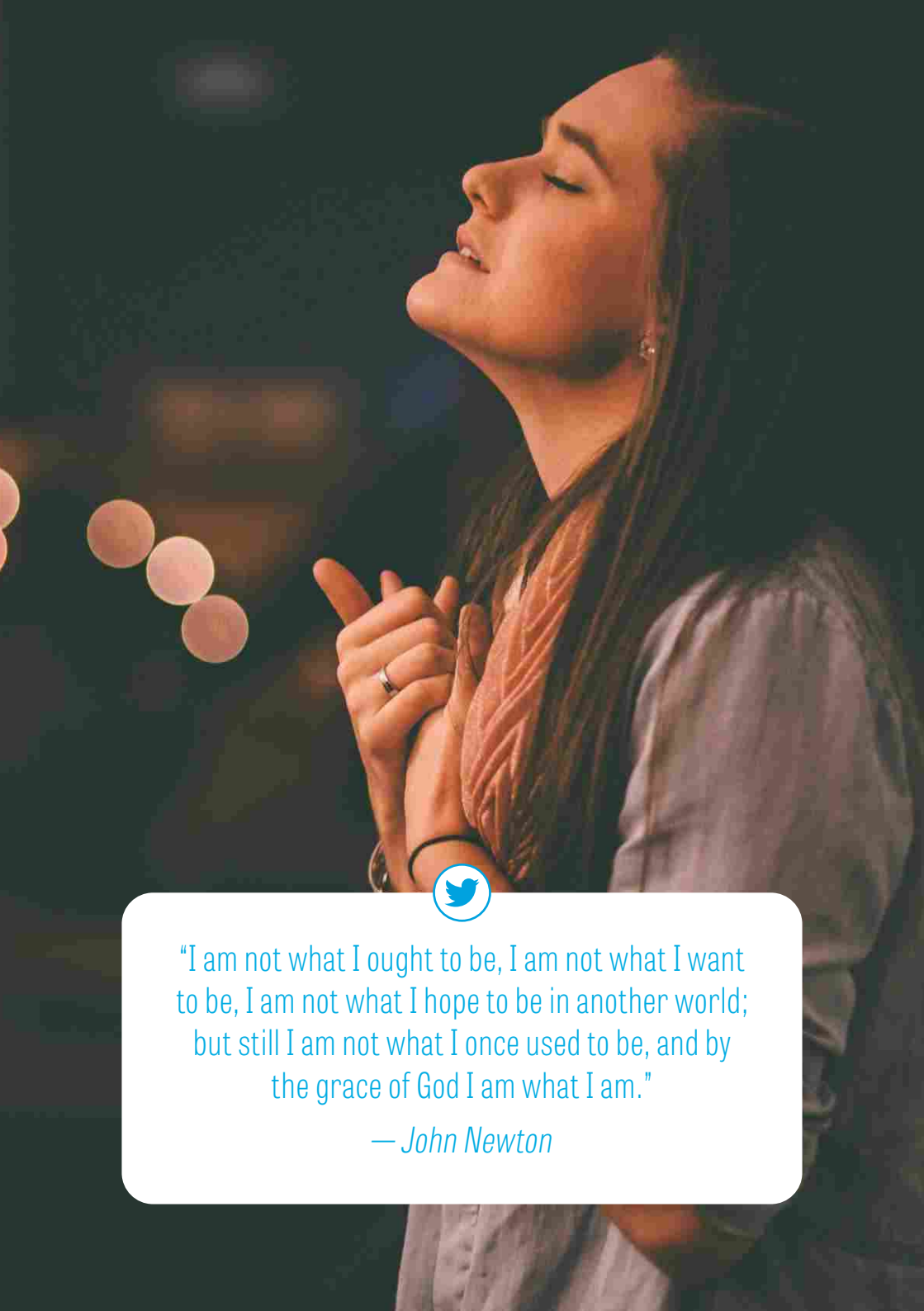
"Every desire for truth and purity, every conviction of our own sinfulness, is an evidence that His Spirit is moving upon our heart." *Ellen G. White*

Q7 *Who did God lift up in order to make salvation possible?*

- ☐ *John 12:32, 34*

- ☐ *Isaiah 49:6* ☐ *Romans 5:17–19*
- ☐ *1 Timothy 2:6* ☐ *Hebrews 2:9* ☐ *1 John 2:2*
- ☐ *Revelation 5:9* ☐ *Luke 15*

As we see Jesus dying on the cross at Calvary for the sins of the world, we will begin to understand the mystery of salvation. The gentle and kind Saviour gave His life for a broken world, so that through Him we might be saved.



"I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I want to be, I am not what I hope to be in another world; but still I am not what I once used to be, and by the grace of God I am what I am."

— John Newton

THE GREATEST LOVE

By dying for us, Jesus showed us the depth of His love, a love that we are unable to ever fully comprehend. As we see and experience His love for us, our hearts will be changed and we will know our need for a Saviour.

Jesus draws us to look at the Cross, to behold Him. Here we clearly see the pain and harm caused by our sin and begin to hate our sin while at the same time, desire to be made right with God. At this time, we experience the purity and holiness of Jesus and understand the incredible sacrifice He made by taking the burden of our sin upon His own shoulders. It was our sin resulted in Jesus sacrificing everything, but through Him, we are saved. Because of His sacrifice, we have a clear choice to accept Jesus or to resist the gift of eternal life.

"For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." *(John 3:17)*

When we desire to live the way God intended, this is evidence that the power of Jesus is working in us.

"The sinner may resist this love, may refuse to be drawn to Jesus, but if you do not resist, you will be drawn to Jesus."
Ellen G. White

Q8	*What invitation does God give to those who desire more?*
	☐ *Revelation 22:17*
	☐ *John 7:37, 38; 4:10* ☐ *Isaiah 55:1–3; 12:3*

THE DESIRE FOR THE ETERNAL

Through the Holy Spirit, God speaks to our hearts and gives us a deep desire for more than the things of this world.

God is pleading with us to seek things that represent true peace and rest—which can only be found in the grace of Jesus and the joy that comes from experiencing His holiness, to which He is constantly seeking to draw us.

Jesus invites us to turn our minds and hearts away from the temporary pleasures and distractions of the world to focus on the infinite, eternal blessings that can be ours.

The waters of this world will not satisfy us, our thirst will always return. Only Jesus offers "living" water—the water of life—that will truly refresh us and give eternal satisfaction. This is what He promises to us in Revelation 22:17.

In your heart, you surely recognise a longing and a desire for something more, something better than the brokenness you see around you. You have a desire for purpose, you want peace in your heart. This is God calling to you. Only God can satisfy your deepest desires and restore your broken lives into something whole and new.

Ask Jesus to help you to truly repent for your sins, and to reveal His endless love and perfect purity to you.

Q9	*When we see Jesus' true character, what does this make us realise?*
	☐ *Isaiah 64:6*
	☐ *Isaiah 53:6* ☐ *Job 14:4; 15:14–16; 25:4* ☐ *Psalm 51:5* ☐ *Romans 7:18, 24* ☐ *Ephesians 2:1, 2* ☐ *Ezekiel 36:31*

GOD'S LAW OF LOVE

Jesus' life on Earth was a perfect depiction of the principles of God's law of love. Jesus lived with kindness and unselfish love, showing compassion for everyone He met.

By reading about His life in the Bible, you begin to recognise your own sinfulness, and all the ways you fall short as a result of your failures.

"One ray of glory, one gleam of the purity of Christ penetrating the soul, makes every spot of defilement painfully distinct."
Ellen G. White



It might seem like you are doing okay. After all, you may think, you are better than plenty of other people and may not feel that you are like the sinners described in the Bible, but this is an incorrect measure. Hidden within your nature are defects that can be clearly seen by God who sees all things. Pride gives an inability to see your true condition and the consequence of sin.

When you spend time with Jesus and reflect on His life, you will see the impurity that exists within your own life and the selfishness that lurks behind every action and motivation. Even when you are outwardly doing the right thing, your flawed heart is still guiding every decision.

"The exceeding sinfulness of man can only be estimated in the light of the cross. . . . As you see the enormity of sin, as you see yourself as you really are, do not give up in despair. It was sinners that Christ came to save." *Ellen G. White*

By the penetrating light of Jesus, you will see the darkness that exists in your own life and how desperately you need a Saviour. As you look upon the purity and holiness of Jesus, the ugliness of your own sin will become clear and you will recognise that you are a sinner need of saving.

Q10	*What was Daniel's reaction when he recognised his own shortcomings?*
	☐ *Daniel 10:7, 8*
	☐ *Daniel 8:17, 18* ☐ *Revelation 1:17* ☐ *Mark 9:5, 6* ☐ *Luke 1:12*

When the prophet Daniel saw the glory of the angel before him, he became weak and lost his strength. Seeing your true condition will create a desire for a pure heart that is in harmony with God's law which is a reflection His character.

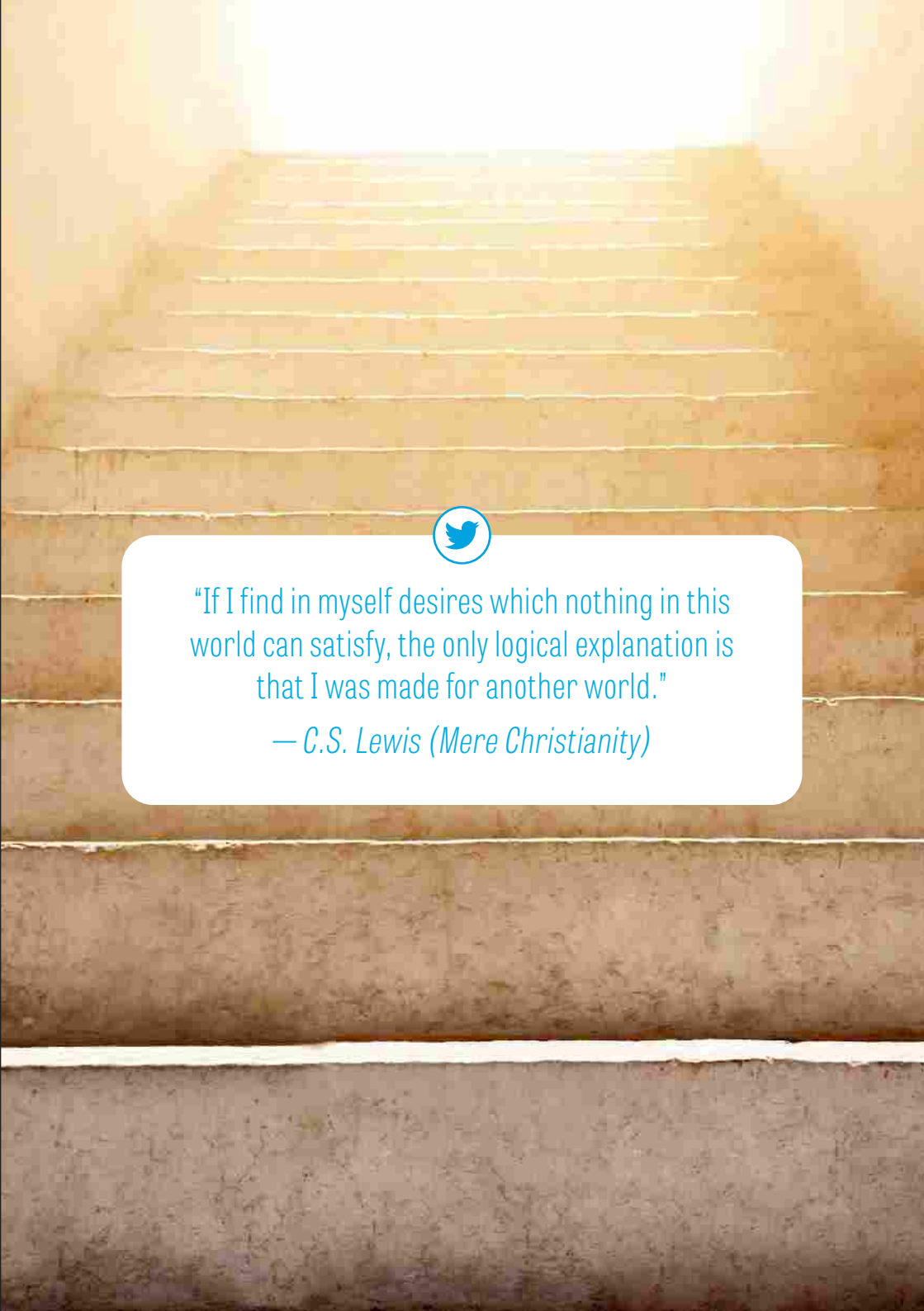
"When Satan comes to tell you that you are a great sinner, look up to your Redeemer and talk of His merits. Acknowledge your sin, but tell the enemy that Jesus came into the world to save sinners." *Ellen G. White*

Q11	*What happens when we realise the true meaning of God's holy law?*
	▢ *Romans 7:9*
	▢ *Romans 7:7; 3:20; 8:3–7* ▢ *1 John 3:4* ▢ *Luke 10:25-28* ▢ *Galatians 3:10; 2:19–21*

Paul explains that by the definition of the law, he was "blameless", but the spiritual character of the law showed him as a sinner (Philippians 3:6). Although his actions may have outwardly been good, he recognised that within himself he still fell into the trap of selfishness and sin. His own nature had led him astray, even though his outward actions may have been within the law itself. As Paul became convicted of God's holiness as seen in His law, he was ashamed of his shortcomings and recognised that it was only through God that he could hope to experience freedom from his sins.

We have been great sinners, but Jesus died that we might be forgiven. Those to whom God has forgiven most, will love most (Luke 7:43). When you fully comprehend the love of God, you will fully comprehend the sinfulness of sin.

Study God's word prayerfully. The Bible presents in the law of God and the life of Christ, the great principles of holiness, without which "no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). It convinces of sin and plainly reveals the way of salvation. Read the Bible carefully and follow it as the voice of God speaking to your heart.



"If I find in myself desires which nothing in this world can satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for another world."

— C.S. Lewis (Mere Christianity)

REFLECTIONS

Thank you, Jesus, for your invitation. I want to experience the perfect rest that you promise.

YES **UNDECIDED**

As I come to know Jesus more and read the Bible, I see Jesus and realise my own sins and my need of Him.

YES **UNDECIDED**

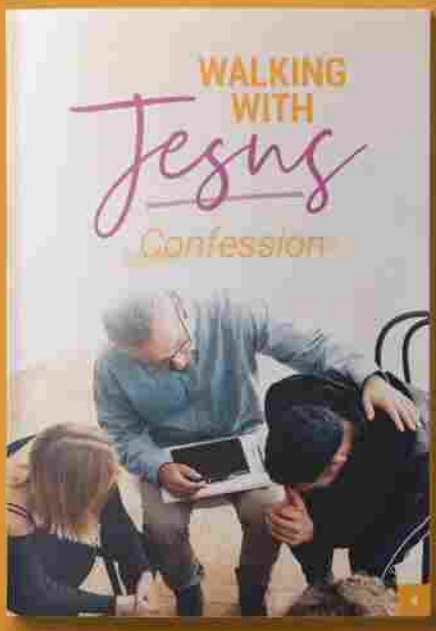
I want to be like Jesus, but realise I am powerless to change on my own.

YES **UNDECIDED**

I am thankful that I can come to Jesus as I am and claim His promise to transform my life into one that will bring honour to Him. I put my life into His hands.

YES **UNDECIDED**





CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY IN PART 4:

CONFESSION

God has promised that when we confess our sins and give our lives over to Him that our sins will be forgiven. Learn how Jesus' perfection can cover your past mistakes as you claim this amazing promise of forgiveness. Experience God's mercy for yourself when you come before Him with a humble heart.



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WALKING WITH Jesus

Confession



Coming clean





"Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy" (Proverbs 28:13).

It had been a long time since I'd read anything by Christian author Max Lucado. Then a few weeks ago I happened across an article called "Coming Clean," written by Lucado for the Summer 2012 issue of *Leadership Journal*.

"I like beer," opened Lucado. "I always have. Ever since my high school buddy and I drank ourselves sick with a case of quarts, I have liked beer. I like the way it washes down a piece of pizza and mutes the spice of enchiladas. It goes great with peanuts at the baseball game and seems an appropriate way to crown eighteen holes of golf. . . . I like it. Too much. Alcoholism haunts my family ancestry. . . . So at the age of 21, I swore off it."

Yeah, I thought. That's about what I expected—a high-profile pastor's safe confession of youthful indiscretion. What I didn't expect was the next few paragraphs.

"A few years back," he wrote, "something resurrected my cravings. . . . At some point I reached for a can of brew instead of a can of soda, and as quick as you can pop the top, I was a beer fan again. A once-in-a-while . . . then once-a-week . . . then once-a-day beer fan."

"I kept my preference to myself. No beer at home, lest my daughters think less of me. No beer in public. Who knows who might see me? None at home, none in public, which left only one option: convenience-store parking lots. For about a week I was that guy in the car, drinking out of the brown paper bag."

Lucado told of buying beer on the way to speak at a men's retreat and realising that he had become what he hated: a hypocrite. "It wasn't the beer but the cover-up that nauseated me," he wrote.

Throwing the beer can in the trash, Lucado resolved to make things right—confessing his sin to his church elders. "I didn't embellish or downplay my actions; I just confessed to them. And they, in turn, pronounced forgiveness over me. Jim Potts, a dear, silver-haired saint, reached across the table and put his hand on my shoulder and said something like this: 'What you did was wrong. But what you are doing tonight is right.'

"After talking to the elders, I spoke to the church. At our midweek gathering I once again told the story. I apologised for my duplicity and requested the prayers of the congregation. What followed was a refreshing hour of confession in which other people did the same. The church was strengthened, not weakened, by our honesty." (Andy Nash, "Max Lucado's confession," *Adventist Review*, 2012)

"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed." *(James 5:16)*

EXPERIENCING MERCY

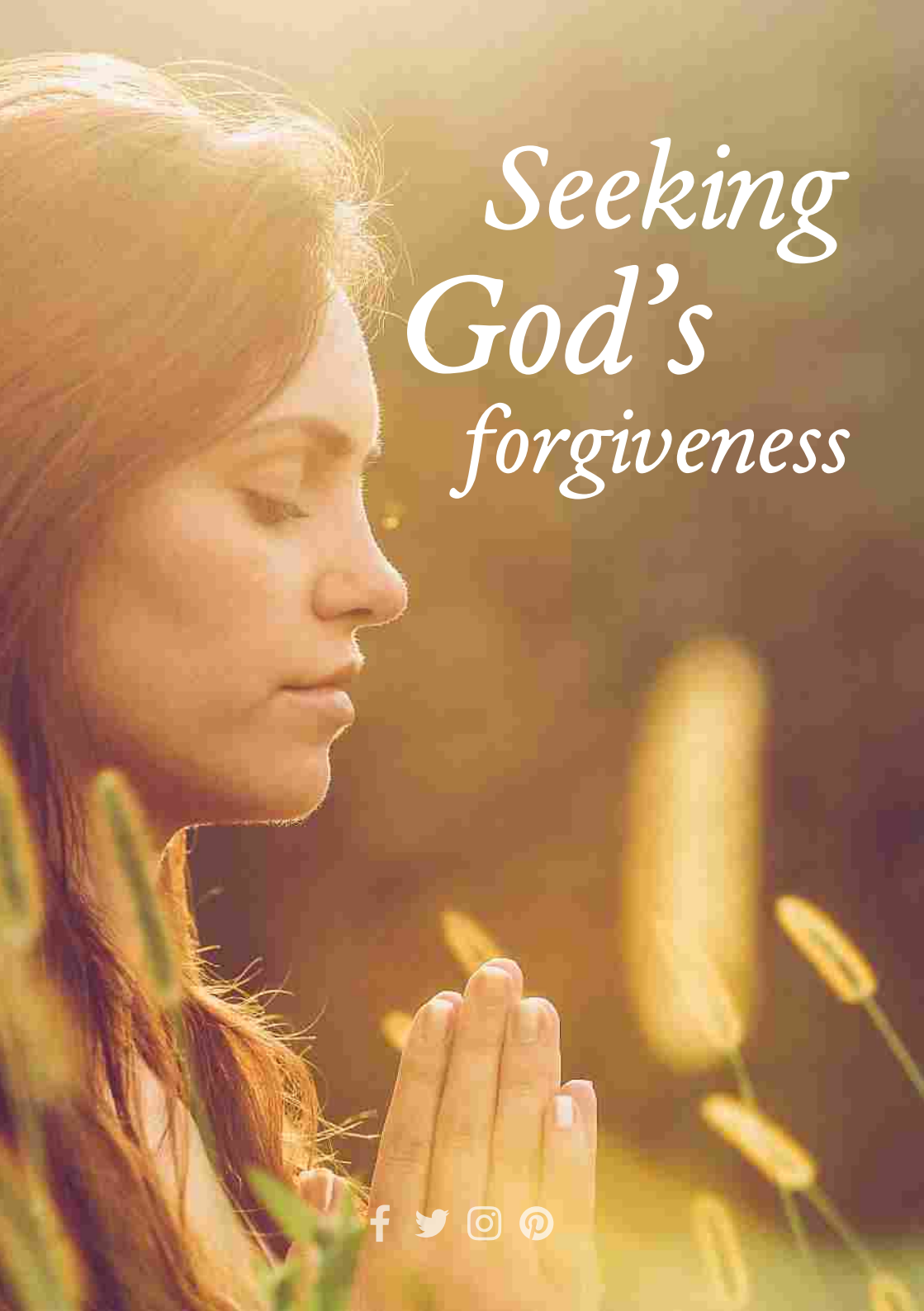
God offers everyone the opportunity to be forgiven. All we need to do is ask and claim His promise. We don't need to go through an ordeal to prove ourselves, conquer some impossible challenge, or be punished. Confess your sin and God, who is rich in mercy will give you new life in Christ.

Q1	*What do we need to do in order to be forgiven?*
	☐ *Proverbs 28:13*
	☐ *2 Chronicles 7:14* ☐ *Luke 15:18–24* ☐ *Jeremiah 3:12, 13*

It's important to recognise that our sins hurt God as well as other people. If your words or actions have hurt a friend, family member or colleague, it's important to acknowledge this hurt, admit you were wrong, and ask them for their forgiveness.

Q2	*To whom should we confess our sins?*
	☐ *James 5:16*
	☐ *Psalm 38:18; 41:4* ☐ *Matthew 5:24* ☐ *Proverbs 28:13* ☐ *1 John 1:8–10* ☐ *Romans 10:10* ☐ *James 4:10*

Once you have apologised for the hurt you have caused, confess your sin to God and ask Him for forgiveness.


Seeking
God's
forgiveness

Those who have not humbled their heart before God in acknowledging their guilt, have not yet fulfilled the first condition of acceptance. If we have not truly repented . . . we have never truly sought for the forgiveness of sin and never found peace with God." (Ellen G. White)

Jesus, who is with God in Heaven, will intercede on our behalf. Hebrews 4:15 reminds us that Jesus was tempted during His time on Earth, so He understands our struggle. Yet despite being tempted, He withstood every temptation and lived a sinless life. Because of His sinless life and his death on Calvary, He is able to forgive and cleanse us from our sins.

A HUMBLE HEART

Q3	*Who has God promised He will be especially close to?*
	▢ *Psalm 34:18*
	▢ *Psalm 51:17; 69:32; 10:17; 147:3* ▢ *Isaiah 61:1; 66:2; 57:15* ▢ *Ezekiel 36:26, 31*

True repentance involves admitting guilt, experiencing genuine remorse, and confessing your sins with a humble heart.

"The humble heart is quick to acknowledge the need for God, eager to confess sin, willing to kneel before heaven's mighty hand. God has a special place for the humble heart." (Max Lucado)

Once you have been through this process, you will experience the peace that God is waiting to offer you.

Q4	*How do we confess our sin?*
	☐ *Leviticus 5:5*
	☐ *Leviticus 26:40; 6:4–7* ☐ *Numbers 5:7* ☐ *Joshua 7:19* ☐ *1 Corinthians 11:28*

It is right to apologise to the individual you have wronged. In other cases, you may have committed a sin that has caused hurt to a group of people. In this case, seeking forgiveness may require something more public in order to right the wrong.

Confession should be freely made; it is your choice to confess. Confession is not something that is to be forced or taken lightly. By confessing your sins, you demonstrate that you are aware of the gravity and weight of our actions.

Your confession should also be specific. This can be difficult. It isn't intended to be a blanket apology for all of your sins. Each sin has particular challenges and struggles. Part of acknowledging your sins and repenting is identifying that you know how you have sinned and are aware of exactly what wrong has been done. Be clear about the nature of the particular sin you are confessing.

"Love the sinner, hate the sin? How about: Love the sinner, hate your own sin! I don't have time to hate your sin. There are too many of you! Hating my sin is a full time hobby. How about you hate your sin and I will hate my sin and let's just love each other!" *Mark Lowry*

The Israelites, a group of people God had chosen as His people, often turned away from Him. Although God had led the Israelites out of slavery by many miracles, they frequently doubted and lost faith in Him. Dissatisfied, they looked to the example of the other nations and asked for a king to lead them. In so doing, they rejected God as their leader. The Israelites turned their back on the all-powerful God of the universe and asked to be governed like the nations around them.

God gave the Israelites a king, but many troubles followed. Before they could find peace with God, they admitted to Samuel exactly what they had done.

Q5	*How specific were the Israelites when they were defined their sin?*
	▢ *1 Samuel 12:19*
	▢ *Psalm 51:1–4* ▢ *Deuteronomy 32:49–52* ▢ *Ezekiel 33:15*

By genuine confession, you are expressing to God your desire to change and asking for His help to turn away from doing wrong.

In Isaiah 1:16, 17, God tells us:

"Wash and make yourselves clean.
Take your evil deeds out of my sight;
stop doing wrong.
Learn to do right; seek justice.
Defend the oppressed.
Take up the cause of the fatherless;
plead the case of the widow."

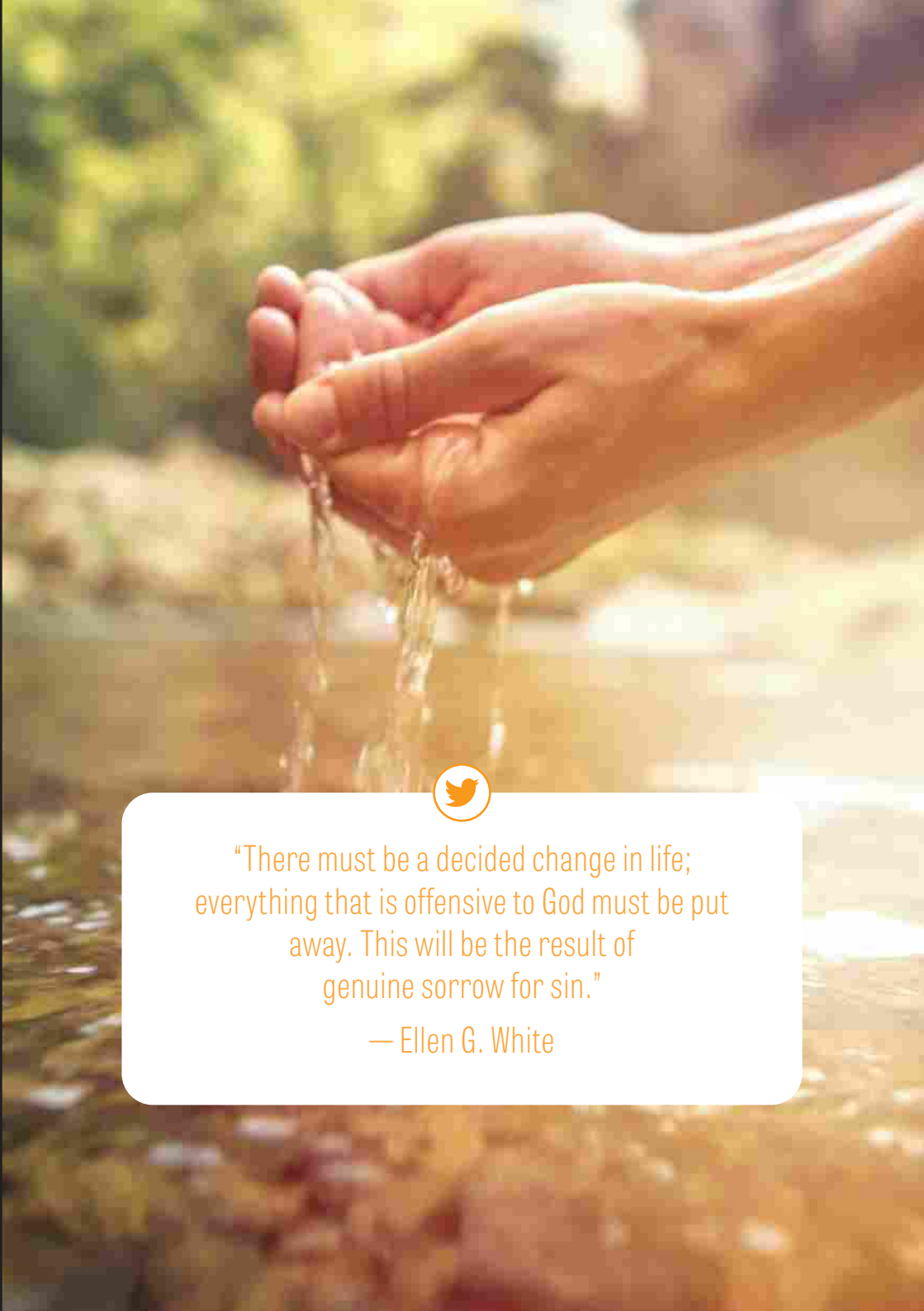
There is a work we plainly need to do: wash ourselves clean, put away evil and learn to do what is right, relieve the oppressed and make restitution for the wrongs we have committed. These actions truly demonstrate we are sorry for our sin and seeking forgiveness for the wrongs we have committed.

BLAME

Deflecting blame or making excuses for our behaviour is not the way to confess our sin. When Adam and Eve experienced sin for the first time, they quickly learned to blame others for their sin and guilt, refusing to accept the consequences of their actions and genuinely confess their sin.

Q6	*Who did Adam and Eve blame for their actions?*
	☐ *Genesis 3:12, 13*
	☐ *James 1:13* ☐ *Exodus 32:21–24* ☐ *1 Samuel 15:20–22* ☐ *Proverbs 28:13*

After Adam and Eve had sinned, they experienced shame and guilt which separated them from God. They had broken the only rule that God had given to them: Do not eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Their first reaction was to find an excuse in order to avoid the consequences of their action. In fact, they didn't want to even face God, so they hid from Him. When God questioned them about what they had done, instead of expressing regret or remorse, they quickly pointed the finger at someone else, blaming that person for their actions rather than recognising that they were accountable for their choices.



"There must be a decided change in life; everything that is offensive to God must be put away. This will be the result of genuine sorrow for sin."

— Ellen G. White


"It is easy to dodge our responsibilities, but we
cannot dodge the consequences
of dodging our responsibilities."
— Josiah Stamp

Similarly, the selfishness in our hearts leads us to sin and our pride can prevent us from humbly acknowledging our wrong, blinding us to our character faults.

Unless we are open with Jesus and ask the Holy Spirit to convict us of our sin, we will be unable to see them clearly. Even when we admit our sins, often we seek to avoid responsibility for them excusing ourselves or offer an explanation to justify our actions.

"The examples in God's Word of genuine repentance and humiliation reveal a spirit of confession in which there is no excuse for sin or attempt at self-justification." *Ellen G. White*

Real repentance recognises that excuses don't matter or change the simple truth that we are sinners. We have sinned, and these sins have consequences.

Q7	*Why is it important that we acknowledge that we are sinners?*
	☐ *Luke 18:13*
	☐ *Luke 5:8* ☐ *Ezra 9:6* ☐ *Psalm 40:12* ☐ *Isaiah 6:5* ☐ *Ezekiel 16:63*

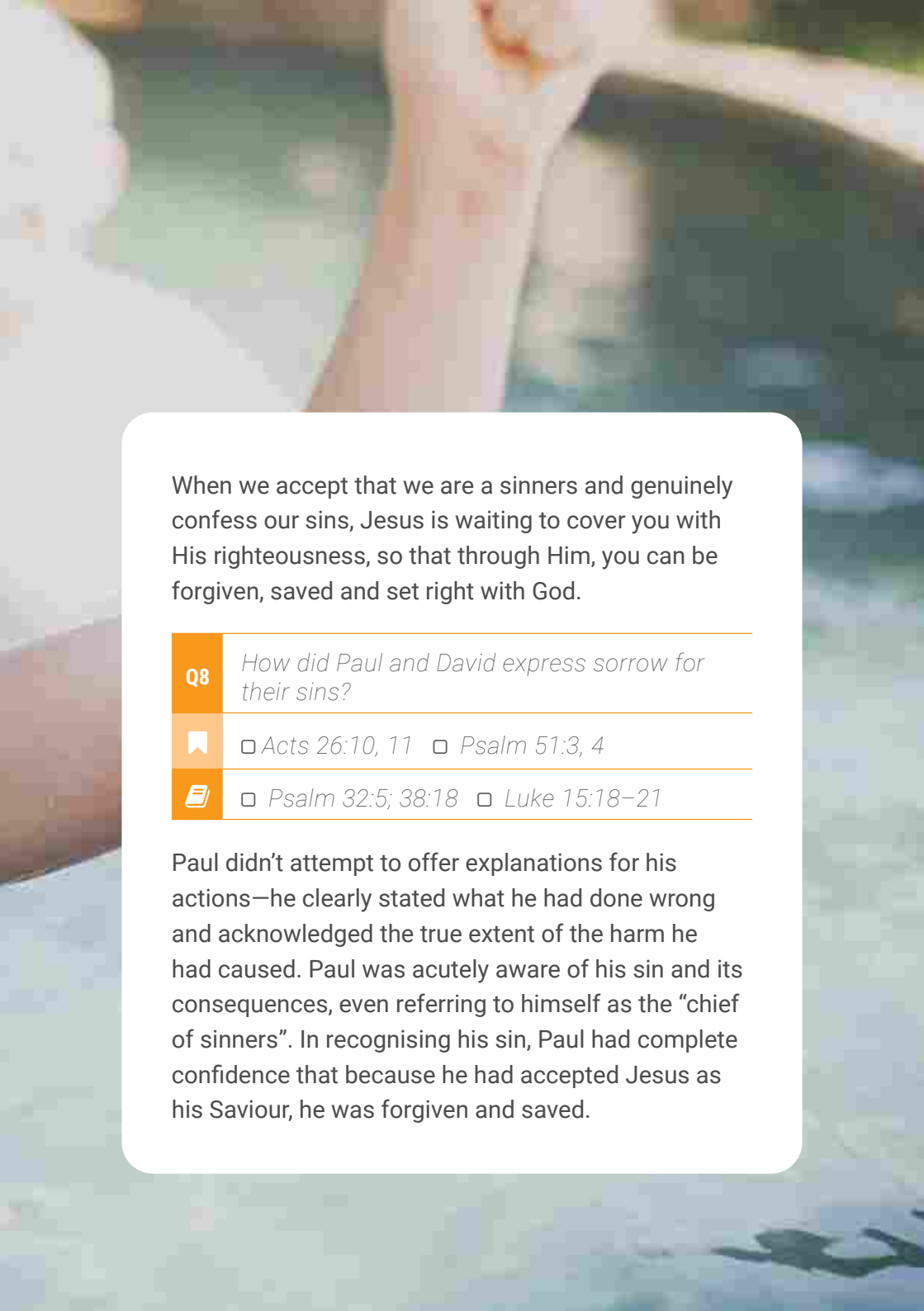
God sees us as we are; no amount of excuses can hide our true natures from Him. All that happens when we try that is we end up blinding ourselves to the truth.

True confession admits we have sinned, acknowledges our guilt, and makes no effort to hide from it. It asks us to recognise the truth: that we are sinners in need of a Saviour.



"True confession will entirely change you; the bias of your souls will be changed, then you will delight in God, in Christ, in His Law, and in His people and you will experience new life in Jesus."

— George Whitefield



When we accept that we are a sinners and genuinely confess our sins, Jesus is waiting to cover you with His righteousness, so that through Him, you can be forgiven, saved and set right with God.

Q8	*How did Paul and David express sorrow for their sins?*
	☐ *Acts 26:10, 11* ☐ *Psalm 51:3, 4*
	☐ *Psalm 32:5; 38:18* ☐ *Luke 15:18–21*

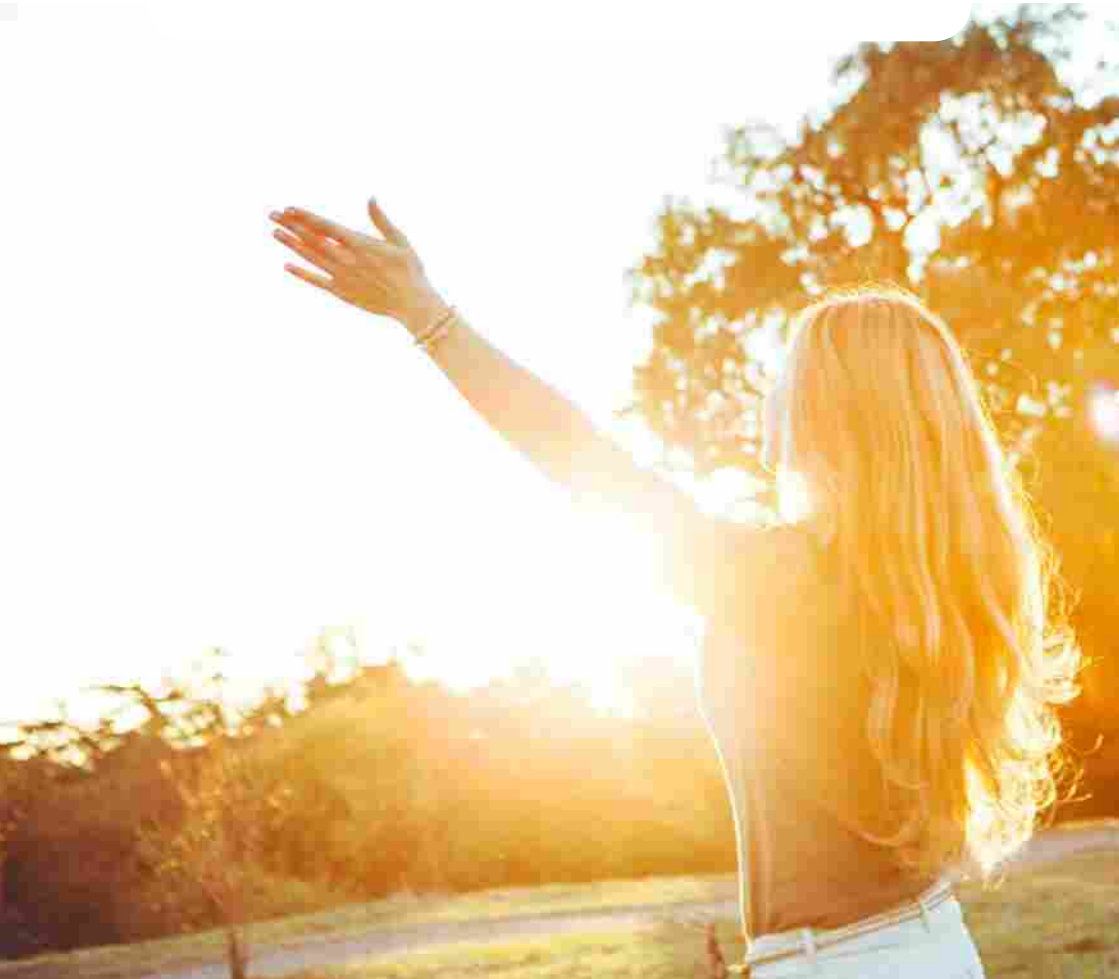
Paul didn't attempt to offer explanations for his actions—he clearly stated what he had done wrong and acknowledged the true extent of the harm he had caused. Paul was acutely aware of his sin and its consequences, even referring to himself as the "chief of sinners". In recognising his sin, Paul had complete confidence that because he had accepted Jesus as his Saviour, he was forgiven and saved.

Q9	*What does God promise will happen when we confess our sins?*
	☐ *1 John 1:9*
	☐ *Proverbs 28:13* ☐ *Acts 3:19* ☐ *Hebrews 7:25* ☐ *Jeremiah 33:8* ☐ *Nehemiah 9:17* ☐ *2 Chronicles 7:14* ☐ *Isaiah 43:25, 26: 1:18*

Jesus paid an incredible price when He died on the cross for our sins so that we had the opportunity to be saved. Jesus doesn't want us to be in pain or to suffer. When we open our hearts to God and humble ourselves, letting go of our selfishness and pride to freely accept His incredible love and freedom, we experience what it is like to walk with Jesus.

"A humble person, broken-hearted by true repentance, will know the love of God. He will understand the cost of Calvary. The sinner who is really sorry will confess. He will come to God as freely as a son comes to a loving father."

— Reference?



REFLECTION

Thank you, God, for giving me the gift of repentance. I want to confess my sins and live my life in a way that honours you.

