

Jesus Is...

LifeVenture
Group

A 6-part Video Series
helping you discover who Jesus is

OVERVIEW

This discussion guide was created to go side-by-side with the *Jesus Is...* video series. Through it, you will have the opportunity to reflect and discuss questions designed to help you explore and reveal your heart. We encourage you to be honest with yourself and, if you are with others, to be open with your group. We can all give superficial answers, but when we wrestle with hard questions, we experience growth.

USING THIS GUIDE

This guide is flexible for you as an individual or group, for young or old, for those who don't know yet what they believe about Jesus and for those who have followed Jesus a long time. Despite differences we have in age, economic or social classes, or even our nationality, Jesus asks us all this same question—

Who do YOU say that I am?

These guides for the preview and six episodes are broken into several sections:

- **Let's Get Started:** This provides a small snapshot of what the topic will be for the video.
- **Watch the Video:** The link and episode name tell you which video to watch.
- **Consider First Impressions:** After the video, consider these simple questions to get you thinking about relevant experiences in your own life or lives around you that tie into the video.
- **Read God's Word:** Taken directly from the video, these Bible verses provide an opportunity to reread the words of Jesus and those he interacted with for yourself. We encourage you to also read these in different Bible translations and the verses around the section to get the full context.
- **Dig Deeper:** Additional discussion questions based on the Bible help you get to the heart of what Jesus is saying.
- **Take Your Next Step:** Wrap up with a final thought and question to help you consider what your next step could be.

It is our hope that through this series, you will learn more about yourself, about who Jesus is, and about God's desire to have a lifelong relationship with you.

SCAN ME

RESOURCES

www.lifeventure.group/media—video resources

www.biblegateway.com — Bible passages, NLT

This QR code provides a quick way to reach the Jesus Is... Series.



Jesus Is...

A Preview

LET'S GET STARTED

Ever since Jesus' life and death two thousand years ago, people have debated innumerable ideas and opinions about who he says he is.

Together, let us begin the journey of discovering Jesus' character and the meaning it has for us today.

WATCH THE VIDEO

Watch *Jesus is... A Preview* at www.lifeventure.group/media

CONSIDER FIRST IMPRESSIONS

- When others look at your life, what do you think they say about you? How do you want others to describe you?

READ GOD'S WORD

MATTHEW 16:13-16 (NLT)

13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"

14 "Well," they replied, "some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and others say Jeremiah or one of the other prophets."

15 Then he asked them, "But who do you say I am?"

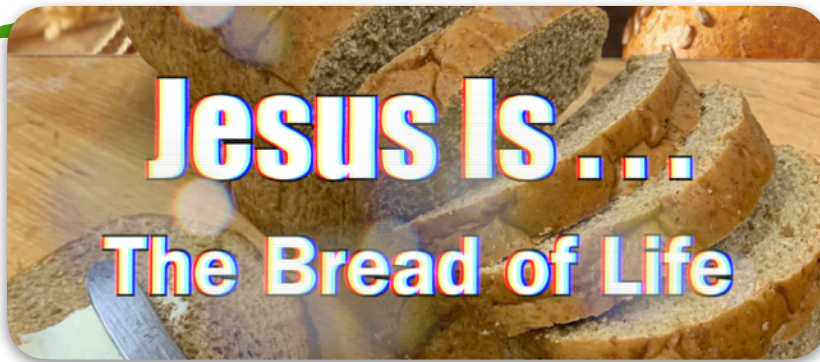
16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

DIG DEEPER

1. Who is Jesus to you? What have others told you about him?
2. What questions do you have about faith, life's meaning, and your purpose in life? What answers have you received from exploring those questions up to this point?
3. To you, what does it mean for Jesus to be "the Messiah, the Son of the living God"?

TAKE YOUR NEXT STEP

Jesus asked his disciples, men who have lived and traveled with him for years, a challenging question that he also asks us today—"But who do you say that I am?" As we consider Jesus' own words, be willing to wrestle with the stories and discover your own answer to his question.



LET'S GET STARTED

Bread has been an essential and vital staple for the Jewish people in Jesus' day and even for many others in our day. Jesus takes this image and applies it to himself. What is the significance of claiming a connection to a common food found in most homes?

WATCH THE VIDEO

Watch *Jesus is... The Bread of Life* at www.lifeventure.group/media

CONSIDER FIRST IMPRESSIONS

- John, one of Jesus' disciples, walked faithfully with him for three years. Have you shared life with a mentor or close friend for a number of years? If so, how have they inspired you? What have they said and done that influences what you do and believe?
- What do you do to find meaning, purpose, or fulfillment in your life? How long do the effects tend to last before you start seeking something else?

