

START!

TO FOLLOW

40 Days of Discipleship

Personal Reading and Reflection Guide



Start! To Follow

Personal Reading and Reflection Guide Week 1



Day 1. Read *Start! To Follow*, chapter 1: “Are You His Disciple?”

Day 2. Read Hebrews 6:1 and 1 Peter 2:1–3. What does the Bible say about “growing up” in our salvation and not remaining spiritual babies?

Day 3. When Jesus said, “Follow Me,” in Mark 2:14, He literally meant “Follow with Me.” What’s the difference between those two commands? How could “Follow with Me” be both a command and an encouraging promise?

Day 4. Read Luke 14:26–28, 33. Is Jesus really asking us to hate our family and friends? What is His real message to us here? How does this look in your own life?

Day 5. In your own words, explain this statement: “Either you will have harmony with God and friction with people, or you will have harmony with people and friction with God.” Read John 15:18-19 and 1 John 2:15-17 for further clarity.

Day 6. Read Luke 9:23-25. Jesus said, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.” What does it mean for you to take up our cross daily?

Start! To Follow Personal Reading and Reflection Guide Week 2



Day 1. Read *Start! To Follow*, chapter 2: “Traits of a Disciple.”

Day 2. Read Acts 4:13. When Peter and John stood before the Sanhedrin, the Jewish leaders “realized that they had been with Jesus.” What do you think tipped them off? How can people in your life tell that you have “been with Jesus”?

Day 3. Read *Start! To Follow*, chapter 3: “The Costs of Discipleship.”

Day 4. Read Mark 14:3–9. Mary of Bethany was showing extravagant love when she poured out a whole bottle of highly expensive perfume on Jesus. What motivated her to do that? How did Jesus defend her when she was criticized? What are some ways we can show extravagant love for our Lord and Savior?

Day 5. Read 1 Corinthians 6:19–20. Thinking of your own life, what are some of the biggest implications of these verses? How would your life change if you allowed your life to be guided by these truths every day?

Day 6. Read Hebrews 12:1-3. In Hebrews 12:1 we read, “Let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up” (nlt). What are some of the weights that slow us down in our desire to be disciples of Jesus? What are some of the sins that so easily trip us up?

Start! To Follow Personal Reading and Reflection Guide Week 3



Day 1. Read *Start! To Follow*, chapter 4: “Discipleship and the Bible.”

Day 2. Read Psalm 19:9-10 and Proverbs 2:1-9. To get the most out of Scripture, we must receive and treasure it. In a practical sense, how can you treasure the words of the Bible in your life?

Day 3. Read Acts 17:11. What does it look like to eagerly examine Scripture? The author writes, “We are better off reading five verses slowly and understanding what they mean than reading five chapters quickly and not getting anything out of them.” What are some of the ways we can slow down and get more out of what we are reading in Scripture?

Day 4. Colossians 3:16 says, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” The author notes that the passage could be translated, “Let the word of Christ permeate your life” or “Let the word of Christ be at home inside of you.” What are some practical ways we can do that?

Day 5. Read Psalm 119:9-11 and John 8:31-32. What is the value of actually disciplining ourselves to learn verses from the Bible by heart?

Day 6. Read Hebrews 4:12 and James 1:22-25. In the book, the author writes, “It is not enough to go through the Word of God; the Word of God must go through us. It is not how we mark our Bible; it is how our Bible marks us.” What are some ways we can apply God’s Word to our own lives and situations? How can we make sure Scripture will really impact what we do, say, and think?

Start! To Follow Personal Reading and Reflection Guide Week 4



Day 1. Read *Start! To Follow*, chapter 5: “Discipleship and Prayer.”

Day 2. Read Matthew 6:25-33 and 1 Thessalonians 5:17. If God knows what we need, why doesn’t He give us everything in one big weekly (or monthly) bundle? Why does He want us to come to Him day by day with our needs and requests?

Day 3. The author writes that the Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) should really be called the Disciples’ Prayer. Why is that? How is this prayer a guide for us, rather than something we should always repeat word for word? Pray now, using this prayer as a guide.

Day 4. “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name.” Why is it important for us to think about who we are praying to before we turn to Him with our requests? Read Isaiah 55:6-11. How are your prayers and your life changed by a personal relationship with an infinitely powerful God?

Day 5. Read Matthew 13:53-58, Romans 12:1-2, and Psalm 66:18. The author writes, “A person can’t really pray, ‘Your kingdom come,’ until he or she can first pray, ‘My kingdom go.’” What do you think he means by this? As you consider this, what are the implications for your own life?

