

# To Be Like Jesus

## *A Study for Children on Following Jesus*

*To Be Like Jesus* answers important questions about salvation and sanctification by explaining elements of the Gospel message, its purpose, and its promise. The study uses the order of salvation found in Romans 8:29-30, with particular emphasis on sanctification, to help children understand what the Christian life is all about and how this relates to salvation through faith alone.



REVISED

### LESSON 1: Created in God's Image for His Glory

*Memory Verse: 1 Corinthians 10:31*

The curriculum begins by teaching students that we have been created by God in a special way, for a special purpose. We have been created in the image and likeness of God with minds that think, hearts that feel emotions, and wills that make choices. This is so that we would know and honor God, love and enjoy Him, and trust and obey Him in all we do. This is our special purpose—to glorify God in all we think, feel, say, and do. We were created to live in relationship with God. His is the only relationship that can make us truly happy.

### LESSON 2: Created to Be Holy and Righteous

*Memory Verses: 1 Peter 1:15; Romans 7:12*

God created us in a special way so that we would glorify God. We glorify God by being holy and righteous in all our thoughts, feelings, and actions. God has given us His holy and righteous law and commands to show us what thoughts, feelings, and actions glorify Him. Because God is holy and righteous, in order to live forever with God, we must be perfectly holy and righteous—always treating Him with the honor and respect He deserves, perfectly obeying Him all the time.

### LESSON 3: All Have Sinned

*Memory Verse: Romans 3:20*

In order to glorify God, we must be holy and righteous. God's commands show us that we fall short of this—we don't measure up because we all disobey God's commands. We are all sinners. It is impossible for us to gain eternal life through our own obedience. Every person is in desperate need of a Savior. Salvation is only possible through God's provision.

### LESSON 4: Jesus, God's Holy and Righteous Son

*Memory Verse: Hebrews 4:15*

It is impossible for sinners to receive eternal life through our own efforts. This is why God sent His Son into the world—to save sinners. Jesus is the holy Son of God. He is fully God and became fully man. He was without sin and obeyed all of God's commands and glorified His Father in all He did. Jesus did everything God required for receiving eternal life. Therefore, Jesus is able to save God's sinful people.

### LESSON 5: The Gospel: Salvation in Jesus

*Memory Verses: John 3:16-17*

The Gospel is the good news that there is salvation in Jesus. The Gospel is the good news that Jesus came to seek after sinners, make them righteous, give up His life for sinners, forgive sinners, reconcile sinners to God, and give His people eternal life. Jesus commands a special response to the Gospel: we must repent and believe in the Gospel in order to be saved.

**LESSON 6: Salvation: Chosen and Called by God***Memory Verses: Ephesians 1:4; John 10:27*

This lesson begins a series in how salvation is accomplished, applied, and worked out in the lives of God's people. To begin with, God, by His sovereign will, has chosen whom He will save, from all eternity. God has not based His choices on any merit within us. Salvation is by grace—a free gift from God apart from works. Secondly, those whom God has chosen, He calls through the proclamation of the Gospel. God desires that the Gospel be proclaimed to all people. When God calls His chosen people, they respond in belief.

**LESSON 7: Salvation: New Spiritual Life***Memory Verses: Ephesians 2:4-5*

God gives new spiritual life through the work of the Spirit. Continuing through the order of salvation, this lesson presents the third step in salvation—regeneration. God chooses people and then calls them through the message of the Gospel. However, in our sinful nature, we are unable to respond to the Gospel in belief. We must be “born again.” Through the work of the Holy Spirit, God's gives His people new spiritual life, drawing us to believe in Jesus.

**LESSON 8: Salvation: Faith and Repentance (Conversion)***Memory Verses: John 20:31; 2 Corinthians 7:10a*

In this lesson, we strongly emphasize that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus alone. Faith includes a right understanding of certain facts about who Jesus is and what He has done, and a complete dependence on Him. Faith is always accompanied by repentance—a deep-felt sorrow and hatred of sin, such that you turn to Jesus and commit to follow Him.

**LESSON 9: Salvation: Justification***Memory Verses: 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 5:1*

In this lesson, we will attempt to truthfully, clearly, and compellingly communicate the deep significance of what actually happened when Jesus died on the cross. Because all people are guilty before God, we deserve God's just punishment. Jesus died as an atoning sacrifice for sin in order to satisfy the justice of God. Justification is a legal act whereby God forgives sin, gives His people Jesus' righteousness, and declares them righteous. Justification is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus alone.

**LESSON 10: Salvation: Adoption***Memory Verses: Ephesians 1:4b-5a; 1 John 3:1a*

In this lesson, students will learn that adoption is an act of God in which He makes someone His beloved child. Everyone who repents and believes in Jesus is made a child of God. God's children enjoy a special and intimate relationship with Him and are heirs to all of His good promises. Therefore, it is fitting that, as His children, we should desire to live in a way that is pleasing to God.

