

Welcome to the Family

A Follow-Up Book for Children

By Alvin and Sylvia Gan



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Acknowledgments

We are eternally grateful to our gracious God and Heavenly Father for the gift of his Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and for the transforming power of the Holy Spirit who lives within us. We also thank God for his gifts of our three wonderful children, Leah, Noah and Ruth, who have drawn us immensely closer to him.

We thank God for the privilege of serving him through the ministry of Let The Little Children Come, through which we are able to proclaim his goodness and glorify his name.

We also thank Alvin's sister, Valerie Gan, and our eldest daughter, Leah, for their patience in reading through our various drafts and for their painstaking efforts in polishing up our manuscript.

We dedicate this book to all of God's children and we pray that through this book and through the ministry of Let The Little Children Come, many more will enter the kingdom of God.

To God be all glory and honor and praise!

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Uncle Perry and Aunt Jaslyn



Own a small convenience store
and work there whenever their
children are in school

Mia



10-year-old daughter
of Uncle Perry and
Aunt Jaslyn

Darius



7-year-old son
of Uncle Perry and
Aunt Jaslyn

Zac



11-year-old boy who
got to know the family

Aunt Katherine



Aunt Jaslyn's Sister;
helps in the
convenience store



Chapter 1

Getting Started

Uncle Perry and Aunt Jaslyn ran a small convenience store just down the street from their home. Every morning, they would go to work there while their children, Mia and Darius, went to school.

One day, Uncle Perry was cheerfully stacking soup cans when something moving through the aisles caught his attention. It was a young boy, all alone. Uncle Perry watched as the boy started to make his way towards the exit, looking nervously around. "Something's not right," Uncle Perry thought to himself. Just then, he noticed an unusual bulge under the boy's T-shirt.

"Hey!" Uncle Perry shouted.

The boy looked up in panic, eyes wide with fear. Before Uncle Perry could say anything else, the boy made a dash for the door. As he used both hands to push the door open, a loaf of bread slipped and fell from under his T-shirt.

The boy froze and looked down at the loaf of bread. But when he saw Uncle Perry stomping towards him, he left the loaf and ran away as fast as he could.

"Another shoplifting attempt," sighed Uncle Perry, as he returned the loaf of bread to its shelf.

A few weeks went by and the incident had almost been forgotten. But one day, while Aunt Jaslyn was manning the store's register, she caught sight of something on the store's security camera. She held her breath as she watched a small boy hide a loaf of bread underneath his shirt.

Shocked, Aunt Jaslyn felt her heartbeat quicken. Many loaves had mysteriously gone missing lately. It was all very strange because they had always had sweets and drinks shoplifted, but never bread.

“Hey!” Aunt Jaslyn hollered, as the boy made a bee-line for the exit. He rushed for the door but was caught by Uncle Perry, who happened to be entering the store at that exact same moment.

“You again?” Uncle Perry’s voice boomed into the boy’s ears. He struggled to free himself from Uncle Perry’s clutch, but gave up trying after a while.

“I caught him trying to steal a loaf of bread a few weeks ago,” Uncle Perry explained to Aunt Jaslyn.

Aunt Jaslyn studied the boy, who looked about the same age as Mia. Ten-year-old Mia was now in school, so shouldn’t he be in school as well? What was he doing here stealing from their store? Aunt Jaslyn was filled with anger as she wondered how long this boy had been taking things from their store.

But another emotion soon overcame her. The boy looked very thin and dirty. “Perhaps he hasn’t had anything to eat for a long time,” Aunt Jaslyn thought to herself. She began to feel sorry for the boy.

Aunt Jaslyn gestured for Uncle Perry to let go of the boy. “Are you hungry? Is that why you tried to steal the bread?” Aunt Jaslyn asked gently.

The boy nodded, surrendering the bread back to Aunt Jaslyn. Aunt Jaslyn unwrapped the loaf and offered some to the boy. He looked up in gratitude, took the food, and gobbled it all down. The boy was obviously starving.

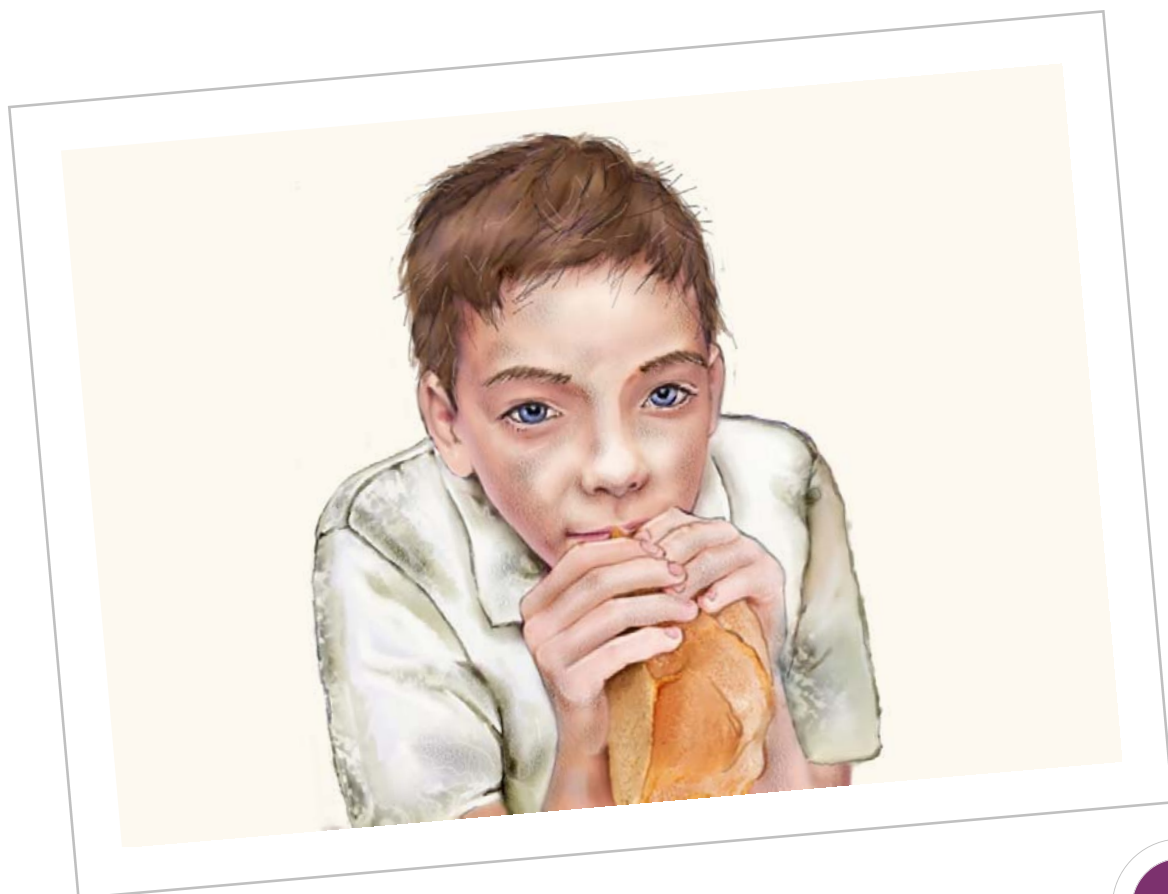
Uncle Perry and Aunt Jaslyn looked at each other, and without another word, took the boy to the pantry at the back of the store. They offered him a drink and found out that his name was Zachary, although most people called him Zac.

