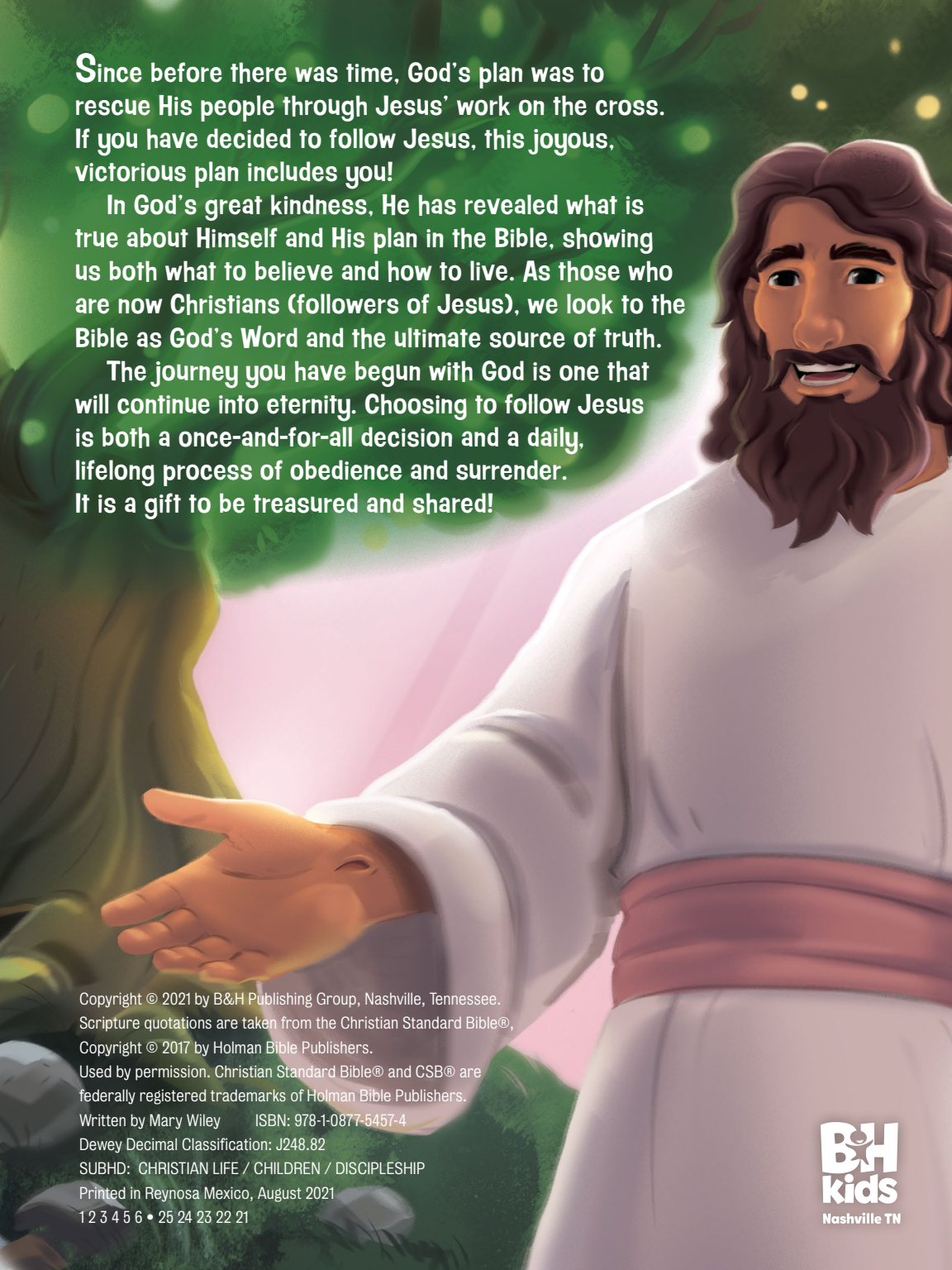


*A Primer for New Believers*

# Life as a Christian

Mary Wiley

**ONE  
BIG  
STORY**



Since before there was time, God's plan was to rescue His people through Jesus' work on the cross. If you have decided to follow Jesus, this joyous, victorious plan includes you!

In God's great kindness, He has revealed what is true about Himself and His plan in the Bible, showing us both what to believe and how to live. As those who are now Christians (followers of Jesus), we look to the Bible as God's Word and the ultimate source of truth.

The journey you have begun with God is one that will continue into eternity. Choosing to follow Jesus is both a once-and-for-all decision and a daily, lifelong process of obedience and surrender. It is a gift to be treasured and shared!

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# What is God's good plan?

## CREATION



**I**n the beginning, God created all things visible and invisible out of nothing, and it was good! Birds and trees, light and land, and sunrises and gravity are all God's work. God also created people in His image. He provided everything His creation needed through His great power and love.

God has always had more love for people than we can imagine. When He created the first people, Adam and Eve, He placed them in a beautiful garden and told them to care for it. God provided for them in every way, giving them trees that produced great food to eat. There was only one tree they couldn't eat from: the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

**A** snake, Satan, was also in the garden, and this snake lied to Adam and Eve. He said that God was keeping something precious from them—keeping them from being like God Himself—by forbidding them to eat from the one tree. That snake convinced Adam and Eve to disobey God, and their disobedience changed everything.