READ GOD'S WORD

JOHN 6:29-35 (NLT)

29 Jesus told them, "This is the only work God wants from you: Believe in the one he has sent."

30 They answered, "Show us a miraculous sign if you want us to believe in you. What can you do? **31** After all, our ancestors ate manna while they journeyed through the wilderness! The Scriptures say, 'Moses gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"

32 Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, Moses didn't give you bread from heaven. My Father did. And now he offers you the true bread from heaven. **33** The true bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

34 "Sir," they said, "give us that bread every day."

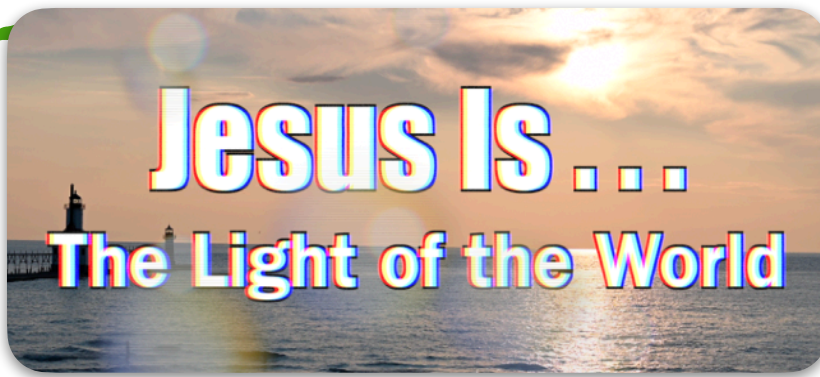
35 Jesus replied, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

DIG DEEPER

1. Have you ever asked for a sign from God? What circumstances prompted that?
2. When you hear "bread of life," what comes to your mind?
3. Jesus promises those who come to him will be satisfied. Where in your life are you unsatisfied? How might your life be different if Jesus' promises were true for you?

TAKE YOUR NEXT STEP

While a loaf of bread can provide nourishment for a moment, nothing can fulfill deep spiritual hunger and restlessness in our lives except Jesus. What are you willing to do to find satisfaction for your hunger? Are you willing to trust the one who is the bread of life? Ask Jesus to satisfy a deeper hunger you are currently experiencing.



LET'S GET STARTED

Light and darkness—these two antithetical realities clash against each other in every aspect of life today, from the physical earth's rotation around the sun or the spiritual reality of good and evil. How can Jesus' claim to be the light in a world of darkness radically transform our perspectives?

WATCH THE VIDEO

Watch *Jesus is... The Light of the World* at www.lifeventure.group/media

CONSIDER FIRST IMPRESSIONS

- Recall a time when you were physically in a place of total darkness, like a cave or room. Describe the experience and any emotions you felt.
- Recall a moment you emotionally, mentally, or spiritually encountered darkness. Describe the experience and any emotions you felt. How does this moment compare with your experience with physical darkness?
- During your dark moments, who or what helped you move out of it or transform your perspective?

READ GOD'S WORD

JOHN 9:1-9 (NLT)

1 As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. **2** "Rabbi," his disciples asked him, "why was this man born blind? Was it because of his own sins or his parents' sins?"

3 "It was not because of his sins or his parents' sins," Jesus answered. "This happened so the power of God could be seen in him. **4** We must quickly carry out the tasks assigned us by the one who sent us. The night is coming, and then no one can work. **5** But while I am here in the world, I am the light of the world."

6 Then he spit on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and spread the mud over the blind man's eyes. **7** He told him, "Go wash yourself in the pool of Siloam" (Siloam means "sent"). So the man went and washed and came back seeing!

8 His neighbors and others who knew him as a blind beggar asked each other, "Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?" **9** Some said he was, and others said, "No, he just looks like him!"

But the beggar kept saying, "Yes, I am the same one!"

JOHN 9:31-38 (NLT)

31 "We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but he is ready to hear those who worship him and do his will.

32 Ever since the world began, no one has been able to open the eyes of someone born blind. **33** If this man were not from God, he couldn't have done it."

34 "You were born a total sinner!" they answered. "Are you trying to teach us?" And they threw him out of the synagogue.

35 When Jesus heard what had happened, he found the man and asked, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

36 The man answered, "Who is he, sir? I want to believe in him."

37 "You have seen him," Jesus said, "and he is speaking to you!"