Zac was eleven years old. He grew up with his grandfather, never having met his parents. His mother had left while he was still a baby, and no one knew enough to tell him about his father.

Sadly, Zac's grandfather died of a sudden illness a few months ago – leaving Zac heartbroken and all alone in this world. Since then, Zac has had to take care of himself.

Uncle Perry and Aunt Jaslyn felt very sorry for Zac. Turning him out of the store did not seem like the right thing to do. Zac hadn't had parents to take care of him, and now he didn't have a grandfather either.

Uncle Perry and Aunt Jaslyn decided that Zac was way too young to be living on his own like that. He looked like he needed a decent meal, a proper shower, and a good night's sleep. He needed



someone to take care of him. They would let Zac stay with them for a day while they thought about what they should do next.

“Hey Jas. Hey Perry. Are you in there?” Aunt Katherine called out from the front of the store.

Uncle Perry and Aunt Jaslyn had been so preoccupied with Zac that they did not hear anyone entering the store. Aunt Katherine and Aunt Jaslyn were sisters. Aunt Katherine would come to the store every afternoon and stayed till it was time to lock up for the night. This allowed Uncle Perry and Aunt Jaslyn to return home to take care of Mia and Darius.



"We're in here, Katherine," Aunt Jaslyn replied. Uncle Perry and Aunt Jaslyn told Aunt Katherine all about Zac, and then took him home with them.

That afternoon, Mia and Darius came home from school to see Zac napping on the couch. Uncle Perry and Aunt Jaslyn explained what had happened earlier that day and why Zac was there with them.

"He has no Papa or Mama?" Mia asked.

"So who does he live with? Who takes care of him?" Darius was equally puzzled.

"He has nobody to take care of him. That's why he is sleeping on our couch right now," Aunt Jaslyn replied.

The Robinsons looked at Zac in silence.

"Can Zac live with us?" Darius asked, "My Sunday school teacher says that God wants us to share our food, clothes and all our things with others. I can share my room with Zac, can't I? And my dinner, too?"

"I think Darius is right, Mama," Mia chipped in, "You've always taught us that we must love God and love other people. And the Bible teaches us that loving others is not just saying it, but doing things for them. Like sharing our food and our home with Zac."

Uncle Perry and Aunt Jaslyn knew that their children were right. Sending Zac back into the streets didn't seem like a loving thing to do.

But taking Zac in, and caring for him, was a huge responsibility. Besides, Zac had previously stolen from their store more than once and they knew almost nothing about him.

Who is God?

Find out more about God
in Chapter 2.

What should Uncle Perry and Aunt Jaslyn do? Should they report Zac to the police, or should they let Zac off the hook? Should they let Zac carry on roaming the streets, or should they invite him to stay with them?

That afternoon, the Robinson family went about their chores quietly, careful not to wake Zac from his nap. They were each in deep thought about what was the right thing to do.

God Loves Us

1 John 4:9-10

This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.

This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

God Wants Us to Love One Another

John 13:34-35

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. .

Let us take a few minutes to think about what we have just read...

1. Was it right for Zac to steal?
2. If you catch someone stealing from you, what would you do?
3. What usually happens to a person who has stolen something?
4. What would you do if you were Uncle Perry or Aunt Jaslyn?
Why?



Chapter 2

Welcome to
the Family!

Zac woke up from his nap to the sound of chatting. Sitting up slowly, he rubbed his eyes in confusion. Where was he? Then, he started to remember what had happened that morning.

When Darius noticed that Zac had woken up, he quickly rushed to introduce himself to Zac. Mia followed closely behind Darius, eager to meet the new boy.

Darius and Mia asked Zac lots of questions, both wanting to get to know him better.

After dinner that evening, when Darius and Mia had gone to bed, Uncle Perry and Aunt Jaslyn spoke to Zac. They asked Zac if he would like to live with them. Uncle Perry would speak to someone in the Department of Children's Welfare to see if Zac could become part of the family.



Zac was shocked. He could not understand why Uncle Perry and Aunt Jaslyn would want to take him into their home, especially after he had repeatedly stolen from them. They had no reason to be so kind to him.

"Zac," Aunt Jaslyn smiled, "you are not the only person who has done wrong. I have done some wrong things too. So has Uncle Perry. Uncle Perry and I believe that when we do things that are wrong, we make God unhappy. But even though we make God unhappy, God still loves us. Uncle

Who is God?

God made the world and everything in it.

He created the sun, moon, stars and the earth.