YES **UNDECIDED**

I will confess my sins to God, and where possible, to the person or people I have hurt.

YES **UNDECIDED**

I recognise how far I fall short of leading a perfect life, and I ask for God's help to make things right and do better in the future.

YES **UNDECIDED**

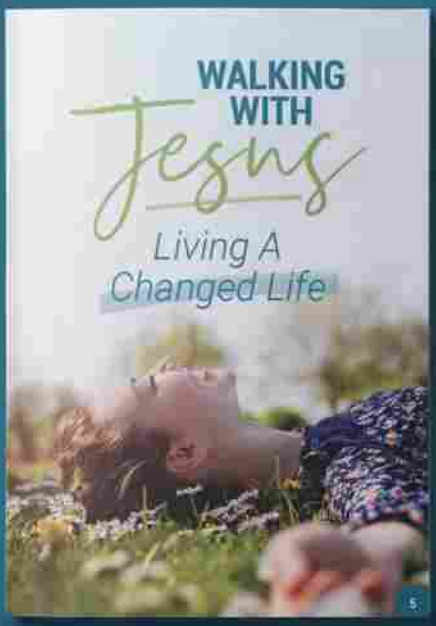
I believe that because of Jesus' perfect and sinless life and His sacrifice on the cross, if I accept His gift of salvation I can be cleansed of my sins.

YES **UNDECIDED**

I believe that when I repent and confess my sins, God will forgive me. I want to remain close to God, and I ask Him to guide my life as I follow His will for me.

YES **UNDECIDED**





CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY IN PART 5:

LIVING A CHANGED LIFE

Sin has separated us from God, but because of Jesus' gift of salvation, our connection with God is restored. The freewill God has given to each of us means that it is your choice to accept the forgiveness found in Jesus, and decide to live your life in a way that honours God.



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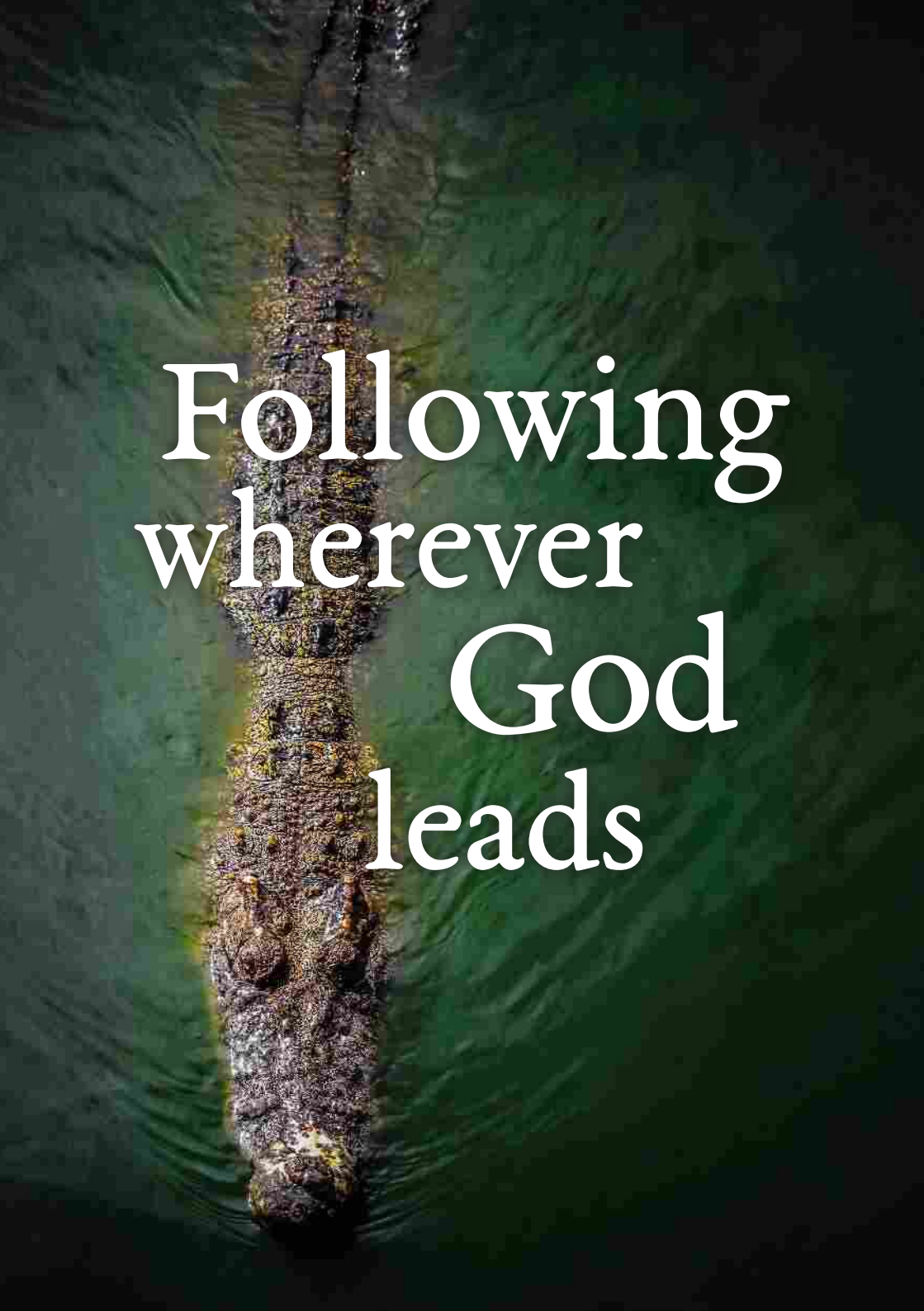
WALKING WITH Jesus

Living A Changed Life




Following
wherever
God
leads



Mark Batterson tells of a modern day martyr in his book *Chase the Lion*:

With his hands tied behind his back, missionary J.W. Tucker was beaten and then with sixty of his Christian compatriots he was thrown into the crocodile-infested Bomokande River. It wasn't ISIS or Al-Qaeda who claimed responsibility. The attack took place on November 24, 1964, at the hands of Congolese rebels.

Our natural instinct is to feel sorry for Tucker, whose earthly life was seemingly cut short. A holy empathy for his wife and children, who survived the terrorist attack, is biblically mandated. Tucker, like many others who had gone before him, joined a long line of heroes who trace their genealogy back to the first Christian martyrs.

In the grand scheme of God's good, pleasing, and perfect will, eternal gain infinitely offsets earthly pain. God doesn't promise us happily ever after. His promises are so much more than that—happily foreverafter.

It was that eternal perspective that inspired J. W. Tucker to risk his earthly life for the gospel. Tucker didn't fear death because he had already died to self. It wasn't an uncalculated risk that led J. W. Tucker into the Congo during a civil war. He counted the cost with his missionary friend Morris Plotts. Plotts tried to convince his friend not to go. "If you go in," he prophetically pleaded, "you won't come out." To which Tucker responded, "God didn't tell me I had to come out. He only told me I had to go in." (*Adapted from Mark Batterson, Chase the Lion, Multnomah: 2016), p. 107)*

RESTORED TO GOD

The harsh realiy of life is that we are sinners and our sinful natures have alienated us from God.

"The whole heart must be yielded to God, or the change can never be wrought in us by which we might be restored to His likeness." *Ellen G. White*

Q1	*What advice does God give to us about how to seek Him?*
	☐ *Jeremiah 29:13*
	Further study: ☐ *Deuteronomy 4:29; 30:9, 10* ☐ *Isaiah 55:6, 7* ☐ *Luke 11:9, 10* ☐ *Jeremiah 24:7* ☐ *2 Chronicles 31:21* ☐ *Psalm 119:2, 10, 58, 69, 145* ☐ *Joel 2:12, 13*

When we surrender our sinful selves to God and ask Him to transform us, He will renew our natures so that we learn to love like He loves.

Without the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives, we will remain as we are in our sinful state, but God desires total transformation, a renewing of our minds.

"The warfare against self is the greatest battle that was ever fought." *Ellen G. White*

It is a struggle for us to remain surrendered to God. We need to ask God

to give us a desire for His holiness and purity, and a dislike and loathing for sin. We need to pray for the Holy Spirit to work in our lives so that we deisre to stay in a relationship with God.

This is a constant battle because we are fighting against our desire to have our own way and do our own will. This will be a struggle because we are naturally accustomed to doing what we want to do. It is necessary that we submit to God and He will delight in doing a new work in our lives .

Q2	*Without God, where would we be?*
	☐ *Ephesians 2:1*
	Further study: ☐ *Ephesians 2:5; 4:18; 5:14* ☐ *John 11:25, 26* ☐ *Romans 8:2* ☐ *Colossians 2:13* ☐ *Matthew 8:22* ☐ *Luke 15:24, 32* ☐ *2 Corinthians 5:14* ☐ *1 Timothy 5:6* ☐ *1 John 3:14*

FREEDOM AND FREE WILL

God designed humans to have free will. He doesn't ask us to surrender blindly or force us to follow him. Satan wants us to believe that God is controlling, but that's not true – God always gives us a choice.

God always gives us a choice.



"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." *Oswald Chambers*

"God created things which had free will. That means creatures which can go wrong or right. Some people think they can imagine a creature which was free but had no possibility of going wrong, but I can't.

If a thing is free to be good it's also free to be bad. And free will is what has made evil possible. Why, then, did God give them free will? Because free will, though it makes evil possible, is also the only thing that makes possible any love or goodness or joy worth having." *C.S. Lewis*

Q3	*What invitation does God make to us?*
	☐ *Isaiah 1:18*
	Further study: ☐ *Isaiah 44:22; 41:21; 43:24-26; 55:1-3* ☐ *Micah 6:2* ☐ *Matthew 11:28* ☐ *Deuteronomy 30:10, 19* ☐ *Joshua 24:15* ☐ *1 John 1:9*

God invites us to use our minds and our hearts to make intelligent decisions to follow Him.

God created us to have curiosity, intellect and reasoning skills, with a character that can be continually refined and a mind that is continually learning. God does not want slaves or servants that mindlessly follow, but instead desires that we choose Him completely.

"Mankind was God's crowning work of His creative power and shall reach the highest possible development. He invites us to give ourselves to Him, that He may work His will in us." *Ellen G. White*

God asks us to give ourselves to Him so that we can live the best possible life – a life that is in harmony with His plans for us. Sin imprisons us, and God wants to set us free so we can live life to the full, during our time on Earth and with Him in eternity.

GIVING OURSELVES TO GOD

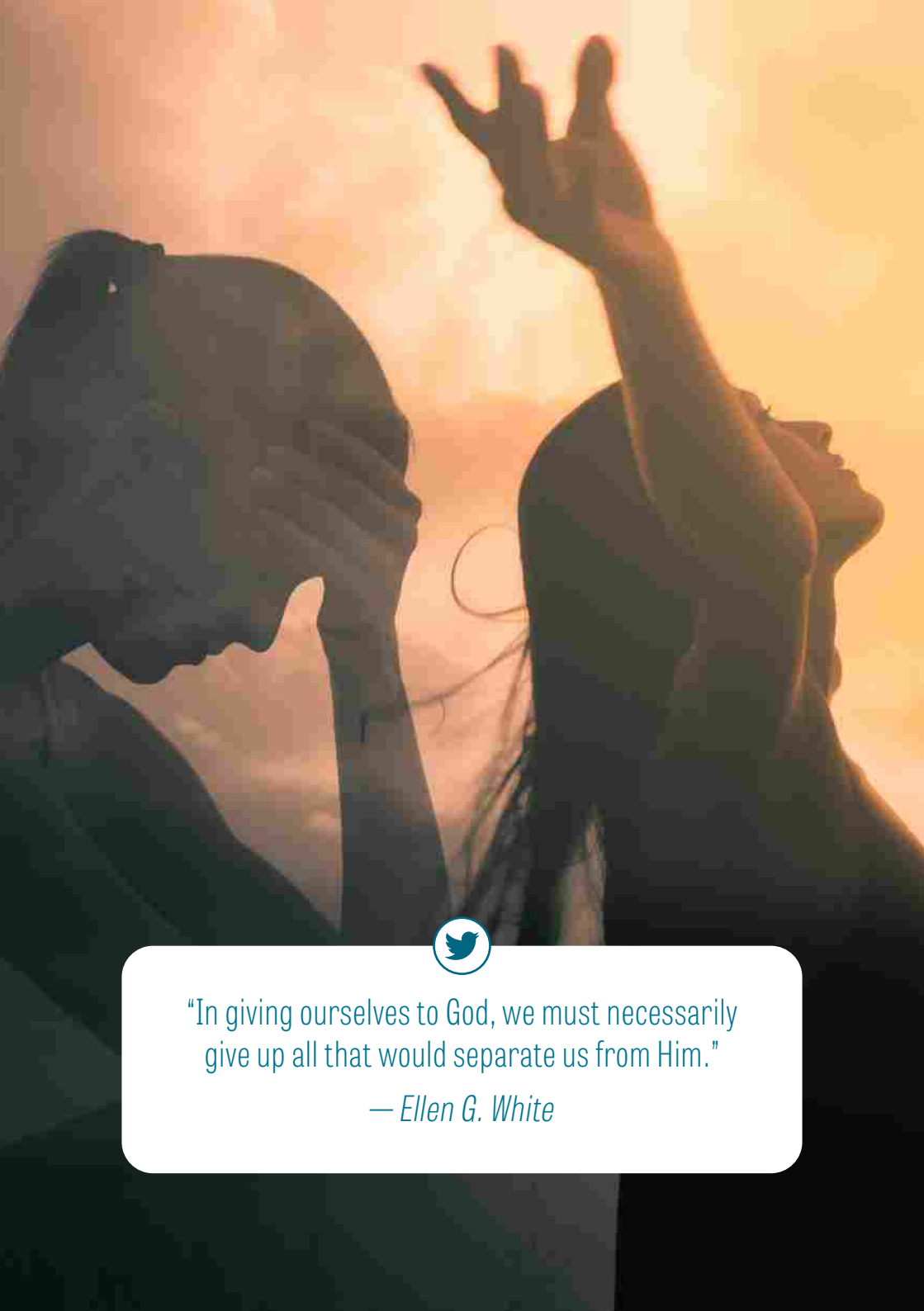
Q4	*What do we need to be willing to give up to follow Jesus?*
	▢ *Luke 14:33*
	Further study: ▢ *Luke 5:11, 28; 18:22, 23, 28-30* ▢ *Philippians 3:7, 8* ▢ *1 John 2:15-17*

Sin separates us from God, so when we give ourselves to God, we have to give up all the things that would draw us away from Him. This should not be seen as a sacrifice but a generous response to a loving God.

"A true and faithful Christian does not make holy living an accidental thing. It is [their] great concern. As the business of the soldier is to fight, so the business of the Christian is to be like Christ." *Jonathan Edwards*

God invites us to surrender anything that would distract us or cause us to stumble in our desire to follow Him. This may be different for each person. For some, it may be the lure of money, for others, fame or chasing after status symbols and worldly possessions.

These priorities can enslave us - so we need to keep our eyes on Jesus and be alert to worldly temptations. We cannot divide our attention and belong to both God and the world. In choosing to be one of God's children, our desire is to live every day in the presence of God.



"In giving ourselves to God, we must necessarily give up all that would separate us from Him."

— Ellen G. White

Q5	*How does the Bible describe salvation?*
	▢ *Ephesians 2:8*
	Further study: ▢ *Ephesians 2:5* ▢ *Romans 3:20-26* ▢ *Luke 7:50* ▢ *John 3:14-18, 36*

Some people claim to follow God, but actually their focus is so caught up on 'doing the right thing', they are not really seeking to be in a relationship with God. They think by concentrating their minds on their own actions, they can change their characters and save themselves. They are so focussed on what they are attempting to do by their own powers that their hearts are not open to Jesus and fail to experience the love of God. To them, Christianity is a checklist of things that need to be done or achieved in order to go to heaven.

This isn't real religion – and it's certainly not the kind of life Jesus wants for us.

"It is not by telling people about ourselves that we demonstrate our Christianity. Words are cheap. It is by costly, self-denying Christian practice that we show the reality of our faith."
Jonathan Edwards

When Jesus dwells in our hearts and is part of our daily lives, we will be filled with His love and experience the joy of being close to Him. Once we've felt what this is like, we will desire a more intimate walk with Him each day.

Instead of mindlessly 'going through the motions,' our Christianity will be a dynamic living experience. Instead of being focussed on self, our eyes will be fixed upon Jesus.

We won't be trying to constantly meet a set of standards for the sake of following rules because of our response of love for who He is and what He has don for us.

"Those who feel the constraining love of God do not ask how little may be given to meet the requirements of God; they do not ask for the lowest standard, but aim at perfect conformity to the will of Jesus their Redeemer." XXX

SALVATION'S INCREDIBLE COST

If you ever feel like you are sacrificing too much to follow Jesus, remember what your salvation cost heaven. Jesus, the Son of God, gave all of himself because of His incredible love for you.

Q6	*What did Jesus endure that we might be saved?*
	☐ *Isaiah 53:5, 7*
	Further study: ☐ *1 Peter 2:24; 3:18* ☐ *Romans 4:25; 5:6-8* ☐ *Daniel 9:24, 26* ☐ *Matthew 20:28* ☐ *Ephesians 5:2* ☐ *Titus 2:14*

As we reflect on the scale of the sacrifice and the depth of His love for us, we will feel humbled as we realise that the challenges we face pale into insignificance in comparison to the sacrifice Jesus has made on our behalf.

"Christ was treated as we deserve that we may be treated as He deserves.
He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share.
He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His.
'By His stripes we are healed."

— Ellen G. White, Desire of Ages



Jesus considered us so valuable that He willingly sacrificed His life for us. We didn't deserve or earn it, but He died the death we should have died so that we might live the life He was to live.

"He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again" (2 Corinthians 5:15).

Q7	*What incredible burden did Jesus carry on our behalf?*
	▢ *Isaiah 53:12*
	Further study: ▢ *Isaiah 53:5, 11* ▢ *Galatians 1:4; 3:13* ▢ *2 Corinthians 5:21* ▢ *Hebrews 9:26, 28* ▢ *1 John 2:2; 4:9, 10* ▢ *Mark 15:28* ▢ *Luke 22:37*

Sometimes human pride causes us to question why we need to come humbly before God in order to be sure of our acceptance with Him. The answer is found in Jesus. He was sinless and more than this, He was the Prince of heaven, but on your behalf, He became sin for the human race and was numbered with sinners to bear the sins of many.

"God does not require us to give up anything that it is for our best interest to retain."

— Ellen G. White



LIVING LIFE GOD'S WAY

Q8	*What should we make the priority in our lives?*
	☐ *Matthew 6:33*
	☐ *Matthew 6:30–32; 19:29* ☐ *Romans 14:17* ☐ *John 6:27* ☐ *1 Kings 3:11–13 17:13-16* ☐ *Proverbs 3:9, 10* ☐ *Luke 12:31–34* ☐ *Psalm 34:9,10; 37:3–7, 18, 19, 20, 25* ☐ *1 Timothy 4:8* ☐ *1 John 2:17*

Jesus desires what is best for us. How marvellous it would be if we could comprehend that Jesus offers us something better than what we even seek for ourselves.

Chasing after the temporary pleasures of this world may cause happiness for a time, but it's not the kind of happiness that will last. When we think and act against God's will, we will only hurt ourselves because the path of trangression leads only to misery and destruction.



LIVING A LIFE OF DESIGN

Q9	*What does God promise us if we follow Him?*
	☐ *Psalm 37:4, 5*
	☐ *Psalm 145:19; 84:11; 23:1-5; 36:8* ☐ *John 10:10; 15:7, 16* ☐ *2 Corinthians 9:8–11* ☐ *Luke 12:30–33* ☐ *1 Timothy 6:17* ☐ *1 John 5:14, 15*

Sin has distorted our world in so many ways including our understanding of God. It is a mistake to entertain the thought that God is pleased to see people suffer. All of heaven is interested in the happiness of humanity. We must close all avenues that bring indulgence, suffering and disappointment.

Jesus accepts us as we are, but does not want us to remain in the same sinful state we were in when we first came to Him. He wants better for us. He knows we are weak and flawed, which is why He has promised to cleanse us from our sins that we can experience the perfect peace that passes all understanding. The true, joyous life of the soul is to have Jesus formed within, the hope of glory.

"When Jesus died on the cross, the mercy of God did not become any greater. It could not become any greater, for it was already infinite. We get the odd notion that God is showing mercy because Jesus died. No--Jesus died because God is showing mercy. It was the mercy of God that gave us Calvary, not Calvary that gave us mercy. If God had not been merciful there would have been no incarnation, no babe in the manger, no man on a cross and no open tomb." *A.W. Tozer*

Q10	*How do I surrender my life to God?*
	☐ *Joshua 24:15*
	☐ *1 Kings 18:21* ☐ *Proverbs 4:25-27* ☐ *1 Peter 4:19* ☐ *Matthew 26:39; 6:10, 21* ☐ *Romans 12:1* ☐ *Philippians 2:5, 13* ☐ *James 4:7* ☐ *Luke 1:38*

Many ask the question, how am I to surrender myself to God? We desire to give ourselves to God, but often feel weak and discouraged knowing that we make many mistakes. While we have the best intentions and make every effort, we fail and break our promises unable to control our thoughts, impulses and desires.

This mindset causes us to doubt our decision to follow Jesus. We wonder how God can accept us, when we keep making the same mistakes.

Do not despair. Remember, God has created you with free will, the governing power in your nature. God has given you the power of choice to freely exercise.

You are not able change your heart by your own efforts, but you can continue to choose to follow God and put your trust in Him. He will help you and continue to forgive you even when you fail Him. He will help you to love others the way He loves them, and to desire what is good.

"What you need to understand is the true force of the will. This is the governing power in human nature, the power of decision, or of choice.

Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to us is yours to exercise.

You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections, but you can choose to serve Him. You can give him your will and He will work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure.

Thus your whole nature will be brought under the control of the Spirit of Jesus, your affections will be centred upon him, your thoughts will be in harmony with Him." *Ellen G. White*

Following Jesus isn't a choice you make only once. It is a choice you make each day. When things are hard and you are discouraged, that isn't a reason to give up – it's a reason to ask Jesus for more faith and more strength, all of which He is waiting to provide.

Q11	*How has God promised to help us when we put our trust in Him?*
	▢ *Isaiah 41:10*
	▢ *Isaiah 41:13, 14; 40:29- 31; 44:2* ▢ *James 4:7, 8* ▢ *Deuteronomy 31:6, 8* ▢ *Psalm 27:1; 29:11* ▢ *Romans 8:31* ▢ *2 Corinthians 12:9, 10*

You are entrusting yourself to God has promised to give you strength and security, and who will help you make the right choices so you can enjoy the best possible life. Through the right exercise of the will, an entire change may be made in your life. By walking with Jesus, you ally yourself with the power that is above all principalities and powers. You will have strength from above that will hold you steadfast and through a life of constant surrender to God, you will be empowered to live a new life of faith.

REFLECTIONS

I believe that God values free will and wants me to make my own decision to follow Him.

YES **UNDECIDED**

I believe that Jesus loved me so much that even though I was a sinner, He gave His life so that I could live.

YES **UNDECIDED**

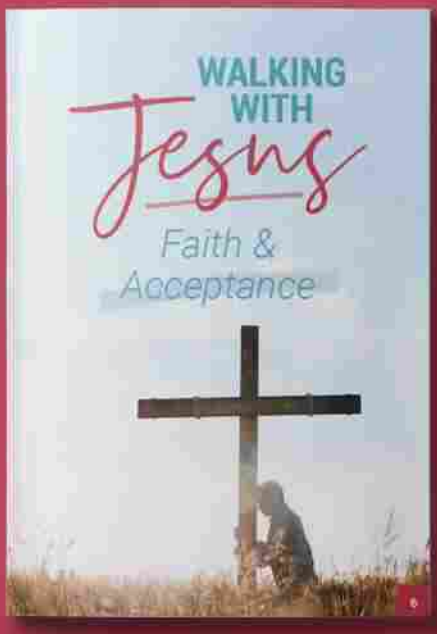
I am grateful that God is waiting to forgive me and help me to grow in my love for Him.

YES **UNDECIDED**

I want to live a life that is in harmony with God's will, and I ask for His help and guidance each day as I continue to follow Jesus.

YES **UNDECIDED**





CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY IN PART 6 -

FAITH AND ACCEPTANCE

As you accept God's gift of forgiveness, you will start to experience the perfect peace that can only be found in God. Learn how to trust in God and claim His promises as you walk with Jesus each day.



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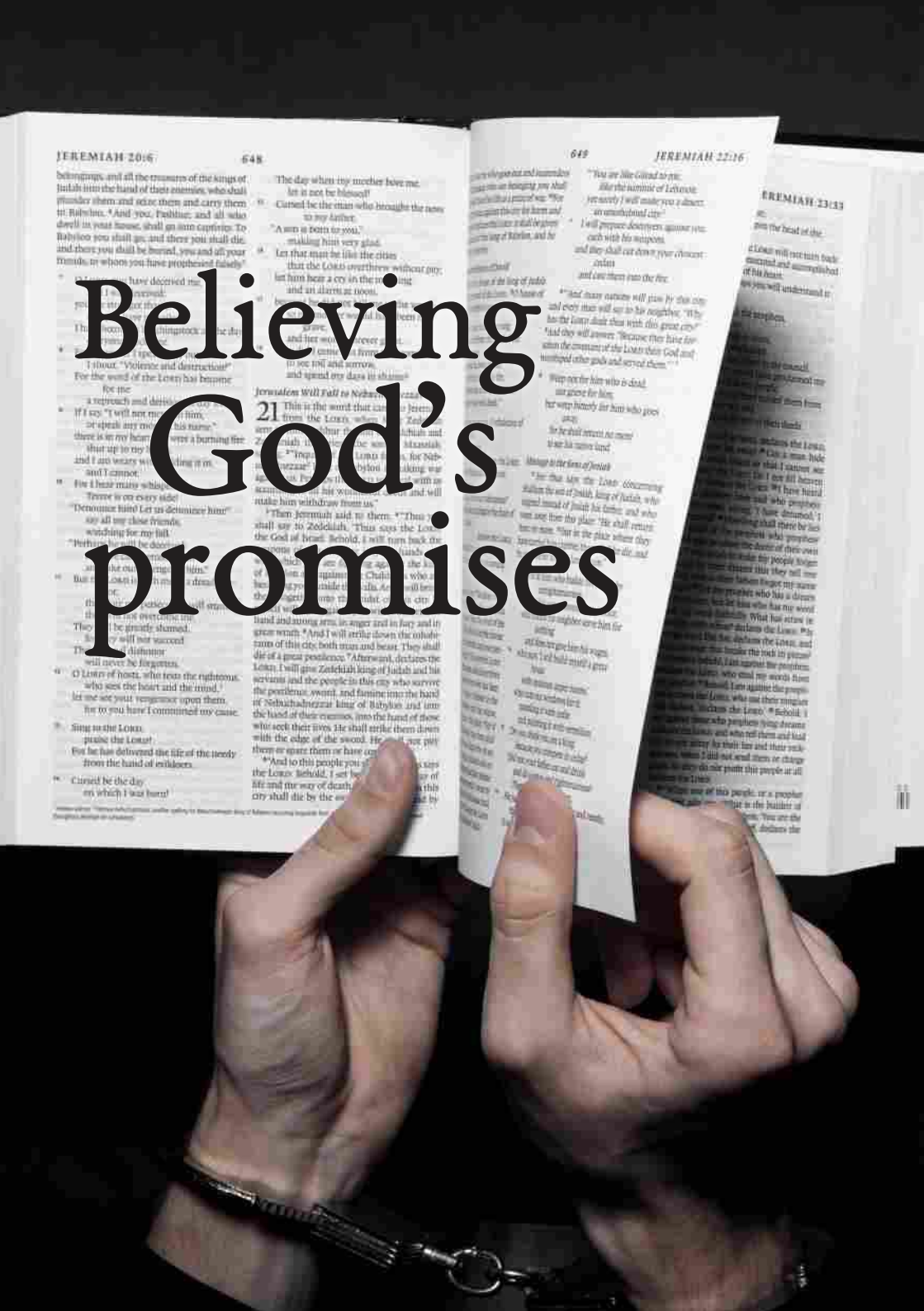
WALKING WITH Jesus

Faith & Acceptance

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Believing
God's
promises



The headlines of the *Washington Post* needed no explanation: *"Texas Executes a Woman"*. "Karla Faye Tucker, the Pickax Killer turned born-again Christian, died of a lethal injection tonight, closing a long fight for her life as a crowd outside the Texas death house prayed for her soul."

The trial seemed to confuse and divide America. Tucker was only the second woman to be executed in the past 100 years, since the reintroduction of the death penalty in 1976. Tucker's conversion to Christianity also seemed to be a concerning fact: Was her conversion genuine or just a cruel ploy to avoid the death penalty?

Tucker recalls that as she waited in the Harris County jail for her trial, her head "began to clear from the years of drugs." As she met with prison ministry workers, she stole a Bible from the church, not knowing they were freely given, and returned to her cell. "That night as I started to read the Bible, I didn't know what I was reading and before I knew it, I was in the middle of the floor on my knees asking God to forgive me."

During an interview with Larry King, he asked the key question, "How do we know, as a lot of people would ask who don't know you, that this isn't a jail house conversion?"

Tucker responded, "I don't try and convince people of that. For me, if you can't look at me and see it, then nothing I can say to you is going to convince you. I just live every day and I reach out to people and it's up to them to receive from the Lord the same way I did, when somebody came to me."

Forgiveness, faith, grace, mercy and acceptance are key words in any situation but of particular importance in Tucker's case. For Tucker, these words needed to be lifted off the pages of the Bible and believed, accepted and cherished. Tucker experienced the transforming power of Jesus Christ. When she accepted Jesus, He gave her a new heart and her new walk with Him began. Tucker needed to accept the forgiveness of God and truly believe that she had been forgiven, not just in some mystical sense, but that God had taken her sin and cast it into the depths of the sea (see Micah 7:19). This is the power of God and the new life. God takes a convicted killer on death row and sets them free (Romans 3:23, 24).

Story Credits - washingtonpost.com, edition.cnn.com/larry.king.tucker

SEEING SIN CLEARLY

Q1	*As we learn more about God's character and grow closer to Him, how will this change how we see our sinful behaviours?*
	☐ *Ezekiel 36:31*
	☐ *Ezekiel.6:9; 20:43* ☐ *Luke 18:13; 5:8* ☐ *Romans 6:21* ☐ *Psalm 40:12* ☐ *Ezra 9:6* ☐ *2 Corinthians 7:9–11*

Once you make the decision to follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit will guide you each day to understand right and wrong. The Holy Spirit will help you to understand your thoughts and actions, making you more aware of the true evil that sin represents and the harm that it causes.

When you see sin for what it really is, you will look upon it with abhorrence. Sin not only separates you from Jesus, but enslaves and separates you from God. Sins fills our lives with selfishness and impurities that cause broken relationships, addictions and spiritual death. As you see your sinful condition, you will desire more than ever to be set free from sin and experience the perfect peace that God has promised you.

"If we want to savour the sweetness of the gospel, we have to be honest with the horror of our sin." *John Piper*



EXPERIENCING GOD'S PERFECT PEACE

Q2	*Who does God offer peace to?*
	☐ *Isaiah 55:1*
	☐ *Isaiah 41:17* ☐ *John 4:14; 7:37, 38; 12:32* ☐ *2 Peter 3:9* ☐ *Revelation 21:6*

God's peace is perfect; it reflects the mercy, forgiveness and love of Heaven. It is eternal and not of this earth. Money cannot purchase heaven's forgiveness, nor can intellect secure it. Instead, God offers it to us as a priceless gift: it is available to us, as long as we make the choice to accept it.

No matter what we have done, we are offered forgiveness and the peace that accompanies it. Isaiah 1:18 assures us that "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Such a dramatic transformation can only come from God.

Q3	*How does God promise He will transform us from within?*
	☐ *Ezekiel 36:26*
	☐ *Ezekiel 11:19, 20* ☐ *Deuteronomy 30:6* ☐ *Jeremiah 32:39* ☐ *2 Corinthians 3:3; 5:17;* ☐ *John 3:3–6*

You have confessed your sins and chosen to turn from them. Go to God and ask Him to cleanse you from your sins and give you a new heart. God is the only one who can cleanse you and make you new again.

Then *believe* that God has transformed your life, just as He promised. Jesus taught us that we need to believe in God's promises and claim them for ourselves.

Q4	*Why does the Bible tell us of the many miracles of Jesus?*
	▢ *John 20:31*
	▢ *Matthew 9:6* ▢ *Mark 2:7, 10* ▢ *John 5:24, 39; 6:40* ▢ *1 John 5:10–13*

When people came to Jesus seeking to be cured of their diseases or overcome their problems, as long as they had faith in His power, He gave them victory.

These acts of mercy helped people believe and strengthened their faith. They could see His power with their own eyes. This encouraged them to trust Him even with things they could not see, such as the power to forgive sin.

In the same way that they had experienced disease or infirmity in their physical bodies, sin acted as a virus in their hearts. Jesus repeatedly demonstrated His ability to heal and restore them physically. This guaranteed His ability to restore them spiritually.



"The desires of one's heart will determine the direction of one's life and ultimately one's eternal destiny. This simple but profound truth is obvious, yet it is often neglected... It is a battleground that can easily hijack our spiritual lives. How do we navigate around the seductions of this fallen world and faithfully follow Jesus in daily life? The key is in and with our heart's desires."

— C.S. Lewis

RECEIVING FORGIVENESS FOR OUR SINS

Q5	*What do we need to do to receive forgiveness?*
	☐ *Mark 11:24*
	☐ *Matthew 8:13; 21:22; 9:6* ☐ *Psalm 32:10* ☐ *Ephesians 2:8* ☐ *1 Timothy 4:10*

One of the many people that Jesus healed was a man who hadn't been able to use his legs for 38 years. Jesus said to Him, "Rise, take up your bed, and walk." It would have been easy for the sick man to laugh or dismiss what Jesus was saying. He could have begged to be completely healed before he tried to walk. Instead, the man believed Jesus and took Him at His word. He trusted Jesus had the power to heal him and followed Jesus' instructions and found that he could walk and had full use of his limbs.

The lame man acted on the word of Jesus, and was made whole.

"Do not wait to feel that you are made whole, but say, I believe it; it is so, not because I feel it, but because God has promised."
Ellen G. White

Q6	*Why can't we heal our own hearts?*
	☐ *Jeremiah 17:9*
	☐ *Jeremiah 13:23; 16:12* ☐ *Psalm 51:5; 53:1–3* ☐ *Genesis 6:5* ☐ *Job 15:14–16* ☐ *Ecclesiastes 9:3* ☐ *Mark 7:21, 22* ☐ *James 1:14, 15* ☐ *Romans 7:14–20* ☐ *Ephesians 2:3*

We are sinners. We cannot save ourselves from our sin. Our sinful natures only leads us back into sin. Holiness is not something we can achieve by our own efforts.

"Left to itself, a heart will run riot with sin. But if a heart responds to the ministry of the Word, there can be fruit and beauty." *Warren Wiersbe*

God promises to give us His holiness through Jesus. All we need to do is believe in God's promise, admit our sins and give ourselves to Him. When we believe God has forgiven and cleansed us from our sins, God does it! We are whole, complete and holy. Just like the paralysed man who believed Jesus was healed, so we are made whole.

Because we claim God's promise of forgiveness, God will make our hearts clean and pure.

Do not wait for a mystical feeling or some kind of divine sign to know for sure that God has forgiven you. Once you give your life to God, God has forgiven you. It isn't about a feeling, it's about trusting in God to do what He has promised.

Q7	*Why can we approach God with confidence?*
	☐ *Romans 8:1*
	☐ *Luke 11:11* ☐ *1 John 5:14, 15* ☐ *Psalm 86:5; 103:11–13* ☐ *Micah 7:18, 19* ☐ *Romans 5:8-10; 8:32* ☐ *Ephesians 2:4–6* ☐ *Titus 3:4–7* ☐ *Hebrews 4:15–16*

God wills that we should be cleansed from sin and be His children. He wants to empower us to live a holy life. So we should pray according to His will, asking for this power. Then we need to believe that we have received the blessings, and praise God that it is true! It is our privilege to go to Jesus asking to be cleansed. Then we can stand before His Holy law without guilt or shame.

In this way, we can approach God with confidence for two reasons;

1. We are no longer condemned. Jesus has transformed our sinful human heart and by His power we have been renewed.
2. You have been redeemed. The cost of your liberation from sin and death was Jesus giving Himself on the cross of Calvary. Because of this sacrifice, when you accept Jesus, you are born into the family of God.

1 Peter 1:18, 19 reminds us that we weren't redeemed with the things of this world like earthly wealth in silver and gold, instead we were redeemed because of the precious blood of Jesus, whose perfect life was given so that we might be saved.

"It is the will of God to cleanse us from sin, to make us, His children and to enable us to live a holy life."

— Ellen G. White

"Now that you have given yourself to Jesus, do not draw back, do not take yourself away from Him, but day by day say, 'I am Christ's; I have given myself to Him,' and ask Him to give you His Spirit to keep you by His grace."

— Ellen G. White



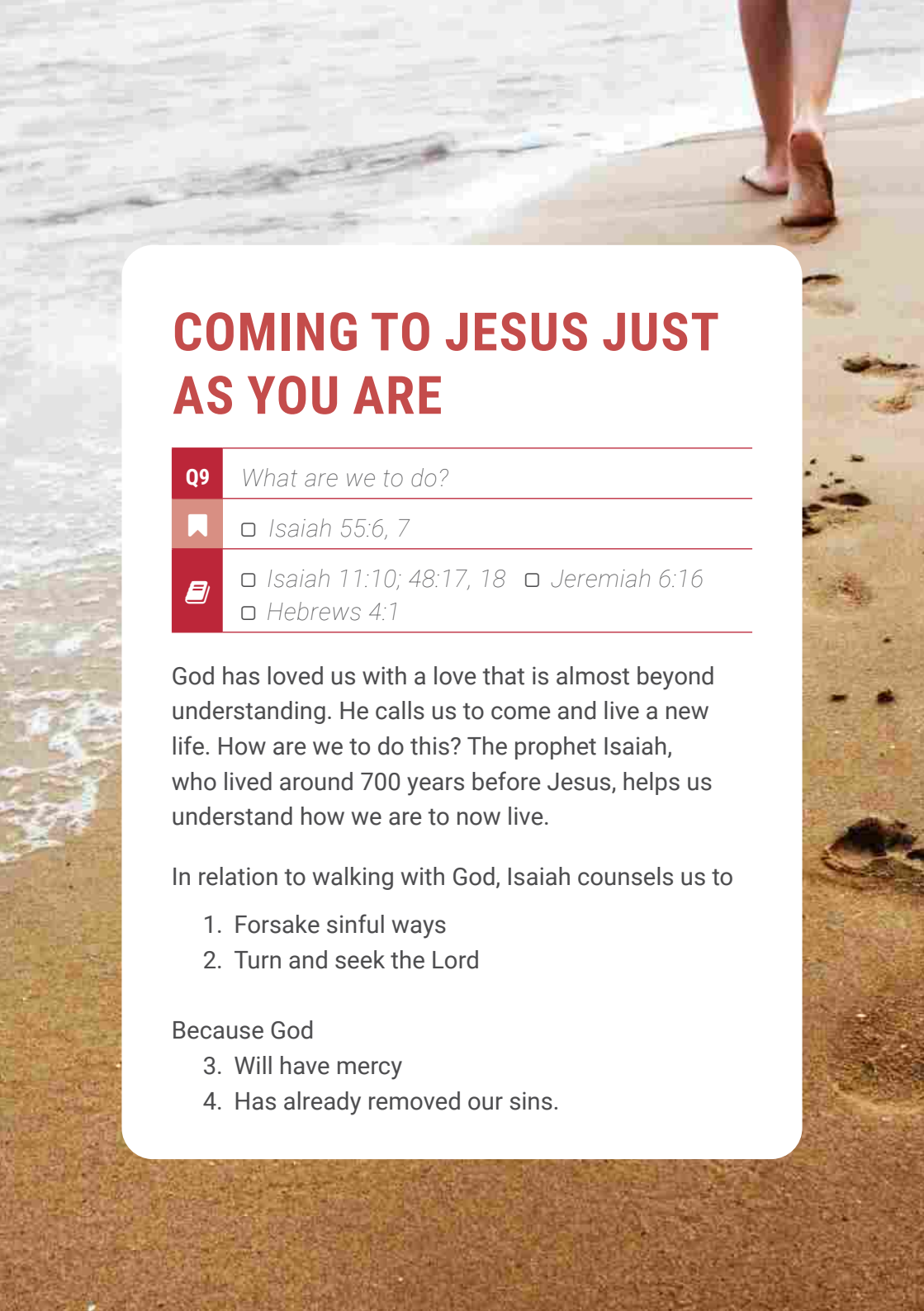
Q8	*How do we stay close to God?*
	☐ *Colossians 2:6*
	☐ *Hebrews 11:6; 3:14* ☐ *Galatians 5:16* ☐ *Matthew 6:33* ☐ *John 15:4–9* ☐ *1 John 2:6* ☐ *2 Corinthians 5:7* ☐ *Ephesians 5:1, 2*

Some people seem to feel that in coming to Jesus they are on some form of probation and must prove to God that they are reformed before they can be accepted by Him and claim His blessings. Remember, Jesus loves to have us draw near to Him as we are, helpless, weak and dependant. We can come to him with our mistakes, sinfulness and failure, falling helpless at His feet. It brings Him glory to wrap us in His arms of love, bind up our wounds and purify us from all our uncleanness.

