



HOW TO KNOW, READ, LIVE AND SHOW THE GOSPEL

TWENTY-
FOUR
LESSON
WORKBOOK

FOLLOWING **KING JESUS**

SCOT MCKNIGHT

AND BECKY CASTLE MILLER

FOLLOWING KING JESUS

HOW TO KNOW, READ, LIVE, AND SHOW THE GOSPEL

SCOT MCKNIGHT
AND BECKY CASTLE MILLER

 ZONDERVAN®

DEDICATION

*To the people of Damascus Road International Church.
Continue to follow King Jesus as you love as Jesus loved, teach
what Jesus taught, and obey as Jesus obeyed.*

—Becky Castle Miller

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Following King Jesus

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INTRODUCTION

By Becky Castle Miller

What is the difference between a Christian and a follower of Jesus?

There shouldn't be one.

But in practice, often there is. We "*Christ-ians*" don't always follow the One whose name we bear. I know, because I've called myself a Christian for thirty-three years, but for long stretches of that time, the religion I practiced had little to do with Jesus.

I inherited Christianity along with brown eyes and big feet. I am a preacher's kid, which gives fair credit to my dad, the preacher, but not enough to my mom, who raised me on Bible stories and prayed with me at bedtime when I was four to "ask Jesus into my heart." I lived in a Missouri parsonage and rode my Big Wheel tricycle on the short path between the back door of the house and the back door of the church. I learned to sing the praise chorus "As the Deer" before I learned "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star." Christianity was not a part of my life; it *was* my life. Even though I knew all about Jesus, he got awfully buried under "Christianity" and the rules that went along with it. The Christianity I grew up with tried to keep me safe:

- Believe precisely this way and your doctrine will be safe. (And shun anyone who believes differently because they aren't real Christians.)
- Follow these principles about relationships and your heart will be safe.
- Do these practices and your spiritual life will be safe.
- Stay in your place and the men in authority will keep you safe.
- Keep all these God-ordained rules, and you will have a happy, blessed life and be safe in heaven when you die.

There was only one problem: the rules didn't work. One by one, I found out the promises were false. The rules didn't keep me safe from a broken heart. They didn't keep me safe from abuse. They didn't keep me safe from "Christian" leaders who misused their power. My Christianity

crumbled in my twenties when I realized I wasn't safe, and I wasn't happy, and some of the well-known Christian teachers who had made the promises and the rules turned out to be hypocrites I could no longer trust.

I couldn't handle the feeling of my spiritual guts tumbling out, so I held myself together with the rubber bands of willpower and denial. It worked for a few years while I graduated college, got a job, got married, had a couple kids, and half-heartedly volunteered at my church. Not half-hearted because I lacked enthusiasm, but half-hearted because I was so locked up to keep myself from *feeling* anything that I only had half a heart to give.

Postpartum depression and repressed grief and trauma finally stretched all those rubber bands till they snapped, and I fell apart. An emotional breakdown left me crying every day, barely functioning, and fighting for my life against suicidal thoughts. That raw, empty place is where God met me in the wild comfort of the Holy Spirit and set me on a healing journey that transformed not only my mind and my heart but also my spirit. As I healed through therapy and antidepressants, I began deconstructing and reconstructing my Christianity. Through that whole painful process, I learned what Christianity was really about.

It's not about a set of inward beliefs and outward cultural religious practices. It's not about safety, and it's not about rules. It's about being transformed inside and out into knowing, thinking, feeling, acting, and loving like Jesus. In other words, being a Christian is about *actually following Jesus*.

Scot McKnight writes about his transformed thinking on what a Christian is supposed to be in his book *One Life*:

The question: *What is a Christian?* . . .