Gen 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

He created the land, sea, plants and animals.

Gen 1:25

God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

Yet the most special things he created were you and me.

Gen 1:27

*So God created mankind in his own image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them. .*

Perry and I, even Mia and Darius, have received God's love and forgiveness. We want to share this love with you. Having you come and stay with us is one way that we can show you God's love."

Zac looked confused.

"Do you know who God is?" Uncle Perry asked Zac.

Zac shook his head.

"God is the maker of the earth and everything in it. God made us, too. He loves each and every one of us, including you, Zac. And because God loves us, he wants all of us to be with him forever and ever," Uncle Perry explained.

"But God is perfect, and he cannot be with people who are not perfect. All of us have done things that are wrong, like telling lies, fighting and stealing.

What are sins?

The Bible tells us that the wrong things that we do are called sins.

Stealing is a sin. Doing, saying or thinking bad things are sins.

Telling lies, disobeying your parents, hurting others and being selfish are all examples of sins.

All of us have sinned.

Rom 3:23

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Because of our sins, we deserve to be punished.

Rom 6:23a

For the wages of sin is death.

But thankfully, because God loves us and he wants us to be with him, he has provided a solution for our sins.

Romans 5:8

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

These wrong things are called sins. We have all sinned and deserve to be punished. Uncle Perry continued. "Because of our sins, we cannot be with God."

"But because God loves us very much and really, really wants us to be with him, he sent his one and only Son, Jesus, to die on the cross to take the punishment for our sins. And since Jesus has already taken the punishment for us, we do not need to be punished anymore." Uncle Perry continued.

"Jesus is God's Son. After Jesus died and was buried, he became alive again on the third day! Everyone who believes in Jesus can become God's child and be with God forever and ever." Aunt Jaslyn added.

"Zac, God loves you. He wants you to become his child.

Sin separates us from God

God is perfect – perfectly good and perfectly holy.

But we are not perfect.

We all have done things that are wrong, things that make God unhappy. These things are called sins.

All of us have sinned

Because of our sins, we are separated from God and cannot be with him.

Isa 59:2 (Good News Translation)

It is because of your sins that he doesn't hear you. It is your sins that separate you from God when you try to worship him.

He wants you to be with him forever and ever.” Uncle Perry explained.

“Would you like to become God’s child?” Uncle Perry asked. Zac nodded. He felt touched that such a powerful God loved him so much.

“Will you admit to God that you have sinned, and tell him that you are sorry? And will you try to stop doing things that you know will make God unhappy?” Uncle Perry asked. Zac thought about all the wrong things that he had done, and he nodded. He did not want to do anything to upset the God that loves him so much.

“Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that he died on the cross but became alive again on the third day?” Uncle Perry asked. Again, Zac nodded.

“Do you believe that because Jesus took the punishment for your sins by dying on the cross, your sins can be forgiven and you can be with God forever and ever?” Uncle Perry asked. Zac nodded a third time, excited to start a new journey with God.

Who is Jesus?

Jesus is God’s Son.

Jesus came to die on the cross to take the punishment for our sins.

1 John 2:2

He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

After Jesus died on the cross, he was buried, and on the third day, he returned to life.

Acts 13:30-31a

But God raised him from the dead, and for many days he was seen by those who had traveled with him from Galilee to Jerusalem.

“That’s great, Zac. Would you like to invite Jesus to come into your life right now?” Uncle Perry asked. Zac smiled and nodded slowly.

Uncle Perry asked Zac to repeat this simple prayer after him:

“Dear Jesus,

Thank you for loving me. I know that I have sinned. I have done things that are wrong. I believe that you died on the cross to take the punishment for my sins. Please forgive all of my sins. Please come into my life and help me turn away from doing wrong. Thank you for taking the punishment for my sins, so that I can have a relationship with you now, and will one day be with you in heaven.

In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.”



What happens when we sincerely pray this prayer?

Many things happen when we pray this prayer...

God forgives all our sins.

We do not need to be punished anymore because Jesus has already taken the punishment for our sins.

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

We receive eternal life.

This means we can be with God now, and forever and ever.

John 3:16

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.

We begin a new relationship with God.

God calls us his children and we can call him “Father”.

John 1:12

Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

God gives us the Holy Spirit, who will live inside us.

He helps us know more about God and teach us how to follow him.

Ezekiel 36:27

And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

“Welcome to God’s family, Zac,” Aunt Jaslyn smiled and gave Zac’s hand a little squeeze. “If you have said that prayer sincerely, God will forgive you and call you his child.”

“That’s right, Zac. You now have a very special relationship with God. You are God’s child and you can call him ‘Father’.” Uncle Perry said.

Zac looked at Uncle Perry. He had never called anyone “father”.

“Yes, Zac, God calls you his son, and you can call him ‘Father’. God loves you, Zac. He loves you very, very much.” Uncle Perry assured Zac.

“Zac, we are happy to have you come live with our family. But we are even happier that you have invited Jesus into your life. You are now part of God’s family. There are many things about being a child of God that you need to learn about. But it is getting late now. Let’s all get some sleep and we can talk tomorrow.” Aunt Jaslyn said.



What Do We Need To Do If We Want To Be With God Forever and Ever?

1. Admit that you have sinned and ask God to forgive you,
2. Believe that Jesus died on the cross to be punished instead of you, and
3. Invite Jesus into your life to help you turn away from sin.

Let us take a few minutes to think about what we have just read...

1. What is sin?
2. Who is Jesus?
3. What separates us from God?
4. What can we do if we want to be with God forever and ever?
5. What happens when a person prays the simple prayer similar to the one that Zac prayed?



Chapter 3

The Bible is
God's Word

Zac's first week living with the Robinsons passed quickly and most happily. One evening after dinner, Aunt Jaslyn turned on the TV to watch a documentary on the Grand Canyon. Uncle Perry, Mia and Darius had fallen into lively chitchat about their day.

"Hey Zac, how was your day?" Uncle Perry called from the couch.