"Jesus gave all His riches, He gave His own life, He emptied heaven to supply every necessity to accomplish the salvation of a lost world." *Ellen G. White*

Many people fail at this point. They do not believe that Jesus pardons them personally and individually, and fail to take God at His word. Believe that God's promises are for you! They are for everyone. No one is so sinful that they cannot find what they need in Jesus who died for them. He will supply the strength and righteousness needed.

Jesus wants to clothe you in His purity and holiness.



COMING TO JESUS JUST AS YOU ARE

Q9	*What are we to do?*
	☐ *Isaiah 55:6, 7*
	☐ *Isaiah 11:10; 48:17, 18* ☐ *Jeremiah 6:16* ☐ *Hebrews 4:1*

God has loved us with a love that is almost beyond understanding. He calls us to come and live a new life. How are we to do this? The prophet Isaiah, who lived around 700 years before Jesus, helps us understand how we are to now live.

In relation to walking with God, Isaiah counsels us to

1. Forsake sinful ways
2. Turn and seek the Lord

Because God

3. Will have mercy
4. Has already removed our sins.

Jesus, in the same way, invites us to claim His promises and find rest in Him, just as we are—sinful and helpless. We don't have to earn His love or prove ourselves to Him; He calls us as we are, but promises not to leave us we were.

Q10	*What does God reassure us happens to our sin when we repent?*
	☐ *Isaiah 44:22*
	☐ *Isaiah 1:18; 43:25* ☐ *Jeremiah 33:8* ☐ *Micah 7:19* ☐ *Titus 2:13, 14* ☐ *1 John 1:9*

We can take God at His word because He will always do as He has promised. God has promised to forgive our sins when we repent and ask for His forgiveness. That means anyone who has truly repented, regardless of the scale of their sin, will be forgiven.

Jesus' perfect righteousness covers even the worst sin imaginable.

"None have fallen so low, none are so vile, but that they may find deliverance in Christ." *Ellen G. White*

Q11	*How does God treat us when we come to Him?*
	☐ *Psalm 103:10–12*
	☐ *Psalm 103:13–19; 130:3, 4* ☐ *Ezra 9:13* ☐ *Nehemiah 9:31* ☐ *Job 11:6*

EXPERIENCING GOD'S FORGIVENESS

It's important to remember that God's forgiveness is different from human forgiveness. As humans, our hearts are sinful, so even when we do our best to forgive others it can be difficult to fully let our feelings go. Some small part of us may cling to hurt, which we then throw back at the other person.

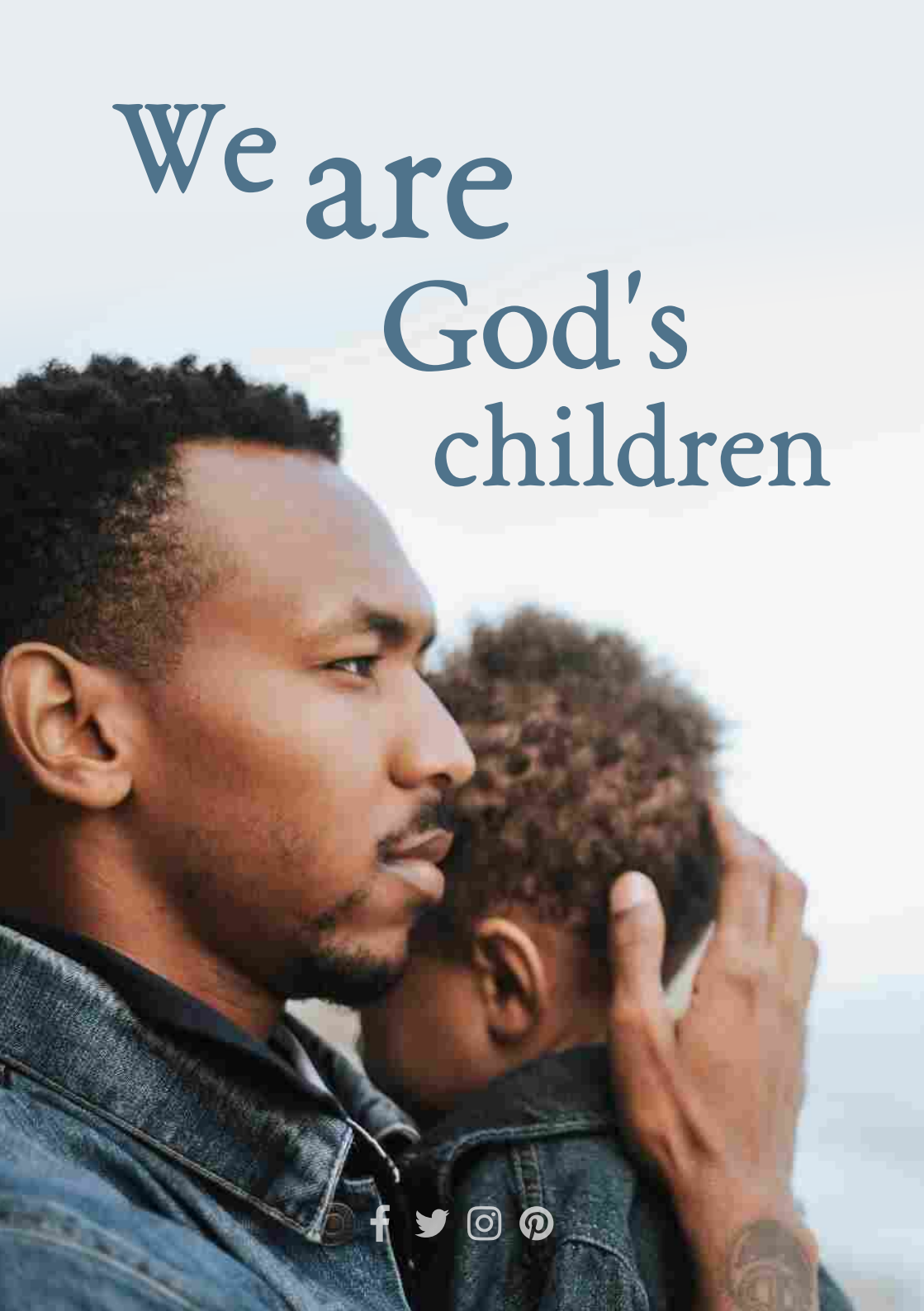
When God forgives us, He does so completely. He promises "abundant pardon" (Isaiah 55:7). God doesn't want anybody to die because of sin—He wants us to enjoy an abundant life now and eternity in the future.

Satan tries to obscure God's promises or make us feel things are more complicated. He wants us to doubt ourselves and to doubt God and question why we are worthy.

The Bible teaches that we aren't worthy, but God loves us anyway, and when we ask Him for forgiveness and surrender our lives to Him, we become His children. How God sees us *makes* us worthy. This transformation is nothing we can achieve or accomplish ourselves.

"I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I want to be, I am not what I hope to be in another world; but still I am not what I once used to be, and by the grace of God I am what I am." *John Newton*

We are God's children



Q12	*How does God react when we turn away from sinning and ask Him for forgiveness?*
	☐ *Luke 15:20*
	☐ *Deuteronomy 30:2–4* ☐ *Psalm 86:5, 15; 78:3; 145:8*

CLAIMING GOD'S PROMISE

Our sin doesn't need to be the end of our story. God has given us a hope. Because God loves us and is ready to receive us, when we turn to Him and ask Him for forgiveness, a new life is given to us.

Even though we have made mistakes and waste chances and opportunities, God doesn't hold our past choices against us. He is ready and waiting to accept us as His children.

In the story of the prodigal son, the young son came intent on asking his father for forgiveness. But upon his return, before he could even say the words of the speech he'd so earnestly rehearsed, his father came running to greet him. His father had been waiting for him to come home, and was celebrating his return. In the same way, God is waiting for each of us and wants to celebrate with us when we come home to Him.

Q13	*What does Jesus promise is something He will never do?*
	☐ *John 6:37*
	☐ *Matthew 11:28* ☐ *Hebrews 7:25* ☐ *Isaiah 55:7* ☐ *Revelation 22:17* ☐ *Romans 8:31, 32; 5:8* ☐ *2 Peter 3:9* ☐ *Psalm 102:17*

Whenever you are anxious, remember God's promises to you. He has promised to be with you always, to never leave you or abandon you. He will be with you to comfort you and bring you hope in the darkest of times and to celebrate with you in the good times. God wants you to be with Him in heaven for eternity, where there will be no more sin, suffering or pain. That is something to long for.

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."
Martin Luther King, Jr.

Q14	*How do we know God will always be with us?*
	☐ *Hebrews 13:5*
	☐ *Deuteronomy 31:6, 8* ☐ *Malachi 3:17* ☐ *Romans 8:38, 39* ☐ *Jeremiah 31:33-35; 32:38–40* ☐ *John 10:27–30*

God's enormous love is too much for us to fully comprehend: His love knows no limits and His care and compassion knows no end. Because of His great love, we are redeemed and transformed.



"But God, who is rich in mercy, because of his great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved."

— Ephesians 2:4, 5

REFLECTION

I recognise that I am a sinner in need of saving.

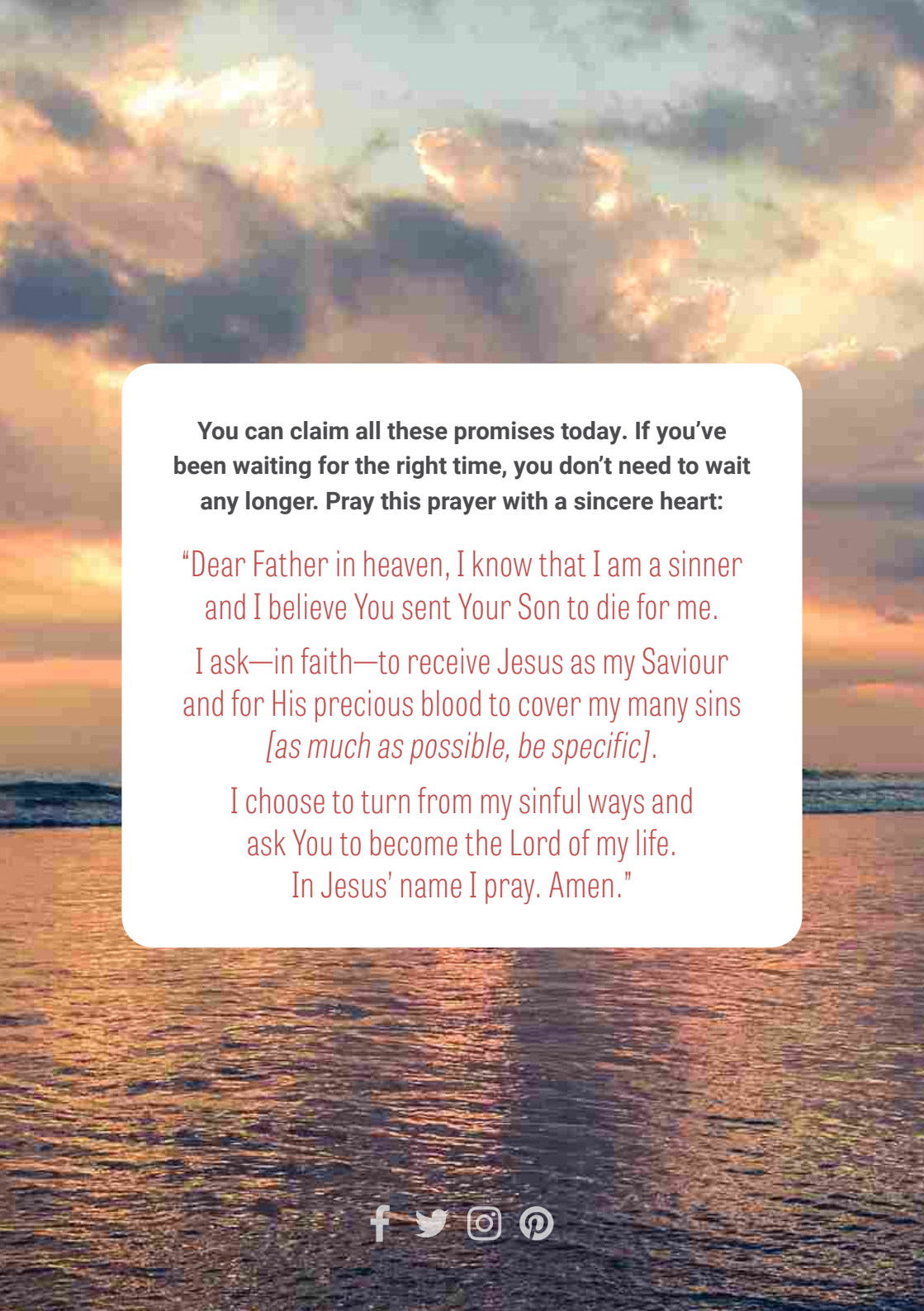
YES **UNDECIDED**

I believe God loves me and sent Jesus as a sacrifice for my sins.

YES **UNDECIDED**

I believe that if I confess my sins and repent, I will be cleansed and God will give me a new heart in the place of my sinful one.

YES **UNDECIDED**

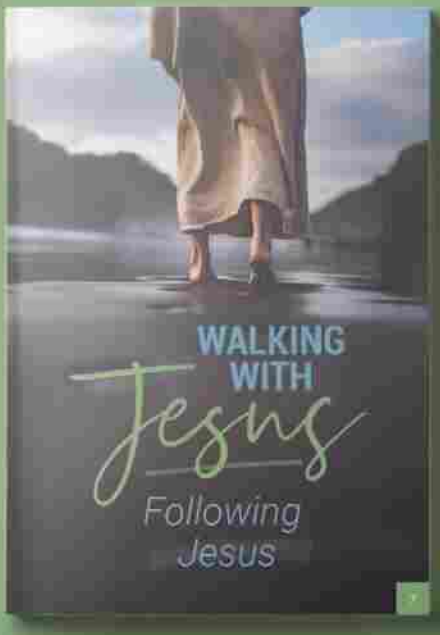


You can claim all these promises today. If you've been waiting for the right time, you don't need to wait any longer. Pray this prayer with a sincere heart:

"Dear Father in heaven, I know that I am a sinner and I believe You sent Your Son to die for me.

I ask—in faith—to receive Jesus as my Saviour and for His precious blood to cover my many sins *[as much as possible, be specific]*.

I choose to turn from my sinful ways and ask You to become the Lord of my life.
In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."



CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY IN PART 7:

FOLLOWING JESUS

As you follow the example of Jesus your life will be a living testament to God. You'll reflect His love, patience, kindness and goodness each day in your thoughts, words and actions. With the new heart that Jesus has given you, you will no longer be ruled by your own selfishness, instead you'll look at the world through Jesus' eyes of love.



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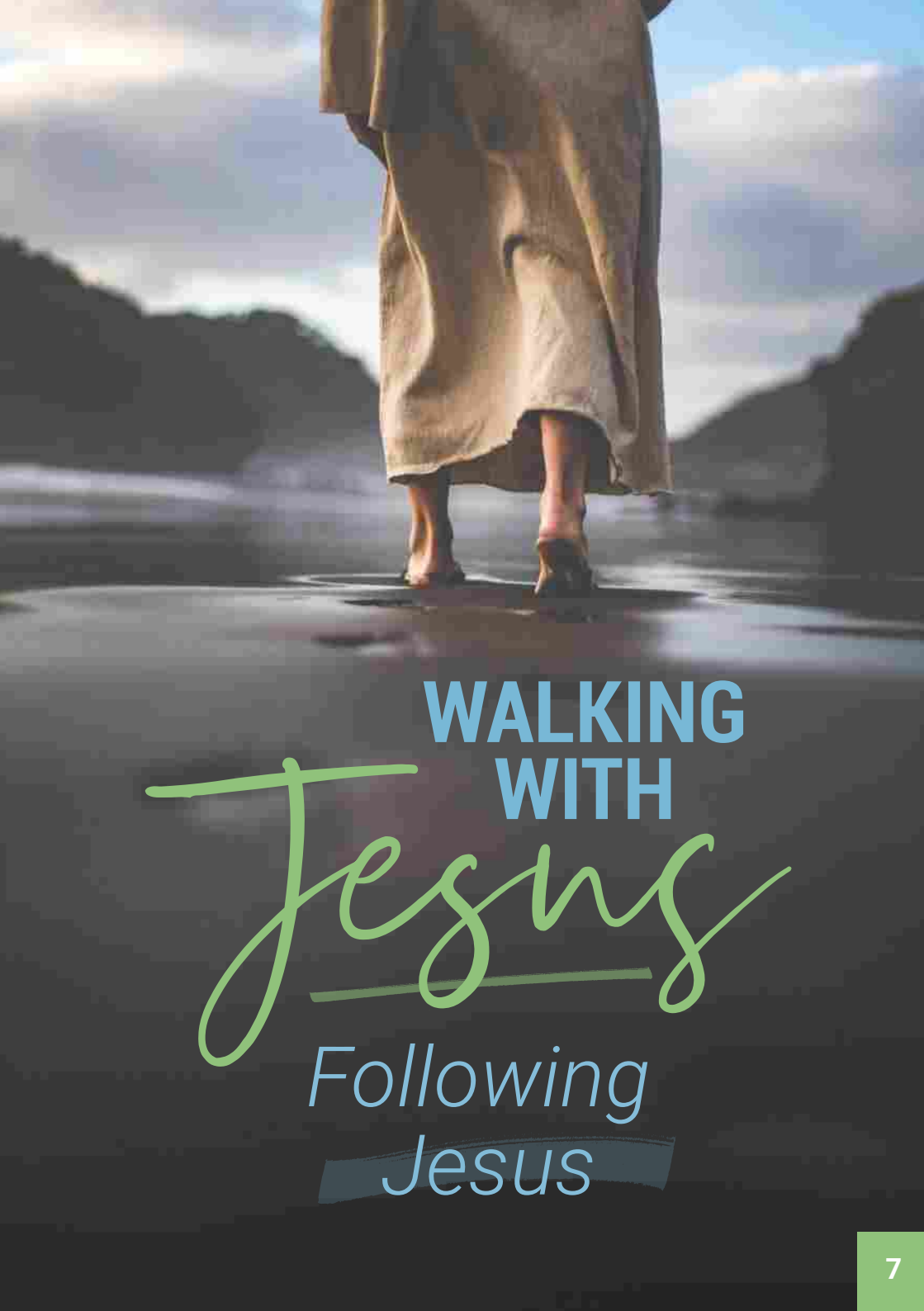
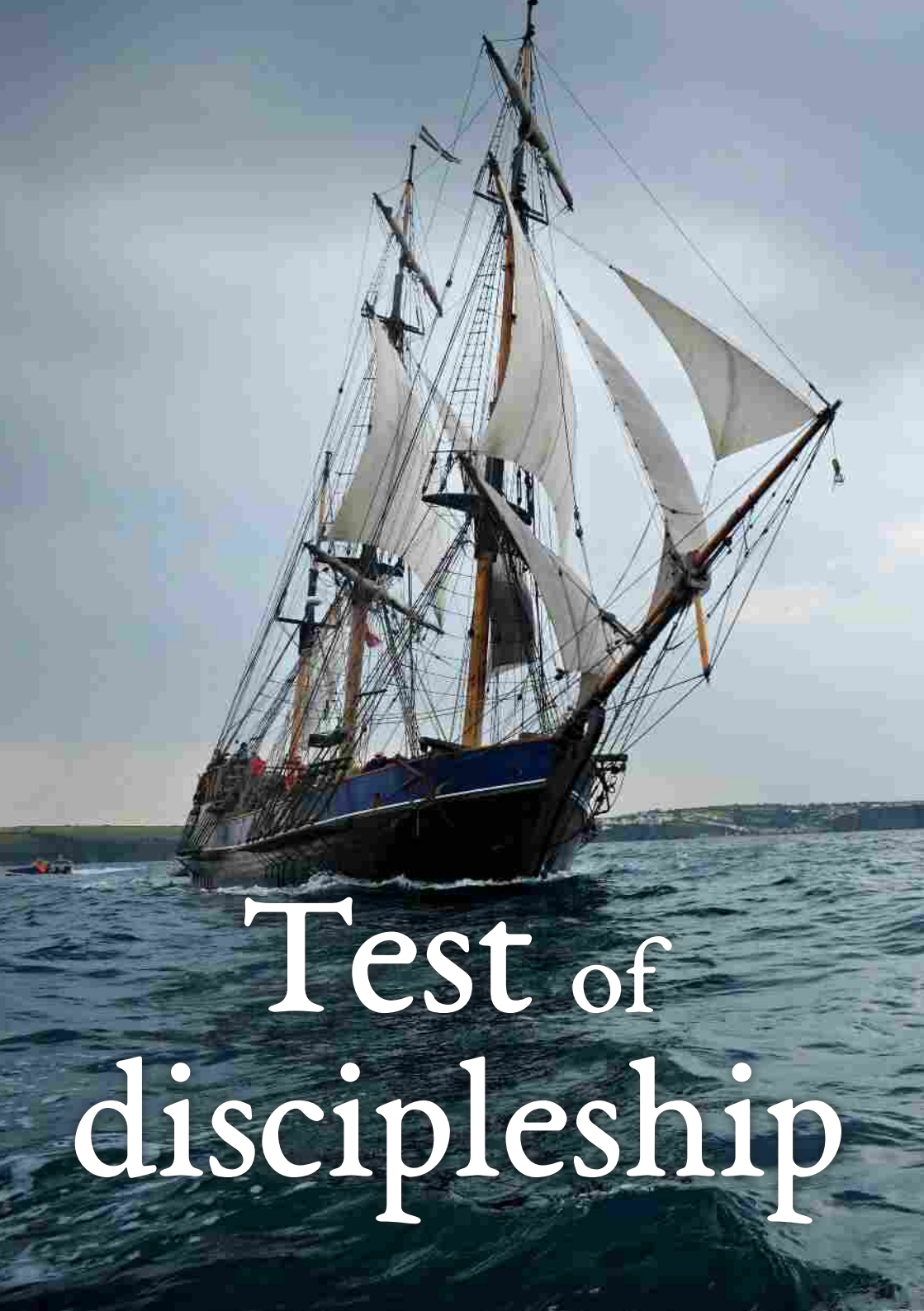

WALKING
WITH
Jesus
Following
Jesus



Test of discipleship

Griffith Francis Jones was born in Hamefly, North Wales, in 1864. When he was 15 years old, he chose the sea as his profession and began study to become a sea captain, achieving his certificate of competency in 1890.

On one of his journeys, he discovered a torn piece of paper from the English journal *Present Truth.* He was about to toss it overboard, but paused to read the content. The information on the piece of paper would change his life. Accepting as truth the Bible teachings found on the piece of paper, he was baptised in 1893.

About 1900, Captain Jones and his new wife Marian, left England to study an intensive Bible course at Keene Academy, Texas, that would start their missionary career sailing through the South Pacific islands.

In 1914, Captain Jones and Marian were asked to take the story of Jesus to the Solomon Islands. In a small boat, called the *Advent Herald,* they arrived at a town called Gizo. With a heart for the people, the gospel began to take hold among the many tribes they visited and despite many challenges, the people willingly believed the story of Jesus.

The villages of the Solomon Islands were troubled by many things. In the early days, and the practice of cannibalism and worshipping devil gods was widespread. To address the spiritual battles between good and evil, God and Satan, Jones began by teaching the people about Jesus who was not yet known to them.

He said, “When we first arrived in the village, we would at once teach the people about Jesus and His power. The old people who led and controlled the evil practices, began to see and feel that they had lost their power. People would often come from surrounding communities requesting us to visit their village. We would reply, ‘yes, but what for?’. They would answer, ‘We want you to do what you have done here—sing and pray and talk of Jesus, because we are troubled by the spirits and wherever you go, these spirits do not come again’.

“I recall instances,” Jones said, “where we would kneel down to pray and the demon would leave without any violence, however on other occasions, people would become violent and throw spears or tomahawks at us. On these occasions we couldn’t be on our knees but commanded the evil spirit in the name of Jesus to leave.”

These people would begin living a new life in Jesus free from the power of evil. They discovered the teachings of the Bible about God’s love, His law and the joy of living a new life not in the fear of evil, but in the joy of the Spirit.

Today, if you visit the Solomon Islands, you would find hundreds of thousands of people serving God because one man, who had himself been renewed by Jesus, stepped into the unknown and began to practice his new faith in a profound way.

G.F. Jones leaves a legacy and example for us, to move out of our familiar and comfortable circumstances and live a life of a faithful follower of Jesus.

(Credit: G.F. Jones and Piuki Tasa)

LIVING A LIFE CHANGED BY JESUS

A person may not be able to pinpoint the exact moment or place, or even circumstances that led to their conversion, but this doesn't prove them to be unconverted. Even though we cannot physically see the new heart that Jesus has given, people around us will witness a change because we now follow Jesus. Jesus described the Holy Spirit as being like the wind, even though it remains unseen, we can clearly see its effects (see John 3:8).

Q1	*How do we know we have been made new?*
	▢ *2 Corinthians 5:17*
	▢ *Ezekiel 11:19, 20; 36:26; 18:27–31* ▢ *Ephesians 2:10; 4:23, 24* ▢ *Romans 6:4–6; 8:10*

We can do nothing in ourselves to create a change in our heart that will bring us in to harmony with God. We must not trust ourselves or good works to secure a changed life. Although we cannot see the Spirit of God as He works on our heart, our words, actions and daily habits are evidence that Jesus has done something special in our lives. This relationship will change our habits and the way we live.

"It is true that there may be an outward correctness of deportment without the renewing of Christ. By what means then shall we determine whose side we are on?
If we are Christ's, our thoughts are of Him,
All we have and are is consecrated to Him.
We long to bear His image, breathe His spirit,
do His will and please Him in all things."

— Ellen G. White



THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Q2	*What characteristics will the Holy Spirit bring to our lives?*
	☐ *Galatians 5:22, 23*
	☐ *Galatians 5:16, 17* ☐ *Psalm 92:12–14* ☐ *Matthew 12:33* ☐ *Luke 8:14, 15*

When Jesus gives us a new heart, we will desire to be more like Him in every way. We will see our lives the way He does, recognising how harmful sin is, and appreciate the gifts God has given us that transform our lives.

Often we set our standards according to the world around us, but this should not be the case. The things we once valued will fade and change because the Spirit has given us a new heart that longs after the heart of God and we now value the things that matter to God.

The proud and self-assertive become humble; the drunkard becomes sober; the immoral person becomes pure. The vain customs of the world are laid aside and the fruit of heaven is clearly evident in our thoughts, words and actions. This is through no action or initiative of ourselves, but the power of God creating in us a new heart.

"If my sinfulness appears to me in any way smaller or less detestable in comparison with the sins of others, I am still not recognizing my sinfulness at all." (Dietrich Bonhoeffer, ***Life together: The Classic Exploration of Christian Community)***

Q3	*How will our attitudes change to people we may have wronged?*
	☐ *Luke 19:8*
	☐ *Exodus 22:1* ☐ *Matthew 5:23, 24* ☐ *Luke 3:8* ☐ *1 Samuel 12:3* ☐ *2 Samuel 12:6*

When we are genuinely sorry for the wrongs we have done, God creates a desire and provides the power to set things right, "for it is God who works in us to do His good pleasure."

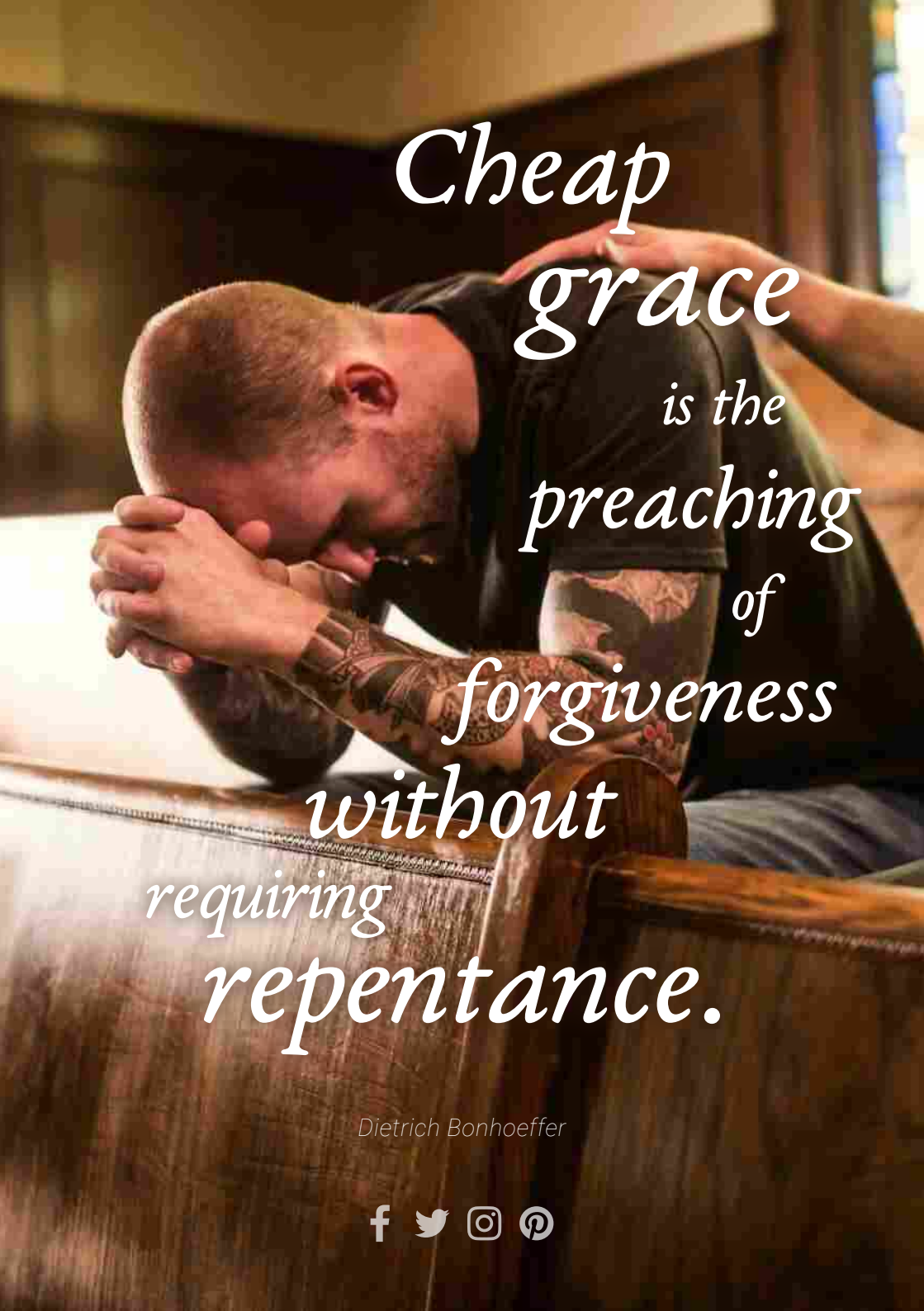
The Bible teaches that sincere repentance involves giving back what we have taken, admitting when we have done wrong, and showing love to God and to the people around us.

This is one way we know a change has taken place. Instead of hiding or making excuses, we are seeking to make things right and repair broken relationships. Instead of being burdened by the past, we focus on the future leaving the shame and guilt of the past.

LOVE COMES FROM GOD

Q4	*What is the source of the love in our heart?*
	☐ *1 Thessalonians 3:12*
	☐ *1 John 4:7-13* ☐ *1 Thessalonians 4:9* ☐ *James 1:17* ☐ *Galatians 5:22* ☐ *2 Timothy 1:7*

Jesus' focus was to do the will of His father, and God's love was reflected in every aspect of His life.


Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance.
Dietrich Bonhoeffer

It is clear that love comes from God—in fact, the Bible defines God as the very definition of love. The natural extension of this love means that a heart that is without love for others is a heart devoid of God. As 1 John 4:19 says, "We love, because He first loved us."

When Jesus recreates us, He puts a love for others in our heart. This love is powerful and brings with it amazing changes. This new walk with Jesus reveals what we should do, helps us exercise self-control, overcomes hate, and helps us care for others more deeply than we have before.

"When as erring, sinful beings, we come to Jesus and become partakers of His pardoning grace, love springs up in the heart." *Ellen G. White*

A LOVE THAT TRANSFORMS

In those who are transformed by the power of God, the character of Jesus is seen. For Jesus, love for God was the controlling power in His life. The heart where Jesus is not found cannot produce a selfless love. It is only where and when divine power has transformed the individual that the power an love of God will be seen.

Q5	*How is our love for God demonstrated?*
	▢ *John 14:15*
	▢ *John 14:21; 15:10–14; 21:15–17* ▢ *Matthew 25:34-40* ▢ *1 John 2:3–6; 4:19–21*

Q6	*What relationship exists between truth and obedience?*
	☐ *1 John 2:4*
	☐ *1 John 1:6–10; 4:20* ☐ *James 2:14–16* ☐ *Titus 1:16* ☐ *2 Timothy 3:5*

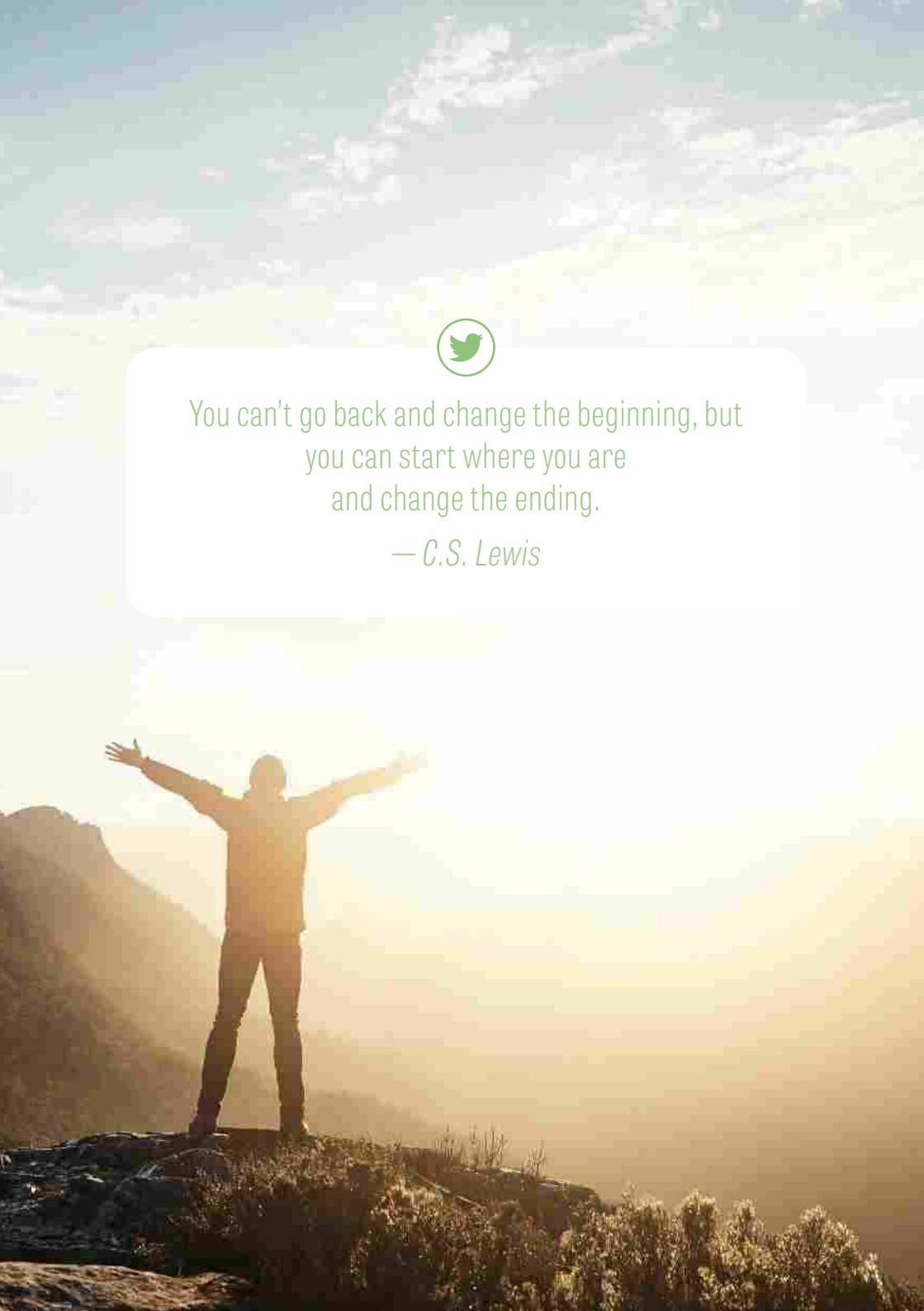
There are two common mistakes that we need to avoid. The first mistake is to think that we can somehow we can save ourselves by our own efforts. Jesus is the only One who can save us—it is impossible for us to save ourselves; we are all sinners in need of a Saviour.

The second is to think that because Jesus has saved and forgiven us, we are free agents who no longer need to obey God's law or teachings. This is dangerous, because it implies that we can somehow accept Jesus' gift of salvation and still continue in our sinful ways.

THE PURPOSE OF GOD'S LAW

Q7	*Where does God write His laws when we accept His teachings?*
	☐ *Hebrews 10:16*
	☐ *Hebrews 8:8-10* ☐ *Isaiah 51:7* ☐ *Jeremiah 31:33, 34; 32:40* ☐ *Deuteronomy 30:6* ☐ *Ezekiel 11:19, 20; 36:26, 27* ☐ *Psalm 37:31; 40:8* ☐ *Romans 8:2–4*

The law of God is an expression of His very nature. It is an embodiment of the great principles of love and is the very foundation of God's government.



You can't go back and change the beginning, but
you can start where you are
and change the ending.

— C.S. Lewis

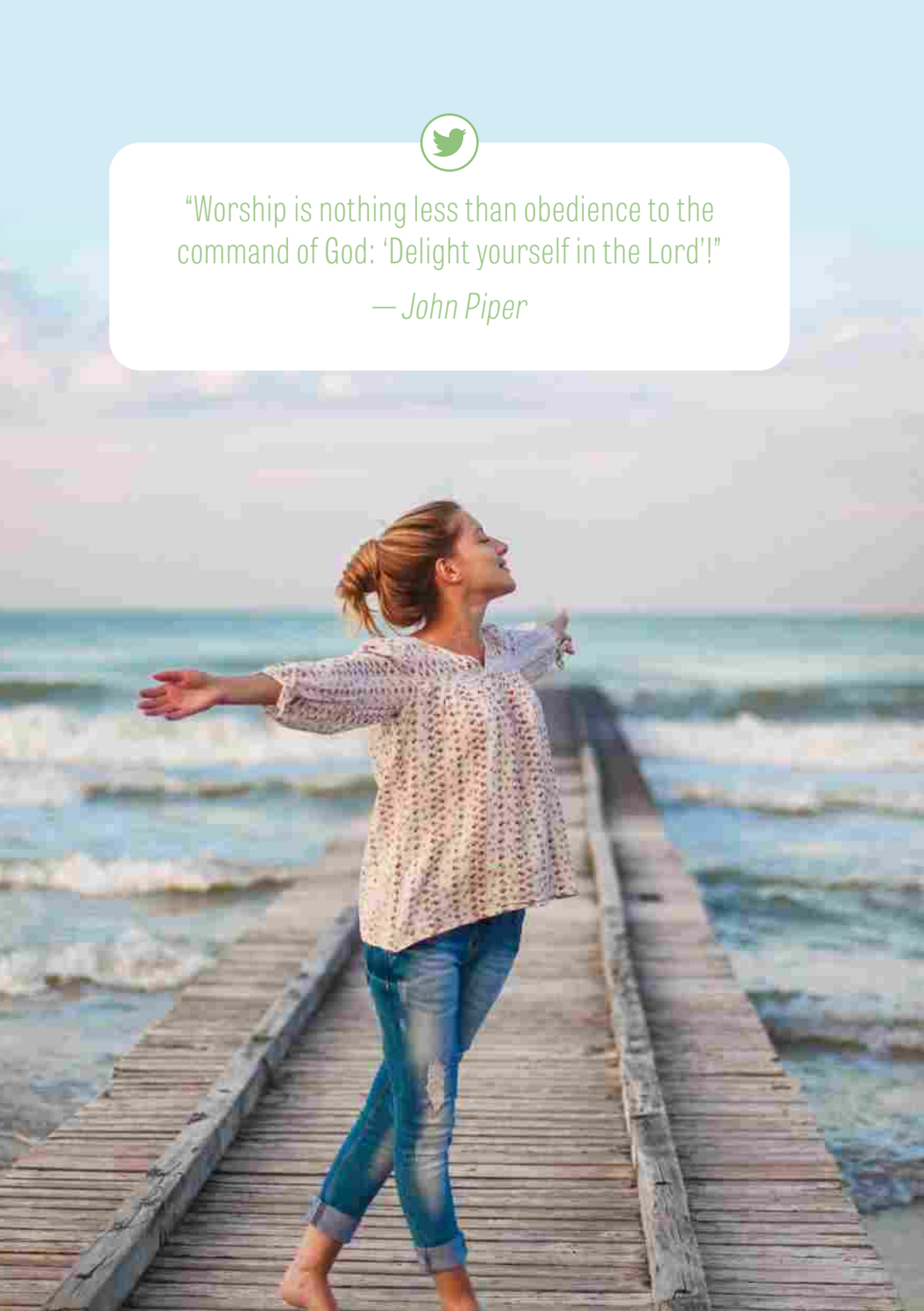
If your heart is made new and you desire to be like God, His law and ways will become part of your heart and will shape how you choose to live your life. Obeying God and following His will demonstrates we are followers of Jesus. Because we love God, we will want to follow the commandments He has given us.