My former answer: *A Christian is someone who has accepted Jesus, and the Christian life focuses on personal practices of piety.*

Now in my third decade of studying and teaching the Gospels, I want to sketch how Jesus understood what we call "the Christian life." If we were to ask Jesus our question—*What is a Christian?*—what would he say? . . . Jesus' answer, which he stated a number of times, was, "Follow me." Or, "Become my disciple." (Page 15)

Jesus is disruptive—he burst onto the scene bringing chaotic joy into organized religion. Jesus is weird—he healed a blind man by smearing mud on the guy's eyes. Jesus is dangerous—he and many of his disciples got themselves beaten and killed. It turns out that Jesus never promised to keep us safe through rules. He even warned that we would have trouble, that following him was risky to comfortable lives. What he did promise was that he would be *with us* in the suffering. And that promise is one I've found to be true.

Six years ago, I accepted an invitation to move with my family to the Netherlands to serve at an international church. Growing with disciples from all over the world has taught me that following Jesus can look like seven billion different things. You can be Indian and follow Jesus.

Or British. Or Nigerian. Or Chinese. You can be Catholic or Anglican or Protestant or Orthodox, Pentecostal or Liturgical (or any of these). I've seen it all in my church. Whatever style our following Jesus takes, there are only two rules: love God and love people. And we best learn how to live that out together with others in the church.

A few years ago, our pastor took us through “The Jesus Life Challenge.” We read one of the gospel accounts of Jesus' life each month for a year, cycling through the four Gospels three times. Spending so much time immersed in the life of Jesus changed *my* life. It helped me continue peeling off the layers of culture and tradition and *rules* that the Christianity of my growing-up years had slapped on top of Jesus himself, and I learned to better orient my Christian life around what Jesus actually taught and did.

As I worked to influence the spiritual formation of my church through Bible study groups, I saw the gaps in our people's discipleship process—and in my own. I read and researched about discipleship and tried multiple approaches to helping people become and grow as students of Jesus. Being re-discipled in this global fellowship of Jesus followers has shown me that it all comes down to this: discipleship is—Christianity is—*Following King Jesus*.

As I've studied with Scot for the past two years at Northern Seminary, I've grown as an academic theologian, but more importantly, I've grown as a follower of Jesus. Scot follows Jesus—this is evident in the ways Scot's scholarship, his ministry, his relationships, and his everyday life are guided by Jesus. In many ways, my conversion story is similar to Scot's. (You can read his story in the introduction to the “Living the Gospel” lessons.) We both grew up in church, both struggled under the weight of legalism, and both found freedom in actually becoming followers of Jesus. I don't ever again want to think I can be an adherent to the religion of Christianity without being a daily apprentice of the Christ.

I've passed on my brown eyes to two of my five children, and my oldest already has feet as big as mine (and steals my shoes). I hope I'm passing Jesus on to them too, in all his complexity and simplicity. Yesterday I was walking with my four-year-old, and we passed a giant crucifix, and she started talking about Jesus and God. I began trying to explain Trinitarian theology, but she interrupted me. “I really want to *see* Jesus,” she said.

I got a lump in my throat. “So do I.” I can't wait to see him face to face.

I don't know where you are in your understanding of Jesus and in your journey of becoming like him. Maybe you are totally new to believing in and following Jesus. Or maybe you've been a Christian for a long time, but you want to be re-discipled in the ways of Jesus, better shaping your life after his. Whatever your starting point, we invite you to spend the next twenty-four weeks with us learning more about what it means to follow King Jesus and to begin putting that into practice.

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

This workbook is made up of four sections that address core ideas in the life of following Jesus. The major themes are taken from Scot's books, in this order:

- Knowing the Gospel (*The King Jesus Gospel*)
- Reading the Gospel (*The Blue Parakeet*, second edition)
- Living the Gospel (*One Life*)
- Showing the Gospel (*A Fellowship of Differents*)

Each of the four sections has six lessons. Each lesson is divided into *Personal Study* and *Group Discussion*. You'll spend time on your own throughout each week reading an excerpt from one of Scot's books (abbreviations used are: KJG in Part 1, BP in Part 2, OL in Part 3, and FOD in Part 4; next you'll read passages from the Bible and answer questions to help you study, pray, and act on what you're learning; and finally you'll reflect by journaling. Then you'll get together with a small group of other people to discuss what you're learning, to do activities to help you interact with these ideas, and to pray for each other. Before you move on to the next lesson, you'll take time to rest.