When Zac didn't reply, everyone turned to look at him. They found Zac's eyes glued to the TV, mesmerized by the images and soaking in every word that is being said about the Grand Canyon.

When the documentary was over, Uncle Perry turned to Zac and asked, "Hey Zac, have you been to the Grand Canyon?"

"No... But it looks like such an amazing place! Did you know that the Grand Canyon is 277 miles long, and 6,000 feet deep? It's huge!"

Uncle Perry had never seen Zac's face light up the way it did when he talked about the Grand Canyon. "Would you like to go to there?" He asked Zac.

Zac stared at Uncle Perry in silence.

"Would you like me to take you to the Grand Canyon, Zac?" Uncle Perry repeated.

"Yes! Yes! Yes, of course! Will you really take me to see the Grand Canyon, Uncle Perry? Really?" Zac was jumping in excitement as he spoke.

"Can we come too, Papa?" Mia and Darius joined in.

Uncle Perry hugged the children and smiled. "Well, I will have to discuss this with Mama. But since the Grand Canyon is only four or five hours' drive away, I don't see why we can't plan a short getaway."

Aunt Jaslyn smiled and nodded in agreement.

Suddenly, Zac remembered that Uncle Perry and Aunt Jaslyn had to be at their store every day.

"What about the store? Who would run the store?" Zac asked. He did not want to be the reason the Robinsons had to close the store.

"Good thinking, Zac. I could ask Aunt Katherine to help us take care of the store while we are away. She's already helping in the afternoons, so we'll just need her to go to the store earlier for a few days. I doubt she will mind." Aunt Jaslyn said.

"Then it's settled!" Uncle Perry beamed at his wife and the kids, "We're going to the Grand Canyon!"

All of them cheered in excitement.

Over the next few days, Zac, Darius and Mia could think and talk about nothing else. Aunt Jaslyn took the kids to the library and they borrowed all the books they could find about the Grand Canyon. Every day, the trio would exchange information about all that they had learnt. The kids' excitement soon rubbed off on Uncle Perry and Aunt Jaslyn, and everyone could not wait for the day that they would see the Grand Canyon.

As the day of the Grand Canyon trip drew near, they

discussed what they would need to pack: clothes, hats, socks, toothbrushes, water bottles, sun screen, a compass, insect repellent, rain coats, a flashlight, a picnic basket and a camera. Uncle Perry made a list of all the things they would need to bring.

Uncle Perry looked at the packing list. "How could I have almost forgotten about the map?" Uncle Perry remarked.

"What map?" Mia asked.

Uncle Perry walked to the bookshelf and retrieved a map that he had not used for many years.

"This map." Uncle Perry answered, gesturing to the map in his hands.



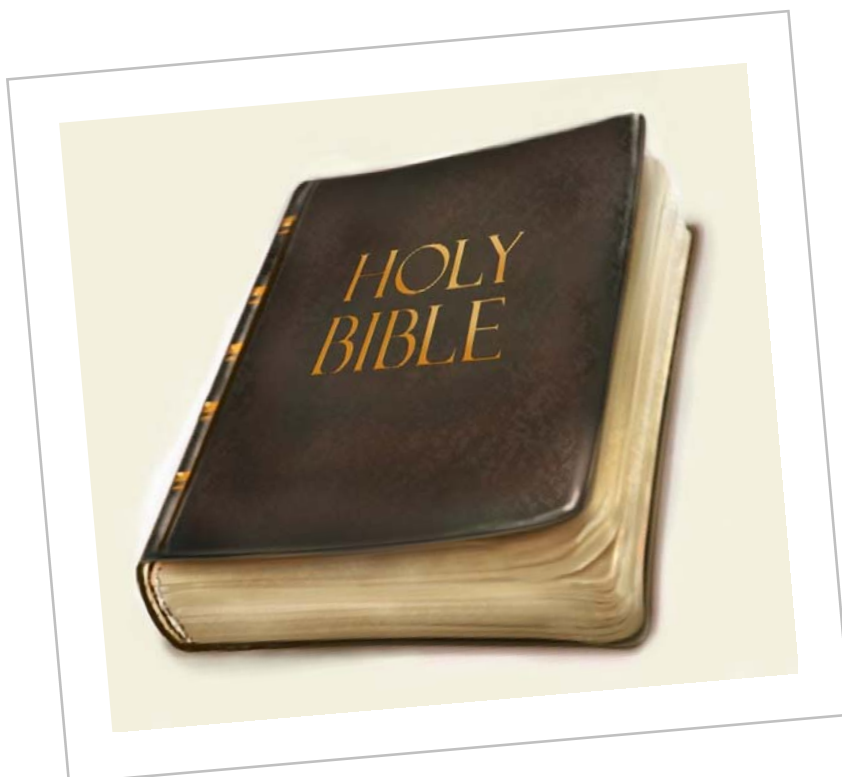
“Why do we need to bring this, Papa?” Darius looked curiously at the map.

“Here, let me show you.” Uncle Perry spread the map out on the dining table and studied it for a moment, moving his fingers about the map and mumbling to himself. “Got it!” He finally said.

“You see this, children?” Uncle Perry’s left index finger pointed at a spot on the map. “This is our home.”

“Now this is the Grand Canyon.” His right index finger pointed at another spot on the map. “This is where we want to get to.”

“This road map shows us how to get from our home to the Grand Canyon.” Keeping his right index finger on the Grand Canyon, Uncle Perry used his left index finger to trace the route from their home to their destination.



What is the Bible?

The Bible is God's Word.

It is like God's love letter to us. It tells us all about God and his love for us – what God did in the past and his plans for our future.

It gives us instructions about what we should and should not do, and teaches us the best way to live – God's way.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

“Without this map, we will have no clue which way to go. It may take us a long, long time to get there, or we may never get there at all!”

“Oh! This must be the most important item on our packing list then. It's a good thing that you remembered, Uncle Perry.” Zac said.

Looking at the packing list again, Uncle Perry added the Bible.