SALVATION IS GOD'S GIFT TO US

We don't earn salvation because of our obedience—salvation is a gift that we claim by faith. Obedience naturally occurs because we believe and secondly, it is the fruit of the faith He has authored in us. Our thoughts, motivations and actions will be in harmony with God's character and continue to instruct and guide our lives. Our actions agree with what His holy law show us God wants us to do. "Let know one deceived you , my children! Whoever does what is right is righteous, just as Jesus is righteous." (1 John 3:7)

Q8	*When we follow Jesus, what two elements need to be equally present in our new life?*
	☐ *James 2:17*
	☐ *James 2:14, 19, 20, 26* ☐ *1 Thessalonians 1:3* ☐ *1 Timothy 1:5* ☐ *2 Peter 1:5–9* ☐ *Galatians 5:6* ☐ *2 Thessalonians 1:11* ☐ *Ephesians 2:8–10*

We are saved by God's grace alone, and because we are saved and our lives have been changed, we live a life to the honour of God and in harmony with His will. A faith, however, that teaches that we do not need to obey God is not true faith. It is teaching something that is not true.



"Worship is nothing less than obedience to the command of God: 'Delight yourself in the Lord'!"

— John Piper

"For it is by God's grace that you have been saved through faith." "Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works is dead" (Ephesians 2:8; James 2:17).

Q9	*Who is our ultimate Example?*
	☐ *1 Peter 2:21*
	☐ *Matthew 10:38, 39* ☐ *Psalm 85:13* ☐ *Ephesians 5:1, 2* ☐ *Philippians 2:4, 5* ☐ *1 John 2:3–6; 3:16–18* ☐ *Luke 9:23–25* ☐ *Hebrews 12:1, 2*

The way we receive eternal life has never changed. Eternal life cannot be gotten in any other way, for then the happiness of all creation would be in danger; sin would go on forever, and suffering and unhappiness would never end.

Q10	*What does Jesus promise to those who seek righteousness?*
	☐ *Matthew 5:6*
	☐ *Philippians 1:6; 3:9, 12–14* ☐ *Proverbs 15:9* ☐ *1 Timothy 6:11* ☐ *2 Timothy 2:22*

Sin disconnected us from God, but through Jesus, our relationship is restored and we are promised strength and wisdom to guide us as we follow God's will. The good news is, God has promised an end to sin. If we want to live forever with Him in heaven, we need to by faith accept Him as our personal Saviour.

Q11	*What does God give to everyone who is made new?*
	☐ *2 Peter 1:4*
	☐ *Ezekiel 36:25–27* ☐ *Colossians 3:10* ☐ *2 Corinthians 3:18; 6:17, 18* ☐ *Ephesians 4:23, 24* ☐ *Hebrews 8:10–12; 12:10* ☐ *John 1:12, 13*

"God is not ashamed of the lowliness of human beings. God marches right in. He chooses people as his instruments and performs his wonders where one would least expect. God is near to lowliness; he loves the lost, the neglected, the unseemly, the excluded, the weak and broken." *Dietrich Bonhoeffer*

ACCEPTED BECAUSE OF JESUS

Q12	*How are we made righteous?*
	☐ *Ephesians 1:7*
	☐ *Colossians 1:14* ☐ *1 Corinthians 1:30* ☐ *Romans 3:24-26* ☐ *Hebrews 9:12-15; 10:16–19* ☐ *1 Peter 1:18, 19* ☐ *1 John 2:2; 4:10;* ☐ *Revelation 5:9* ☐ *Psalm 130:7*

When Adam and Eve were first created, they were without sin and had a close connection with God. When they sinned, their thoughts and desires changed from what was right to what was evil. This has been the fate of all humankind ever since, as we to inherited this sinful nature.

Because sin is in our nature, we cannot obey God's perfect law. In surrendering ourselves to God, we are counted as just. The beauty of Jesus is that He takes our hearts of stone and gives us a new one.

In the first century, Jesus came to our world and lived among the people in the land of Palestine. Like us, He went through trials and temptations, but unlike us, He never gave into temptation and sinned. But even though He lived a life without sin, He died for us, taking our sin upon Himself that we might be saved.

When we accept Jesus as our Saviour, it means that regardless of our sin, Jesus' perfection stands in place of our imperfection and we are accepted by God.

Q13	*What happens when Jesus lives in us?*
	☐ *Galatians 2:20*
	☐ *Romans 1:17; 5:2* ☐ *1 Peter 1:5–9* ☐ *2 Corinthians 1:24; 5:7* ☐ *Hebrews 12:2; 11:6*

When Jesus lives in our heart, through faith, we will also be changed. We are to behold Him everyday by faith and by doing this, He will work in us something wonderful.

"Where there is not only a belief in God's word, but a submission of the will to Him; where the heart is yielded to Him, the affections fixed upon Him, there is faith—faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Through this faith, the heart is renewed in the image of God." *Ellen G. White*

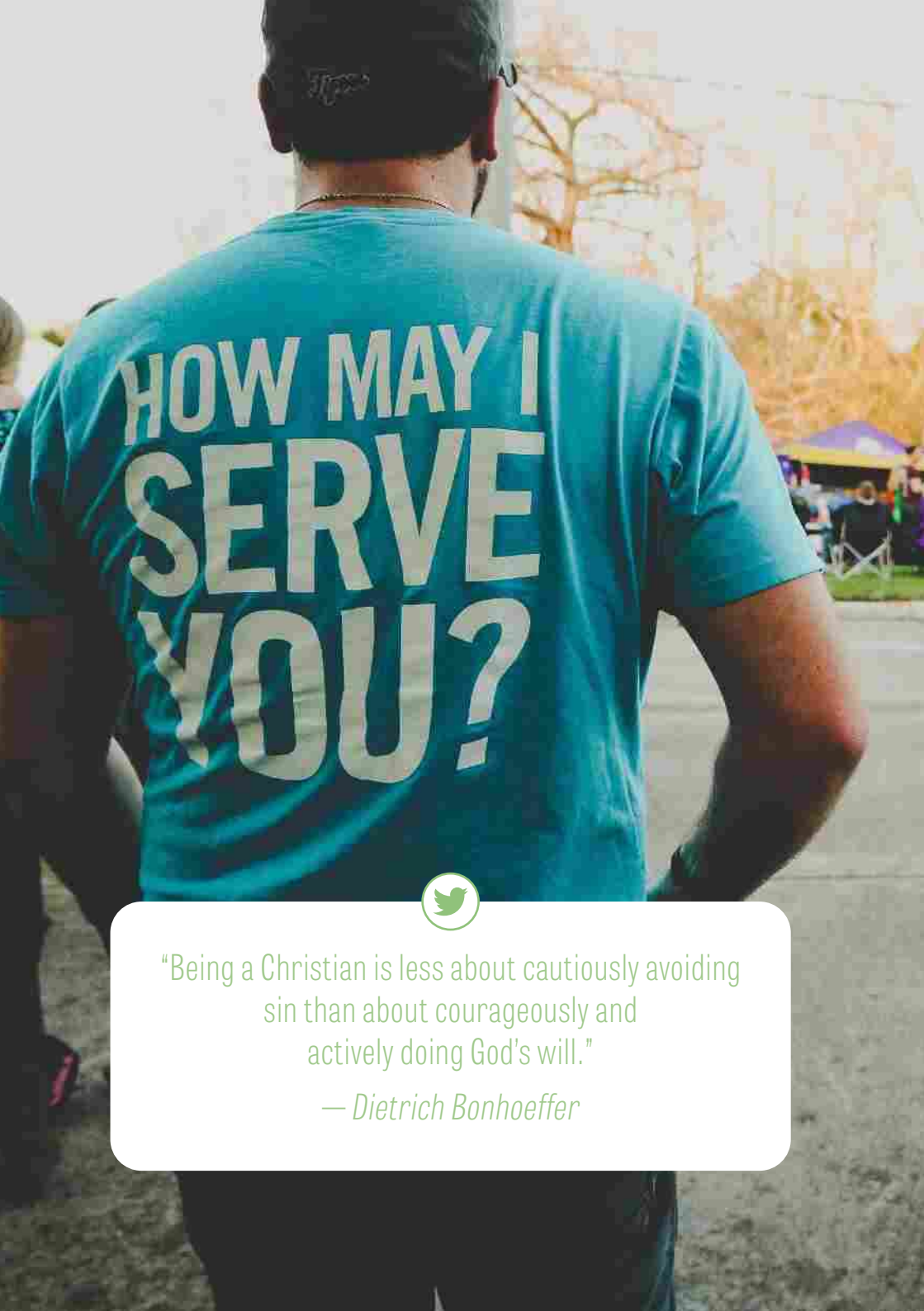


GOD IS ALWAYS WITH YOU

Q14	*How long will Jesus continue to work in our lives?*
	☐ *Philippians 1:6*
	☐ *Hebrews 12:2; 13:20, 21* ☐ *Philippians 2:13* ☐ *Psalm 138:8* ☐ *1 Thessalonians 5:23, 24* ☐ *1 Peter 5:10* ☐ *1 Corinthians 1:8, 9* ☐ *2 Corinthians 9:8*

Do not be discouraged by the awareness of your faults and your failures. Rather, be encouraged because of the love Jesus has for you. Ask Him for His help and guidance. However, when you sin, be comforted by the knowledge that God has promised to forgive and help you. Do not draw back without hope. “Bow and weep at the feet of Jesus because of your mistakes, yet do not give up. God does not turn away from us even if we are overcome by the enemy.”

God has promised that He will never leave you or abandon you. He will be with you regardless of the trials you are facing.



"Being a Christian is less about cautiously avoiding sin than about courageously and actively doing God's will."

— Dietrich Bonhoeffer

CLAIMING GOD'S PROMISES

Q15	*What promise can we claim if we sin?*
	☐ *1 John 2:1*
	☐ *Romans 8:34* ☐ *1 Timothy 2:5* ☐ *Hebrews 7:24, 25; 9:24*

Jesus is at the right hand of God to intercede for us. Don't wait any longer. Surrender yourself to Him and He will do a new thing your life. The more we understand Jesus' character, the more we will recognise our need for Jesus, His forgiveness, grace and mercy.

Q16	*As we know Jesus more, what will we realise about our sins?*
	☐ *Isaiah 64:6*
	☐ *Isaiah 53:6* ☐ *Ecclesiastes 7:20* ☐ *Job 15:16* ☐ *Ephesians 2:1-3* ☐ *Psalm 51:5; 130:3* ☐ *John 15:5*

"The closer you come to Jesus, the more faulty you will appear in your own eyes; for your vision will be clearer and your imperfections will be seen in broad and distinct contrast to His perfect nature. This indicates that the Spirit of God is upon you bringing you to new life." *Ellen G. White*

It's impossible to love Jesus and accept Him as your Saviour without first recognising your own sin and your need for Him. If you can't see your own sinful state, how can you appreciate the love of Jesus? The closer we are to Jesus, the more we'll be changed to be more like Him.

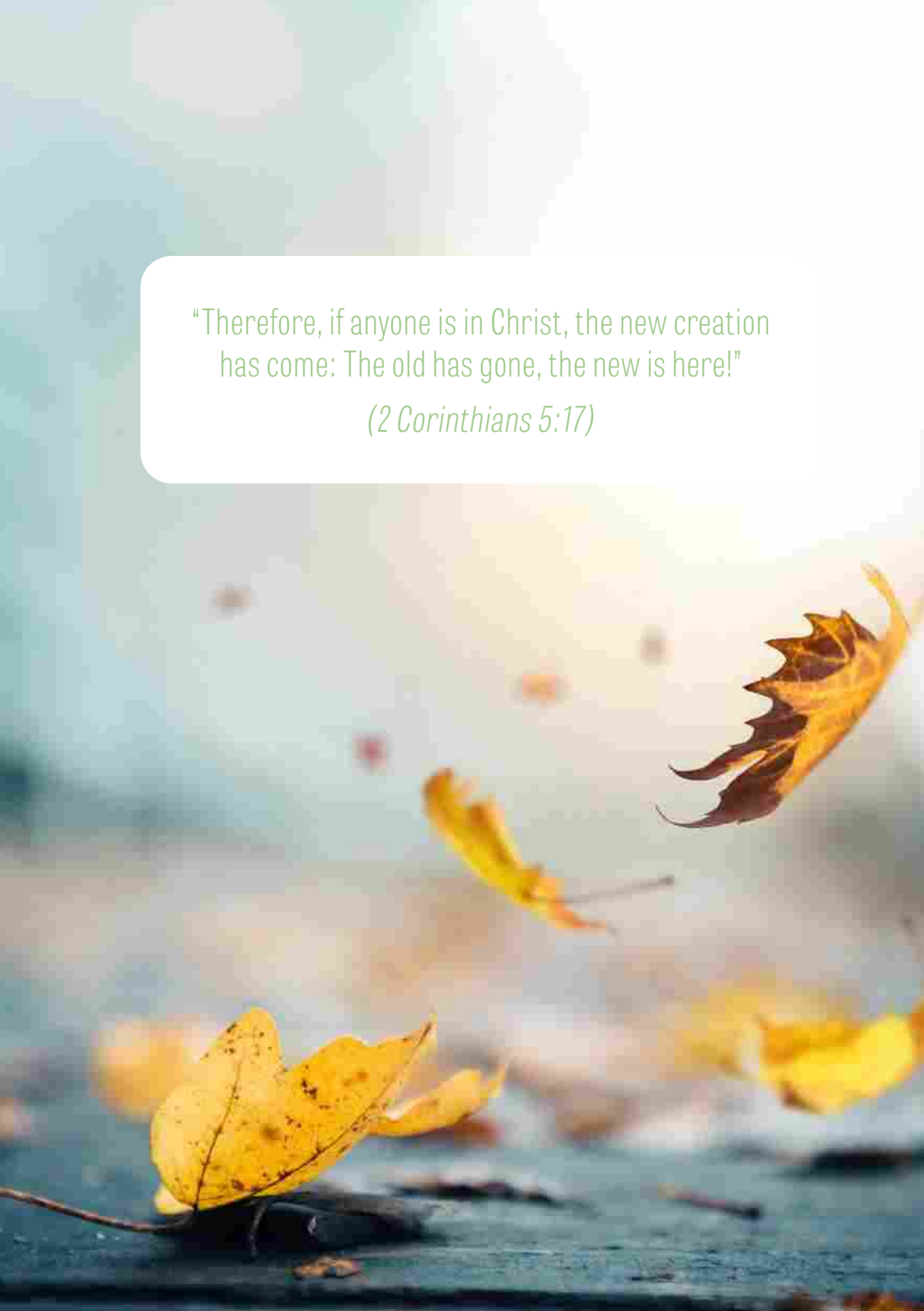
REFLECTION

I want to follow the example of Jesus and live a life that honours God.

YES **UNDECIDED**

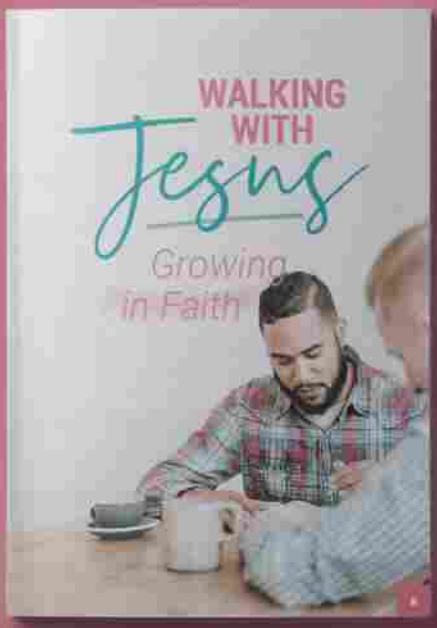
I want to reflect God's love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control in every aspect of my life.

YES **UNDECIDED**



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

(2 Corinthians 5:17)



CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY IN PART 8:

GROWING IN FAITH

God calls us His children, and just as children mature over time, as our relationship with Jesus deepens, we will gain new perspectives and a greater understanding of the love, forgiveness and grace we've found through Him. As we put our trust in Jesus, He will guide us each day.



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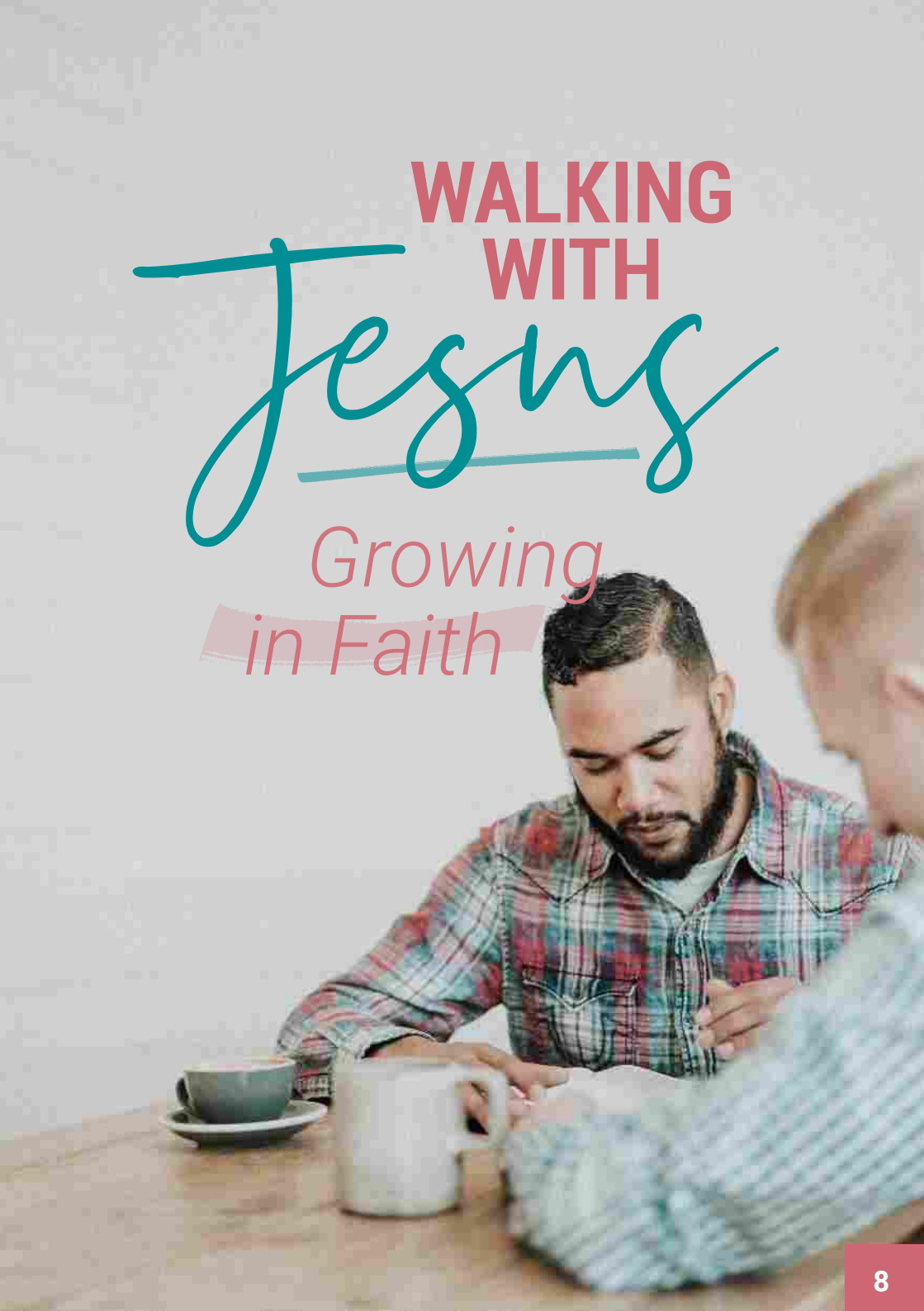
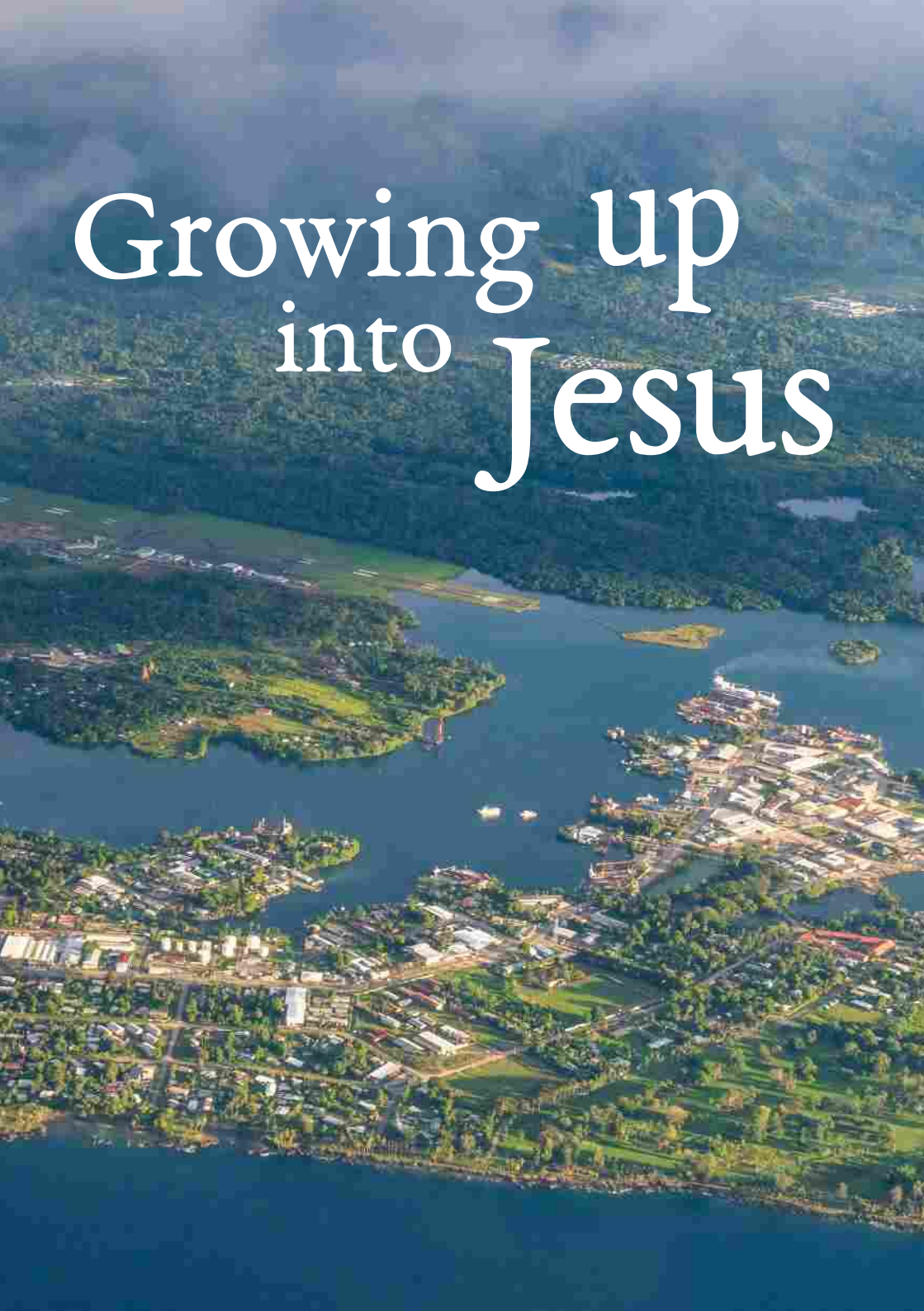
WALKING WITH Jesus

Growing in Faith





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.

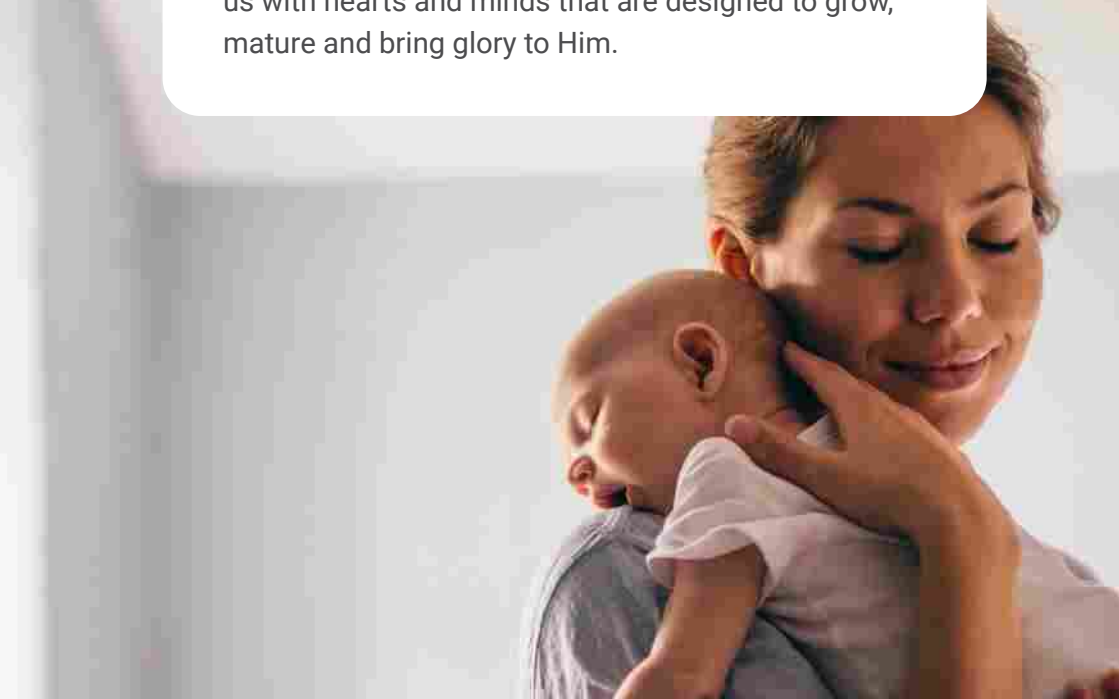
"The Christian faith, simply stated, reminds us that our fundamental problem is not moral; rather, our fundamental problem is spiritual. It is not just that we are immoral, but that a moral life alone cannot bridge what separates us from God. Herein lies the cardinal difference between the moralising 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*

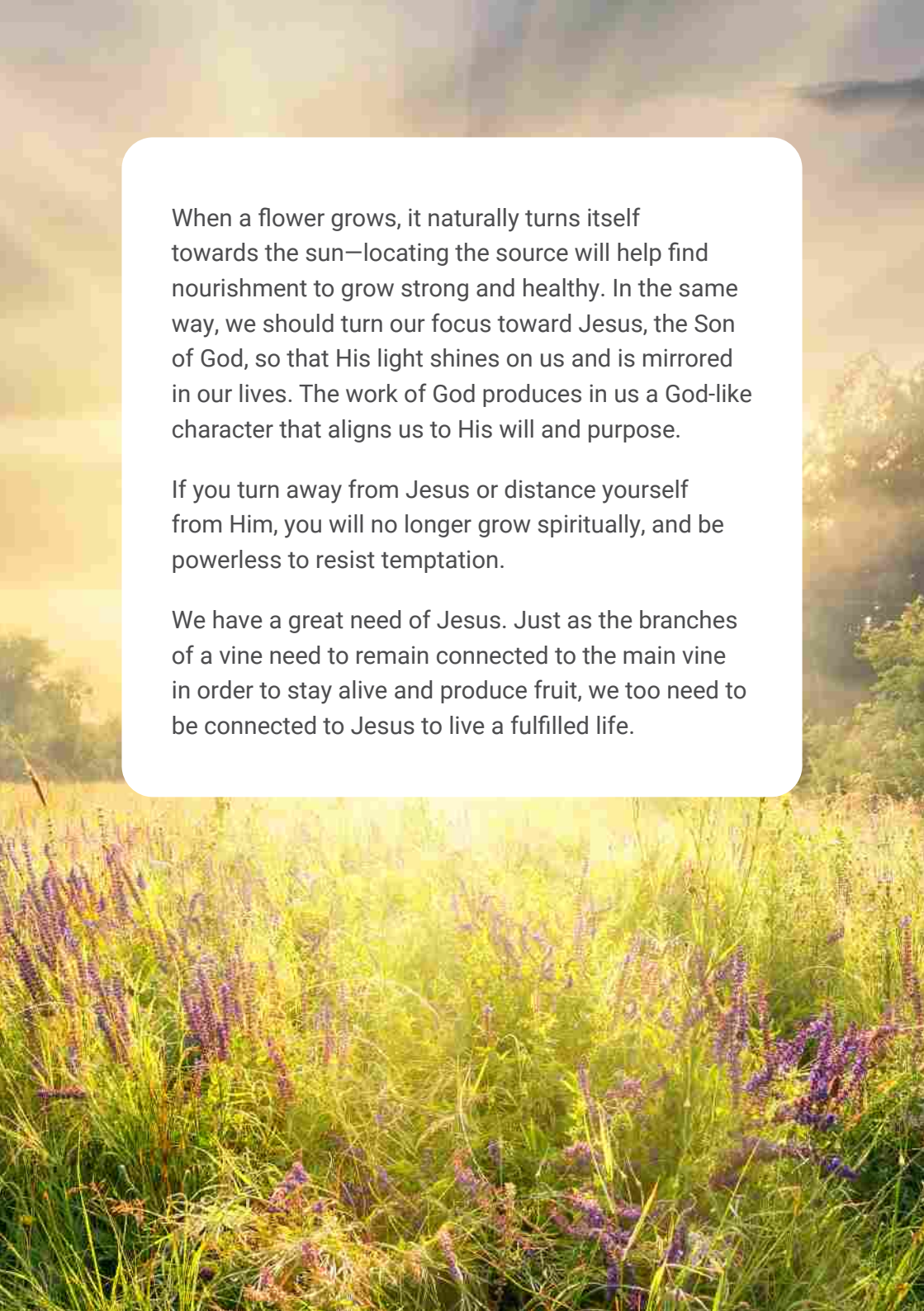
No amount of worry, anxiety or effort on our part will grow our spiritual life—only God and His life-giving care will help us grow. That is why it is so important to remain connected to God.

"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





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." *(Psalm 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*
	☐ *Psalm 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.

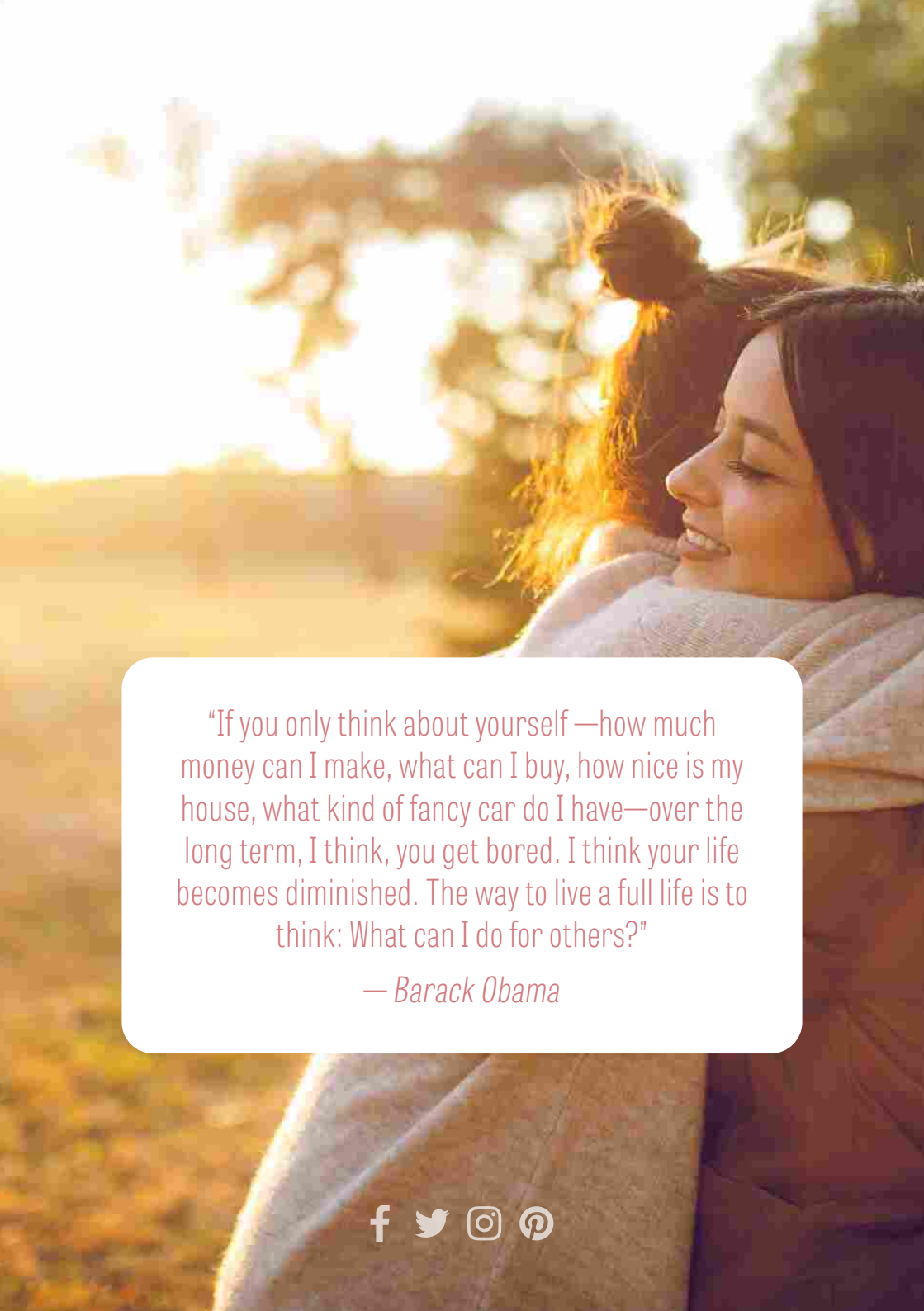
"Your weakness is united to His strength, your ignorance to His wisdom, your frailty to His enduring might. So you are not to look to yourself, not to let the mind dwell upon self, but look to Christ. Let the mind dwell upon His love, upon the beauty, the perfection of His character." *Ellen G. White*

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.



"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.

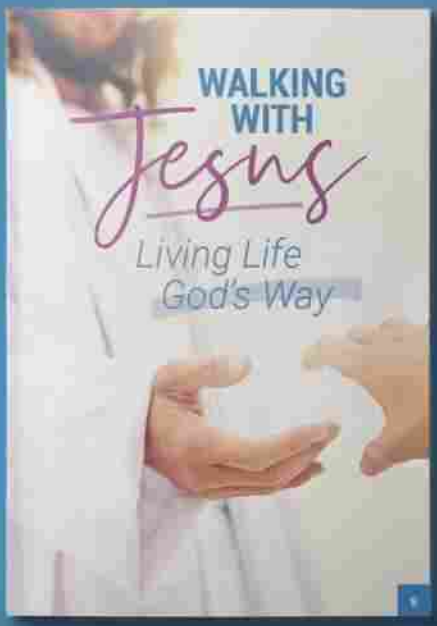
YES **UNDECIDED**

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.



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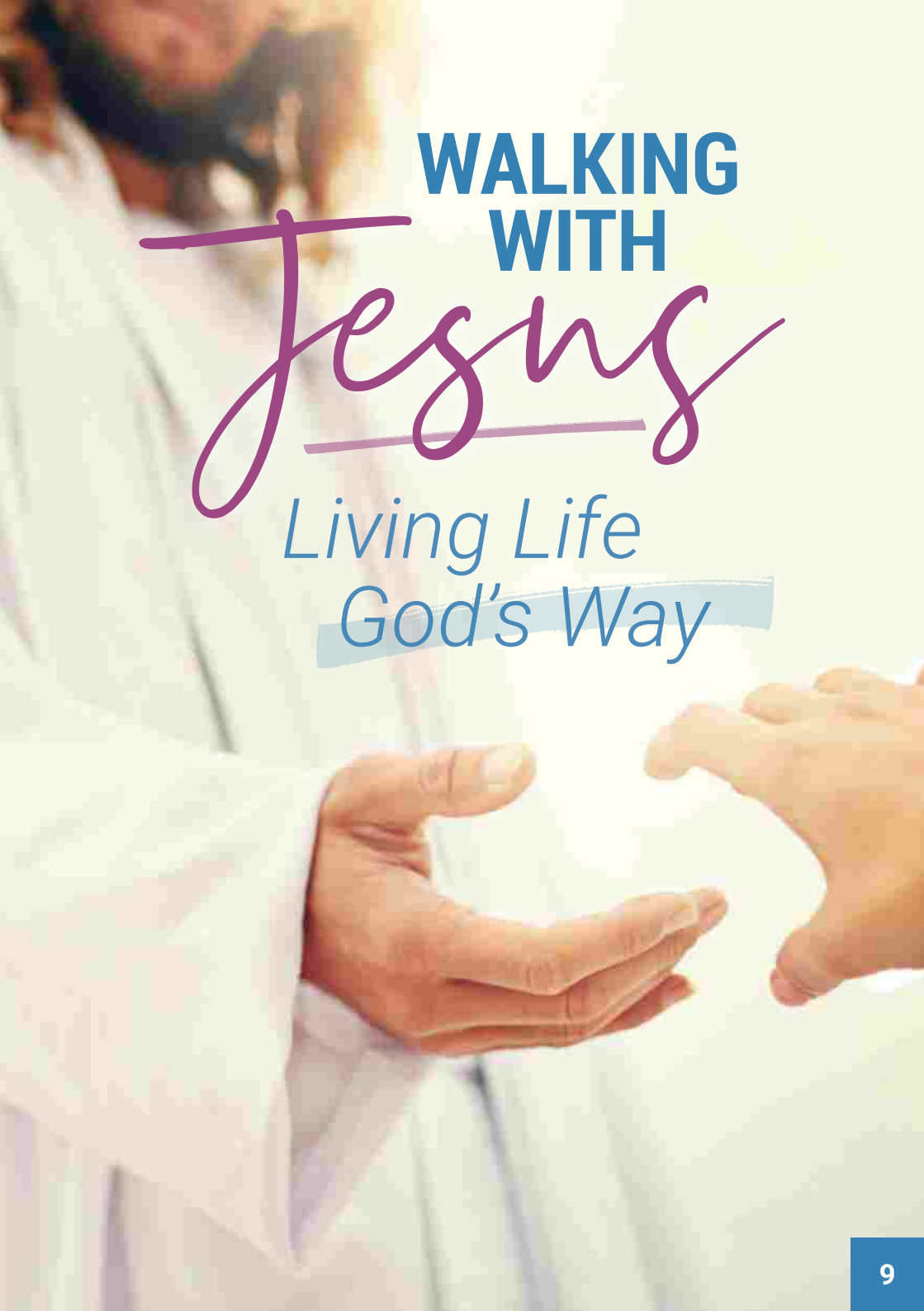
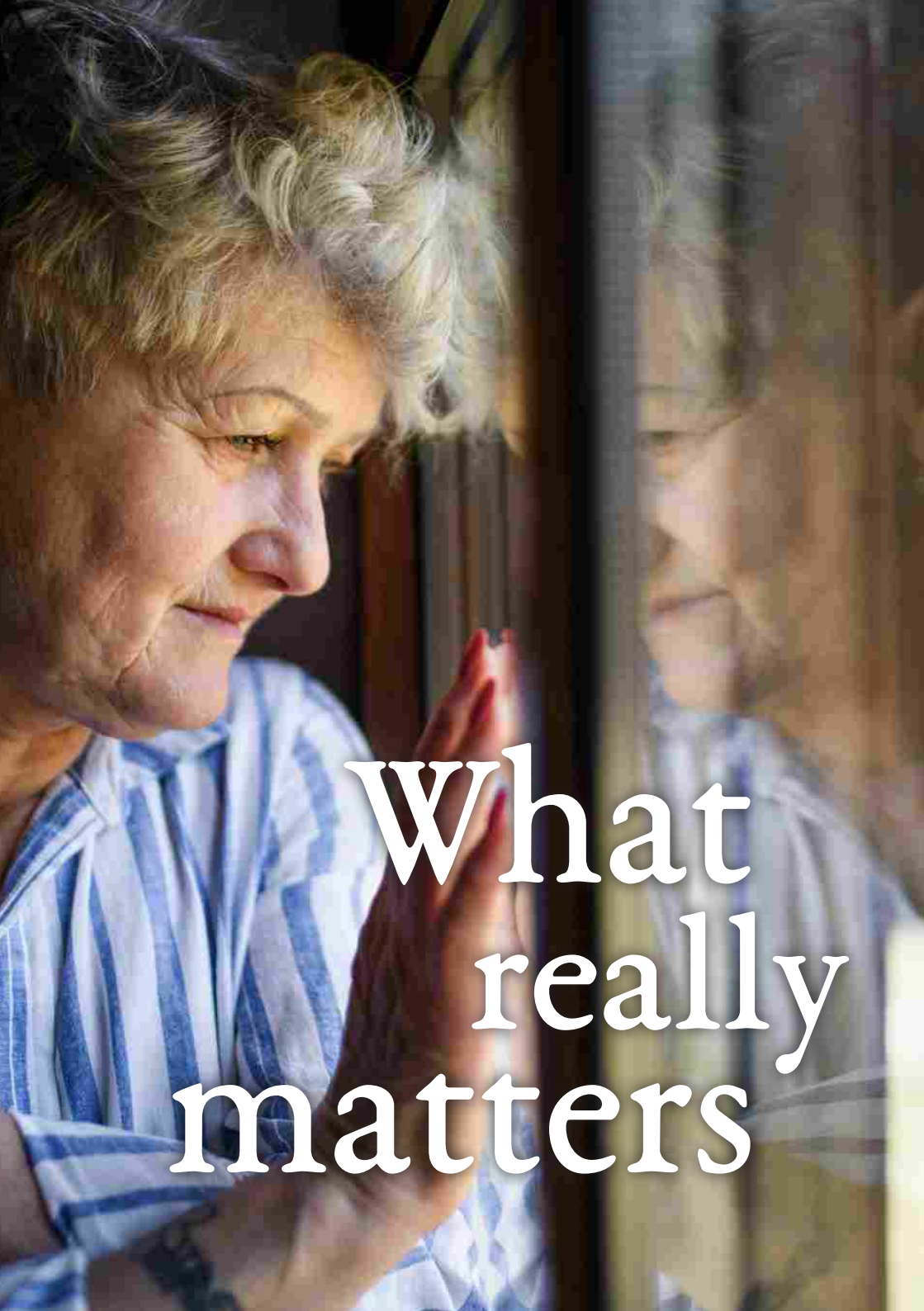

WALKING
WITH
Jesus
Living Life
God's Way



What really matters



George Washington Carver was born a slave in Missouri around 1864. His parents had been bought in 1855 by Miles Carver, a German immigrant. When George was a week old, he was captured along with his mother and sister by Confederate raiders from Arkansas, who sold them as slaves in Kentucky. Miles tracked George down and got him back, though not his mother or sister. The Carvers decided to raise George as their own son, and "Aunt Susan" taught him to read. He was too sickly to work in the fields, so he began studying plants, developing natural pesticides and fungicides, and finding ways to improve the soil. He was so successful that local farmers began to call him "the plant doctor."