Here's a little more information about some of the aspects of this workbook.

JESUS CREED

When someone asked Jesus what was the greatest commandment, he said it was to love God, and he added that the second greatest commandment was to love other people. Scot calls this statement "the Jesus Creed." He wrote a book by that name in 2004, and it's also the name of his blog. This is what Scot says about the Jesus Creed:

I began a practice of beginning and ending each day by saying the Jesus Creed. Then I made myself a promise that I'd say the Jesus Creed every time it came to mind, even if it came to mind fifty times per day (which sometimes it has). What happened to me is that I became much more conscious of the need to be more loving. Believe me when I say this is dangerous to your moral health, because it calls into question both our attitudes and practices.

My proposal to you if you want to be a follower of Jesus is to begin and end each day by saying the Jesus Creed, and then say it whenever it comes to mind . . . and then watch what happens to your life. (Page 53, OL)

Scot opens each one of his seminary classes by having all the students say the Jesus Creed together with him: “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.” Repeating the priorities of Jesus to ourselves helps us make them our own priorities. In each lesson and each group meeting, you'll say the Jesus Creed out loud—if it feels a little silly at first, keep going anyway. You might become like me and many of his other students who now feel like class hasn't really started until we say the Jesus Creed. May these words sink deep into your heart, soul, mind, and body.

PRAYER

Jesus taught his disciples how to pray by giving them this model prayer:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not 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)*

Praying like Jesus is one way we can shape our lives to be like his life. In every lesson in this book, you will conclude your prayer time with this prayer, which is often called the Lord's Prayer or the Our Father.

REFLECTION

Processing your thoughts and ideas by writing them down can help you figure out what you think on a topic. Each lesson in this book will give you a prompt for journaling to help you

* Or from *evil*; some later manuscripts *one*,/ *for yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

clarify what you are learning. These entries may also give you a useful tool to map your growth and progress. Hopefully you will see your ideas evolve over the weeks of this study, and you'll notice how Jesus is shaping your mind and heart.

SMALL GROUP

If you are doing this study with a church, your church may have already set you up with a group facilitator, host, and other group members. If you are doing this on your own or with a group of friends, think about the logistics of your group. How many members will you have? Six people might be a good number, though you could meet with two to four or even eight to twelve. A smaller group might get to have deeper discussions but can make it harder to have enough people to consistently meet every week. A larger group may have more lively discussions but will likely have longer meetings! Decide who will facilitate the conversations, who will host your group, and when will you meet. For the facilitators, there is an appendix with tips on leading a small group to help you prepare. (Important: read through the group discussion guide *before* your meeting. Some of the weeks have several activities to choose between or supplies you'll want to prepare.)

REST

Pursuing holistic health for spirit, mind, and body includes rest. Each lesson concludes with a different exercise or approach to help you learn how to incorporate rest into your discipleship.



PART 1

KNOWING THE GOSPEL

Our pastor doesn't really preach the gospel very often," said a well-intentioned woman in my church.

I squinted at her over my mug. "He just spent the entire year going through the Gospels, looking at the story of Jesus and encouraging us to be like Jesus."

"But he doesn't really tell people how to be saved!"

Ah, I realized what she was saying. "You mean he doesn't give *altar calls* very often?"

"Yeah! He doesn't preach the gospel."

I sipped my coffee to hide my smile. A few years before, I might have said the same things as my friend.

I thought of our church's motto that we repeat together every Sunday: *We the church, as followers of Jesus, will love as Jesus loved, teach what Jesus taught, and obey as Jesus obeyed.* I've never been in a more gospel-centered church, and it has changed me.

I said, "I think Pastor Matt is more focused on helping people count the cost of following Jesus and become long-term disciples than he is on making an emotional appeal for a momentary decision."