This disobedience is known as *sin*, which is when we do, think, or say something God tells us *not* to do, think, or say. It is also when we *don't* do, think, or say something God does tell us to do, think, or say. God gave Adam and Eve these instructions in the garden, but now we can read them in the Bible.

Well, Adam and Eve felt guilt and shame about what they had done. They were removed from the garden and faced a curse for their sin. Sin infected every last atom on earth, leaving the world opposed to God.

## THE FALL



# REDEMPTION



**Like Adam and Eve, we all sin. Yet, even before Adam and Eve sinned, God was making a way for His people to be right with Him again. God's plan was to redeem His people, whom He had made in His image, by sending His Son, Jesus, into the world.**

**Jesus was born as a baby and lived the perfectly obedient, sinless life that we could not live. Yet He paid our full debt for sin by dying on the cross. But that's not the end of the story: Jesus rose again three days later, showing that He had defeated sin and death!**

*The Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John*



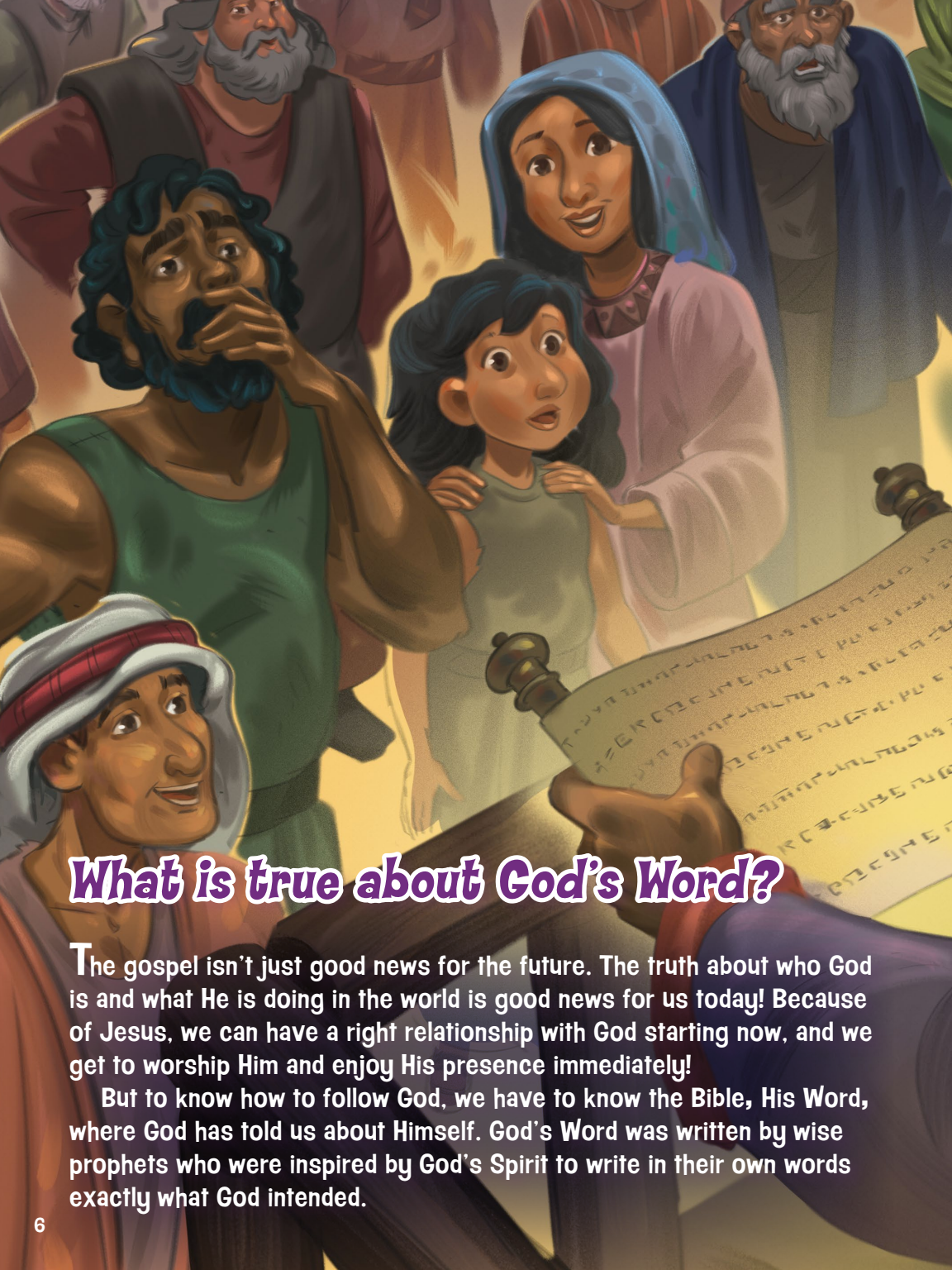
**G**od's good plan to make us right with Him again comes through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. The word *gospel* means "good news," and the gospel about Jesus is definitely the best news for us! Jesus is alive today, ruling over the earth and His church and advocating for His people.