George came to faith in Christ as a young boy. He described the event in a letter he wrote in 1931:
"I was just a mere boy when converted, hardly ten years old. There isn't much of a story to it. God just came into my heart one afternoon while I was alone in the 'loft' of our big barn while I was shelling corn to carry to the mill to be ground into meal.

"A dear little white boy, one of our neighbours, about my age came by one Saturday morning, and in talking and playing, he told me he was going to Sunday school tomorrow morning. I was eager to know what a Sunday school was. He said they sang hymns and prayed. I asked him what prayer was and what they said. I do not remember what he said; only remember that as soon as he left I climbed up into the loft, knelt down by the barrel of corn and prayed as best I could. I do not remember what I said. I only recall that I felt so good that I prayed several times before I quit.

“My brother and myself were the only coloured children in that neighbourhood and of course, we could not go to church or Sunday school, or school of any kind.

“That was my simple conversion, and I have tried to keep the faith.”

Because he was not allowed in the schools in his hometown, George walked ten miles to a town where there was a school he could attend. He arrived after the school had closed and spent the night in a barn. The next day, he met Mariah Watkins from whom he rented a room.

After attending several other schools, he eventually got his high school diploma. In 1888 he got a loan to pay for education and went to Simpson College in Iowa to study art and piano. His skill at drawing flowers and plants led his professors to encourage him to apply to Iowa Agricultural College (now Iowa State). Carver was so successful that his professors talked him into staying for a master’s degree and becoming the college’s first black faculty member. He completed his degree in 1896. By this point, he had developed a national reputation as a botanist.

In 1896, Booker T. Washington recruited Carver to head the Agricultural Department at Tuskegee Institute, a position which he held for 47 years. In that position, he was as concerned about character development as he was in academics; he even began teaching a Bible study at the request of his students.

His agricultural research at Tuskegee led to a system of crop rotation to repair soils depleted by cotton cultivation. He discovered that alternating cotton with sweet potatoes or legumes such as peanuts not only increased the yield of cotton but also produced food and diversified

the cash crops for the farmers. Carver then began developing alternate uses for sweet potatoes and peanuts to increase the market for the new crops. He ultimately found 118 derivatives from sweet potatoes and 300 from peanuts.

All this brought him to the attention of important figures in government, including Theodore Roosevelt. He also became one of the very few Americans admitted to the Royal Society for the Arts in England (1916).

Carver used his fame to educate American farmers on best practices and to promote racial unity. All through his career he had sought out Christians for fellowship. He saw in the gospel the means to overcome racial and social divisions. Three American presidents consulted with him during this period, and he continued his agricultural research.

In January 1943 Carver fell down a flight of stairs at the Tuskegee Institute. He died of complications from the fall a few days later. His epitaph reads: “He could have added fortune to fame, but caring for neither, he found happiness and honour in being helpful to the world.”

Carvers early experiences and conversion would shape his life and work. The early challenges developed a deep inner character that shaped not only his own life, but those with whom he would meet over the course of his life. A deep love for God will always have a profound impact on one’s life that will produce a selfless desire to serve others. (from Glenn Sunshine, https://breakpoint.org/george-washington-carver/)



Reflect: Who among your family and friends needs to know and experience the story of Jesus? Begin praying for them and ask God for opportunities to share Jesus with them.

LOVING OTHERS AS GOD LOVES

Q1	*What does Jesus ask us to do to show we are His followers?*
	☐ *John 13:34*
	☐ *1 John 4:7–12, 16, 21; 2:8-10; 3:14–18, 23* ☐ *2 John 1:5, 6* ☐ *John 15:12, 13, 17* ☐ *Leviticus 19:18, 34* ☐ *Romans 12:10* ☐ *Ephesians 5:2* ☐ *James 2:8* ☐ *1 Peter 1:22*

God is the creator and the source of all that is living and all that is good in our world. When our hearts are filled with God's love, it will naturally flow to others and they too will also experience the love of God.

Jesus came to this world to reveal the character of God. He accomplished this through His healing and teaching ministry that culminated in the demonstration of His sacrificial love on the cross, and the power of His resurrection.

"Avail yourself of the greatest privilege this side of heaven. Jesus Christ died to make communion and communication with the Father possible." Billy Graham

As disciples of Jesus, we are called to follow His example of selfless love and service to others. This radical love is powerful and contagious—it is an influential witness because it is so different from the conditional love we experience every day. This love will refresh and re-energise not only you, but people you encounter.

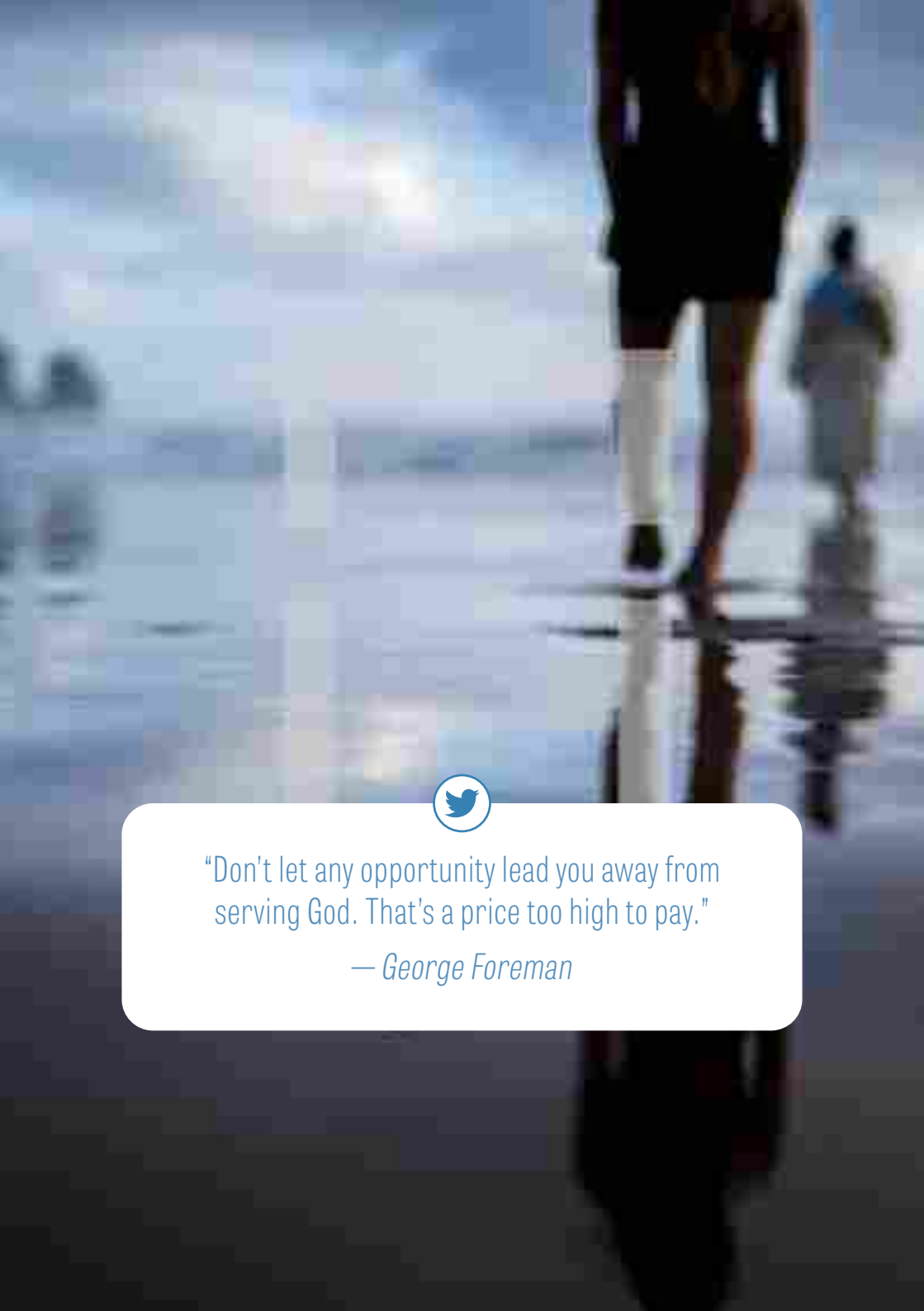
Q2	*Why did Jesus come to our world?*
	☐ *Matthew 20:28*
	☐ *Luke 22:27; 5:31, 32* ☐ *1 John 2:2* ☐ *Isaiah 61:1–3; 53:4, 5* ☐ *Philippians 2:4–8* ☐ *Psalm 146:7–9* ☐ *Ephesians 5:2* ☐ *Hebrews 9:28*

Because Jesus loves us, we respond in turn by showing our love for Him. We do this when we seek to bless and help other people just as He did in His life on Earth.

"You know the generous grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty he could make you rich." *(2 Corinthians 8:9)*

As Jesus worked unceasingly to reach people, He faced many challenges, but was determined to do God's will.

There was not one trace of selfishness in Jesus—everything He did, He did for God and the good of humanity. In uniting yourself with God, having experienced His love and grace, no personal sacrifice will be too great.



"Don't let any opportunity lead you away from serving God. That's a price too high to pay."

— George Foreman

NEWS WORTH SHARING

Q3	*What is the good news about Jesus that we are to share with others?*
	☐ *John 1:29*
	☐ *1 Peter 1:19, 20* ☐ *Revelation 5:12, 13; 13:8* ☐ *Galatians 1:4* ☐ *1 John 2:2; 3:5; 4:10* ☐ *Isaiah 53:5–7*

As your walk with Jesus deepens, a desire will be born in your heart to make Him known to your friends and family. The good news about Jesus is to be shared—it isn't something we are to keep to ourselves. Notice that when Philip found Jesus, he went to Nathaniel and told him: "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" (John 1:43–51).

Q4	*What happens when we prioritise others?*
	☐ *Proverbs 11:25*
	☐ *Proverbs 28:27* ☐ *Isaiah 58:7–11* ☐ *Job 29:13–17* ☐ *Matthew 5:7; 25:34–36* ☐ *2 Corinthians 9:6–13*

When we focus our efforts on helping others rather than looking for our own self-interest, we will be blessed. God invites us to use these blessings as part of the redemption story and diffuse them to others. This is the greatest privilege that has been granted to us: that we may take part in the work of God.

God could have delegated this work to the angels or used other methods—but in His love and infinite wisdom, He invited us to work alongside Him to tell others of His compassion, mercy and love.

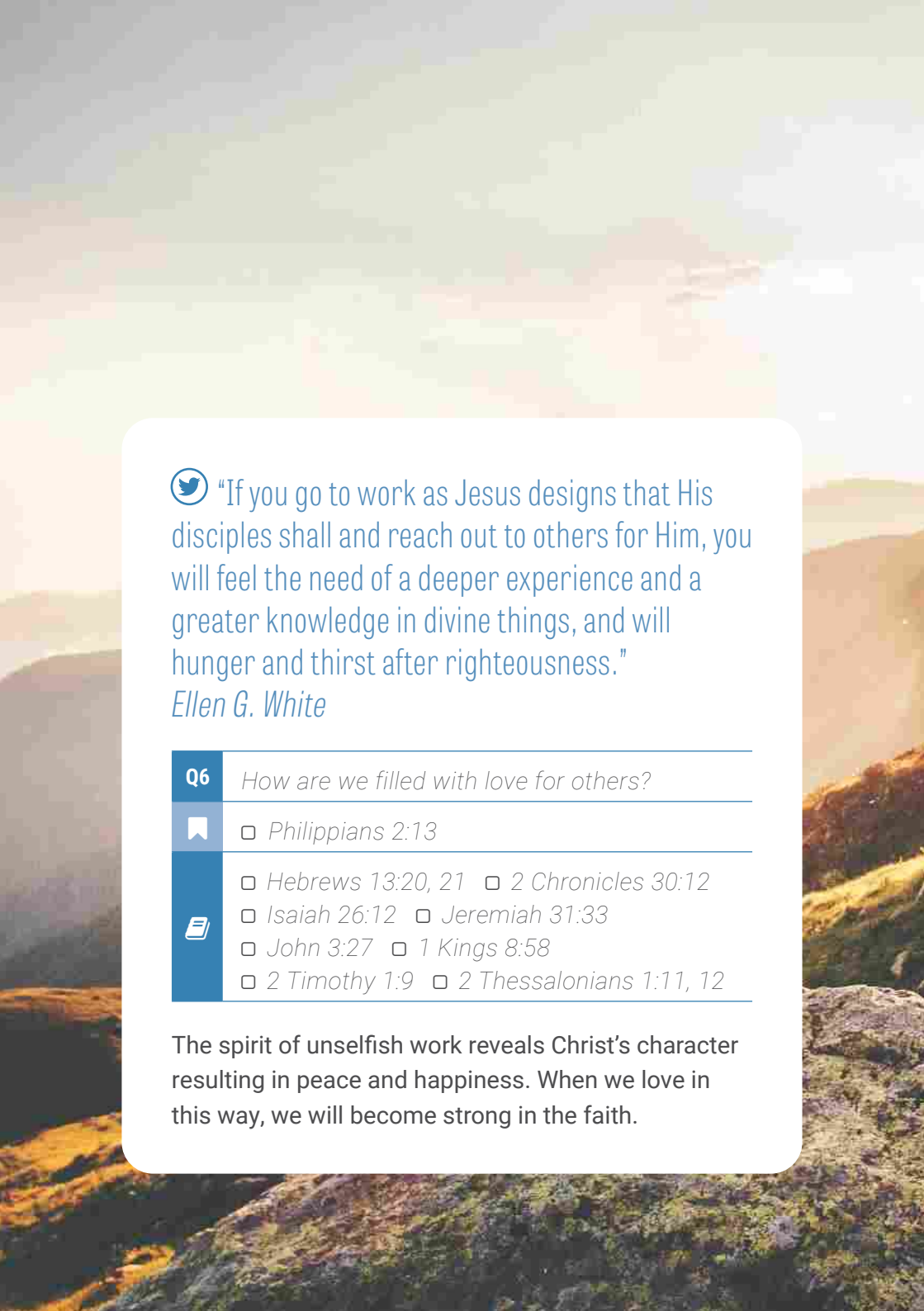
"Hold your possessions so loosely that when they are lost in the sacrifices of love, your confidence in a supreme Treasure in heaven will fill you with joy." *John Piper*

FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

Q5	*How did Jesus live a life of service to others?*
	☐ *2 Corinthians 8:9*
	☐ *1 Peter 2:2;* ☐ *Philippians 2:6–8* ☐ *Mark 10:44, 45* ☐ *Matthew 20:28* ☐ *John 13:3–5* ☐ *1 Timothy 6:17–19* ☐ *James 2:5* ☐ *Hebrews 2:9–18* ☐ *Matthew 6:33*

As we face challenges and obstacles, these experiences draw us closer to Jesus as we understand that He has already faced and conquered every challenge for our sake. Every time we put others first, or perform acts of selfless service or kindness, we are following the example of Jesus.

In doing this work, you may experience opposition and uncertainty. When you face challenges, look for guidance in the Bible, spend time with God in prayer and your faith will be strengthened and your soul refreshed to continue in your walk with Jesus.



"If you go to work as Jesus designs that His disciples shall and reach out to others for Him, you will feel the need of a deeper experience and a greater knowledge in divine things, and will hunger and thirst after righteousness."
Ellen G. White

Q6	*How are we filled with love for others?*
	☐ *Philippians 2:13*
	☐ *Hebrews 13:20, 21* ☐ *2 Chronicles 30:12* ☐ *Isaiah 26:12* ☐ *Jeremiah 31:33* ☐ *John 3:27* ☐ *1 Kings 8:58* ☐ *2 Timothy 1:9* ☐ *2 Thessalonians 1:11, 12*

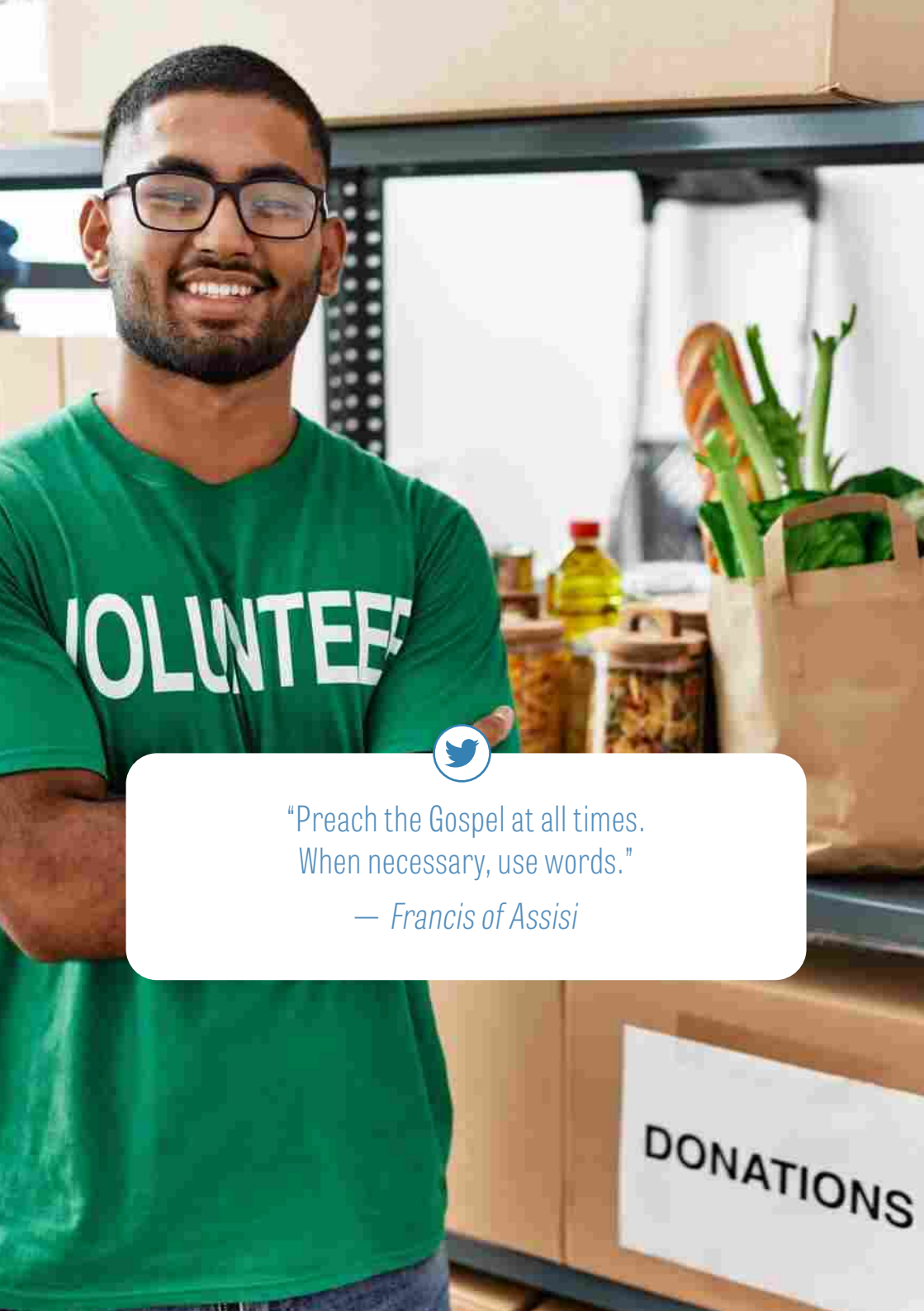
The spirit of unselfish work reveals Christ's character resulting in peace and happiness. When we love in this way, we will become strong in the faith.

BECOMING MORE LIKE JESUS

Q7	*How does helping others impact you?*
	☐ *Isaiah 58:10, 11*
	☐ *Psalm 41:1-3; 112:4–9* ☐ *Deuteronomy 15:7–10* ☐ *Matthew 10:39* ☐ *Proverbs 11:24, 25; 14:31; 28:27*

When we follow Jesus, our character will become more like His—instead of being selfish, we will be unselfish, instead of helping ourselves, we will help others. When we live a life of service to others, there is no room for laziness, selfishness or pride. This means our goals will be different because we no longer choose to put ourselves first above Jesus and everything He has told us.

As we model our lives on the example of Jesus, we grow in our understanding of God and will be able to share His love clarity. As our faith continues to grow, we will approach Him boldly presenting our request to Him.



"Preach the Gospel at all times.
When necessary, use words."

— *Francis of Assisi*

GROWING IN FAITH

Q8	*How do we grow in our faith?*
	☐ *James 1:25*
	☐ *Psalm 119:2, 3* ☐ *James 1:27; 2:12* ☐ *Luke 6:46, 49; 11:28* ☐ *John 8:31; 13:17; 15:9, 10* ☐ *Romans 11:22* ☐ *1 Timothy 4:16* ☐ *1 Corinthians 15:58* ☐ *Revelation 22:14*

Jesus has instructed us to share His story and be a blessing to others, which also includes action. We should help everyone, regardless of whether or not we may think they deserve our help. It is important to remember that the work God has called us to participate in, is not about us, but Him. In Matthew 5:13–16, Jesus calls us to be the salt of the earth and light to the world. In every aspect of our life, we are called to be lightbearers in times of darkness and add flavour to life where there is hatred.

As we follow Jesus and do good in His name, we will find that our faith is strengthened and our relationship with Him will grow.

It may tempt some people to be the type of Christian who just receives the blessings Jesus has given without responding in any way. It is true that Jesus gifts us with salvation. This is not something we have earned, however, once filled with God's love, we begin to live a life that will honour Him, a life of sacrificial service.

If you don't exercise the muscles in your physical body, your arms and legs will weaken and lose strength. In the same way, if your faith isn't active, your walk with God will weaken and your witness will be powerless.

"True leadership is serving God and not looking for the glory that might come from it. You don't do it for the glory or personal benefit but for God's glory. You don't take credit for anything that is done, but praise God for everything that He has done through you."

— Vonette Bright



LIVING A LIFE TO HONOUR GOD

Q9	*Where can we work for Jesus?*
	☐ *1 Corinthians 7:24*
	☐ *1 Corinthians 10:31* ☐ *Colossians 3:17, 23, 24* ☐ *James 1:27* ☐ *Philippians 4:11* ☐ *Isaiah 6:8* ☐ *2 Corinthians 3:3* ☐ *Acts 16:25; 22:21; 26:16, 17* ☐ *Matthew 25:36; 28:19, 20*

Although we are all called to share the good news of Jesus with the world, this doesn't mean we are required to travel to other countries in order to accomplish this work. We can be a witness for Jesus in our home, our workplace, and in our relationships with friends and family.

When we follow Jesus, His character and love will be evident in our lives, and others will see and experience what He is like through our example. Therefore, it is important to live our lives in a way that will bring glory and honour to God.

Q10	*Why is it important to use the gifts and talents God has given us?*
	☐ *John 15:2*
	☐ *Matthew 25:14–30; 31–46* ☐ *Colossians 3:23*

Sometimes we can make excuses and fail to use our God-given talents and abilities. We may feel that because we are not the best at something, it's not worth expending any effort at all.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

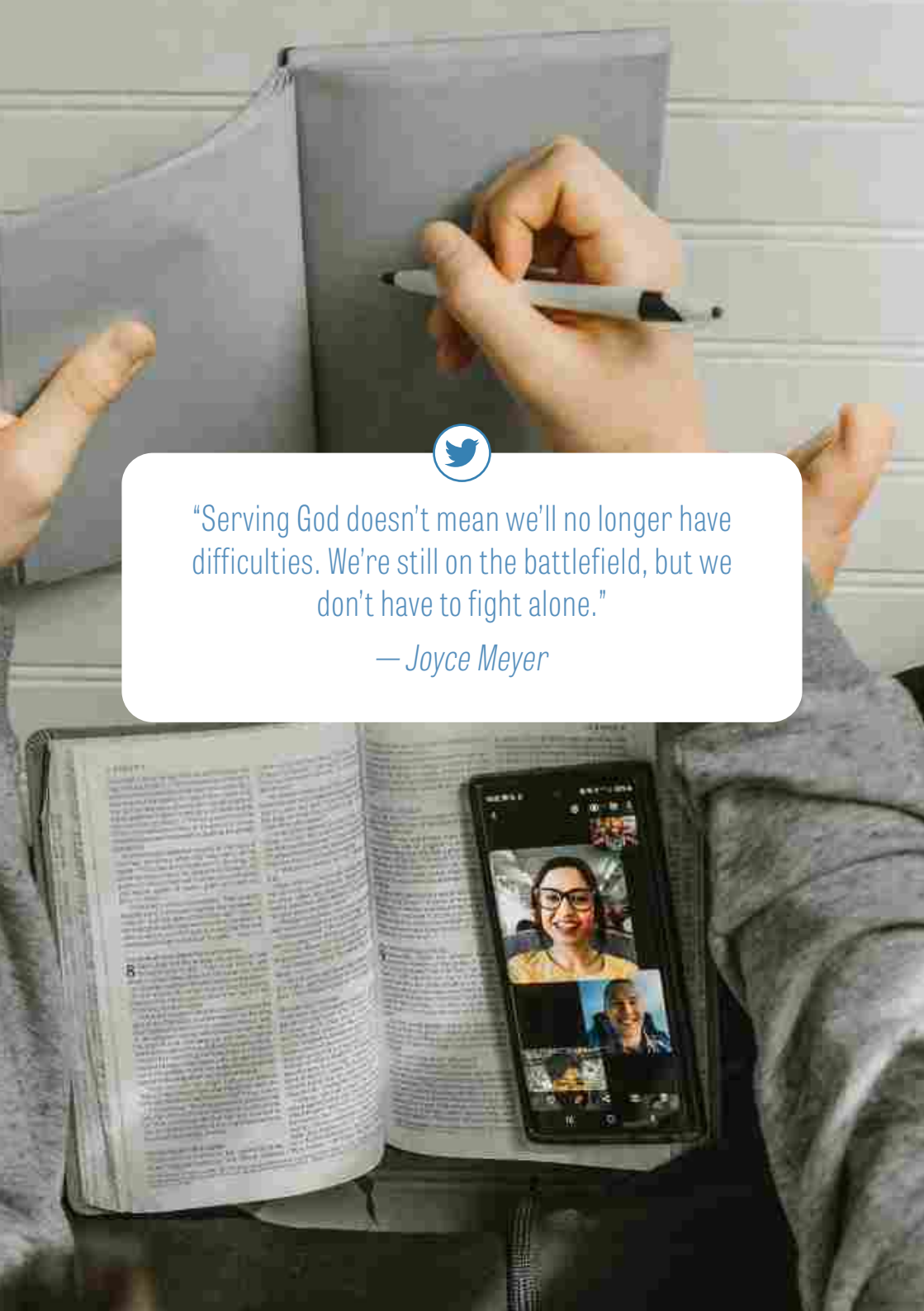
Society values things like fame, wealth, power and physical attractiveness. This can make us feel unworthy or that we don't measure up to others who on the surface may appear to have more than we do.

That's not how God's kingdom works! God has given us talents and abilities that He calls us to use for Him in His service. It doesn't matter if you think your abilities are insignificant compared to others. God doesn't want you to compare yourselves to those around you, He wants you to surrender to His will and focus on doing whatever you can to be a blessing to others.

Q11	*When we love God with all our heart, how will we treat others?*
	▢ *Ephesians 6:6–8*
	▢ *1 Thessalonians 2:3, 4* ▢ *Matthew 7:2* ▢ *Galatians 1:10* ▢ *1 Peter 2:15; 4:2* ▢ *Hebrews 13:5* ▢ *1 Timothy 6:6*

Attitude matters. If we sincerely love God, this will be obvious by the way we live. Jesus will be reflected in our life through our words and actions, and we will be a blessing to others. What matters is that our hearts are sincere and open to God's leading, and that we are seeking to do His will.

You don't need to wait for a momentous occasion or have a certain level of skill before you can start serving God. You can start right away.



"Serving God doesn't mean we'll no longer have difficulties. We're still on the battlefield, but we don't have to fight alone."

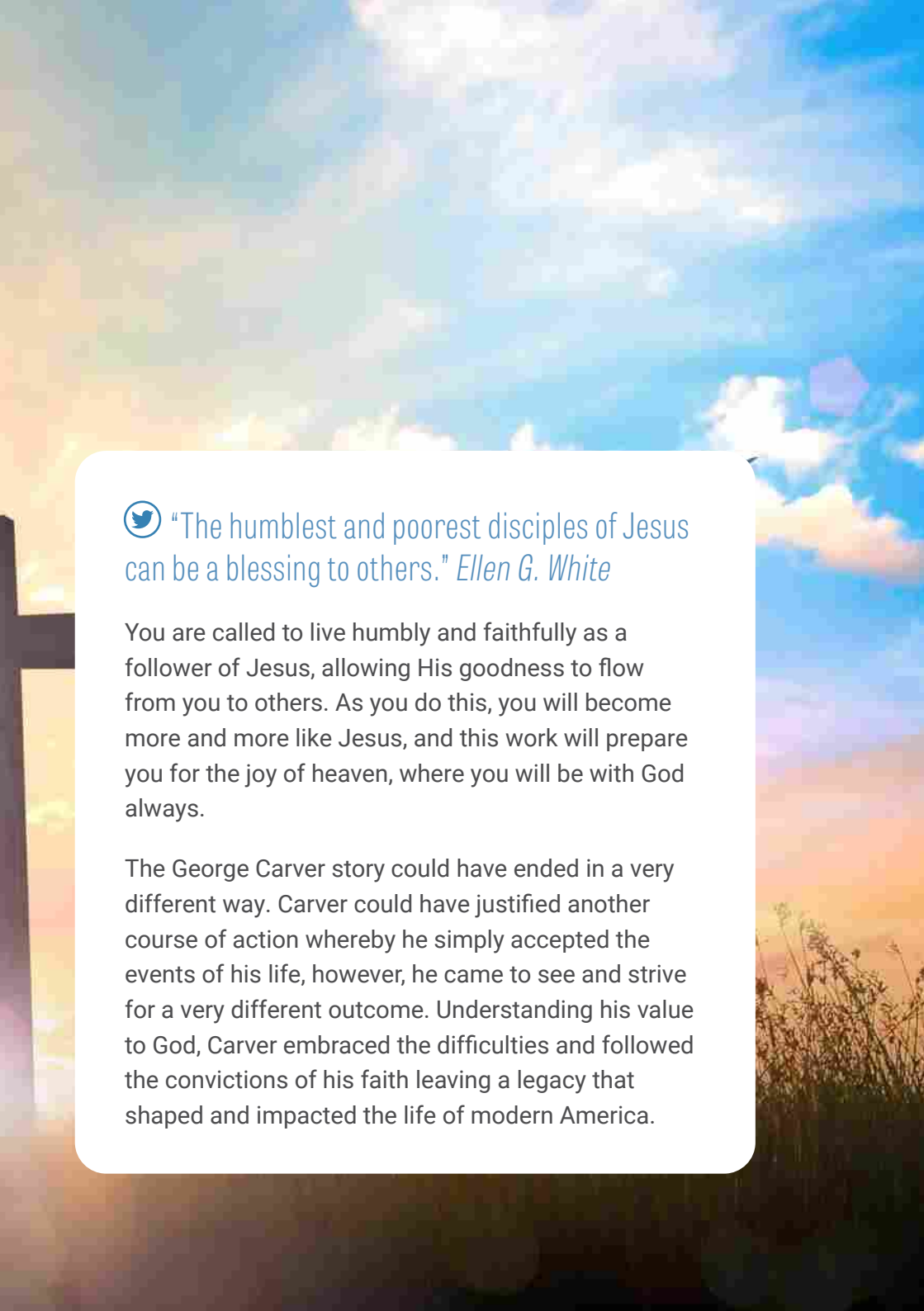
— Joyce Meyer

LIVING LIFE GOD'S WAY

Q12	*What is the result of a life lived in Jesus?*
	☐ *2 Corinthians 9:6*
	☐ *Luke 6:38* ☐ *Proverbs 11:18, 24; 22:9* ☐ *Matthew 5:14* ☐ *1 Timothy 5:25* ☐ *Psalm 41:1–3* ☐ *Ecclesiastes 11:1, 6* ☐ *Galatians 6:7–9* ☐ *Hebrews 6:10*

God sees the world in a different way than we do. There might be some small kindness or help that we can provide. We may not see this as having any significant impact, however it could actually be the start of a wave of joy that grows wider and deeper. Like a small stone thrown in the waters, the ripples can extend out far beyond the initial action.

We may not know the impact of all our actions until heaven. This can sometimes cause discouragement, weariness, and confusion if we are even accomplishing anything worthy of what God has called us to do. Our task is not to judge the success of our efforts—we are to leave that in God's hands.



"The humblest and poorest disciples of Jesus can be a blessing to others." *Ellen G. White*

You are called to live humbly and faithfully as a follower of Jesus, allowing His goodness to flow from you to others. As you do this, you will become more and more like Jesus, and this work will prepare you for the joy of heaven, where you will be with God always.

The George Carver story could have ended in a very different way. Carver could have justified another course of action whereby he simply accepted the events of his life, however, he came to see and strive for a very different outcome. Understanding his value to God, Carver embraced the difficulties and followed the convictions of his faith leaving a legacy that shaped and impacted the life of modern America.

REFLECTION

Thank you, Jesus, for coming to this world to teach us and to meet our needs.

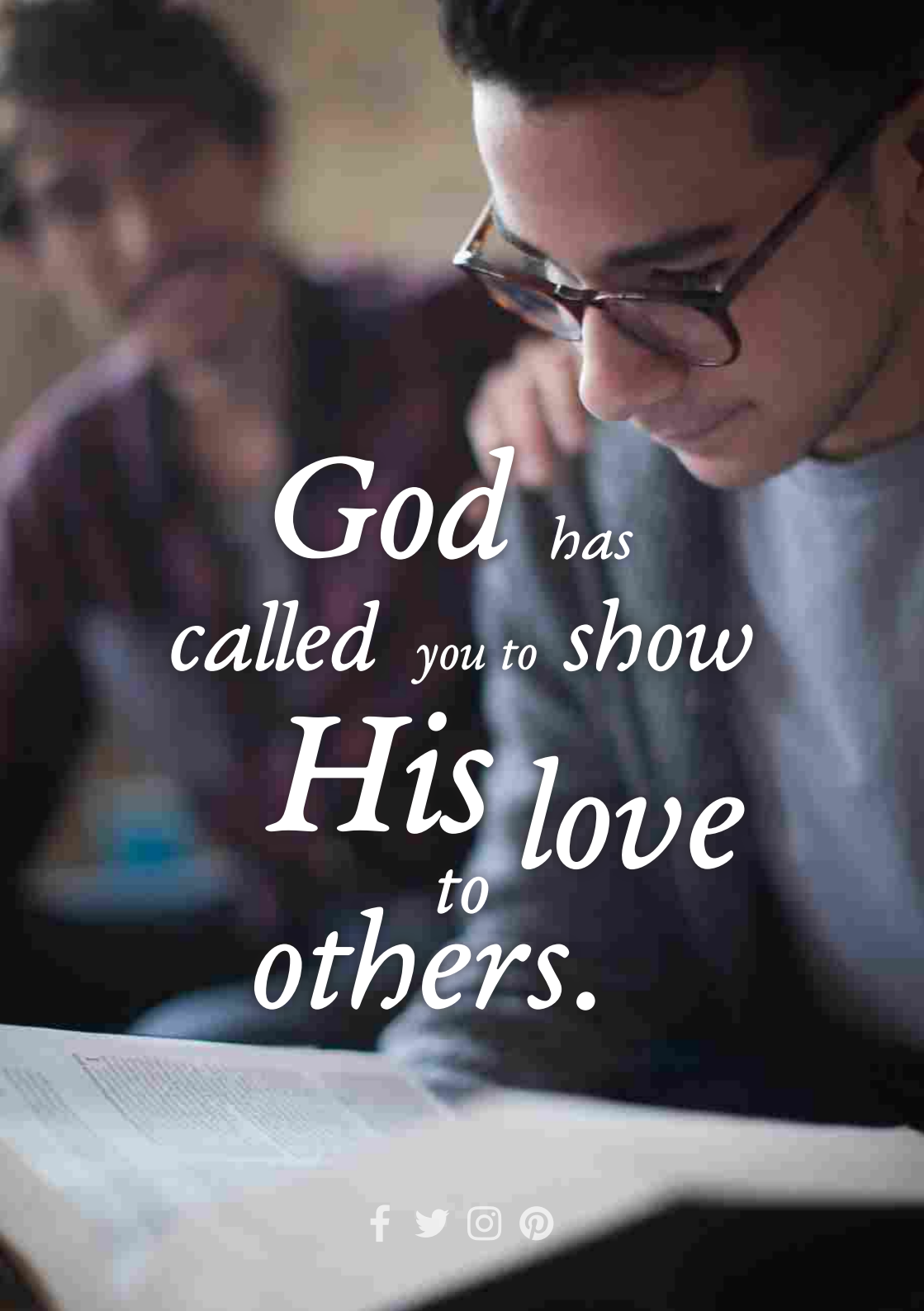
YES **UNDECIDED**

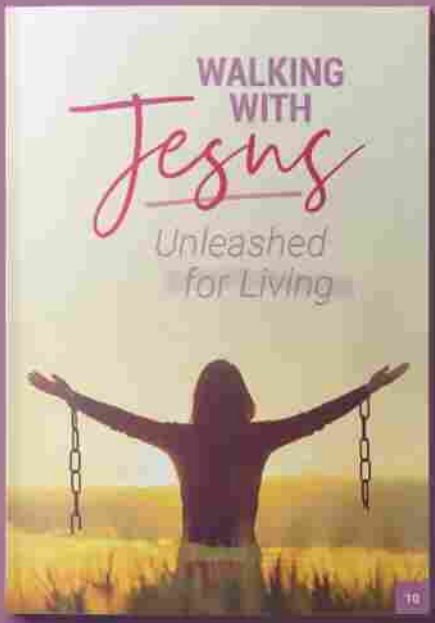
I pray that your Holy Spirit will help me to follow your example of reaching others: by being their friend, by helping to meet their needs, and by telling them the good news about you.