Is "the gospel" an altar call? Is it telling people how to pray a prayer to "get saved"? Is it a persuasive pitch that addresses an individual's sin by offering them individual forgiveness and an individual ticket to heaven? When I was growing up in church and learning about the Christian faith, I would have said yes. I thought "gospel" meant a message about sin as the sickness and Jesus as the cure, so "evangelism" meant convincing people to accept that message and convert to Christianity.

I'm a big fan of the British TV show *Doctor Who*. The Doctor is an alien from the planet Gallifrey who travels through time and space saving the day in a vessel called the T.A.R.D.I.S. On the outside, it looks like a 1960s police call box, about the size and shape of a red British phone booth, but blue. The Doctor sometimes travels with human companions, and it's a running gag in the show for a new companion to creak open the T.A.R.D.I.S. door and discover a massive spaceship control room—so much larger than the small exterior! Hallways lead off to a labyrinth of passageways and other rooms, including a swimming pool. The humans almost always express their shock by saying, "It's bigger on the inside!" (Though one said, "It's smaller on the outside!")

As I have become more serious about studying theology and growing as a disciple of Jesus, I feel like I'm opening the door of the gospel and gasping, overwhelmed at the beauty and wonder and limitless places to explore—"It's so much bigger on the inside!" I'm learning that "gospel" is more comprehensive, more incredible, and more all-encompassing than a short, individualistic message leading to a one-time decision. The gospel is the whole story of God and God's people, the story that goes from first creation to new creation and hinges in the middle on the incarnation of Jesus and his life and work and teaching and death and resurrection and ascension. The gospel is an invitation to be a part of God's work in remaking the entire cosmos.

The conflation of "gospel" with "personal salvation decision" is pervasive, and it limits the gospel. It misses the point of the gospel Jesus taught. Throughout Galilee and in all the towns and villages he visited, Jesus proclaimed the Good News about the kingdom. The good news is the kingdom news, and the kingdom news is good. There is no gospel apart from the kingdom of God, and there is no gospel apart from the King.

If "preaching the gospel" or "gospelizing" simply means asking for a one-time verbal agreement with a set of beliefs about personal salvation, I am no longer interested in doing it. I've seen that message fill churches with people who do not live like subjects of the kingdom, like followers of King Jesus. But if gospelizing means telling the story of Jesus, the King of God's people, who are gathered into God's present and future kingdom, then I am excited to proclaim it, to teach what Jesus taught.

Most of evangelism today is obsessed with getting someone to make a *decision*; the apostles, however, were obsessed with making *disciples*. Those two words—decision and disciples—are behind this entire book. Evangelism that focuses on decisions short circuits . . . the design of the gospel, while evangelism that aims at disciples slows down to offer the full gospel of Jesus and the apostles. (Page 18, KJG)

I believe the word *gospel* has been hijacked by what we believe about personal salvation, and the gospel itself has been reshaped to facilitate making "decisions." The result of this hijacking is that "gospel" no longer means in our world what it originally meant to either Jesus or the apostles. (Page 26, KJG)

This section of the workbook looks at what "gospel" meant to Jesus and Paul and Peter, to help us reclaim a biblical understanding of gospel for today. And as we understand it better, we can share that good news by "gospelizing" and creating a gospel culture.

One important point before we begin: *the Gospels* are the four first books of the New Testament—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—and they are written records of the life and teachings of Jesus that could be considered memoirs of the apostles or biographies of Jesus. *The gospel* is a message of good news from God—what exactly that message involves is the focus of these lessons. They will also touch on the ways that the Gospels and the gospel interact.

LESSON 1

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

Learning intent: Disciples will learn a short and clear definition of the gospel: *The Story of Jesus as the resolution of Israel's Story.*

Spiritual formation intent: Disciples will experience all the aspects of this workbook's approach to discipleship and will practice reading, studying the Bible, journaling, praying, spending time with their small group, and resting as facets of growing as followers of Jesus.