“The Bible? Why will we need the Bible for our trip, Uncle Perry?” Zac asked.

“The Bible is the most important book in the whole wide world. The Bible is God's Word. It is God's special book for us. It is like God's personal message to us. It shows us how much God loves us. It tells us about what God did in the past and what he has planned for our future. It helps us

know God better and teaches us how to live in a way that makes God happy.”

“Er... Ok, Uncle Perry... But I still don’t see why we’ll need it for this trip.” Zac hesitantly added.

Uncle Perry paused to think about how he could explain it to Zac.

“You see, Zac, we almost forgot to include the road map on our list. Without the map, we may get lost and not make it to the Grand Canyon. The Bible is like a road map.” Uncle Perry explained.

“A road map gives us directions. It tells us how to get from one place to another.” Uncle Perry said.

“The Bible also gives us directions – different kinds of directions. Do you remember what I told you about God?” Uncle Perry asked.

“Mmm... I remember you said that God is the one who

made me and that he loves me.” Zac replied.

“That’s right, Zac. And do you know how we know that God made us and loves us?”

Uncle Perry asked.

Zac shook his head.

“We know these things because that’s what the Bible tells us.

In what way is the Bible like a road map?

The Bible tells us about God and gives us directions that lead us towards him. When we follow these directions, we can become God’s children and be with him forever and ever.

The Bible also gives us directions about how God wants us to live after we become his children.

Why is it important to read the Bible regularly?

Just like we need to check the road map to make sure that we do not lose our way to the Grand Canyon, we also need to read the Bible regularly to make sure that we know God's directions.

And just like we need food to grow physically, we also need to read the Bible to grow spiritually as a Christian.

1 Peter 2:2-3

Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

The more we read the Bible, the more we will know about Jesus. And the more we obey and do what the Bible says, the more we will become like Jesus.

"Oh, I see." Zac smiled in understanding.

"But that's not all, Zac." Uncle Perry added. "Becoming a child of God is only the beginning. The Bible tells us many more things about God. Reading the Bible will help us to know God better." Uncle Perry added.

"And the Bible gives us directions about how God wants us to live after we become his children. For example, God wants us to be kind to people around us, to show them God's love. When we follow God's directions, God is happy, and others will also know about God." Uncle Perry said.

"I get it! Like how you and Aunt Jaslyn were kind to me! That's how I got to know God and became his child." Zac said excitedly.

"That's right, Zac," Uncle Perry was pleased, "just like how we need to check the road map to make sure that we do not lose our way to the Grand Canyon, we also need to read the Bible regularly to make sure that we keep on



following God's directions. It is a good habit to read the Bible everyday, even when we are on vacation at the Grand Canyon."

"Well, Uncle Perry, you are certainly right that the Bible is way more important than the road map to the Grand Canyon! We'd better make sure to bring it with us." Zac agreed enthusiastically, which made Uncle Perry laugh.

"Yes, Zac, the Bible is far more important than the road map to the Grand Canyon. You will understand more as you read more and grow in your knowledge of God. Speaking of which, why don't we get you started right away? We can begin by reading this together right now..." Uncle Perry said.

Let us take a few minutes to think about what we have just read...

- 1. What is the Bible?*
- 2. In what way is the Bible like a road map?*
- 3. Why is it important to read the Bible regularly?*

It is Important to Read the Bible Regularly

Ask God to help you understand the Bible and to obey what it says.

You can use the table on the next page as a guide to read through the Gospel of Mark over the next 30 days.

The Gospel of Mark has 16 chapters.

In each chapter there are many verses.

Mark 1:1-20 means:

- The Gospel of “Mark”
- Chapter 1
- Verses 1 to 20

Put a tick "✓" in each box after you have finished reading each portion of the Bible.

Mark 1:1-20

☐

Mark 9:1-29

☐

Mark 1:21-45

☐

Mark 9:30-50

☐

Mark 2:1-28

☐

Mark 10:1-31

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Mark 3:1-12

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Mark 10:32-52

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Mark 3:13-35

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Mark 11:1-33

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Mark 4:1-25

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Mark 12:1-27

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Mark 4:26-41

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Mark 12:28-44

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Mark 5:1-20

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Mark 13:1-37

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Mark 5:21-43

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Mark 14:1-11

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Mark 6:1-29

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Mark 14:12-31

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Mark 6:30-56

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Mark 14:32-52

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Mark 7:1-23

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Mark 14:53-72

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Mark 7:24-37

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Mark 15:1-20

☐

Mark 8:1-21

☐

Mark 15:21-47

☐

Mark 8:22-38

☐

Mark 16:1-20



Chapter 4

Prayer is
Talking to God

Zac had never been happier in his life. He was really looking forward to going to the Grand Canyon. He would never have imagined that a family of total strangers would be so kind as to take him into their home, much less take him on a vacation. Zac then decided to prepare a surprise breakfast for the Robinsons, to show them how thankful he was.

It was still dark when Zac opened his eyes. The sun had not yet risen. Zak snuck out of his room, careful not to wake Darius.

“Strange. Why are the dining room lights on?” Zac wondered. Then he spotted Uncle Perry sitting at the table with his eyes closed. Beside him, the Bible was lying open on the table. “Uncle Perry must have fallen asleep while reading the Bible last night.” Zac thought to himself.

Zac did not want to wake Uncle Perry, so he did not switch on the kitchen lights and he tried to be as quiet as possible. He was cracking eggs into a bowl when the kitchen lights came on and he heard Uncle Perry say, “Hey Zac, you’re up early today. Hungry? Let me cook you an omelette.”

Zac was caught by surprise. “I’m sorry I woke you, Uncle Perry. I tried to be as quiet as I could.”

“Don’t worry, Zac. I was already awake.” Uncle Perry said.

“But I thought you fell asleep while reading the Bible last night.” Zac said.

What is prayer?

Prayer is talking to God.

"Oh..." Uncle Perry realized that Zac had thought that he was sleeping. "No, Zac, I usually wake up early in the mornings to read the Bible and to pray." Uncle Perry explained.