YES **UNDECIDED**

I believe a life lived for others is more rewarding than a life lived only for myself. Help me to love others the way You do, and let me be a witness for you.

YES **UNDECIDED**


God has called you to show His love to others.



CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY IN PART 10:

UNLEASED FOR LIVING

Through the Bible, God has revealed Himself to us. As we learn more about His character and His power, we will gain new insights. By studying the Bible for ourselves, we will gain a greater understanding of who God is and all that He has promised us.



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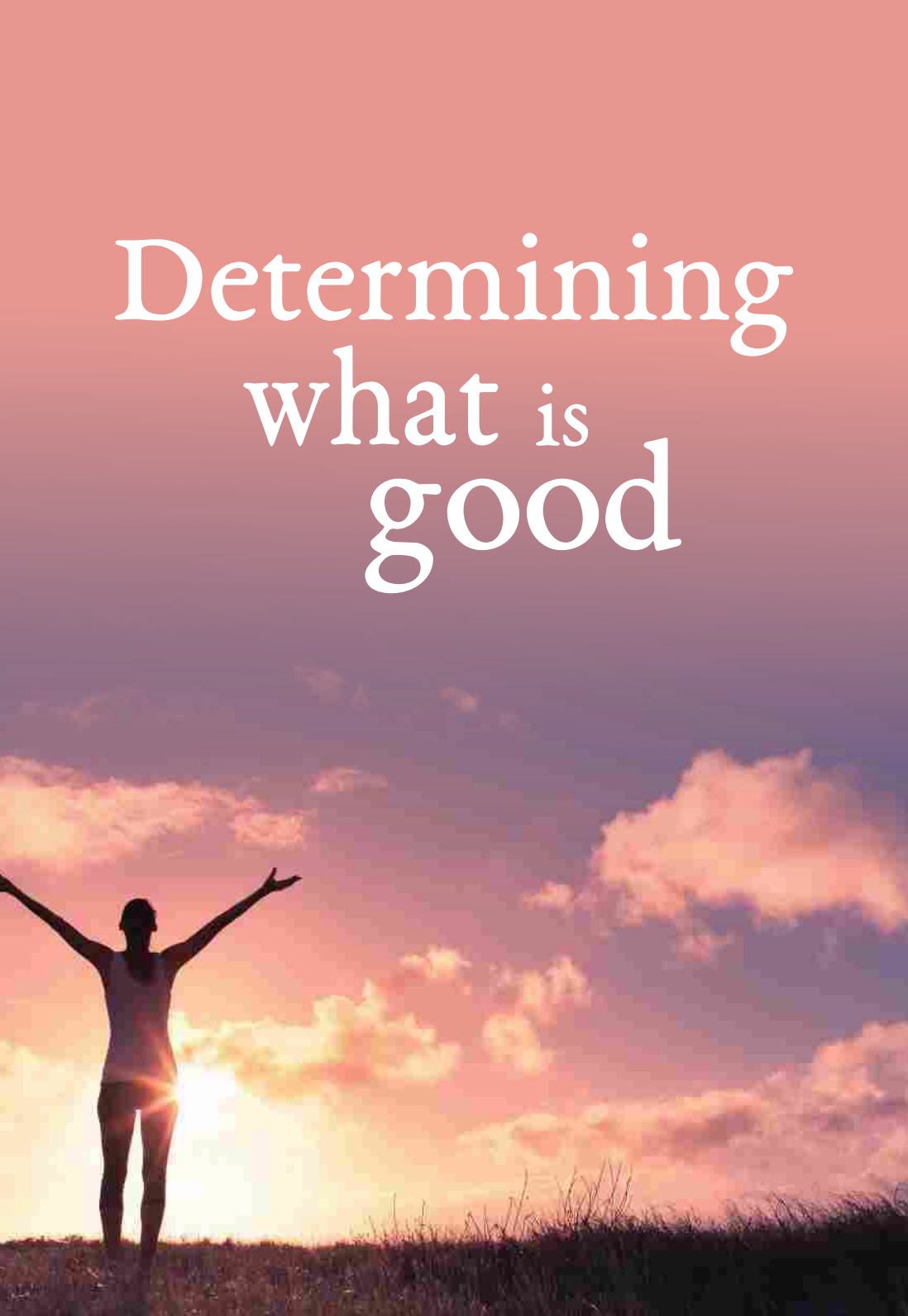
WALKING WITH Jesus

Unleashed for Living



Determining what is good





C.S. Lewis' *Pilgrim's Regress* is an allegorical defence of Christianity, reason and romanticism. The main character, John, like us, is in search for meaning and answers. Going from philosophy to philosophy, he finds himself at a mountain called the Spirit of the Age. John is described, not as a free being, but instead bound in chains, living for the spirit of the age.

The man who controls the Spirit of the Age looked down upon John to give him breakfast. He loosens the chains for breakfast. As he takes a sip of the milk, John comments on how delicious and nourishing it is. The guard who brings it to him—representing the spirit of the age—says to John, "You only call it nourishing and delicious, but all it is, is the secretion of a cow, isn't it? The cow secretes urine, the cow secretes milk. You call it delicious and nourishing, but it's just a secretion of a cow."

As John finishes breakfast and put back in chains, Reason comes riding on a horse to rescue John. Reason looks at him who runs the spirit of the age and says, "Sir, you lie! You lie because you don't know the difference between what nature intended for nourishment and what nature intended as garbage."

A knowledge of God determines what is right and good, as opposed to what is false and intended for garbage.

In today's world, we have confused these two areas and deem everything profitable and permissible. Only as we know and understand God can we determine the difference between what will nourish us and what will leave us empty. (C.S. Lewis, *The Pilgrims Regress: An Allegorical Apology for Christianity Reason and Romanticism,* 1933).

A KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

Q1	*What reminds us of God's glory?*
	☐ *Psalm 19:1*
	☐ *Romans 1:19, 20* ☐ *Isaiah 40:22, 26; 44:24; 48:13* ☐ *Psalm 8:3,4; 33:6* ☐ *Job 31:26–28* ☐ *Genesis 1:1–20*

As we look at the world and see the magnificent natural beauty, we are reminded of God, the Creator of heaven and earth. We see and experience God through what He has created—the green paddocks, the tall trees, the flowers in bloom, the clouds in the sky, the rain and the rainbow, the beaches—these all declare God's power and love for us.

By reflecting on the glory of God as revealed in nature, our hearts will be open to know and experience Him.

"If God did not create you, He cannot redeem you." *Dr Eric Walsh*

When we are busy with our daily life, we can look up at the sky and be reminded of the God who created it—and the God who created us. God wants us to enjoy the beauty of His creation.

Q2	*How can we hear and experience God?*
	☐ *Psalm 46:10*
	☐ *Psalm 33:8, 9; 4:4* ☐ *Habakkuk 2:20* ☐ *Matthew 6:28–30*

By searching the natural world, we learn lessons of trust and obedience. All the elements of nature obey what God set in place—the stars travel in their appointed paths; the sun rises and sets each day, just as God created it to do.

"By investigating God's majestic and awesome creation, science can actually be a means of worship." *Francis Collins*

GIVING OUR CARES TO GOD

Q3	*How can we be assured that God cares for all He has created?*
	☐ *Matthew 10:29, 30*
	☐ *Luke 12:24–28* ☐ *Lamentations 3:22, 23* ☐ *Psalm 103:1–17; 104:27, 28; 139:1–18; 136:25; 145:15, 16*

God's vast love encompasses the entire universe, and yet His heart is with each of His creations.

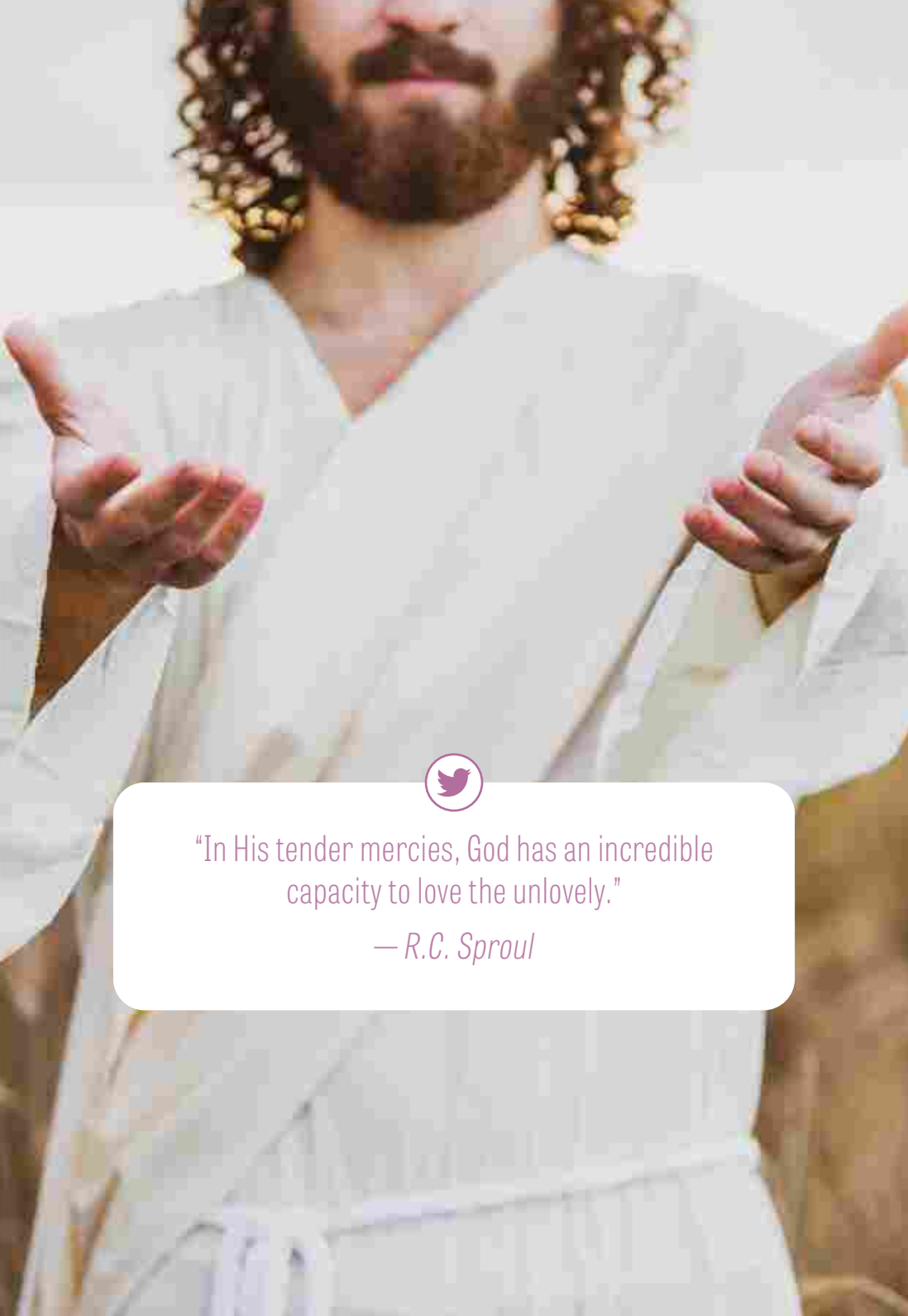
The same God who keeps each of the stars in the sky also cares about the smallest sparrow. God's love extends to each human being—whatever we do, God is watching over us. When we are sad, He feels our pain; when we are happy, He feels our joy; when we are burdened, He carries our affliction.

Q4	*When we put our trust in Jesus, what hope can we claim?*
	☐ *Romans 8:28*
	☐ *Romans 8:35–39* ☐ *Isaiah 26:3* ☐ *Psalm 46:1, 2* ☐ *Jeremiah 29:11–13* ☐ *Zechariah 13:9* ☐ *Hebrews 12:6–12* ☐ *1 Peter 1:7, 8*

When we realise that God is in control, we can feel at peace and be free from worries and anxiety.

"No tears are shed that God does not notice. There is no smile that He does not mark." *Ellen G. White*

God is not overwhelmed or over-burdened by our problems—He wants us to come to Him so that He can help us with whatever we are facing and give us His perfect peace. If we would fully believe this, all undue anxiety would fall away. Our lives would not be so filled with disappointment for now we have confidence to leave everything—no matter how big or how small—in the hands of God.



"In His tender mercies, God has an incredible capacity to love the unlovely."

— R.C. Sproul

THE WONDERS OF HEAVEN

Q5	*How has God promised to make everything new?*
	▢ *Revelation 21:5*
	▢ *Revelation 21:1–4* ▢ *Isaiah 65:17; 43:18, 19; 42:9*

In order to fully appreciate nature, we need to see its beauty as a symbol of God's love. But, lovely as nature is, the new world God has prepared for us, is beyond human comprehension:

"As it is written:

'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).

The most beautiful things we see and experience on earth will be just a pale reflection of the wonders that await us in heaven.

Q6	*What will we learn about God when we put our trust in Him?*
	▢ *Psalm 33:5*
	▢ *Psalm 104:24; 119:64, 68; 97* ▢ *Revelation 15:3, 4*

God speaks to us as He works in our lives through the Holy Spirit. Each day, providing our hearts are willing, there is an opportunity to discover more about God.

"With the goodness of God to desire our highest welfare, the wisdom of God to plan it, and the power of God to achieve it, what do we lack? Surely we are the most favoured of all creatures."
A.W. Tozer

GOD'S WORD TO US

While God speaks to us through nature, He also speaks to us through the Bible, which helps us know and understand His character and our purpose in living.

Q7	*Why has the Bible been given to us?*
	☐ *Romans 15:4*
	☐ *1 Corinthians 9:10; 10:6, 11* ☐ *2 Timothy 3:16* ☐ *Romans 4:23, 24*

The Bible records God's interaction with men and women throughout the ages. This was not just with the great prophets and kings, but with people like you and me who were simply seeking a closer walk with God. Although they lived in a very different time, they faced many similar challenges, doubts and temptations. The same grace that was extended to them is also available to us, enabling victory and second chances even after we've made mistakes.

God blessed His people with valuable experiences that shaped their characters. Through their experiences, we to can find encouragement, and be assured, that God cares for us just as much today.

THE BIBLE TELLS US OF JESUS

Q8	*Who will we encounter as we study the Bible?*
	☐ *John 5:39*
	☐ *Luke 24:27* ☐ *Matthew 22:29* ☐ *Proverbs 6:23; 8:33, 34*

The Old Testament (the first half of the Bible, which was written before the birth of Jesus), tells of a promised Saviour.

The New Testament records the story of Jesus and demonstrates the fulfilment of the prophecies relating to His birth and ministry along with His death and resurrection.

If you want to know Jesus, study the Bible. From the story of creation in Genesis, to the promise in Revelation of His soon return, the Bible testifies of Jesus.

Q9	*As we study the Bible, what is to be our focus?*
	☐ *1 Corinthians 2:2*
	☐ *Philippians 3:8–10* ☐ *1 Corinthians 1:17, 18, 23* ☐ *Galatians 6:14*

The story of how Jesus came down from heaven to earth, lived a humble life and ultimately died to save us, is the greatest story ever told. This salvation story is one that the entire universe is also participating.

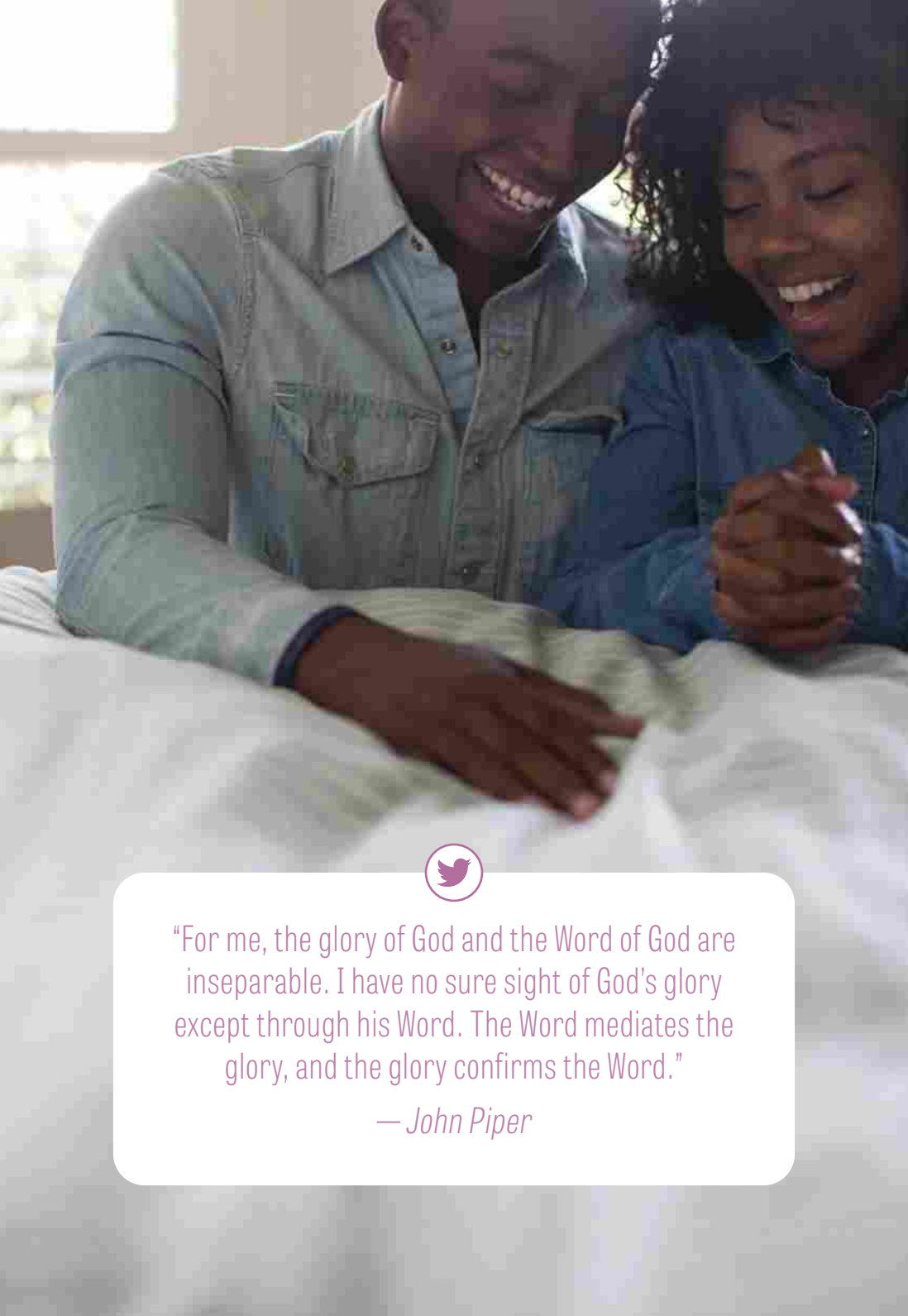
Remember: the same God who forgave Moses the murderer, Rahab the prostitute, David the adulterer, Peter the denier and Paul the Christian persecutor, can also forgive you. *Matt Fradd*

Jesus is our Redeemer and Advocate. Because of His great love, He came to save us from our sins. As we reflect on this sacrifice, our faith and love are strengthened, and our prayers become more earnest. As we put our trust in Jesus, we will experience His power in our lives.

Q10	*Now that Jesus has given you a new heart, what advice does Paul give you on building a Christ-like character?*
	☐ *Philippians 4:8*
	☐ *Romans 12:9, 10; 13:14* ☐ *Galatians 5:22–26* ☐ *Psalm 119:11, 37, 40*

As we consider and meditate on Jesus' example, our lives will begin to reflect His character. As we see and understand His selfless character, we will no longer be absorbed with self.

"When I look at myself, I don't see how I can be saved. But when I look at Christ, I don't see how I can be lost." *Martin Luther*



"For me, the glory of God and the Word of God are inseparable. I have no sure sight of God's glory except through his Word. The Word mediates the glory, and the glory confirms the Word."

— John Piper

STUDYING THE BIBLE FOR OURSELVES

Q11	*Why is it so important for us to personally study God's word?*
	☐ *2 Timothy 2:15*
	☐ *2 Timothy 3:15–17* ☐ *2 Peter 1:5, 10, 15* ☐ *John 17:17* ☐ *Psalm 119:24, 41, 105, 130* ☐ *1 Corinthians 10:6, 11* ☐ *Romans 15:4*

It's not enough to just listen to what other people say about the Bible—we need to spend time reading and reflecting on it individually.

"There is nothing more calculated to strengthen the intellect than the study of Scriptures. No other book is so potent to elevate the thoughts, give vigour to the faculties as the broad, ennobling truths of the entire Bible." *Ellen G. White*

If we allow others to do our thinking, we're accepting their interpretations and we haven't let our own hearts and minds engage with God's message to us on a personal level.

Q12	*How should we study the Bible?*
	☐ *Psalm 119:11*
	☐ *Psalm 119:97; 1:2; 37:31; 40:8* ☐ *Job 22:22* ☐ *Jeremiah 15:16* ☐ *Colossians 3:16*

Many make the mistake of reading the Bible just as they would another book. You can read every word of the Bible, but if the heart is closed to God, it will simply be words on a page with no transforming power.

Take time to reflect and understand the words you are reading. It is far better to read and fully engage with just one verse of the Bible than to read multiple chapters without understanding.

Keep your Bible close throughout the day. This may be a physical copy of the Bible or an app on your device. When you have an opportunity in a car, bus or even a boat, read a verse, contemplate its meaning and commit it to memory.

Set aside a specific time each day to read the Bible. Ask God to help you understand and bring the change to your life. This time of meditation will renew your heart and transform your character.

UNDERSTAND GOD'S MESSAGE FOR YOU

Some parts of the Bible are easy to understand, whereas other parts require more effort to comprehend. It is important to compare verses and stories in the Bible to reveal the true beauty of the Bible.

Just like the fossicker who painstakingly searches for any trace of gold beneath the surface of the earth, the person who earnestly searches God's Word will be rewarded with truths of great value. The time and effort you put into your study of God's word will be richly rewarded.


The Bible
is God's
message to
us.

Q13	*Why is it important to pray and ask God to help us understand His message to us?*
	☐ *Jeremiah 33:3*
	☐ *Jeremiah 29:12* ☐ *John 14:26; 16:13* ☐ *Psalm 145:18* ☐ *1 Corinthians 2:9–11*

Whenever you study the Bible, first pray for the Holy Spirit to open your mind and give you wisdom to understand and discover God's teachings and purpose for your life.

"Faith, prayer and the Word of God are the weapons God provides you to fight spiritual battles." *Jim George*

Q14	*How is God's truth revealed?*
	☐ *John 16:13*
	☐ *John 16:8; 14:17; 26; 15:26* ☐ *Galatians 5:16* ☐ *Zechariah 12:10* ☐ *2 Peter 1:21*

As we read the Bible, the Holy Spirit is our teacher and guide. Both the Holy Spirit and Bible provide key teachings that will help us understand good and evil, right and wrong. C.S. Lewis brings further clarity to this point in *Pilgrims Regress*: God's Word helps us discern the difference between those things that God designed to help us grow and those things that will destroy us. It is important we never confuse the two.

Knowledge of the Bible gives us a clearer understanding of Jesus and enables us to see His love and comprehend the incredible gift of salvation.



"The Spirit of truth is the only effectual teacher of divine truth. How must God love the human race since He gave His Son to die for us and appoints His Spirit to be our teacher and continual guide."

— Ellen G. White

REFLECTIONS

I believe reading my Bible will teach me about God, and He will transform my life to be like Jesus.

YES **UNDECIDED**

I want to commit time to the study of God's Word so that I can understand His plan for my life.

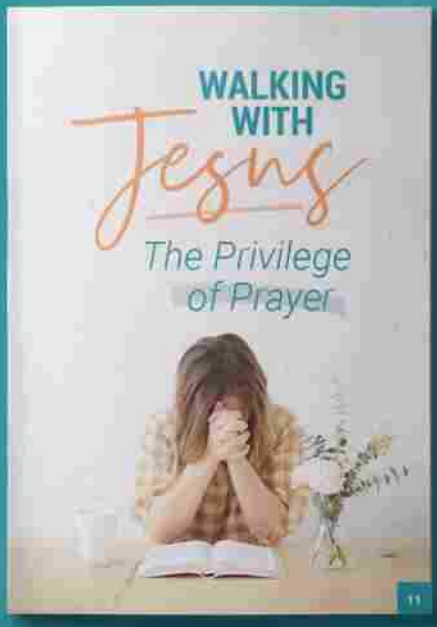
YES **UNDECIDED**

I want to ask the Holy Spirit to guide me as I study God's Word and help me to understand and accept His truth with a humble heart.

YES **UNDECIDED**

In God you will find hope - for today and for the future.





CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY IN PART 11:

THE PRIVILEGE OF PRAYER

Learn why prayer is so important to keep you connected to God through Jesus. By seeking God with a sincere heart and following the example of how Jesus approached God in prayer, you will experience a deeper sense of God's peace and His guidance in your daily life.



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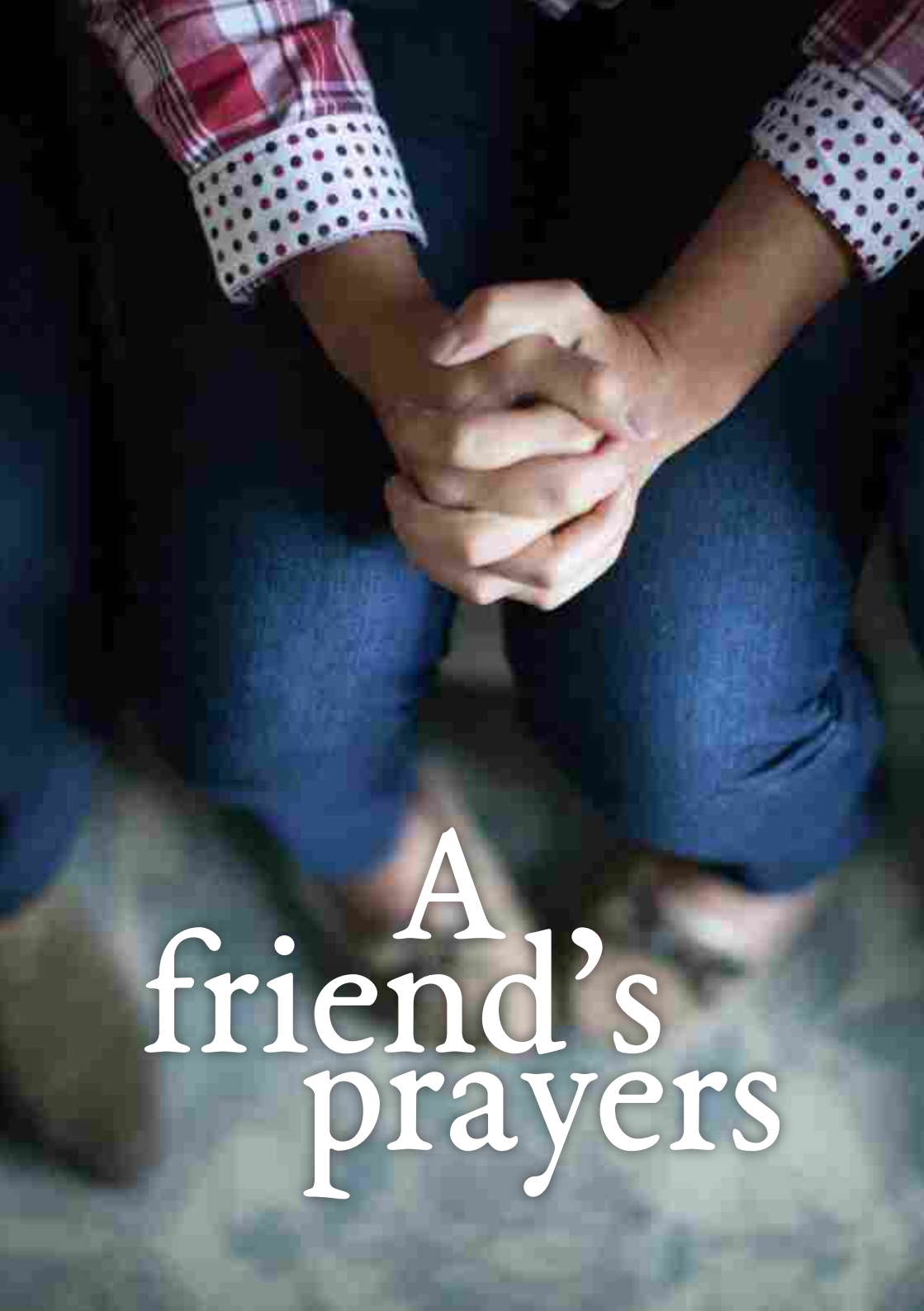
WALKING WITH Jesus

The Privilege of Prayer




A
friend's
prayers



"There is an old Roman story which tells how a Roman Emperor was enjoying a triumph. He had the privilege, which Rome gave to her great victors, of marching his troops through the streets of Rome with all his captured trophies and prisoners in his train. The Emperor was on the valedictory march with his troops. The streets were lined with cheering people. The tall legionaries lined the streets' edge to keep the people in their place. At one point on the triumphal route, there was a platform where the empress and her family were sitting to watch the emperor go by in all the pride of his triumph. On the platform with his mother, there was the emperor's youngest son.

As the emperor came near, the little boy jumped off the platform, burrowed through the crowd, dodged between the legs of a legionary and ran out on the road to meet his fathers' chariot. The legionary stooped down and stopped him swing him up into his arms: "You cant do that boy" he said. "Don't you now who is in that chariot?" That's the emperor. You can't run out to his chariot," he said. The little boy laughed. "He may be your emperor," he said, "but he's my father."

This is exactly the way we should feel towards God. The might and the majesty and the power are the might and the majesty and power of the one whom Jesus taught us to call Our Father." (Daily Study Bible Series, *Matthew's Gospel, Vol. 1*, p. 203.)

"Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that this is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him." *Ellen G. White*

WHY PRAYER MATTERS

Q1	*Why is prayer so important?*
	☐ *Jeremiah 29:12*
	☐ *Jeremiah 31:9* ☐ *Psalm 50:15; 102:17* ☐ *Isaiah 65:24* ☐ *Matthew 7:7, 8*

God speaks to us through the beauty of the natural world, through His words in the Bible, through His influence in our lives and by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer is how we speak to God; it is how we maintain personal contact with our heavenly Father. God invites us to pour our hearts out to Him and share with Him what is happening in our lives and how we are feeling. In this way, our minds are drawn out to Him as to a friend.

Prayer is opening our heart to God the way we would to a close friend—sharing our highs and lows and telling Him whatever is going on in our life—our everyday struggles, hopes and anxieties. The act of prayer does not bring God down to us; instead, it is how we are brought into the presence of God.

"If prayer stands as the place where God and human beings meet, then I must learn about prayer. Most of my struggles in the Christian life circle around the same two themes: why God doesn't act the way we want God to, and why I don't act the way God wants me to. Prayer is the precise point where those themes converge." *Philip Yancey*

HOW JESUS PRAYED

Q2	*What does Jesus invite us to do when we pray to Him?*
	☐ *1 Peter 5:6-7*
	☐ *Philippians 4:6, 7* ☐ *Psalm 55:16–18; 34:5–8, 15–20; 62:8* ☐ *Jeremiah 33:3* ☐ *2 Chronicles 7:14*

During Jesus' ministry on earth, the disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray. He taught them to present their daily needs before God and to cast all their cares upon Him.

This, then, is how you should pray:
"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be Your name,
  Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
  on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.

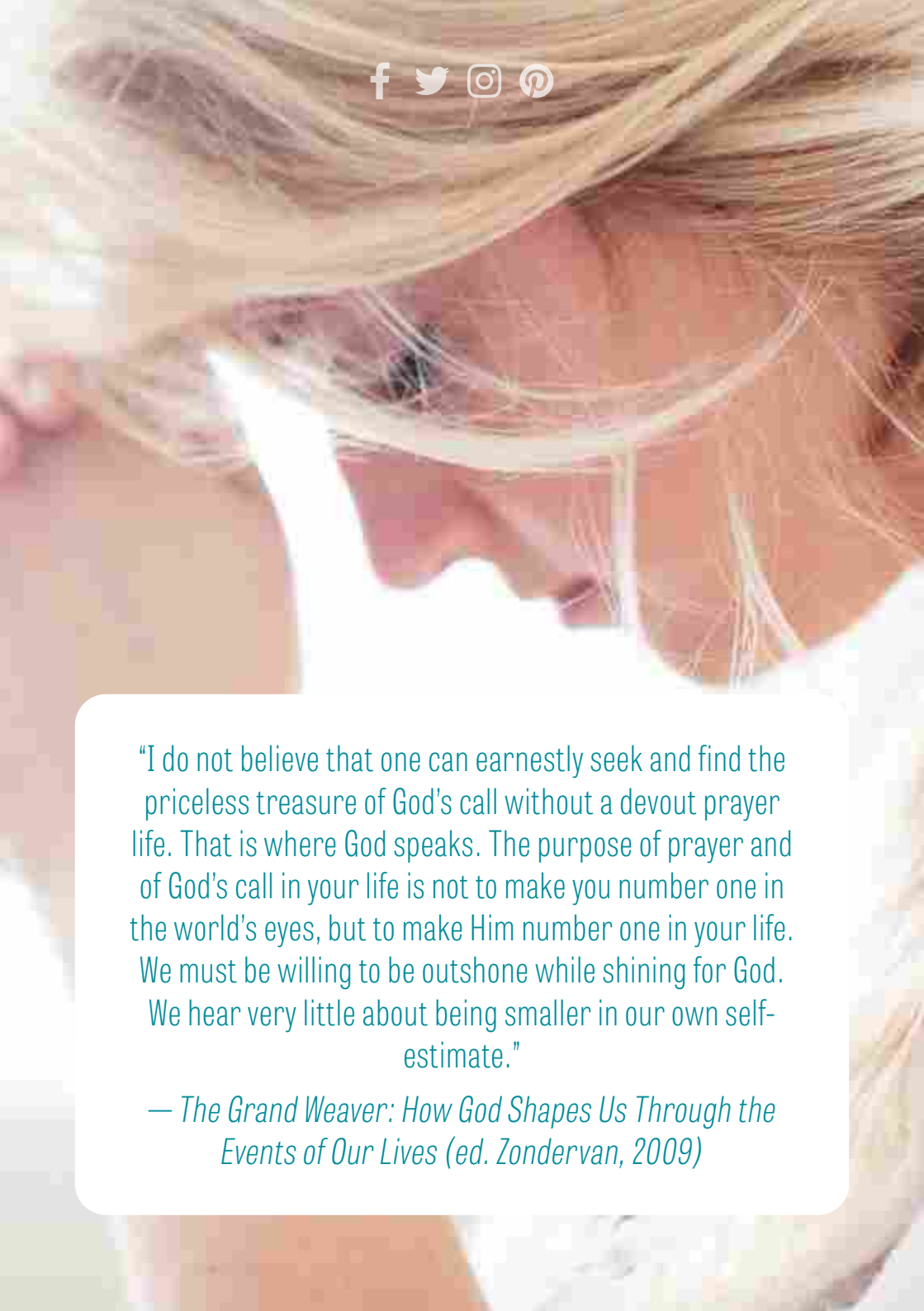
And forgive us our debts,
  as we forgive our debtors.
And do not lead us into temptation,
  but deliver us from the evil one.
For Yours is the kingdom and the power
and the glory forever. Amen." *(Matthew 6:9–13)*

Q3	*During His time on earth, how did Jesus pray?*
	☐ *Mark 1:35*
	☐ *Mark 6:46* ☐ *Matthew 6:6; 14:23* ☐ *Luke 6:12; 1* ☐ *Peter 2:21*

In reading of Jesus' life, we see many examples of His prayer life. Jesus continually brought everything before God, relying on God to meet His needs, help Him to face temptation and to and give Him strength to glory God through His actions. This also serves as an example as to what a close relationship with God really looks like.

Jesus found strength and joy from the close communication with His Father. By daily seeking the renewing power of God, Jesus resisted sin, lived a perfect life and redeemed us from a sinful world.





"I do not believe that one can earnestly seek and find the priceless treasure of God's call without a devout prayer life. That is where God speaks. The purpose of prayer and of God's call in your life is not to make you number one in the world's eyes, but to make Him number one in your life. We must be willing to be outshone while shining for God. We hear very little about being smaller in our own self-estimate."

— The Grand Weaver: How God Shapes Us Through the Events of Our Lives (ed. Zondervan, 2009)

Jesus' humanity made prayer both a necessity and a privilege. If Jesus, the Son of God, felt the need and importance of prayer, how much more should we, sinful human beings, feel the need of fervent constant prayer?

Q4	*What specific link did Jesus identify between prayer and temptation?*
	☐ *Matthew 26:41*
	☐ *Luke 21:36* ☐ *Mark 14:38; 13:37* ☐ *Galatians 5:16* ☐ *James 4:7, 8; 1:2–5* ☐ *Romans 13:14* ☐ *Matthew 7:7*

"Prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse where are treasured the boundless resources of heaven." *Ellen G. White*

Praying to an omnipotent God gives us a daily awareness not only of sin, but access to divine power to overcome sin. It is Satan's desire that we should become careless in prayer, causing us to deviate from God's plan. In short, prayerlessness makes it easier to be overcome by Satan's temptations and diverted from our close walk with God.

"The darkness of the evil one encloses those who neglect to pray. The whispered temptations of the enemy continues to entice people to sin; and it is all because they do not make use of the privilege that God has given to them in the divine appointment of prayer." *Ellen G. White*

Satan knows well that when you pray, you access God's grace and power that will enable you to resist the temptations Satan uses to drag you into sinful ways.

SEEKING GOD WITH A SINCERE SPIRIT

Q5 *What should our attitude be as we seek God?*

☐ *Psalms 69:32*

☐ *Isaiah 44:3; 41:17; 48:21* ☐ *Matthew 5:6*
☐ *John 4:10; 7:37–39* ☐ *Revelation 21:6; 22:17*

God has promised that He will hear and answer our prayers if we come to Him with a humble heart. An essential aspect of praying sincerely, is to recognise our need that only God can provide. The heart must be open to the Holy Spirit's influence, or God's blessings will not be recognised nor received. God wants us to recognise and acknowledge our spiritual emptiness so that He, through the Holy Spirit, can fill us with His blessings and goodness.



PUT AWAY SIN

Q1	*What impact does sin have on prayer?*
	☐ *Psalm 66:18* ☐ *Proverbs 28:9*
	☐ *Isaiah 1:15, 16* ☐ *Zechariah 7:11–13* ☐ *Proverbs 15:8–10; 109:7*

God shares how we are to approach Him. If we cling to known sin and have not repented, or if we rebel, God will not hear our prayer. However, once we acknowledge our sin, He accepts our prayers.