■ PERSONAL STUDY ■

READING

As you begin your discipleship time today, say the Jesus Creed out loud:

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.

Pre-reading question

1. What is “the gospel”? How would you explain it in one or two sentences to someone who has never heard this word?

What is the gospel?

You may be surprised. You may think the word *gospel*, a word used in the ancient world for declaring good news about something (like a wedding) but used today for our Christian message, is the one thing we *do* understand. You may think that's the one thing around which there is no fog at all. You may think the gospel is the simple thing, whereas everything else—like politics and eschatology and atonement theory and poverty—cries out for debate. Those issues need to be debated, but we really cannot debate them in a Christian manner until we get the gospel question resolved. I think we've got the gospel wrong, or at least our current understanding is only a pale reflection of the gospel of Jesus and the apostles. We need to go back to the Bible to find the original gospel. (Pages 23–24, KJG)

What the Gospel Is Not

In a recent and very rapid email exchange with Pastor Eric about the meaning of the gospel, I stated that each of the Gospels of the New Testament was the gospel itself. Pastor Eric was not so sure.

. . . He said to me, “The gospel is about our sins, Jesus as our Savior, and our need to believe by accepting him into our heart.”

I pushed back again: Did Jesus preach this gospel?

His response shocked me: “No, Jesus didn't preach this gospel.” Before I could say another word, he sent me another email: “The gospel is not about Jesus as Lord, about being a disciple of Jesus, about the kingdom vision for social justice and changing the world. It's about three things: admitting you're a sinner, understanding Jesus as the Savior on the cross, and believing in that by consciously accepting him as Savior . . . the gospel is about grace so anyone who pushes for kingdom, repentance, and following Jesus is pushing into the realm of works.”

Pastor Eric wants to preach an understandable gospel for all people, and he has been very successful at leading folks to Christ, but he has often (he later admitted to me over the phone) struggled with so many who “accept” Christ but don't “obey” him. That struggle is in part created by his “salvation culture” gospel.

We will argue in this book that the apostolic gospel, because it is a gospel culture gospel and not a salvation culture gospel, did not have this struggle. This struggle is our own making. You can play with the words all you want, but that kind of salvation culture gospel will always create the problem of discipleship.

. . . the gospel of Jesus and that of the apostles, both of which created a *gospel* culture and not simply a salvation culture, was a gospel that carried within it the power, the capacity, and the requirement to summon people who wanted to be “in” to be The Discipled. (Pages 32–33, KJG)

What the Gospel Is

The *Story of Israel*, or the Bible, is the sweep of how the Bible's plot unfolds: the creation of the world as God's temple, the placing of two little Eikons—Adam and Eve as divine image-bearers—in the garden temple of God (called Eden) to represent God, to govern for God, and to relate to God, self, others, and the world in a redemptive way. The single task of representing God and governing God's garden was radically distorted when Adam and Eve rebelled against the good command of God. God banished them from Eden. We can't skip now to Jesus and to the New Testament and think we understand the Story of Israel/the Bible. The Bible, page after page, takes another path. . . .

God chose one person, Abraham, and then through him one people, Israel, and then later the Church, to be God's priests and rulers in this world on God's behalf. What Adam was to do in the Garden—that is, to govern this world redemptively on God's behalf—is the mission God gives to Israel. Like Adam, Israel failed, and so did its kings. So God sent his Son to do what Adam and Israel and the kings did not (and evidently could not) do and to rescue everyone from their sins and systemic evil and Satan (the adversary). Hence, the Son is the one who rules as Messiah and Lord.

Notice this: what God does in sending the Son is to establish Jesus as the Messiah, which means King, and God established in Jesus Christ the kingdom of God, which means the King is ruling in his kingdom. We need to restate this: the idea of King and kingdom are connected to the original creation. God wanted the Eikons, Adam and Eve, to rule in this world. They failed, so God sent his Son to rule. As its King and Messiah and Lord, the Son commissions the Church to bear witness to the world of the redemption in Jesus Christ, the true King, and to embody the kingdom as the people of God.