How Should We Pray?

Praying is simply talking to God.

Some people like to pray out loud.

But we can also pray silently in our minds.

We can pray while we are walking or doing something.

Or we can find a quiet place and close our eyes so that we can concentrate on talking to God.

"Pray?" Zac was puzzled.

"Do you know what prayer is?" Uncle Perry asked.

Zac shook his head.

"Prayer is talking to God."

Uncle Perry explained.

"Remember that you became a child of God, and you can now call him

'Father'? You see, just like you and I can talk to each other, we can also talk to God. But the difference is that we don't always need

to speak out loud when we talk to God. We can also talk to God in our hearts. And we can talk to him anytime, anywhere. He will always hear us." Uncle Perry continued.

"I didn't know that."

Zac paused. "But what do you talk to God about?"

"We can talk to God about anything. God is our

When and Where Should We Pray?

We can pray anytime, anywhere.

We should pray every day.

Father. He loves us. He wants to know everything that's important to us. We can talk to him about things that have happened. We can talk to him about our problems. We can talk to him about the things that made us laugh. He likes us to talk to him. And he always listens to everything that we say. We should talk to God every day." Uncle Perry explained.

Why Should We Pray?

God is our Father. He loves us. He wants to know everything that's important to us. He likes us to talk to him and he always listens to everything that we say. And he will answer our prayers.



"And you know what? God not only listens to us. He answers us too!" Uncle Perry added.

"What?" Zac was baffled, "Can you really hear God talking back to you?"

Uncle Perry laughed, "Well, no, that's not how God usually answers us. But in his own way, he will answer us. Sometimes it is through what's written in the Bible. Or sometimes it is through thoughts that come to us when we read the Bible or when we pray. Sometimes God answers through things that happen or through other people. Sometimes he answers through other ways." Uncle Perry explained.

Uncle Perry paused to think about the best way to explain it to Zac.

"Hmm... for example, if you tell God that you really, really want a particular new toy..."

Now Uncle Perry really got Zac's attention.

"God may answer, 'Yes, you may have that toy.' He may answer you through Aunt Katherine, who may buy it for your birthday." Uncle Perry continued.

"God answered 'yes', but he did not speak the words out loud," Uncle Perry said, "Do you get it?"

Zac beamed and nodded.

"But just like I will not say 'yes' to everything that you ask me for, God does not always say 'yes' to us. Sometimes God's answer may be 'no', so you can't have the toy." Uncle Perry continued, "Or sometimes, God's answer may be 'yes,

What Should We Pray About?

Some people like to use the word “ACTS” to guide them in their prayers:

A – Adoration

We can start by remembering who God is and praising him for who he is and what he has done.

God is the Maker of the heavens and the earth, and he loves us so much that he sent Jesus to die on the cross for our sins so that we can be with him and become his children.

C – Confession

We can admit to God that we have done some wrong things.
God will forgive us.

T – Thanksgiving

We can thank God for answering our prayers and for all the things that he has done for us and given to us.

S – Supplication

The word “supplication” simply means asking God for something.
We can ask God for things for others and ourselves.

But we do not always have to follow this way of praying.

Remember that prayer is talking to God.

We can talk to God about anything and everything we like.

The important thing is that we must be sincere when we talk to God.

God answers our prayers!

Sometimes God's answer is "yes",
sometimes "no",
sometimes "yes, but not now"
and sometimes "I have something even better for you".

but not now', so you may still get the toy, but not just yet. Sometimes God will even say 'I have something even better for you'. God knows us better than anyone in this world, and sometimes he knows of something else that will make us even happier than the thing we asked for."

Zac nodded, slowly processing everything Uncle Perry had just said.

"I will tell you more about prayer later. For now, let



me cook you some breakfast.” Uncle Perry said.

“No, Uncle Perry, I’m not hungry. I was planning to surprise you, Aunt Jaslyn, Mia and Darius with a special breakfast.” Zac replied shyly.

“That’s mighty thoughtful of you.” Uncle Perry smiled.

“It’s nothing compared to what your family has done for me. Thank you for letting me stay here with you. And I am really, really excited about our trip to the Grand Canyon. I have never been so happy in my life!” Zac exclaimed.

Uncle Perry was both surprised and touched by Zac’s thoughtfulness.

“You have added much fun and laughter to this home, too, Zac! Hey, how about we both prepare a special breakfast for Aunt Jaslyn, Mia and Darius?”

Zac was happy to have Uncle Perry’s help in the kitchen.

As they cooked, Uncle Perry continued to teach Zac about prayer.

Let us take a few minutes to think about what we have just read...

- 1. What is the prayer?*
- 2. Why should we pray?*
- 3. When should we pray?*



Chapter 5

It is Important
to Go to Church

The day of their trip to the Grand Canyon finally arrived. After a good breakfast, they loaded the car with what they had packed, and set off on their exciting journey.

To help time pass faster, they sang in the car, told jokes and played “I spy”.

After an enjoyable few hours, with Zac jumping up and down in his seat, they crossed the border into Arizona – and were immediately awestruck by the beauty of the state.

“We’re here! We’re here! We’re here!” Zac could hardly contain his excitement.

Uncle Perry chuckled, “Not yet Zac! We’ve only just reached Arizona. Hang in there for a little bit, buddy!”

A couple more hours flew by, and they were at the rim of the Grand Canyon.

“We’re here! We’re really here!” The kids exclaimed, beaming with sheer joy.

The view was breathtaking. The images that Zac saw on TV were stunning, but they were nothing compared to seeing the Grand Canyon with his own eyes. Zac and the Robinsons were completely blown away by the beauty of the Grand Canyon.

After parking the car, they sat down for lunch. Uncle Perry was glad for the rest and a hearty meal. However, the children were more interested in setting off on the day’s hike.

“Not yet, children,” Aunt Jaslyn said. “We need to wait for our camping guide and the other campers to arrive.”

“What?” The children exclaimed in unison.