**LESSON 11: Salvation: Sanctification***Memory Verses: Ephesians 4:24; 1 Peter 1:14-15*

In this lesson, we will begin to help the students understand the meaning and importance of sanctification in the lives of God's children. God requires that His children be holy and righteous, growing into the likeness of His Son, Jesus. Sanctification is the ongoing work of God in His children in which they strive to become more and more like Jesus. Just as good parents help their children grow up properly—providing them with all that they need—God helps His children grow up to be like Jesus.

**LESSON 12: Jesus Says, “Follow Me”***Memory Verses: 1 John 2:3, 6*

In the previous lesson, we learned that sanctification is the ongoing work of God in His children in which they strive to become more and more like Jesus. In this lesson, we will introduce students to the important concept of Jesus as Master and Lord. Children of God are to be disciples of Jesus—recognizing His authority such that they submit to Him, learn from Him, obey His commands, and follow Him throughout their lives. Jesus teaches and instructs God's children how to become more and more like Him.

**LESSON 13: God Gives His Children the Holy Spirit***Memory Verses: John 14:15-17a*

In this lesson, we will give the students a brief summary of the Person and work of the Holy Spirit, and how He helps God's children in the process of sanctification. Every believer has the Holy Spirit dwelling within him to give understanding of the truths revealed in His Word, empower him to fight sin, encourage him in daily life, and give wise counsel in any situation. Children of God never outgrow their need for the Holy Spirit's help. They need His guidance and help daily to grow in obedience to Jesus.

**LESSON 14: God Gives His Children His Word***Memory Verses: 2 Timothy 3:16-17*

Along with the Holy Spirit, God has given His children His Word to help in the hard work of sanctification. The Holy Spirit and the Word work together helping God's children grow so they become more and more like Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed truth and teaches, rebukes, corrects, and trains in righteousness. The Bible teaches and instructs in all the things we need to know in order to trust and obey Jesus. It teaches us everything we need to know about God, ourselves, salvation, and Jesus and His righteous and holy ways that we are to follow.

**LESSON 15: God Gives His Children the Gift of Prayer***Memory Verses: Matthew 6:9-13*

God desires to have an intimate relationship with His children. Prayer is the means by which God's children come into His presence and speak to Him, growing in our relationship with Him. Although one lesson cannot lend itself to the vast scope and depth of the subject, we will focus on some of the key elements of prayer found as specified in the prayer Jesus taught His disciples. In it, we see these elements: addressing God with honor and respect, a desire to seek and submit to God's ways, acknowledgement of our needs and asking for provision, confession of sin, and asking forgiveness. Prayer is to be the "norm" in the Christian life.

**LESSON 16: Love God Most of All***Memory Verse: Mark 12:30*

The most important command highlighted throughout the Bible is this: Love God most of all. This is our greatest duty. God must have our highest devotion. He is a jealous God who will tolerate no competitors. Yet, this command to love God most is no joy-killer. What is utterly amazing is that our greatest duty toward God enables us to experience our greatest delight. In this lesson, we will emphasize the connection between loving Jesus and keeping His commandments, along with seeing these commandments as a pursuit of lasting joy.

**LESSON 17: Worship God in Spirit and Truth***Memory Verse: Hebrews 12:28b*

In this lesson, we want to expand our students' understanding of biblical worship. This understanding is one that is meant to encompass all the Christian life. Worship involves recognizing the truth about God and expressing a right, heart-felt response to Him—expressions of reverence and awe of God. Worship may be expressed to God through singing, words of praise, giving thanks, being quiet and humble, and more. God's children are to worship Him at all times and in all situations.

**LESSON 18: Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness***Memory Verses: Ephesians 5:8b-10*

Jesus tells His disciples to long for righteousness—always seeking to do what is pleasing to God. Through the Bible, God guides us in what is righteous in every situation. Doing what is pleasing to God brings about happiness and contentment. In this lesson, we not only point to the need for Christ's righteousness in our lives, but also the necessity to grow in discernment of what is right to do in every situation, thereby providing students with practical application in what it means to walk in righteousness.

**LESSON 19: Trust God in All Circumstances***Memory Verses: Philippians 4:5b-6*

This lesson begins by highlighting how God has provided His children with their greatest need by sending Jesus to die. God is a sovereign heavenly Father who continually watches over His children and provides for their every need. He is completely trustworthy. Jesus commands His disciples to trust God daily for every need and in every situation.

**LESSON 20: Be Content***Memory Verse: Hebrews 13:5*

God knows our every need and generously provides for His children. Everything we have is a gift from a good and generous heavenly Father. Therefore, Jesus wants His disciples to be content with what we have. True contentment means trusting God to provide for every need, being thankful to God for His provision, being happy and satisfied with what you have been given, and not being envious of what others have.