The Story of Jesus brings the Story of Israel to its *telos* point, to its fulfillment, to its completion, or to its resolution. (Pages 35–36, KJG)

The Story of Jesus is about his kingdom vision, and this kingdom vision emerges out of the creation story, out of Israel's Story of trying to live out God's design for Israel . . . (Page 37, KJG)

[The gospel is] the Story of Jesus as the resolution of Israel's Story. (Page 44, KJG)

Reflection questions on the reading

1. Look back at your answer to the pre-reading question and see how you previously defined the gospel. After completing the reading, how would you define the gospel differently?

2. From the reading above, how would you summarize what the gospel is NOT?

3. Based on your own thoughts and experiences, what else might you add to what the gospel is NOT?

4. Try writing the Story of Israel, as outlined in the reading, in two or three sentences:

BIBLE STUDY

Jesus' Mission Statement (Luke 4)

Luke tells the story of Jesus beginning his public ministry after his baptism and preparation time in the desert. Jesus showed up in his hometown synagogue and read from the sacred scrolls a passage from the prophet Isaiah. This could be considered Jesus' own announcement of the "mission statement" for his work that he was about to start.

Read Luke 4:14–21.

1. Try to imagine Jesus' family and friends listening to him and watching him make this declaration. How might they have felt?

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

2. How do you think Jesus might have felt as he stood in front of his family and friends and proclaimed his identity, his calling, and his work?
3. Jesus said this prophecy was being fulfilled in their hearing, implying that he was the one who was doing these works Isaiah had prophesied. What actions did the Scripture foretell? List them here.
4. Based on what you know about Jesus, which of those actions you listed above did he accomplish? If you want to take more time on your Bible study, look for sections in the Gospels where Jesus did these various works.
5. The goal of a disciple is to become like her or his teacher. If we are followers of Jesus, what kinds of actions should define our lives?

PRAYER

Prayer shapes us, and praying like Jesus prayed can shape us to be like him. Try reading the Lord's Prayer out loud several times, putting emphasis on different words and sentences each time. What do you learn about Jesus from looking at his example of prayer?

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one, for yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

ACTION

Both in his ministry “mission statement” in Luke 4 and throughout his ministry, Jesus focused on people who were poor, people who were imprisoned, people who were blind or suffering other physical ailments, and people who were oppressed.

- Think of a person or people group you know, or at least know about, for each of those categories. Write their names or group identities here:

Poor:

Imprisoned:

Blind/sick:

Oppressed:

- How would Jesus see each of those people or groups? What would he do for them?

REFLECTION

- Begin your journaling process by writing down what you hope to learn through this study. Why are you doing this? What questions do you have about following King Jesus? What do you want to gain during this process? Set a timer for ten minutes and try to keep writing continuously, not worrying about your neatness or spelling or grammar.

■ GROUP DISCUSSION ■

When your group meeting begins, say the Jesus Creed together:

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.

The following questions are based on the personal study you already have completed. Monitor how much time your group has for discussion and answer as many of these questions together as you can.

INTRODUCTION

As this is likely your first meeting together as a group, spend time at the start getting to know each other. Introduce yourselves and share a little about your life and where you are in following King Jesus. Would you consider yourself a Christian? Or are you simply curious to know more about Jesus? Share the stories of your spiritual journeys with each other.

If your group does not already have a facilitator, choose one person to facilitate the group. Or, those who are willing to facilitate could take turns each week reading out the questions and guiding the conversation. Discuss any group logistics that still need to be figured out. Where and when will you meet? How long will your meetings last? Will you share a meal or snacks together? Discuss your expectations for confidentiality: as you share personal information with each other, do you want to make sure that the group members commit to keeping that information only among each other?

READING

■ How did you define the gospel before the reading?

■ How did you define the gospel after the reading?