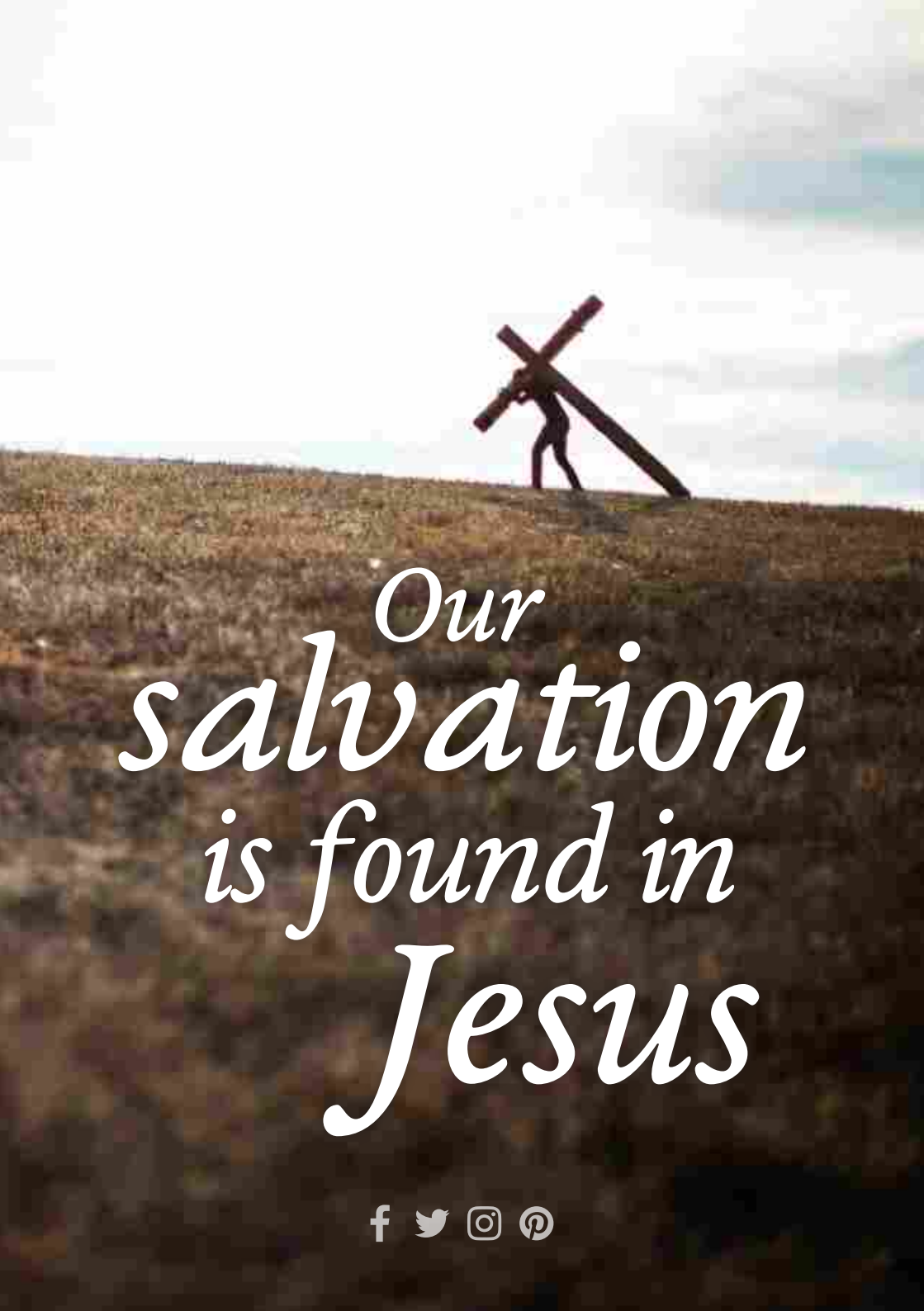
We will never win the favour of God by our own goodness: it is only through the provision of God in sending His son Jesus to pay the penalty for our sins that we are saved. Once we accept Jesus as our atoning sacrifice, He acts as our mediator and reconciles us to a holy God (see Hebrews 9:11–15).

FAITH AND PRAYER

Q7	*What role does faith have when we pray?*
	☐ *Mark 11:24*
	☐ *James 1:6* ☐ *Matthew 21:22* ☐ *Mark 11:22–24* ☐ *Timothy 2:8*

Another element of prevailing prayer is faith. Faith plays a very crucial part in our prayer life. We need to have faith that God's Word is true and believe that He cares about our needs and will answer our prayers according to His will.

The assurance is broad and unlimited—God is faithful. If you do not receive exactly what you asked for, or if you feel like you have waited too long without answers, this doesn't mean that your prayers have not been heard or even answered. God will answer your prayers in accordance with what is best for you.


Our
salvation
is found in
Jesus

"Faith is expecting the word of God to do what it says, and then depending upon that word to do what it says."

— Ellen G. White



We are so erring and short-sighted that we sometimes ask for things that would not be a blessing to us. God, in love, answers our prayers by giving us that which will be for our highest good (James 4:2, 3).

Don't be afraid to trust God always, even if you think the answer to your prayer might be a long time in coming. Keep your faith firmly in Him and trust in His promises.

Q8	*How are prayer and forgiveness connected?*
	▢ *Matthew 6:14, 15*
	▢ *Matthew 5:23–24; 6:12; 18:21–35* ▢ *Luke 7:40-48; 11:4*

When you ask God for His mercy and blessings, it is important that you do this with a spirit of love and forgiveness in your own heart. How can we ask God to forgive us if we are holding past resentments and hurts against people who have wronged us?

PRAYING WITHOUT CEASING

Q9	*How often should we pray?*
	▢ *1 Thessalonians 5:17*
	▢ *Colossians 4:2,12* ▢ *Luke 21:36* ▢ *Psalm 55:17; 86:3*

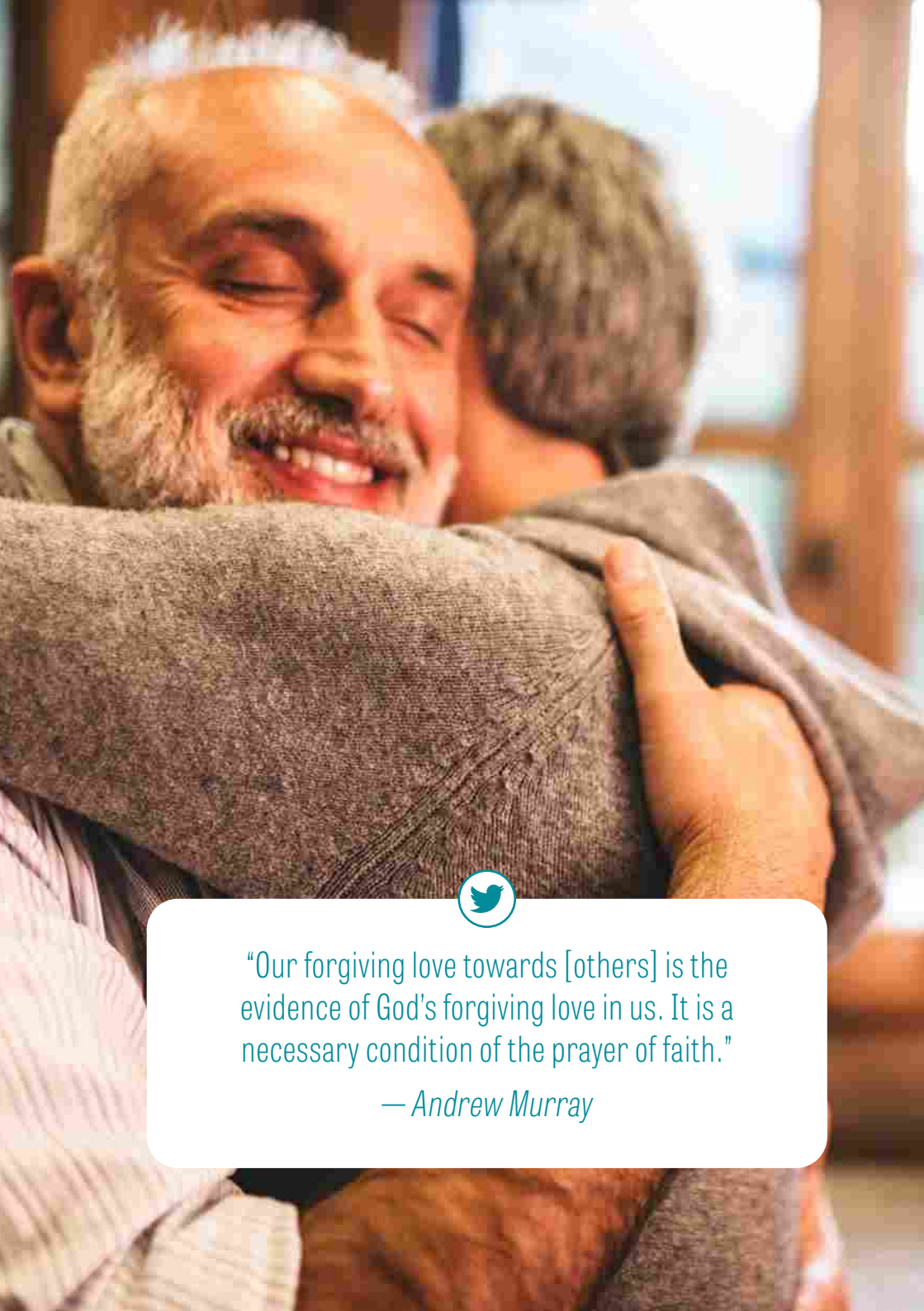
We are encouraged to keep praying; it is not something we do just at church, nor as one moment in our day. Prayer can happen anytime. Through sincere prayer, we are brought close to the mind of God. We may not feel that He is near, but Jesus is bending over us in love an

sympathy. We may not feel His touch, but His hand is upon us in love and tender pity.

We need to prioritise prayer and connect with God daily. Look for opportunities in your day to pray. Don't wait until you need God's help to bring you to your knees. You can pray in any situation.

In all times, whether in joy or affliction, when the outlook seems dark and the future perplexing and you feel helpless and alone, draw near to God. Take every moment you can to spend time with God in prayer and receive His blessings.

"We need to have far less confidence in what man can do, and far more confidence in what God can do for every believing soul. He longs to have you reach after Him by faith. He longs to have you expect great things from Him." XXX



"Our forgiving love towards [others] is the evidence of God's forgiving love in us. It is a necessary condition of the prayer of faith."

— Andrew Murray

REFLECTIONS

Thank you God for the opportunity to come to you at any time, through Jesus, in prayer.

YES **UNDECIDED**

I believe that prayer is how I can connect with God. I want to live in a close relationship with Him and experience His peace through the gift of prayer.

YES **UNDECIDED**

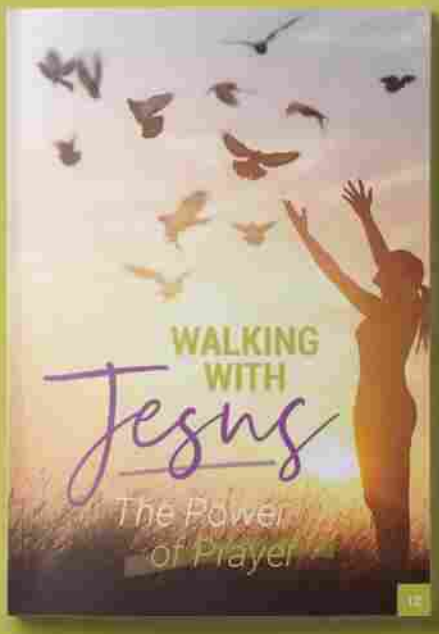
I trust that God hears me when I pray, and I believe He knows what is best for me and will answer my prayers according to His perfect will.

YES **UNDECIDED**

I accept God's invitation to come 'boldly before His throne of grace' in prayer, so that I can benefit from His grace and mercy in my daily walk with Him.

YES **UNDECIDED**


Prayer
brings us
into
God's
presence
- anytime,
anywhere.



CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY IN PART 12 -

THE POWER OF PRAYER

Through prayer, God makes Himself accessible to us – and through Him, we can access immeasurable power and strength. Prayer connects and provides us with strength to comfort now matter what we are facing. It's also an opportunity to give thanks to God and continue to grow in our faith and understanding of Him.



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This booklet series is adapted from Steps to Christ by E.G. White and the Steps to Christ Bible Study Guide developed by Merlin Beerman, Revelation Publications.
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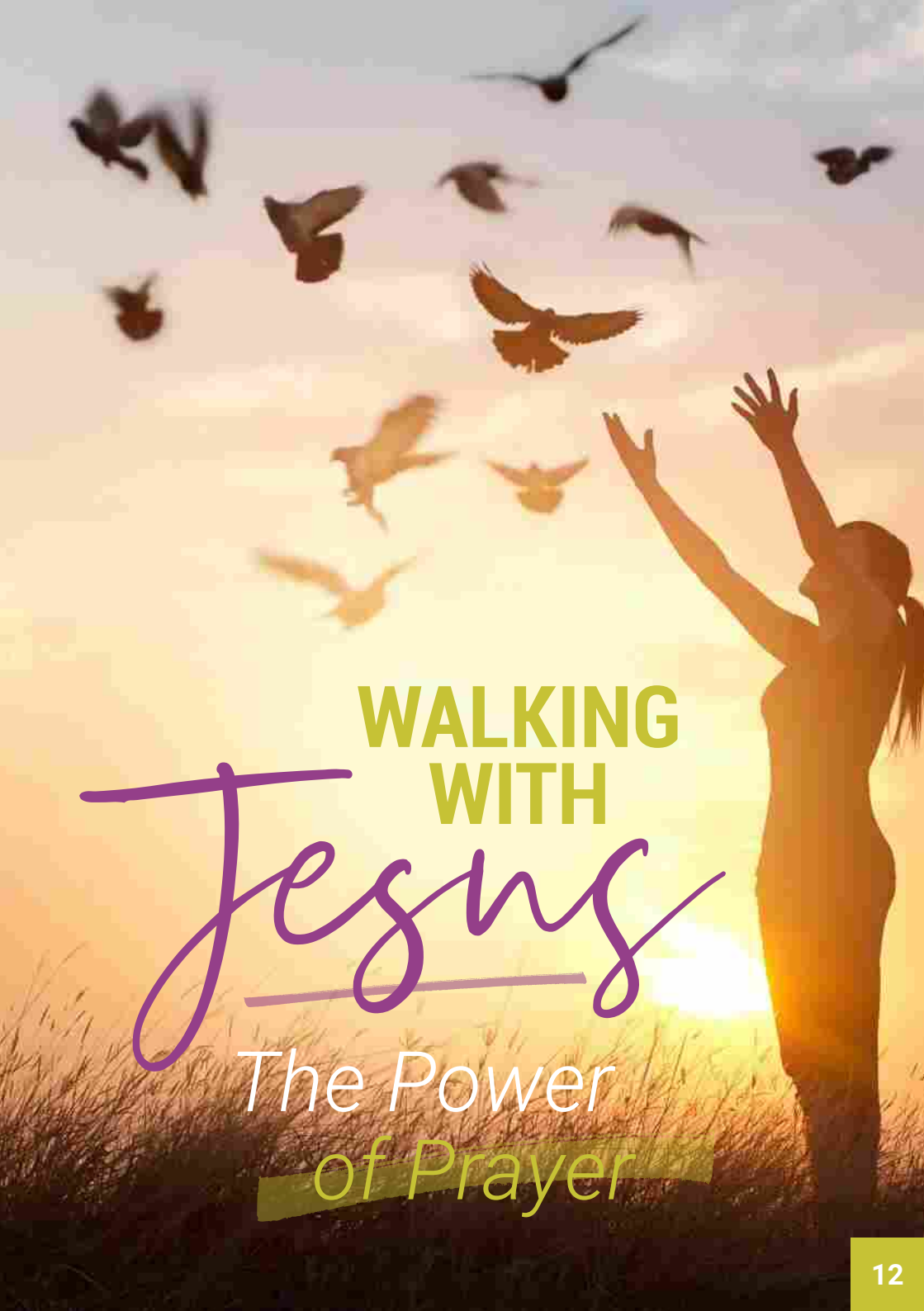
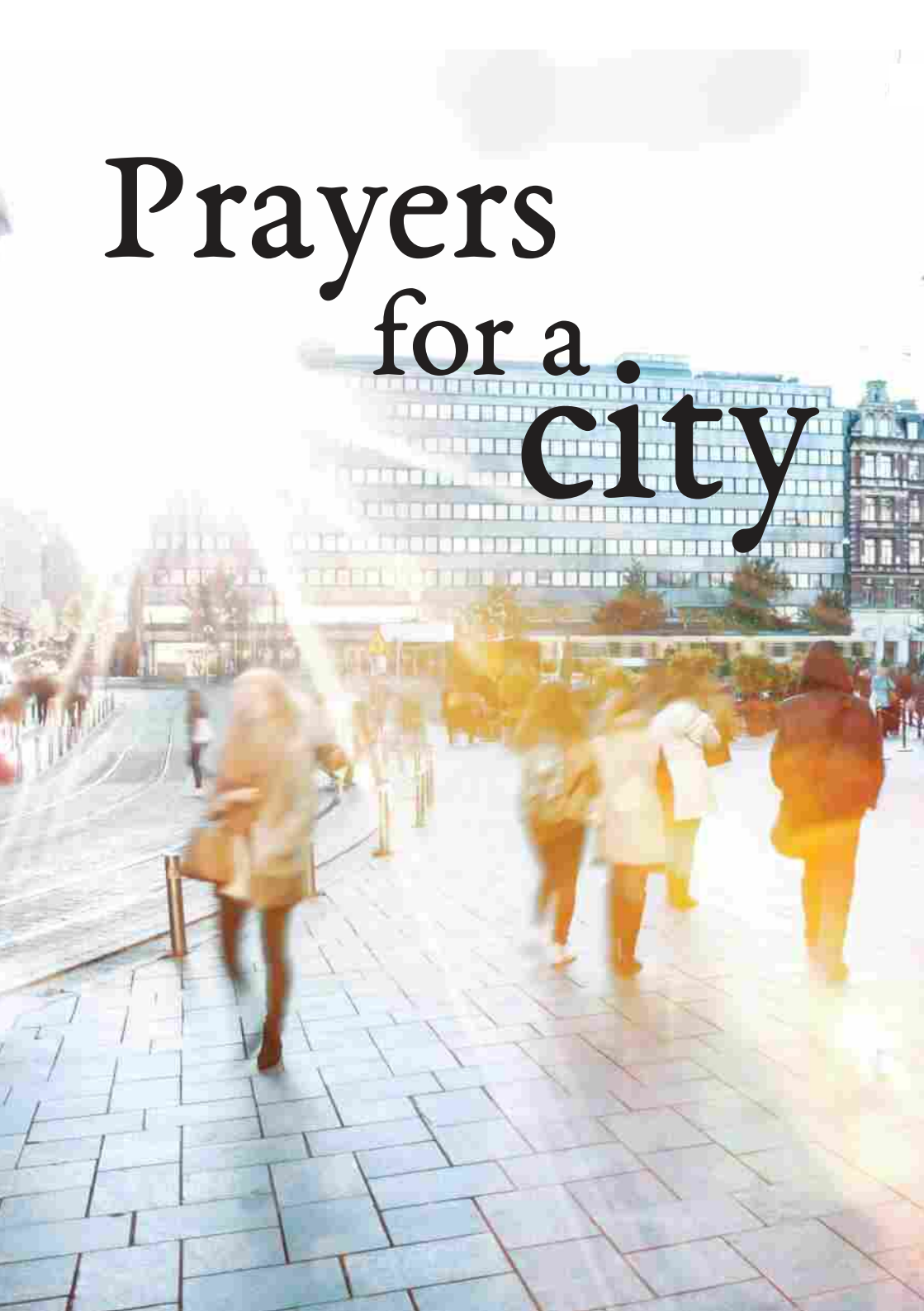

WALKING
WITH
Jesus
The Power
of Prayer

Prayers for a city





Jeremiah Lanphier lived in New York City during the 1850s—a time of tension, when the shadow of war loomed over America. There were strikes, depressions, failing banks, long unemployment lines, and an air of simmering violence. In this setting, Lanphier accepted a calling as a full-time city evangelist. He walked the streets, knocked on doors, put up posters, and prayed constantly—all to no visible result.

As his discouragement increased, Lanphier looked for some kind of new idea, some possibility for breakthrough. New York was a business town: *maybe the men would come to a luncheon.* So he nailed up his signs, calling for a noon prayer in the Old Dutch Church on Fulton Street. When the hour came, he sat and waited until finally a single visitor arrived. Several minutes later, a couple of stragglers peeked through the door.

Lanphier gave his idea another go on the following week. Twenty men attended; at least it was a start. But then forty came on the third week. The men were getting to know each other by this time, and one of them suggested he'd be willing to come for prayer every day. Lanphier thought that was a good sign, and he ramped up his efforts for a daily prayer time.

Before long, the building was overflowing. The most intriguing element of the "Fulton Street Revival," as they called the phenomenon, was the ripple effect. Offices began closing for prayer at noon. . . . Fulton Street was the talk of the town, with men telegraphing prayer news back and forth between New York City and other cities—other cities had started their own franchises; other godly meetings were launching in New York.

The centre of the meeting was prayer. It was okay to come late or leave early, as needed . . . . Men stood and shared testimonies. [This was not] a place for the well-known preachers of the day—this was about the working class, businessmen who wanted to share the things of God.

Some historians went so far as to refer to the Fulton Street Revival as one of the most significant revivals of history—it lasted for two years and saw as many as one million decisions for Christ. Given the influence of New York City, no one could estimate the national and international impact that spread out from Jeremiah Lanphier's simple prayer meetings. (from Ronnie Floyd, *Our Last Great Hope.* Thomas Nelson, 2011)

WHY PRAYERS MATTER

Q1	*Why are personal prayers so important?*
	☐ *Matthew 6:6*
	☐ *Psalm 34:15–19; 86:5–7; 50:15; 55:16* ☐ *Isaiah 65:24* ☐ *Hebrews 4:16* ☐ *Romans 8:26, 27; 10:12* ☐ *James 5:16*

God reveals Himself through nature and different revelations, but this in itself is not enough—God invites to experience Him in a more personal way and invites us to pour out our hearts to Him in prayer. When we pray, our hearts are drawn to Him and we can more closely meditate upon His work, His mercies and blessings. While we receive a knowledge of God by meditating upon these aspects, God invites us to share the very things that are upon our heart.

"Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend" *Ellen G. White*

Pray at home with your family, or in public gatherings, but do not neglect personal prayer. Pray and let your heart be uplifted often to God. Silent prayers rise like precious incense before God.

"Through sincere prayer, we are brought into connection with the mind of the infinite." *Ellen G. White*

GOD WILL SUPPLY YOUR STRENGTH

As we pray to Jesus in faith, we access strength far beyond our own. Unceasing prayer is the unbroken union of the soul with God. We know we can't defeat sin or resist temptation by our own merits, but through Jesus, we access strength beyond our own limitations.

Pray a personal prayer to God at any time of the day—in fact, He invites you to do so. As you go about your day, at work or at home, uplift your heart to God. Talk with Him about every aspect of your life. As your prayer life strengthens and your heart is fixed upon God, Satan will be powerless to overcome or distract you from the love of God.

Those whose hearts are open to receive the support and blessings of God will enjoy the atmosphere of heaven.

Q2	*How often should one pray?*
	☐ *1 Thessalonians 5:17*
	☐ *2 Chronicles 7:14* ☐ *Psalm 145:18, 19* ☐ *Jeremiah 29:12, 13*

"We need to have more distinct views of Jesus and a fuller comprehension of the value of eternal realities." *Ellen G. White*

The Bible is filled with stories of people who sought God's help in times of trouble, and then how He delivered them in their hour of need.

Some examples of powerful prayers can be easily found in the Bible:

- Genesis 18:16–33
- Psalm 51
- Daniel 9:1–19
- John 17

When we are surrounded by struggles and trials, prayer connects us to a merciful God who draws us to Himself with loving kindness. When God is near and our thoughts are of Him, He will supply us with the strength needed to bring us through any crisis.

"Therefore, submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. *(James 4:7, 8)*

Q3	*What impact does prayer have on your spiritual experience?*
	☐ *Isaiah 26:3*
	☐ *Philippians 4:6, 7* ☐ *John 14:27; 16:33* ☐ *Psalm 9:10; 57:1* ☐ *Jeremiah 17:7, 8*

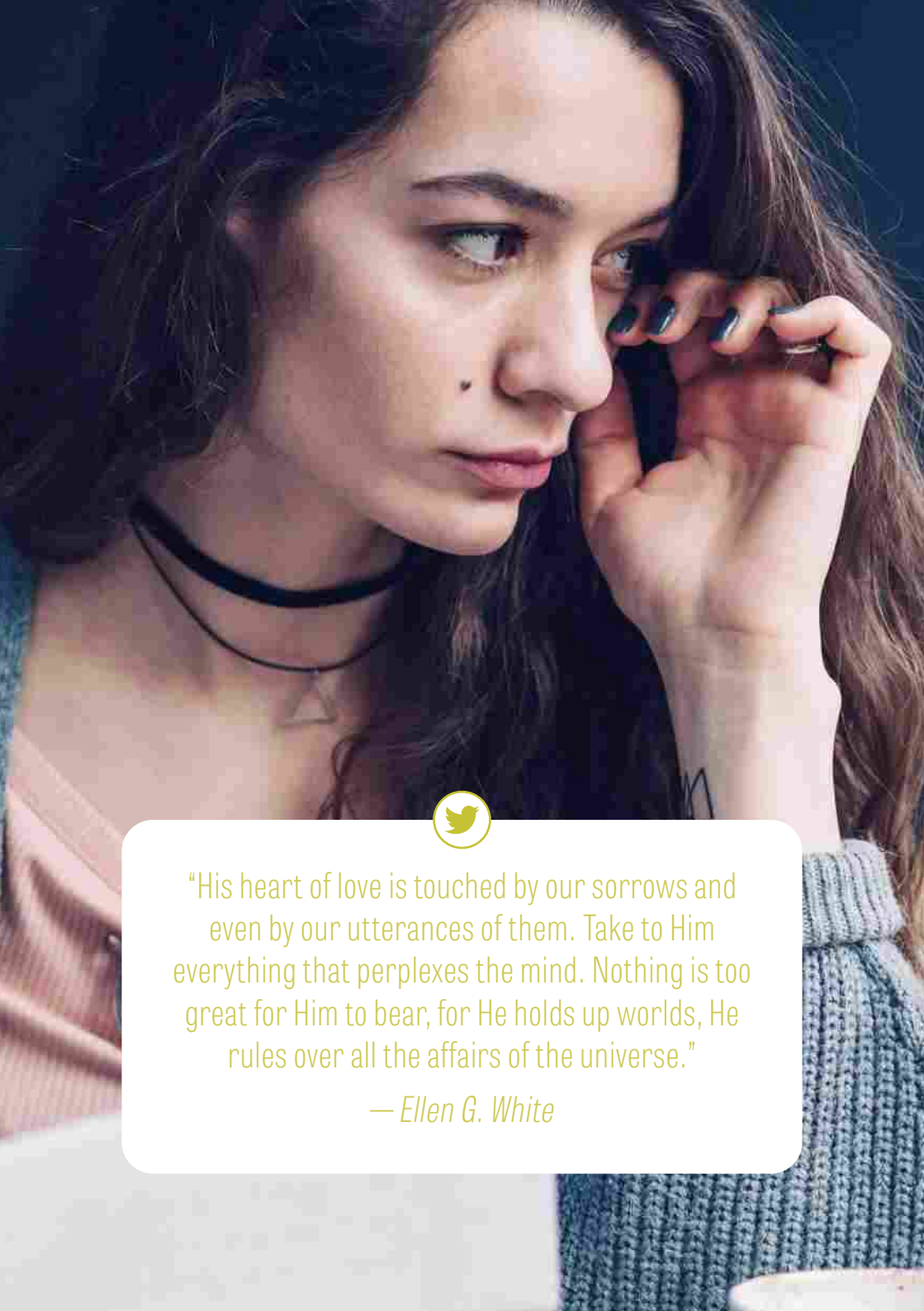
Prayer helps us experience Jesus and understand the love of God. As Jesus draws near and you experience the regenerating power of God, your thoughts will turn to Him. No chapter in your experience is too dark

for Him read; there is no perplexity too difficult for Him to unravel. No sincere prayer escape the lips, of which God is unobservant or in which He takes no interest.

Q4	*How does God promise to comfort us and meet our needs?*
	▢ *Psalm 147:3*
	▢ *Psalm 51:17; 34:18* ▢ *Isaiah 57:15; 61:1* ▢ *Hosea 6:1*

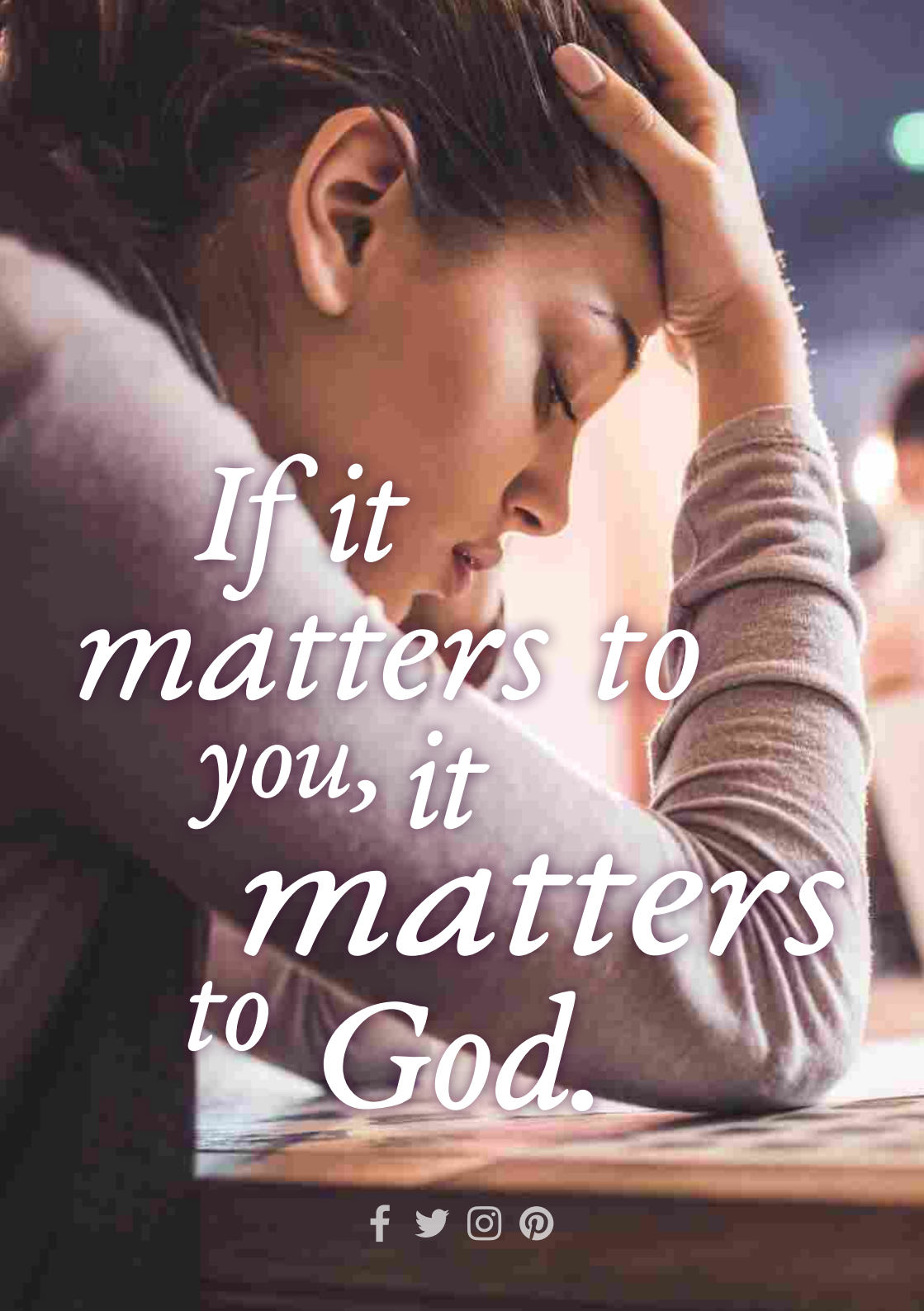
God longs for you to bring everything before Him: everything you long for, all the things that bring you joy, your anxieties and doubts—give all of these to God in prayer and allow Him to unravel those things that have become a burden to you. God will be your strength and comfort in times of difficulty.

"There is no chapter in our experience too dark for Him to read; there is no perplexity too difficult for Him to unravel. No calamity can befall the least of His children, no anxiety harass the soul, no joy cheer, no sincere prayer escape the lips, of which our heavenly Father is unobservant, or in which He takes no immediate interest." *Ellen G. White*



"His heart of love is touched by our sorrows and even by our utterances of them. Take to Him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for Him to bear, for He holds up worlds, He rules over all the affairs of the universe."

— Ellen G. White


If it matters to you, it matters to God.

PRAYING IN THE NAME OF JESUS

Q5	*In whose name should we pray?*
	☐ *John 15:16, 16:26–27*
	☐ *Matthew 28:18, 19* ☐ *Romans 1:5* ☐ *Acts 2:38* ☐ *Malachi 1:11*

Jesus instructed His followers to pray in the name of Jesus. This means more than just mentioning Jesus' name at the beginning and end of our prayer. Praying brings the mind and heart into harmony with the mind and spirit of Jesus. It enables us to understand and hold firmly to His promises, trust His grace, and live in a way that will bring honour to Him.

Q6	*How are we instructed to put our faith into practical actions?*
	☐ *James 1:27, 2:16*
	☐ *Matthew 25:34–46* ☐ *1 John 3:17–19* ☐ *1 Timothy 1:5* ☐ *Job 29:12, 13;* ☐ *Isaiah 1:17; 58:6–11* ☐ *Galatians 5:6; 6:9, 10*

Being close to God doesn't mean we need to retreat and live life as a hermit or in some remote place. We don't need to permanently hide ourselves away in order to stay close to God.

Jesus lived among people, and was frequently ministering to both large crowds and a small group of followers. Jesus also found time to withdraw to remote places and be alone with God in personal prayer.

While God encourages us to spend time prayer, He equally encourages us to spend time with others in prayer. These prayerful friendships enable us to encourage and be encouraged in the service of God..

"Ask of me is the one condition God puts in the very advance and triumph of His cause." *E.M. Bounds*

Spending time with people enables you to have a deeper understanding of people's needs, helping you pray more intelligently. If you never spent time with anyone but yourself, your prayers would soon become repetitive, empty and self-serving and you would lose perspective of the needs of others.

As followers of Jesus, we are instructed to go to where the people are and share with them the good news that they are loved and have been rescued by Jesus at great cost. Because of His actions, they have the opportunity to experience the salvation of God.

"If we thought and talked more of Jesus and less of self, we should have far more of His presence." *Ellen G. White*

GOD'S PERFECT PEACE

Q7 *How do we experience the peace of God?*

- ☐ *Colossians 3:1–4*

- ☐ *Isaiah 57:19–21* ☐ *Psalm 91:14; 119:36–40*
- ☐ *John 14:27* ☐ *Proverbs 23:5* ☐ *Matthew 16:23*
- ☐ *Romans 8:4–6* ☐ *1 John 2:15*

God loves us infinitely more than we are loved by our closest friends or family. He has blessed our lives and given us unique abilities and interests. If we carefully consider all the blessings that have flowed from heaven, we will be constantly reminded of love that has been freely extended to us.

Our thoughts and conversations are often focused on the things this world offers, however because of Gods' goodness, this world loses its attractiveness as we long to experience the joys of heaven. In this way, the gifts God has given to us shouldn't so absorb our thoughts that we are neglectful of the Giver. These gifts serve as a constant reminder of Him and His unending love for us.

Q8 *What should be our attitude in prayer?*

- ☐ *Colossians 4:2*

- ☐ *Colossians 2:7; 3:15, 17* ☐ *Philippians 4:6*
- ☐ *1 Thessalonians 5:16–18*

WE HAVE SO MUCH TO BE THANKFUL FOR

Sometimes our prayers dwell to much upon the lowlands of earth. Let us raise our voices in praise to God always expressing our gratitude to Him.

"Happy moments, PRAISE God. Difficult moments, SEEK God. Quiet moments, WORSHIP God. Painful moments, TRUST God. Every moment, THANK God." *Rick Warren*

Attitude is important—God doesn't want us to serve Him out of duty or obligation—He wants us to serve Him willingly, cheerfully and gladly. It is our privilege to have the opportunity to give thanks to God and to live our lives in a way that will bring honour to Him.

God wants our hearts to overflow with joy and love because He has richly blessed us and asks us to be a joy to others. When we reflect on God's goodness, we find true contentment and live a life filled with purpose.

"When it comes to life, the critical thing is whether you take things for granted or take them with gratitude." *G.K. Chesterton*

Q9	*What does God reveal to us when we give thanks?*
	☐ *Psalm 50:23*
	☐ *Psalm 50:14, 15; 85:9* ☐ *Romans 15:6, 9* ☐ *1 Peter 2:9*

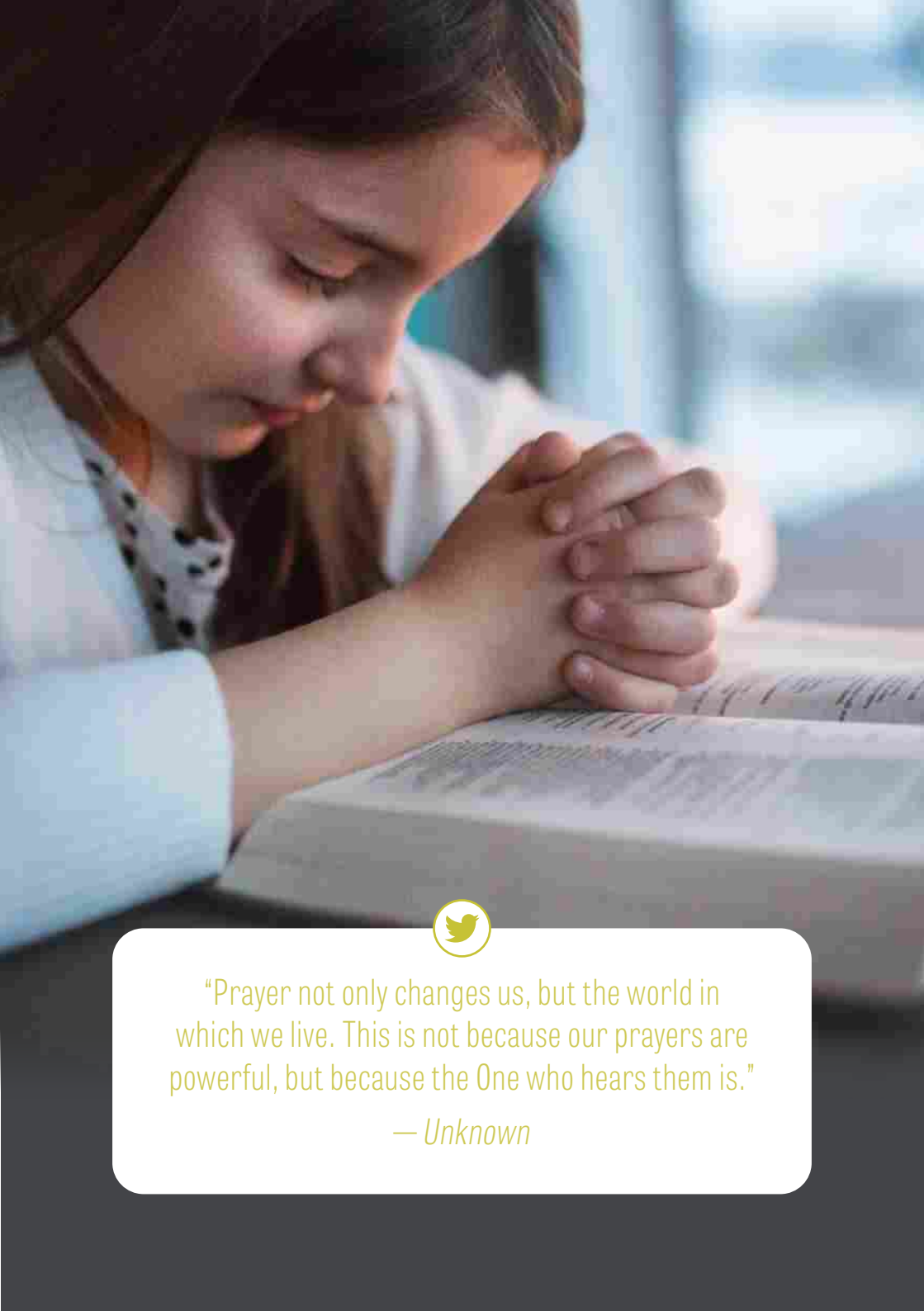
Every good and perfect gift is from above.

Jesus left the glory of heaven so that we might be saved. This incredible act should fill our lives with purpose and a passion to follow Him. Our hearts should be filled with gratitude that, because of Him, we can be free from sin and its deadly consequences.

Q10	*What does Psalms 107 teach us about prayer?*
	▢ *Psalms 107:21,22*
	▢ *Psalm 107:15, 31, 32; 34:3; 92:1, 2; 147:1* ▢ *Isaiah 63:7*

When we praise God and give glory to Him, we are echoing the praises of the angels in heaven. God is worthy of all our praise, so with reverence and joy we come before Him expressing our thankfulness for all He has done, and will do, in our lives.

We need to have a more distinct view of Jesus and a fuller comprehension of eternal realities. So let your heart be drawn out and upward in prayer, that God may grant you the breath of heavenly realities. May you keep your heart so close to God, that in every unexpected trial, your thoughts will turn to Him as naturally as the flower to the sun.



"Prayer not only changes us, but the world in which we live. This is not because our prayers are powerful, but because the One who hears them is."

— Unknown

REFLECTION

I realise the importance of both private and public prayer in helping me stay constantly connected to God.