Day 6. Read 1 John 5:14-15 and James 4:13. In this week’s chapter, the author stated that most unanswered prayers are outside the will of God. How do these Scriptures help you understand unanswered prayer? How can we begin to align our prayers more closely to God’s will for our lives?

Start! To Follow Personal Reading and Reflection Guide Week 5



Day 1. Read *Start! To Follow*, chapter 6: “Discipleship and the Church.”

Day 2. The Bible tells us to “think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another” (Hebrews 10:24–25, nlt). What does this passage say happens when Christians gather regularly in church? What, then, would be the result if we neglected to do this?

Day 3. The chapter says, “The number one priority in selecting a church should not be how close it is to your home or how nice its facilities are.” What, then, is the number one priority? Read Matthew 22:34–40.

Day 4. The chapter tells us that the more we give to others in the context of our participation in a healthy church, the more capacity we will find in ourselves to receive what God has for us. Describe how this might work in your life. How do you receive by giving yourself away in Christ? Read Matthew 20:25–28.

Day 5. Read Acts 2:42–47 and 4:32–35. Normal Christian living as presented in the New Testament was a passionate, Spirit-empowered, all-consuming devotion to God and to His Word. If that was first-century normal, what is today’s normal? How can we as believers return to New Testament normal?

Day 6. According to this chapter, authentic fellowship isn’t just Christian social activity — gab sessions with cookies and coffee. What are some aspects of the true and deeper meaning of fellowship, or *koinonia*, between believers? For other aspects of Christian community and uses of the Greek word, *koinonia*, read Hebrews 13:16, 1 John 1:3–7, Philemon 1:6, Philippians 2:1–5 and 3:10, 2 Corinthians 8:3–5 and 9:13, Romans 15:26, 1 Corinthians 1:9 and 10:16

Start! To Follow Personal Reading and Reflection Guide Week 6



Day 1. Read *Start! To Follow*, chapter 7: “Discipling Others.”

Day 2. Read Matthew 28:18–20. Why is this the Great Commission rather than a great suggestion? Do most believers take these words of Jesus as more of an optional activity or good idea, or do they receive them as a command? How are you “going” and “obeying” this command?

Day 3. Read Acts 4:29. How did the disciples respond to the threats and intimidation of the authorities to keep quiet about Jesus? What did they specifically pray for? Are you willing to pray as they prayed, in the face of indifference or opposition to your witness? What might happen in your day if you prayed this each morning?

Day 4. Jesus says to His disciples, “You are the salt of the earth” (Matthew 5:13). One distinct quality of salt is that it affects everything it comes into contact with. In what ways can we be “salt” in our job . . . in our neighborhood . . . in our school . . . in our family? Another quality of salt is that it makes people thirsty. Read Colossians 4:5–6. How can we use even casual conversation with people to make them thirsty to know more about God, who loves them?

Day 5. Read *Start! To Follow*, chapter 8: “Discipleship: It’s Your Choice.”

Day 6. We can’t always see the work God is doing in our lives, but that doesn’t mean He isn’t working! Read Philippians 1:6; 2:12–13; Romans 8:28–29; and Hebrews 13:20–21. What do you see in these verses that encourages you about God and His being active and at work in your life?

Start! To Follow

Personal Reading and Reflection Guide Keep Following! (Bonus thoughts as you continue your journey from Start! To Follow)



* Greg writes in chapter 7, “The hardest thing about sharing your faith with unbelievers is getting started, forcing those first words out of your mouth.” Why do you think that might be? Why might that conversation get easier once you get the ball rolling? Practice sharing your faith and ways to start meaningful conversation. If you haven’t already, identify people in your life with whom you can be intentional about sharing the Good News of life with Christ. (A great tool for preparing and sharing your faith is “The Plan of Salvation” found on page 113 of *Start! To Follow*.)

* Greg writes in chapter 8, “You were placed on earth to know God. Everything else is secondary . . . a distant second to knowing God.” Looking back on your life over the last six weeks, could you honestly say that about yourself? What steps will you take to adjust your priorities?

* In Scripture, both David and Solomon started out in life loving the Lord passionately and making right decisions. Yet both of them drifted from God later, disappointing many and bringing trouble on themselves and their families. What causes Christians to drift away from the truth and their love for the Lord? How can we prevent that drift in our own lives?

* Greg writes in chapter 8, “We discover truths about God by studying His Word. And if you begin to neglect this, your spiritual life ultimately will start unraveling.” What are some practical ways you can discipline yourself to read, study, and meditate on the Bible every day? You have a great routine going now. For the past 40 days, you have been spending time prayerfully reading and reflecting on Scripture and your life as a follower of Christ. What a great start! Keep following!