FOLLOWING KING JESUS

- When have you heard a pastor explain the gospel like Pastor Eric did? What did you think at the time, and what do you think about that explanation now?
- What did you agree with in the reading?
- What did you disagree with in the reading?

BIBLE STUDY

- As you tried to imagine the thoughts and feelings of Jesus and his family and friends in the synagogue scene, what ideas came to mind about this moment?
- What do you think about viewing Luke 4 as Jesus' mission statement for his ministry? Explain why you do or do not think that is an accurate perspective.
- What does this passage reveal to you about Jesus' priorities?
- What are other Gospel passages you would use instead of or in addition to this one to show Jesus' vision or goal for his ministry?

PRAYER

- Did you grow up in a Christian tradition that regularly prayed the Lord's Prayer? If yes, what was your experience with that?

- What do you think about praying a scripted prayer like this?

- As you read the prayer out loud, putting emphasis on different parts, what did you learn or discover?

- Did this feel like praying to you, or did it feel like reading?

ACTION

- Which people or people groups did you list for each of the categories Jesus spoke about in Luke 4? If you named specific individuals and you think they would not like their names shared, you may keep those to yourself.

- What do you think Jesus would say to or do for the people you listed?

- How have you spoken about or spoken to the people you listed?

REFLECTION

Let each group member share their goals for doing this study. (If you have already covered this in your introduction time, you can skip it here.) What do you hope to gain from the personal study time? What do you expect from the small group time?

GROUP PRAYER

Share briefly about your experiences with group prayer in the past, if you have any. Do you feel comfortable praying out loud? Do you mind having others pray for you? Are you okay with holding hands or someone placing a hand on your shoulder or arm?

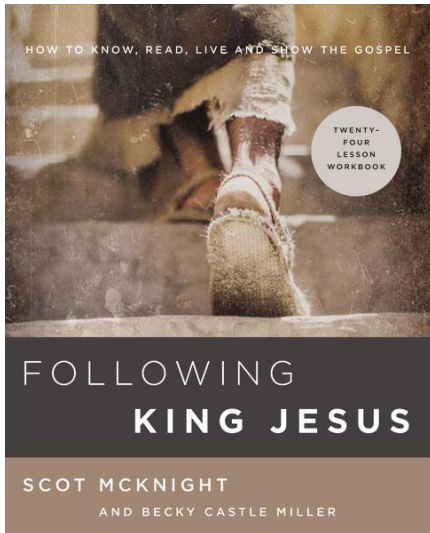
Anyone who would like to can conclude your first session together by praying a closing prayer, asking God to guide and teach you through this study.

As your group meeting ends, pray the Lord's Prayer together.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not 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)

REST

After your first week of study, take a day off and do something you enjoy.



Following **King Jesus**: How to Know, Read, Live, and Show the Gospel

By Scot McKnight

We want to follow King Jesus, but do we know how?

Author and professor Scot McKnight will help you discover what it means to follow King Jesus through 24 lessons based on four of his writings (The King Jesus Gospel, The Blue Parakeet, One.Life, and A Fellowship of Differents). McKnight's unique framework for discipleship is designed to be used for personal study and within disciple-making groups of two or more. In this workbook, McKnight will help you:

- Know the biblical meaning of the gospel
- Read the Bible and understand how to apply it today
- Live as disciples of Jesus in all areas of life
- Show the world God's character through life together in the church

Each lesson, created by Becky Castle Miller, has both Personal Study and Group Discussion sections. The Personal Study section contains a discipleship reading from Scot McKnight, an insightful Bible study, an insightful Bible study, and a time for individual prayer, action, and reflection. The Group Discussion section includes discussion questions and activities to do together with a discipleship group. You'll share insights from your personal study time with each other and explore different ways of living out what you're learning.

Whether you have been a Christian for many years or you are desiring a fresh look at what it means to be a disciple, this workbook is an in-depth guide to what it means to follow King Jesus and to discover how to put that kind of life into practice.

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