**LESSON 21: Serve God with Your Abilities***Memory Verse: Colossians 3:23-24*

God has given His children a variety of abilities to be used in service to Him. Whatever work we do, it should be done with the mindset of serving Jesus. Service to God blesses us and is used by God to help others and further His kingdom. In this lesson, we want students to see this truth and be encouraged to live it out in very practical ways, knowing that they are still in process of learning and acquiring many diverse skills and abilities.

**LESSON 22: Store Up Treasures in Heaven***Memory Verse: Matthew 6:20-21*

The parable of the rich man and his barns from Luke 12 is a sobering reminder about the riches of this world—in the end, they do not provide comfort, security, or true happiness. In this lesson, we point students to treasures that do provide lasting comfort, security, and happiness. Jesus commands us to strive to lay up heavenly, imperishable treasures that come through loving, trusting, and obeying Christ. Just like us, our students have a harder time recognizing and appreciating these treasures, as they are often unseen and cannot be fully experienced until heaven. But they are more real and immeasurably more satisfying than any earthly treasure.

**LESSON 23: Guard Your Heart***Memory Verse: Proverbs 4:23*

Jesus' disciples are to be vigilant in guarding against the indwelling influence of sin and Satan's temptations. In this lesson, we will begin by using a clever story told in Africa that very pointedly highlights the necessity of guarding our hearts from even seemingly "little" sins. Jesus wants His disciples to be watchful, pay close attention, and never let our guard down—so that sin can't take hold, grow in influence, and rule over us. God has given His children everything they need to guard their hearts against sin and Satan.

**LESSON 24: Obey and Honor Your Parents***Memory Verses: Ephesians 6:1-3a*

The parent-child relationship is vitally important, especially when seen in light of God's good design and primary purpose. God is a perfect heavenly Father, and parents are to reflect God's good and loving character to their children. God says that one of the important ways we learn what it means to love Him most of all is by honoring our parents, and for children to also obey their parents. In this lesson, students learn what it means to honor and obey their parents in a way that is pleasing to the Lord.

**LESSON 25: Love Your Neighbor***Memory Verse: Matthew 22:39b*

Next to loving God most of all, the second most important command is to love your neighbor. Loving your neighbor involves treating him as you yourself would want to be treated. In this lesson, we will read and study the parable of the Good Samaritan and challenge the students to see how Jesus' command to "love your neighbor" is binding and relevant for all our day-to-day interactions with others.

**LESSON 26: Love Your Enemies***Memory Verses: Luke 6:27b-28*

Jesus commands His disciples to love our enemies. This includes praying for them, blessing them, and doing good to them. But it is important for us to see what loving our enemies actually "looks like," especially for children who are particularly weak, vulnerable, and naïve. Therefore, in this lesson, we will explore the meaning of this command, and we'll use the story of Corrie Ten Boom to highlight what love for her enemy looked like in the context of her situation.

**LESSON 27: Forgive Others***Memory Verse: Ephesians 4:32*

In this lesson, we first emphasize these important truths: 1) We have all wronged God immeasurably because of our sin and 2) God forgives all who repent and trust in Jesus alone for salvation. This gives the students a better context, appreciation, and necessity for understanding Jesus' command to forgive others. The parable of the unforgiving servant from Matthew 18 provides an excellent example of this logical progression of thought.

**LESSON 28: Be a Humble Servant***Memory Verse: Philippians 2:3*

In this lesson, we will study Jesus' command to humble ourselves, looking carefully at His own perfect example, so that we might understand and be encouraged to follow His path of humility. Even though Jesus is fully God, He had the mindset and actions of a humble servant. We are to follow Jesus' example. We are to not to be selfish or self-centered, but look to the needs of others and seek to serve them. This is true greatness in God's eyes.

**LESSON 29: Be Merciful***Memory Verse: Luke 6:36*

God is merciful and wants His children to be merciful, too. Mercy sees people in distress, feels compassion for them, and acts to help them. Jesus set the example of mercy that His disciples are to follow. In this lesson, we will briefly highlight the story of the Samaritan showing mercy, and then look at various examples of how Jesus showed mercy to those in distress, giving us an example to follow.

**LESSON 30: Give Cheerfully and Generously***Memory Verses: 2 Corinthians 9:6-7*

In this lesson, the aim is to give the students a fundamental foundation for giving their money, and how Jesus has designed giving to the church as a means of blessing His people and furthering His kingdom work. Jesus wants His disciples to give cheerfully and generously. The students will also be taught the importance of regular, thoughtful giving. God promises spiritual blessing for those who give cheerfully and generously.