The children did not know that Aunt Jaslyn had arranged to meet a camping guide and a group of other campers.

“Why do we need to meet some other campers, Mama? Can’t we just camp and hike on our own?” Mia grumbled.

“Yes, we could.” Aunt Jaslyn answered, “But since it is our first trip here, I prefer that we join a group of experienced campers. On our own, we could get lost or miss the best spots. Besides, I think we will have much more fun in a larger group.”

The children had no choice but to accept Aunt Jaslyn’s decision. They sat down obediently, but fidgeted restlessly, clearly impatient for the other campers to arrive.

Finally, everyone was there. Zac, Mia and Darius were glad that there were two other families with children close to their ages. After the camping guide had finished giving everyone some quick instructions, the group set off on their first hike.

Over the next few days, the group hiked to various spots in the Canyon. They took in many amazing sights and shot plenty of photographs. Every evening, exhausted from the day’s adventure, they returned to their campsite. The warmth of the campfire and the aroma of dinner would always greet them.

“Did this trip live up to your expectations, Zac?” Uncle Perry asked Zac on their last night, as they sat by the

campfire, toasting marshmallows.

“Yes, it certainly did! I’ve always imagined the Grand Canyon to be gorgeous, but I never imagined that seeing it in person could be so much more amazing! And I’m glad Aunt Jaslyn arranged to meet some other campers here.”

“That’s true! It wouldn’t have been as enjoyable without the group. And we might not have experienced the best hiking trails.” Uncle Perry agreed.

“It’s kind of like church,” Uncle Perry mused.

“Like church?” Zac was confused.

“Yes, like church. We did not come camping here all by ourselves, but we joined a group of other campers. It was



What is Church?

Some people think of church as a place or building where Christians gather to worship God.

But the Bible refers to the church as the people who gather together and not the building itself.

So the church is a group of Christians.

Ephesians 1:22-23

And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.



more fun this way, wasn't it? The more experienced ones led us to better spots. And when we got tired and felt like giving up, the guide and other campers were there to encourage us to keep going." Uncle Perry explained.

"Church is like that too – a group of Christians meeting together. God knows that it is not good for us to be alone. When we gather together as one big family, we can help and encourage one another." Uncle Perry added.

"Did you say that church is a group of Christians? I always thought church was the place we go to on Sundays to sing songs and attend Sunday school." Zac voiced out.

"That is what many people think too, Zac. But the Bible refers to the church as the people who gather together, not the building itself." Uncle Perry explained.

"I never knew that," Zac said.

"Now you know!" Uncle Perry smiled and patted Zac on his head, "You are a young Christian, and there are many more things that you have yet to learn. In fact, even Aunt Jaslyn and I are still learning more about God each day! That is why it is important for you to meet with other Christians regularly. And as you learn and grow as a Christian, you will eventually be able to serve God. There are many things you can do for God, for example, helping younger Christians grow in their knowledge of God. And you can serve God by serving others outside the church too, like showing love to others and telling them about Jesus."

Zac had never thought of serving God, but he was pleased at the prospect of being able to do something for God. God has been so good to him. God brought such a wonderful family into his life – a family that takes care of him and loves him. Sitting next to Uncle Perry, by the campfire at the Grand Canyon, Zac felt like he was the most blessed person on the earth.

Why Do We Meet as a Church?

God wants us to gather together and worship him as one big family. By meeting together as a church, we can also learn more about God and the Bible, help and encourage one another, and serve other people who are not part of the church.

Hebrews 10:24-25

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

*Let us take a few minutes to think
about what we have just read...*

1. What is church?
2. Why do we go to church?



Chapter 6

Overcoming our Problems

The next morning, everyone woke up early to get ready for the final day at the Grand Canyon. Today, the group would take one last hike – a challenging hike with a steep trail. Carefully, they made their way up the trail to their final lookout point. So far, the Grand Canyon had looked magnificent from every viewpoint, and the view here certainly did not disappoint. Since this was their final stop before heading home, the group took their time to enjoy the scenery. Out came picnic mats, and everyone settled down for a well-deserved rest and snack.

But soon, it was time to go home. The group packed up and made their way back to their campsite. About halfway down the trail they heard a thud, followed by an “Ouch!”

Everyone turned, and found Darius crying in pain, holding on to his ankle. Uncle Perry and Aunt Jaslyn rushed to his side. Darius had slipped on a rock and hurt his ankle.

Thankfully, the hiking guide had brought a first aid kit with him. Darius squealed in pain as the guide slowly removed his shoe. Seeing that ankle was red and swollen, the guide wrapped it with some bandages to reduce the swelling.

But Darius was in great pain and in no shape to complete the hike back. Since Uncle Perry was not an experienced trekker, the guide kindly offered to carry Darius. Uncle Perry and Aunt Jaslyn were very grateful for the guide’s help.

The trek back took much longer than expected, but everyone was more concerned about Darius than about the time.

The group finally made it back to their campsite.

Uncle Perry thanked the guide for his help. If it hadn't been for him, Uncle Perry would not have known what to do, and he would not have been able to carry Darius down the trail. Although Darius was not in very much pain anymore, the guide suggested that they should still see a doctor when he gets home.

All too soon, it was time to bid farewell to the Grand Canyon and their fellow campers. Mia, Darius and Zac were sad to leave their new friends, but knew that they would keep in touch.

On the drive home, Aunt Jaslyn, Mia and Darius fell asleep. Zac was concerned that Uncle Perry might fall asleep too, so he tried his best to stay awake to chat with Uncle Perry.

Uncle Perry was thankful for the conversation; it certainly helped him stay awake. They talked about everything that happened on the trip.

"Uncle Perry, the past few days were truly the best days of my life. I love the Grand Canyon. It is so magnificent I don't even know how best to describe it. I can never thank you enough for this trip, Uncle Perry. I am so sorry that Darius hurt himself, though." Zac said.