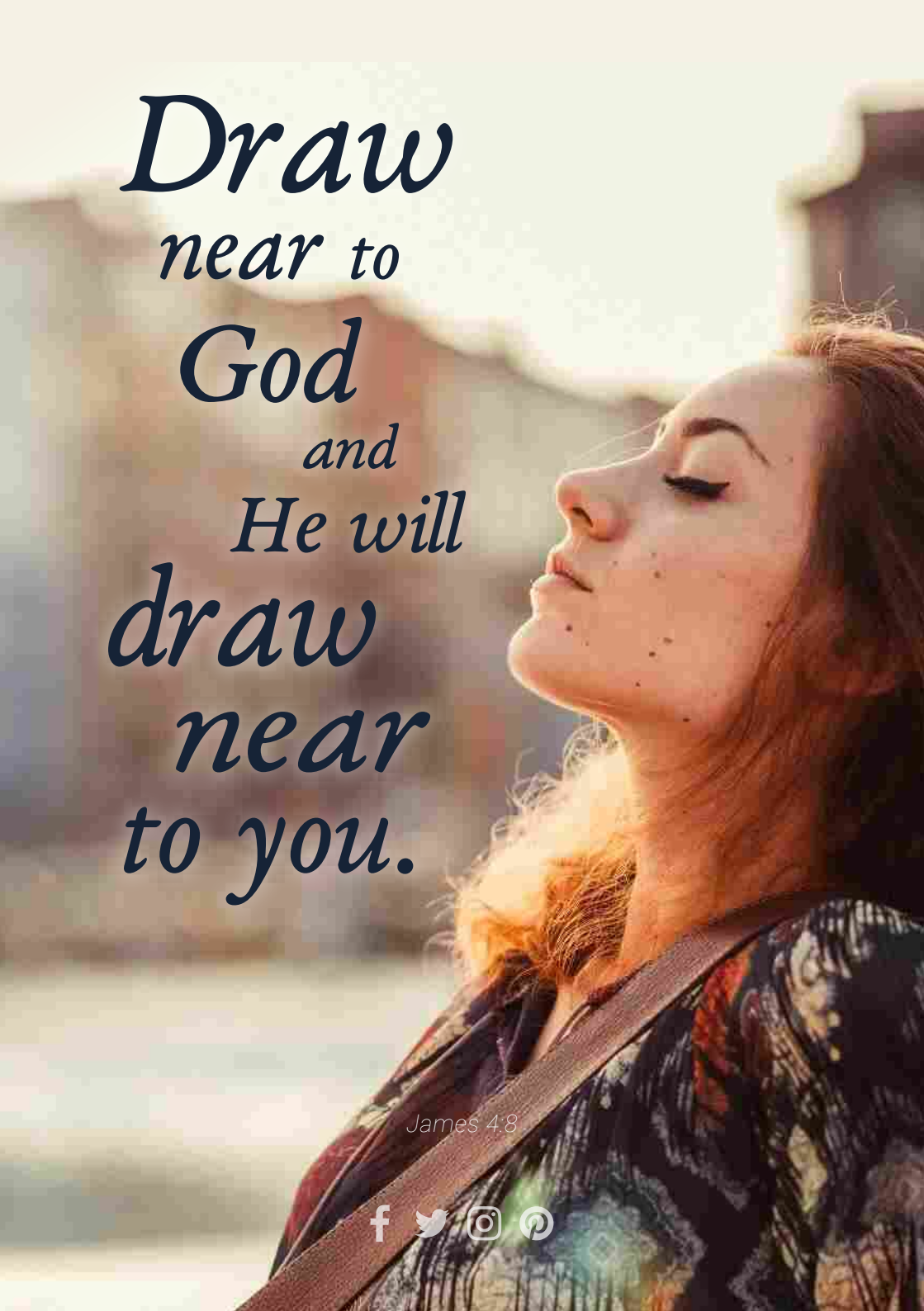
YES **UNDECIDED**

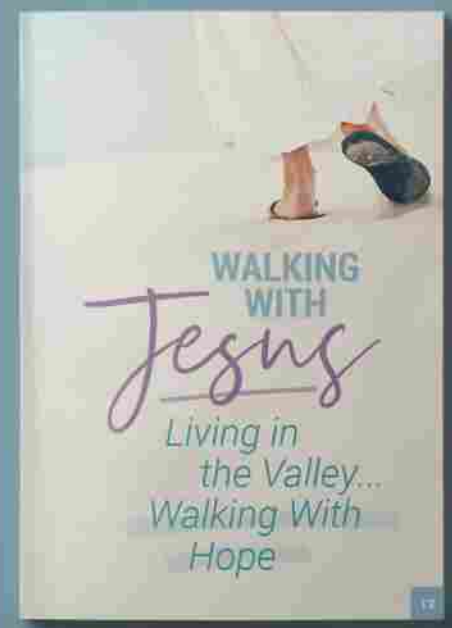
I believe that God is worthy of my praise and gratitude. In my prayers, I will express my thankfulness to God for His mercy and goodness in my life.

YES **UNDECIDED**

I am so thankful that I have the opportunity and the privilege to come before God as one of His children, to claim His power in my life and in the lives of the people I pray for.

YES **UNDECIDED**


Draw
near to
God
and
He will
draw
near
to you.
James 4:8



CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY IN PART 12:

LIVING IN THE VALLEY... WALKING WITH HOPE

What to do we do when faced with challenges or grapple with questions that we don't understand? God has promised to be with us always, even in seasons of doubt. When your faith is tested, learn why keeping your eyes fixed on Jesus and claiming his promises is the best decision you can make.



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WALKING WITH Jesus

Living in the Valley... Walking With Hope

At the crossroads of faith



In 1981, Stuart McAllister was part of a mission team whose primary task was to help the church in Eastern Europe transport Bibles, hymn books and Christian literature to believers behind the Iron Curtain.

On one occasion, while attempting to cross the border from Austria into what was then Communist-ruled Czechoslovakia, Stuart and his colleague were arrested and thrown into prison after guards discovered their concealed cargo.

In the recesses of his mind without any idea of when or if he might be released—it what would be a two-week confinement—questions and doubts began to surface in Stuart's mind.

"In such circumstances," Stuart writes [in retrospect], "we are forced to face what we mean when we speak of faith. Do we believe, in spite of evidence to the contrary? Do we believe no matter what? How do we handle the deep and pressing questions our own minds bring when our expectations and reality do not match?

"During my time in prison, I expected God to do certain things, and to do them in a sensible way and time. I expected God to act quickly, and that I would sense his intervention. My reading of Scripture, my grasp of God's promises, my trust in the reliability of God's Word, the teaching I had received, and the message I had embraced, led me to expect certain things. When this did not occur in the way I expected, or in the timing that I thought, I was both confused and angry."

"Since I had never given any conscious thought to worldviews in general, or mine in particular, I was unaware how many unexamined assumptions I was living by. I did not realise how little change had penetrated my heart, and under pressure the gaps were painfully revealed and felt.

From the perspective of time, I can now answer these questions meaningfully, but I needed the experience of doubt and hardship to show me how much I did not know or was not rooted in the biblical answers to these core questions. A worldview that merely answers questions intellectually is insufficient; it must also meet us existentially where we have to live." (*Beyond Opinion: Living the Faith We Defend,* Thomas Nelson, 2007)

McAllister's encounter with doubt is not unique. When faced with life-threatening situations like McAllister, everyone is forced to re-evaluate their world view. This is one of life's most difficult struggles—what do we do when our beliefs system seems to fail us? How do you move forward?

If this describes you, be assured you are not alone in this struggle. The experience, however, raises key questions of what to do with doubt when it arises?

We need to realise that there are many things that cannot be explained. Should we be surprised to find that some things in the spiritual world are difficult to explain or understand. While our minds might be too narrow to reach these higher thoughts, God invites us to draw near to Him and reason with Him (see Isaiah 1:18). This act provides a framework that will help us deal with fears and doubt.

DEALING WITH DOUBT

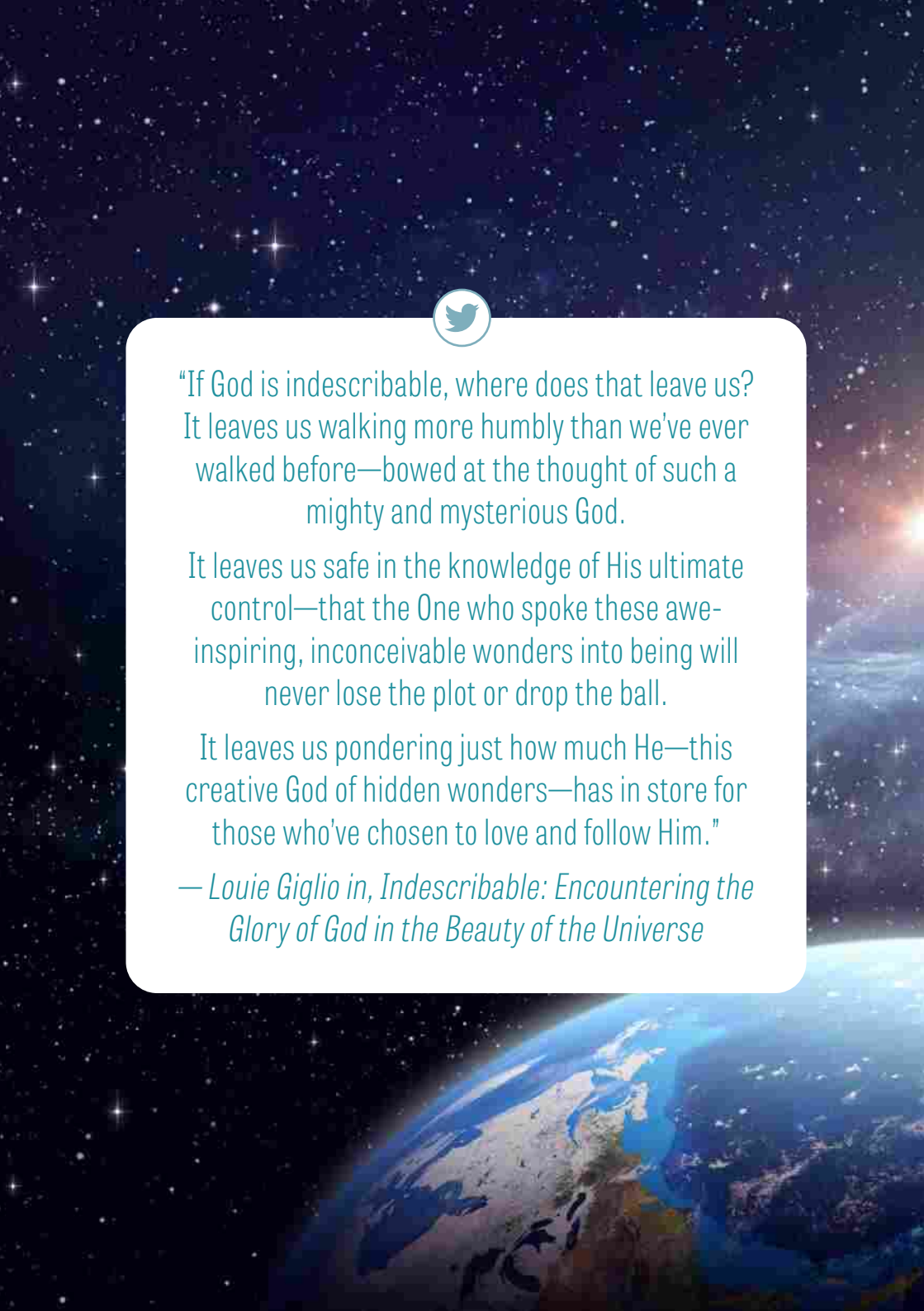
Q1	*How did Jesus respond when He was asked to prove His identity?*
	▢ *Matthew 16:1–4*
	▢ *Luke 11:16, 29, 30* ▢ *Mark 8:11, 12* ▢ *John 2:18; 4:48*

It isn't uncommon to experience doubt; even some messages in the Bible seem hard to understand and can raise scepticism. Whatever the trial, Satan will seek to convince you of these uncertainties and shake your faith.

The good news is, God never asks us to believe without providing sufficient evidence upon which to base our faith. While God has given such evidence, He does not remove the possibility of doubt.

Q2	*Why is God beyond our human understanding?*
	▢ *Isaiah 55:8, 9*
	▢ *Psalm 92:5; 77:19* ▢ *Matthew 11:25* ▢ *Romans 11:34–36*

Although the fullness of God is beyond our comprehension, this doesn't mean we're unable to understand or appreciate aspects of His character. While God continues to reveal Himself to us, the Infinite will remain clothed in mystery.

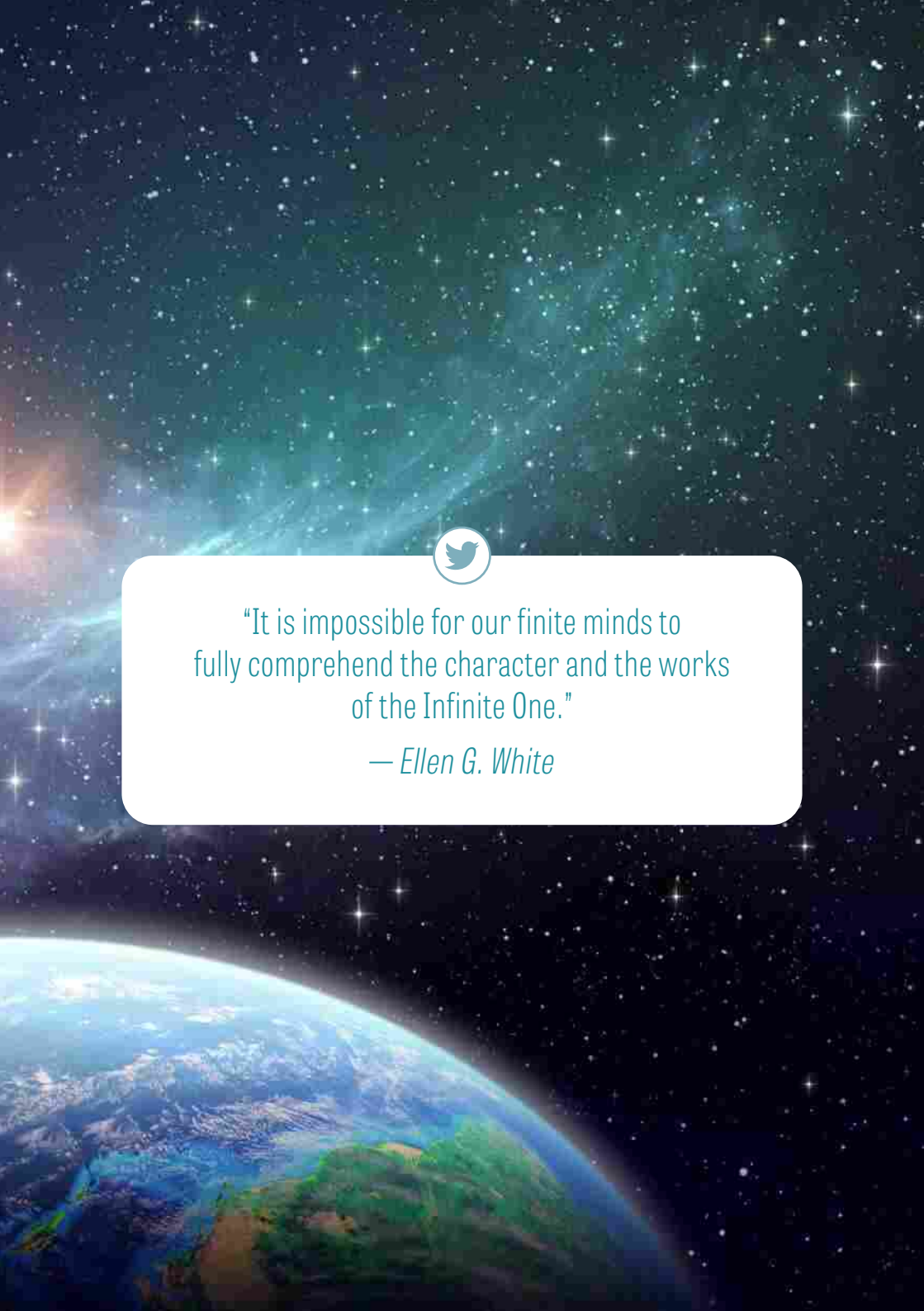


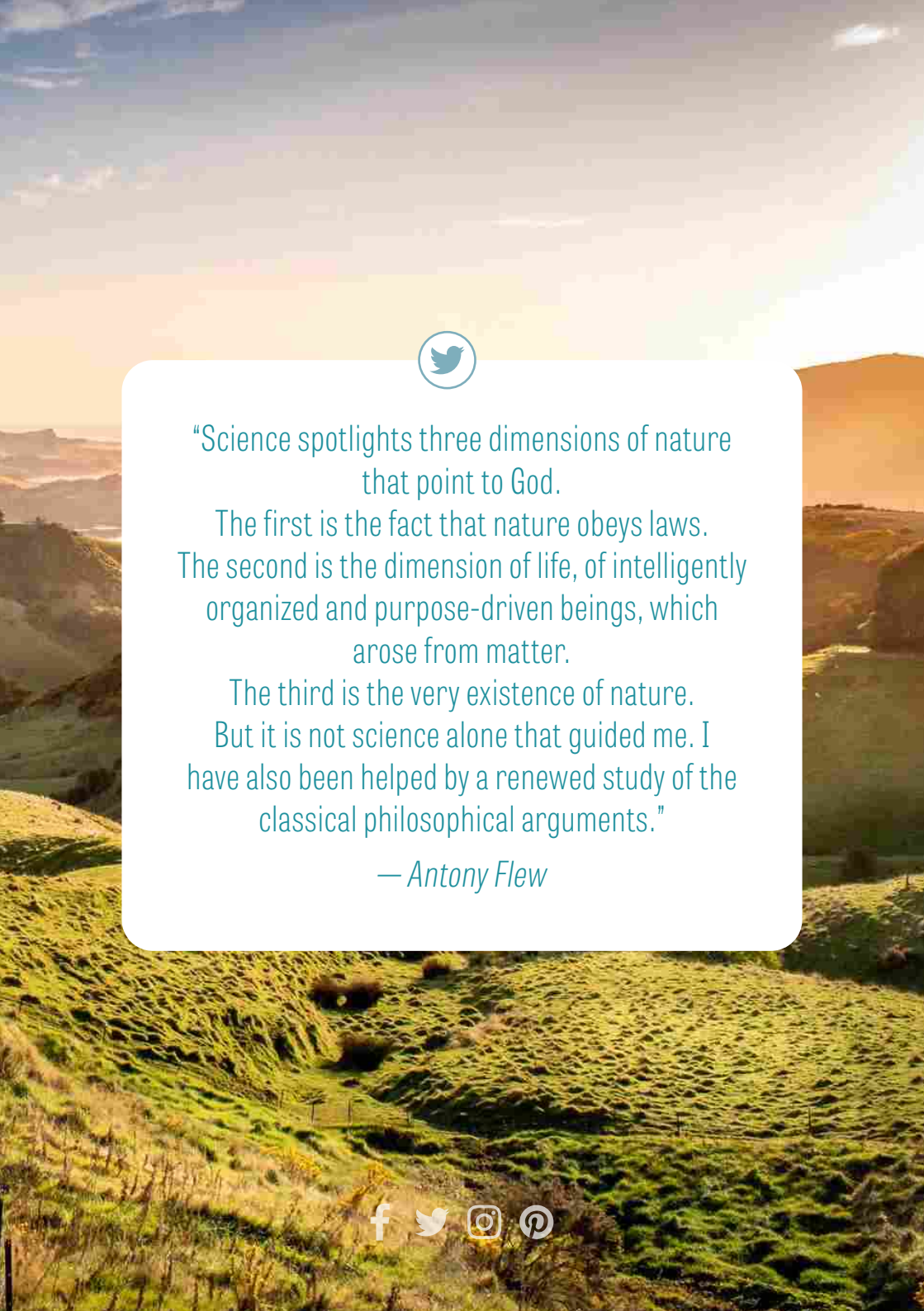
"If God is indescribable, where does that leave us? It leaves us walking more humbly than we've ever walked before—bowed at the thought of such a mighty and mysterious God.

It leaves us safe in the knowledge of His ultimate control—that the One who spoke these awe-inspiring, inconceivable wonders into being will never lose the plot or drop the ball.

It leaves us pondering just how much He—this creative God of hidden wonders—has in store for those who've chosen to love and follow Him."

— Louie Giglio in, Indescribable: Encountering the Glory of God in the Beauty of the Universe


"It is impossible for our finite minds to
fully comprehend the character and the works
of the Infinite One."
— Ellen G. White



"Science spotlights three dimensions of nature that point to God.
The first is the fact that nature obeys laws.
The second is the dimension of life, of intelligently organized and purpose-driven beings, which arose from matter.
The third is the very existence of nature.
But it is not science alone that guided me. I have also been helped by a renewed study of the classical philosophical arguments."

— Antony Flew

GOD'S MESSAGE TO US

Q3	*How do people react to Bible texts they don't fully comprehend?*
	☐ *2 Peter 3:16, 17*
	☐ *Romans 16:17, 18* ☐ *Jeremiah 23:35, 36* ☐ *2 Timothy 3:5–7; 2:16, 23*

Some teachings in the Bible are difficult to fully explain or understand—the Godhead, the Creation, the entrance of sin and the birth of Jesus, to name a few. Although we may not fully comprehend these things, we have no reason to doubt the Bible simply because we cannot understand these mysteries.

Everyday, we are surrounded by things in the natural world that we simply cannot fathom. The difficulty lies solely in the weakness and narrowness of the human mind.

As the Bible unfolds truth to the reader, the human heart is engaged in the awesome contemplation of God. Rather than creating doubt, this should inspire deeper faith, study and assurance, that the Bible is unmistakeably the Word of God.

"If God's greatness and majesty could be grasped by finite minds, then the Bible would not bear the unmistakeable credentials of divine authority." *Ellen G. White*

Q4	*Why do we need help to understand God's word?*
	☐ *1 Corinthians 2:14*
	☐ *1 Corinthians 2:12, 13* ☐ *Matthew 13:11* ☐ *Romans 8:5, 6* ☐ *John 3:6; 8:43; 16:13; 14:26* ☐ *Proverbs 14:6*

The truth's revealed in the Bible match the needs and desires of our heart. These truths are both complex and simple; they encompass the deepest themes of our existence, and yet, are clear enough that all who hear them can understand the plan of salvation.

The Bible points us to Jesus and invites us to put our faith in Him as the only One who saves. The more we study the Bible and seek God's truth, the more our belief in God will deepen as our human thoughts begin to comprehend the greatness of God.

Q5	*What do we need to guard our hearts against?*
	☐ *Hebrews 3:12*
	☐ *Hebrews 3:19; 10:38* ☐ *Matthew 13:58; 17:20* ☐ *Mark 9:24* ☐ *Romans 3:3, 4; 11:20*

EXPERIENCING GOD'S WISDOM

People who don't believe in God will often point to the mysteries of the Bible as a reason to deny it. Believing in God doesn't mean we are immune from doubts or that we will understand the Bible perfectly.

When reading the Bible, some people are snared by their own pride believing they should by their own intelligence be able to understand the Bible. In holding to such a position, they are actually denying God's power and the authority of the Bible.

We must never impose an interpretation of the Bible that is contrary to the teachings of God. God is infinite; in Him are all the "treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3).

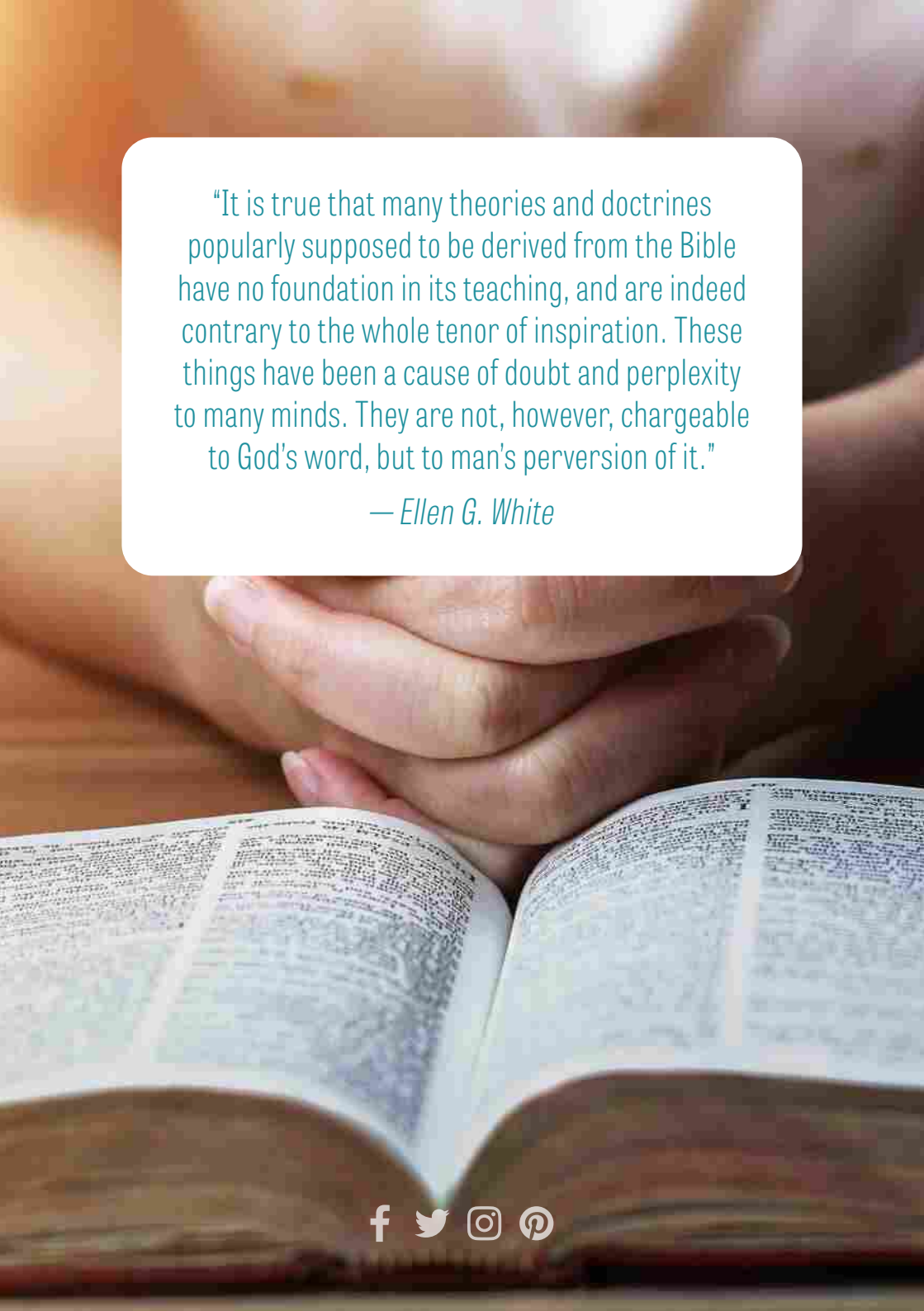
Q6	*How is God's wisdom different to our own?*
	▢ *Deuteronomy 29:29*
	▢ *Romans 11:33, 34* ▢ *Daniel 2:22* ▢ *Matthew 13:35* ▢ *Acts 1:7* ▢ *1 Corinthians 2:10–11*

When was the last time you stopped to ponder the limitless and infinite nature of God?

We will never reach a point where we know everything about God. However, God intends that even in this life, the truths of the Bible will forever reveal a knowledge of Him.

We must have the simplicity and faith of a little child that is eager to learn. When you open the Bible, pray and ask the Holy Spirit to guide your understanding. The Holy Spirit will give an understanding that will help you know the limitless and infinite God.

Throughout eternity, we will be searching, learning, and amazed at God's wisdom, goodness and power.



"It is true that many theories and doctrines popularly supposed to be derived from the Bible have no foundation in its teaching, and are indeed contrary to the whole tenor of inspiration. These things have been a cause of doubt and perplexity to many minds. They are not, however, chargeable to God's word, but to man's perversion of it."

— Ellen G. White

"What's a nine-foot-tall Goliath to a star-forming God? Dwell on the size of your God, not the height of your giants." *Louie Giglio*

Q7	*How can we experience God's wisdom?*
	☐ *James 1:5*
	☐ *1 Corinthians 2:12* ☐ *Romans 8:1, 5, 6* ☐ *2 Corinthians 4:4* ☐ *John 16:14, 15* ☐ *1 John 2:20, 27; 5:20*

God shares His truth throughout the Bible. To help us understand the Bible, the Holy Spirit—the same source that inspired the writing of the Bible—is ever present to reveal God's deepest truths.

OPENING OUR MINDS TO THE BIBLE

Q8	*What will you discover when you allow the Holy Spirit to guide your study of the Bible?*
	☐ *John 16:13*
	☐ *John 14:17, 26; 15:6; 8:32; 7:16–18* ☐ *1 John 4:6*

God has given us intelligent and creative minds to think, reason and make decisions. Reading the Bible engages both the heart and mind as no other study can. The reading of the Bible should be approached with the same humility and reverence as if we were to enter the very presence of God. Ask God for His Holy Spirit to guide your mind and give understanding for what you are reading.

"Nothing is so calculated to enlarge the mind and strengthen the intellect as the study of the Bible. No other study will so elevate the soul and give vigour to the faculties as the study of the living oracles." *Ellen G. White*

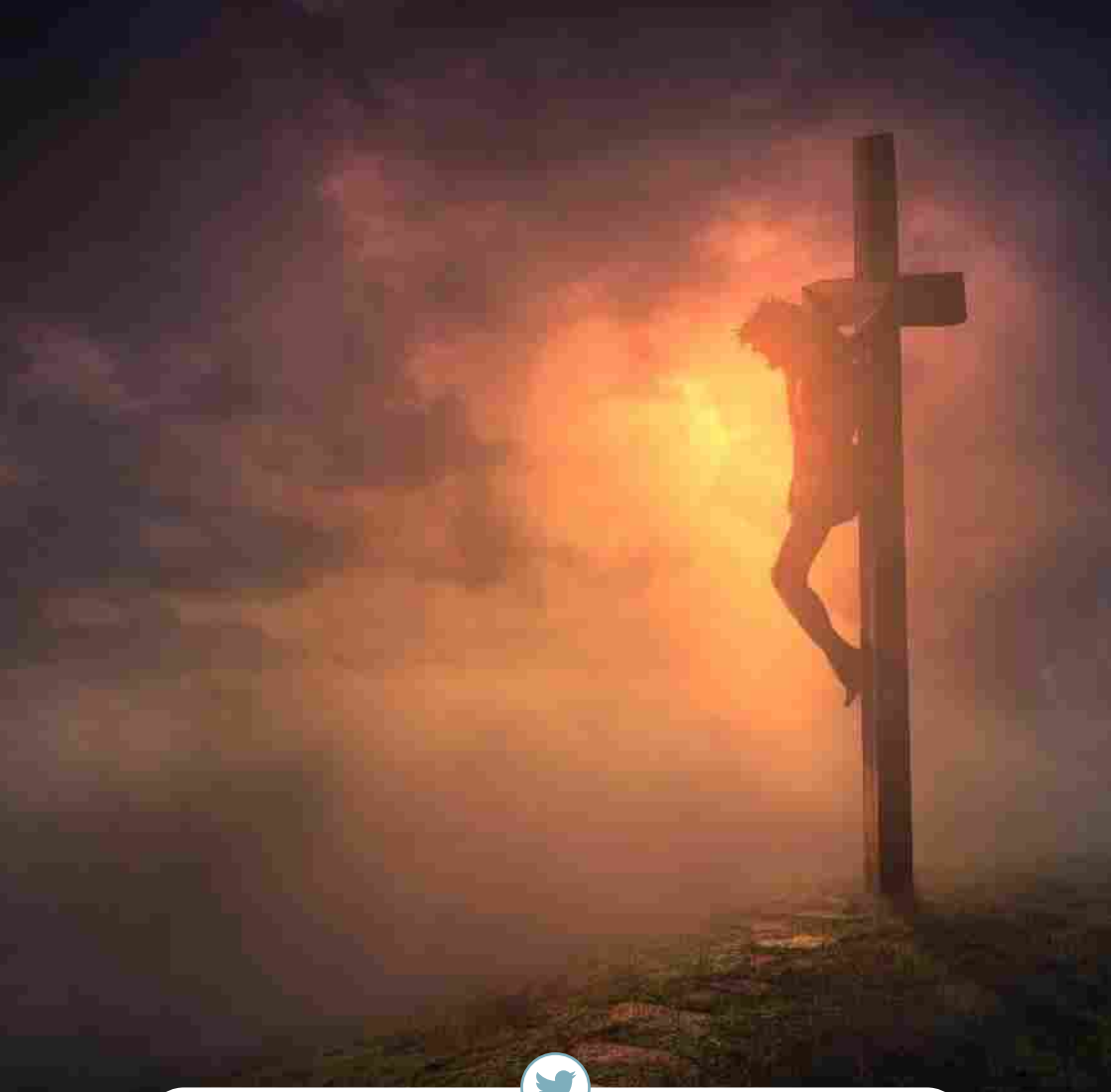
The student of the Bible should be taught to approach it in the spirit of a learner. We are to search the pages not for proof to sustain our opinions but in order to know what God says.

Q9	*Who is the source of all wisdom?*
	☐ *James 1:17, 3:17*
	☐ *James 1:17; 3:17* ☐ *Job 28:12–28* ☐ *Matthew 7:7–11* ☐ *Proverbs 3:5–7; 9:4–6; 2:3–11*

God has promised to help us understand the Bible—even aspects that may at first seem difficult or unclear, God can reveal His truth if we ask for help.

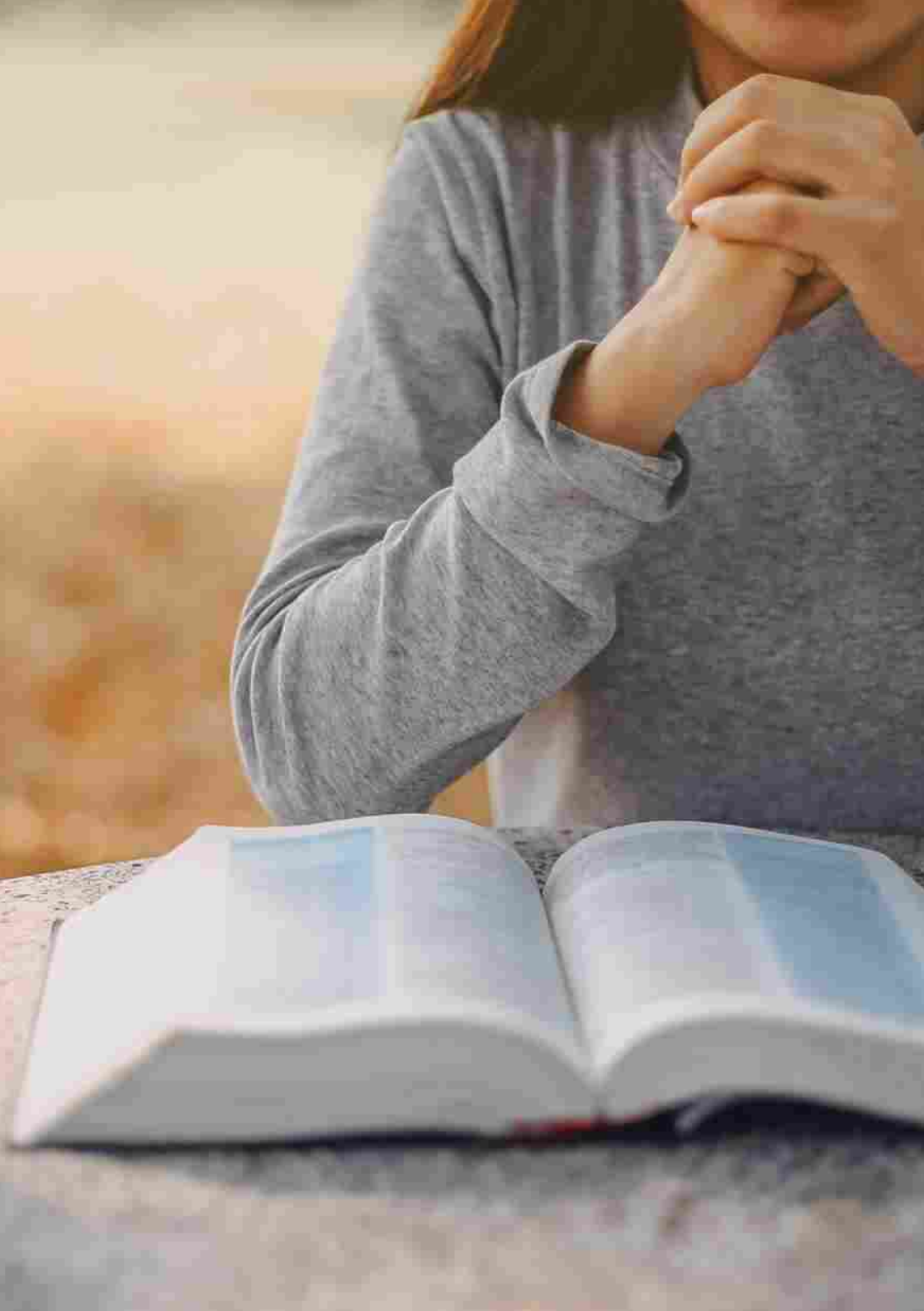
Reading the Bible doesn't automatically mean we will understand it. It is possible to read the Bible and not gain anything from it. This happens when we read without a humble and teachable heart. If our hearts and mind are not fixed upon God, they will fill with doubt as Satan seeks to divert our attention and magnify any uncertainties we may have. In order to find truth, we must be wanting to know the truth and be willing to obey it.

"Disguise it as they may, the real cause of doubt and scepticism, in most cases, is the love of sin." *Ellen G. White*



"The wisdom of God devised a way for the love of God to deliver sinners from the wrath of God while not compromising the righteousness of God."

— John Piper



ASKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

Q10	*What does Bible help us understand?*
	☐ *John 7:17, 17:17*
	☐ *John 8:31, 32* ☐ *Psalm 119:10, 101, 102* ☐ *Micah 4:2* ☐ *Acts 17:11*

Instead of focusing on all the things that you may not understand, it is better to focus on the truth God has revealed to you. By so doing, you will see His teachings more clearly and increase your understanding of Scripture.

God invites us to prove for ourselves the reality of the Bible. Instead of relying only on the experiences of others and what they have learnt from the Bible, we are to experience Him personally and claim His promises for ourselves.

As we understand the fullness of God, our doubts and darkness will disappear in the light of His presence.

Q11	*How does knowing Jesus help us in everyday life?*
	☐ *Colossians 1:13*
	☐ *Ephesians 5:7–9* ☐ *1 Peter 2:9* ☐ *1 John 2:8* ☐ *Romans 6:20–22; 4:20, 21* ☐ *Titus 3:3–7*

Our personal experience with Jesus is a powerful witness. The love and truth of God will be self-evident and clearly demonstrate the power of the Bible and Jesus to transform lives.

Q12	*How does the Bible shape your spiritual journey?*
	☐ *2 Timothy 3:15–16*
	☐ *Luke 24:3* ☐ *Psalm 92:12* ☐ *Proverbs 4:18* ☐ *Hosea 14:1–7* ☐ *Malachi 4:2* ☐ *Ephesians 4:15* ☐ *2 Thessalonians 1:3* ☐ *1 Peter 2:25*

When we walk with Jesus, our faith will grow and our understanding of the Bible will become clearer. Every day, we will see the beauty of the truths He has given to us.

Throughout life, although much has perplexed us and doubts have arisen, we can rejoice that in time, God will make all things plain. Things hard to understand will find explanation; where our finite minds discovered only confusion, we shall see the most perfect and beautiful harmony.

By faith we look forward to a new time. In grasping the truths of the Bible, you will be connected to a living God, that will bring new life and joy to your wearied heart.



"Bible study without Bible experience is pointless. Knowing Psalm 23 is different from knowing the shepherd."

— Kingsley Opuwari Manuel

REFLECTION

I choose to believe the evidence God has given.

YES **UNDECIDED**

I believe God has given me the Bible to help me to understand His love and character.

YES **UNDECIDED**

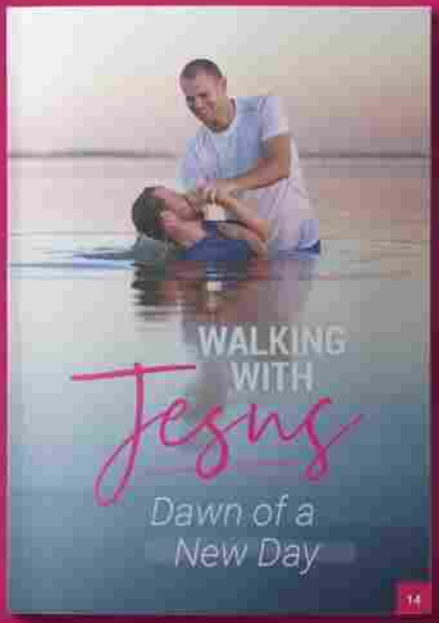
I recognise that God's wisdom is beyond my understanding. I believe He knows best, and I will put my trust in Him, believing that He is always in control.

YES **UNDECIDED**

I know Satan wants me to doubt God and the truths of the Bible, however even when Satan tries to tempt me, I will choose to follow God and continue to put my faith in Him.

YES **UNDECIDED**





CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY IN PART 13:

DAWN OF A NEW DAY

When we follow Jesus, our lives become a living witness to His message of love and hope to share with those around us. God promises to supply us with His endless love and strength. We can be glad in Jesus even when we face challenges, because in Him we find hope and peace despite life's uncertainties.



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