**LESSON 31: Care for One Another***Memory Verses: John 13:34-35*

Jesus never intended His disciples to live as lone, isolated believers. Every child of God belongs to the family of God—the church—and family life is to be experienced through our loving interactions with other Christians. The place where this is to happen with great intentionality is within the local church. In this lesson, we give students a picture of family life among Christians as we explore various “one another” commands in the New Testament.

**LESSON 32: Seek for Lost Sinners***Memory Verse: 1 Peter 3:15*

Two short and simple parables—the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin—provide poignant illustrations of Jesus' love for seeking after and saving lost sinners. Jesus wants His disciples to follow His example and look for opportunities to share the hope of the Gospel. Whether saved or unsaved, each student should be challenged in this lesson to see the desperate condition of lost sinners and the need for Jesus' saving work. We want to encourage believing students to think in terms of the ordinary personal interactions they have in their everyday lives—looking for simple opportunities to express the hope that is within them.

**LESSON 33: Go into All the World***Memory Verses: Matthew 28:18-20a*

Jesus commands His disciples to spread the message of the Gospel throughout the world. In this lesson, we challenge our students to see the role that Jesus' disciples now have to participate in this ongoing mission, either as those who will go or those who will help others to go. No Christian is exempt from this awesome privilege and responsibility. Our desire should be to fan the flames of the worldwide mission of Christ in such a way that our students are encouraged to be actively engaged in this endeavor, even now.

**LESSON 34: Let Your Light Shine***Memory Verse: Matthew 5:16*

Jesus' disciples are to be like lights that shine and draw attention to the greatness and worth of Jesus. We should look for opportunities to do good deeds and speak words of hope. This will not be an easy road for our students to follow, but nonetheless, it is what Christ commands of His disciples. In this lesson, we want to not only explore the meaning of this command, but also offer the students practical examples by posing a variety of situations in which to let their lights shine before men.

**LESSON 35: Rejoice in Persecution***Memory Verses: Matthew 5:11-12a*

Christians will suffer persecution for their faith to one degree or another, if not now, then later. Therefore, it is wise for us to be proactive and give our students a biblical perspective on persecution and suffering—one that does not serve to scare, but to encourage. For the child of God, suffering is temporary and cannot compare with the everlasting joy to be experienced in the future. Therefore, Jesus commands us keep this perspective and rejoice in our sufferings.

**LESSON 36: Lose Your Life to Gain Your Life***Memory Verses: Luke 9:23-24*

Jesus' call to deny yourself, pick up your cross, and follow Him is an imperative truth that our students must understand. Jesus' call to lose your life in order to truly gain it must be understood with all of its obligations and rich rewards. In this lesson, we will explore the meaning of these two calls from Jesus, and then point to the life of Eric Liddell, to show how God led and empowered him little by little, step by step, to fully surrender his life to Christ.

**LESSON 37: Salvation: Perseverance of Believers***Memory Verse: Philippians 1:6*

The past 21 lessons have all be aimed at exploring sanctification by looking at specific commands that direct God's children toward walking in godliness, becoming more and more like Jesus. This lesson and the next direct the students back to the elements of salvation that have yet to be completed. In this lesson, we will focus on the assurance of the perseverance of believers. It is an important biblical truth that many Christians struggle with: "Am I really a Christian? What if I walk away from the Lord?" Through the texts presented, the aim is to give those who are truly trusting in Christ an unshakable confidence that He is faithful and will bring their salvation to completion. At the same time, our hope should be that every student also spends time in sober reflection, thinking about whether or not he is trusting in Christ for salvation.

**LESSON 38: Salvation: Death and Glorification***Memory Verses: Philippians 3:20-21*

In this lesson, we want to acknowledge the reality and pain of death, while also pointing to the hope and glories that await God's people. For the Christian, God uses the death of the physical body as a means of completing his salvation. Jesus has promised to transform His people and give them glorified bodies after death. Glorification is the final step of salvation in which God makes His children perfectly righteous and holy like Jesus.

**LESSON 39: Glorifying God Forever***Memory Verse: Psalm 86:12*

We began this study with the truth that we were created in a special way for a special purpose. Namely, we have been created in the image and likeness of God so that we might glorify God forever. The final goal of salvation is God enabling His people to glorify Him in all our thoughts, feelings, and actions—all of the time. In this lesson, the students will be led to see that glorifying God forever means seeing and knowing the greatness and worth of Jesus as we were meant to see and know Him, giving Jesus the full love, praise, honor, thanks, and worship He deserves.

**LESSON 40: Come, Look, Abide***Memory Verse: John 15:5*

This final lesson is meant to be a loving plea with the students to take to heart what has been taught over the year. In one way or another, they all have responded to the truth, either in belief or unbelief. May the lesson serve to draw any unbelievers to come to Jesus for salvation. May it serve to remind believers to continually come to Jesus, look to Him, and abide with Him daily.

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