"Don't worry about Darius, Zac. It's probably just a

sprained ankle and nothing serious. But I will bring him to the doctor's when we get home, just to be sure." Uncle Perry replied, "I am thankful that we had the guide with us to help us when Darius fell. I wouldn't have known what to do. Carrying Darius down that steep trail would have been near impossible, too."

"Yes. Thankfully we had the guide with us." Zac paused, "Wouldn't it be wonderful if it was always like that? Always having a guide with us to help us every time we are in trouble?"



“But we do, Zac!” Uncle Perry smiled, “God gave us the Holy Spirit to be our personal guide. And he is with us all the time!”

“The Holy Spirit?” Zac was confused.

“God gave us the Holy Spirit to live inside us. Not only does he help us every time we get into trouble, but he helps us to stay out of trouble, too.” Uncle Perry explained.

Uncle Perry went on to explain that when a person prays to receive Jesus, God sends the Holy Spirit to live in that person. The Holy Spirit helps us talk to God and



Who is the Holy Spirit and What Does He Do?

When we pray to receive Jesus, God sends the Holy Spirit to live in us to be our Helper.

The Holy Spirit teaches us about God and helps us understand and obey God's Word, the Bible.

Whenever we need help, we can ask the Holy Spirit and he will help us.

John 14:26

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

understand God's Word, the Bible. When we are tempted to do things that are wrong, the Holy Spirit gently prompts us to obey God instead. Whenever we need help, we can ask the Holy Spirit and he will help us.

"So I have the Holy Spirit living inside me right now?" Zac asked.

"Yes, you do, Zac." Uncle Perry assured Zac. "You can talk to the Holy Spirit anytime. He is always there for you."

Zac smiled.

Learn more about the Holy Spirit

God knows that it is not always easy to do the right things and to obey him. That is why, when we believe in Jesus, God not only made us his children but he also gave us the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit works inside us, and helps us obey God and do the things that God wants us to do.

Whenever we are afraid or do not know what to do, we can pray to the Holy Spirit to guide us and help us.

The more we follow the directions of the Holy Spirit, the more he will help us become like Jesus:

Galatians 5:22-23a (New Living Translation)

“But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.”

*Let us take a few minutes to think
about what we have just read...*

1. *Who is the Holy Spirit and what does he do?*



Chapter 7

Telling Others

When they reached home, Uncle Perry and Aunt Jaslyn brought Darius to have an X-ray taken of his foot. The doctor assured them that there were no broken bones and Darius would be well again after a few weeks' rest.

Over the next few days, Zac and the Robinsons could not stop talking about their trip to the Grand Canyon. They recalled the hikes that they went on, the sights they had seen, the meals they had, the campfires they enjoyed and the friends they had made.

Aunt Jaslyn printed some of the best photographs they took at the Grand Canyon. The kids were happy to help put together a scrapbook. Everyone chipped in and wrote little captions next to the photographs. When it was finally



completed, the children proudly showed it to Uncle Perry.

"Wow! This is a beautiful scrapbook!" Uncle Perry was impressed.

The children grinned from ear to ear. They couldn't stop talking about their trip yet again as they looked at the scrapbook together with Uncle Perry.

"Can I bring this scrapbook to school for 'show and tell' tomorrow, Mama? I want to tell all my friends about how beautiful the Grand Canyon is, and how much fun we had there." Darius asked Aunt Jaslyn.

"Of course you can. Are you going to tell your friends about your sprained ankle too?" Aunt Jaslyn smiled and asked Darius playfully.

"You know, kids, I am glad that you enjoyed your trip so much that you want to tell your friends about it. But do you know that there is something even more awesome that you should also tell your friends about?" Uncle Perry asked.

"Something even more awesome than our Grand Canyon trip?" The kids were puzzled. What could be better than their amazing trip?

"Yes. We had such a great time at the Grand Canyon, and we want to share our experience with our friends. That is good. But although our trip to the Grand Canyon was really good and fun, it only lasted for the few days that we were there. There is something much better that we can enjoy not just for a few days, but forever and ever!" Uncle Perry hinted.

“Oh! I know, Papa. You are talking about Jesus!” Mia exclaimed.

“Jesus?” Zac was still confused.

“Yes, you should also be telling your friends about how God loves each and every one of us and wants to be with us forever and ever.” Uncle Perry explained.

“Just as God loves you and wants you to be with him forever and ever, God also wants your friends to know him and believe in him, so that they can be with God forever and ever as well,” Uncle Perry smiled.

Zac nodded. He was indeed thankful that Uncle Perry had told him about Jesus.

“You are right, Uncle Perry. Having Jesus in my life is definitely much better than the trip to the Grand Canyon. I must tell my friends about Jesus!” Zac agreed.

Uncle Perry and Aunt Jaslyn looked at Zac, and then at each other. They were thankful that God had given them the opportunity to tell Zac about Jesus. They were glad that Zac had been reading the Bible and learning more and more about God each day, and that he was now ready to tell his friends about Jesus.

Why Should We Tell Others About Jesus?

Just as God loves us and wants us to be with him forever and ever, God also wants our friends to know him and believe in him, so that they too can be with God forever and ever.

What Should We Tell Others About Jesus?

We should tell that God loves each and every one of us and wants to be with us forever and ever.

But because we have all sinned, we cannot be with God.

So God sent Jesus, to die on the cross to take the punishment for our sins.

But because Jesus is God's Son, after Jesus died and was buried, he became alive again on the third day.

Anyone who is truly sorry for all the wrong things that he / she has done, and who truly believes that Jesus took the punishment for his / her sins, can pray for God's forgiveness and invite Jesus into his / her live.

God will forgive our sins and we can have a relationship with God. We become God's child and will one day be with him in heaven.

Let us take a few minutes to think about what we have just read...

1. Why should we tell others about Jesus?
2. What should we tell others about Jesus?



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We believe that children not only need to hear the gospel message, but more importantly to grow in their relationship with Jesus. This book, **Welcome to the Family: A Follow-Up Book for Children**, is written for the purpose of helping children grow in their understanding of the Gospel and in their journey with Jesus.

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