The Bible promises that one day Jesus will return from heaven to make all things new. There will be no more sadness, sickness, or death, and all who trust Jesus will worship Him as King and live with Him forever!

## RESTORATION



**Revelation 21-22    1 Corinthians 15:25-26    Hebrews 7:23-25**



## What is true about God's Word?

The gospel isn't just good news for the future. The truth about who God is and what He is doing in the world is good news for us today! Because of Jesus, we can have a right relationship with God starting now, and we get to worship Him and enjoy His presence immediately!

But to know how to follow God, we have to know the Bible, His Word, where God has told us about Himself. God's Word was written by wise prophets who were inspired by God's Spirit to write in their own words exactly what God intended.





For thousands of years, God's people listened as teachers read from scrolls of the Old Testament. They told the stories of Scripture to their children, passing down truths about God and His work in the world. These truths gave instructions on how to live and revealed God's promise to send a Savior who would defeat sin once and for all.

Today, we have the gift of God's Word in full. It doesn't have to be read by a teacher; we can read it anywhere we go! We read the same words God's people read thousands of years ago, translated from the original texts into our own language, and God's Spirit helps us understand them. Ancient manuscripts continue to be discovered today that confirm God's Word has not changed. It can be trusted!



**God's Word** is faithful and true. It is consistent, despite being written by forty people from three different continents over the span of around 1,500 years. It's unlike any other book because it is alive and active, used by God to direct and guide us. **We** can grow in our love for and understanding of God by reading, studying, meditating (thinking) on, and memorizing the Bible. To know God, we must know His Word.

The Bible is one book of many books, and they aren't all in the order that they happened. Instead, they are arranged by *genre*, or the kind of writing they are. Knowing the genre helps us as we read, because we don't read Poetry in the same way we read History. For example, Poetry uses beautiful words and illustrations to reveal truths about God, while History records events that occurred. **We** read the Law as instructions for us and the Prophets as messages given by God to a prophet who delivered that message, often to a specific group of people. Letters provide instructions for us but also for particular people or churches, usually to address a certain issue. And Prophecy reveals more about God's plan, both now and into the future.





LAW

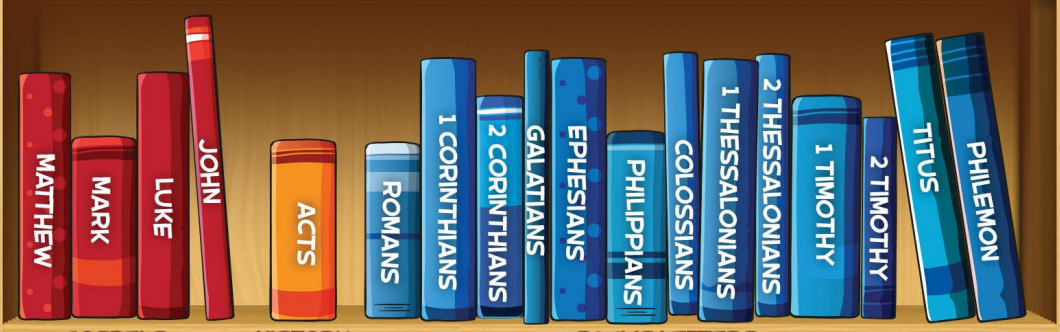
HISTORY



POETRY & WISDOM

MAJOR PROPHETS

MINOR PROPHETS



GOSPELS

HISTORY

PAUL'S LETTERS



GENERAL LETTERS

PROPHECY



# How can I study God's Word?

## 1. Read and re-read



## 2. Observe



Ask questions about what you read:

- What type of writing is this? How does that mean I should read it?
- Is this passage (a group of Scriptures) *describing* something that happened or *prescribing* (guiding or instructing) me in how I should live?
- Where does it fall in the storyline of the whole Bible? What else is going on in the book? In the chapter? In the paragraph around it?
- What does this passage teach me about God and His character?
- What does this passage show me about people?
- Is anything repeated, showing me it's important?
- Are there any references to other parts of the story?



## 3. Apply

- How does this passage help me know how I should live?
- How can I worship God because of what I read?



## 4. Pray

- **RESPOND** to what you read by talking to God about it.
- **REPENT** or turn from any sin this passage revealed in your life.
- **REQUEST** your needs from God, focusing on what God's Word tells you about how you should live. Ask God to help you live more like Jesus did.

# How do I live as a Christian?

New Christians are beginning exciting relationships with God, but they often have questions about what to know and how to live. *Life as a Christian* invites readers to explore key truths of the Christian faith and find answers to big questions such as:

- **Who is God and how should I respond to Him?**
- **Why should I trust the Bible?**
- **Who does God say I am?**
- **What is the Church, and why should I be part of it?**

This short booklet offers a clear explanation of spiritual disciplines and helps new Christians better know God and how they are part of His good plan. It's a perfect tool for:

- **Personal use**
- **Church classrooms**
- **Evangelism**

*Life as a Christian* offers a strong foundation that new believers can build on with confidence as their faith grows!