38 "Yes, Lord, I believe!" the man said. And he worshiped Jesus.

JOHN 1:4-5 (NLT)

4 The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone.

5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.



The Light of the World

1 JOHN 1:5-7 (NLT)

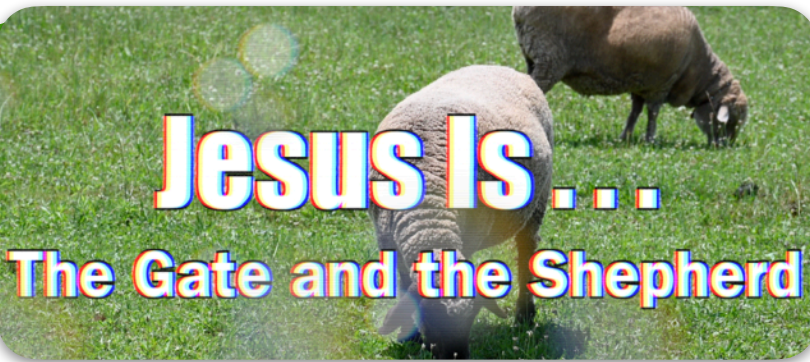
5 This is the message we heard from Jesus and now declare to you: God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all. **6** So we are lying if we say we have fellowship with God but go on living in spiritual darkness; we are not practicing the truth. **7** But if we are living in the light, as God is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin.

DIG DEEPER

1. Has something miraculous that you couldn't explain ever occurred in your life or someone else's? Explain what happened and how it impacted you.
2. Are there any areas in your life where you are experiencing spiritual darkness or something oppressive? How are these affecting you or possibly those around you?

TAKE YOUR NEXT STEP

The beggar born blind, through no fault of his own, encountered Jesus, the light of the world. Jesus miraculously opened his eyes not only physically but also spiritually. His response resulted in a joyful transformation so bright everyone around him noticed it. Jesus offers this same transforming power to you—would you like his light to shine in your life? If so, invite him to shine his transforming light into an area of darkness in your life.



LET'S GET STARTED

During the first century, shepherds guided their sheep to good pastures and safeguarded them from danger in Israel's countryside. Jesus depicts himself as a gate and a good shepherd who guards and protects the flock underneath his care. But how does this relate to us today?

WATCH THE VIDEO

Watch *Jesus is... The Gate and the Shepherd* at www.lifeventure.group/media

CONSIDER FIRST IMPRESSIONS

- Have you ever had something stolen from you or someone close to you? What was it, and how did that event impact you?
- What would you be willing to give up for someone you care for? Your time, money, power, or maybe even your life?

READ GOD'S WORD

JOHN 10:7-15 (NLT)

7 ... So he [Jesus] explained it to them: "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. **8** All who came before me were thieves and robbers. But the true sheep did not listen to them. **9** Yes, I am the gate. Those who come in through me will be saved. They will come and go freely and will find good pastures. **10** The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.

11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd sacrifices his life for the sheep. **12** A hired hand will run when he sees a wolf coming. He will abandon the sheep because they don't belong to him and he isn't their shepherd. And so the wolf attacks them and scatters the flock. **13** The hired hand runs away because he's working only for the money and doesn't really care about the sheep.

14 "I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep, and they know me, **15** just as my Father knows me and I know the Father. So I sacrifice my life for the sheep."

JOHN 3:16-17 (NLT)

16 For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. **17** God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him.

DIG DEEPER

1. To you, what would be a good pasture? How might God describe his good pasture?
2. In this story, what role do a gate and shepherd play? What challenges are inherent with both?
3. How do those under the shepherd's care benefit from the risks he takes on their behalf?
4. Right now, what is something that feels like it is stealing, killing, or destroying your life, preventing you from experiencing a rich and satisfying life?

TAKE YOUR NEXT STEP

We all belong to one of two flocks: those under Jesus's protection or those outside of it. Jesus desires for all to hear his voice and follow his lead. He is even willing to lay down his life for those who wander outside of his fold. Are you under the protection and leadership of the good shepherd, Jesus? Would you like to be? Invite him to begin leading your life and providing the care and protection he offers.

Jesus Is...

The Resurrection and the Life

LET'S GET STARTED

Life is a journey of transformation, joy, and sorrow, and except for a few recorded stories in the Bible, everyone's life ultimately ends in death. However, even in death, Jesus offers a new reality that goes beyond what we can see with our eyes.

WATCH THE VIDEO

Watch *Jesus is... The Resurrection and the Life* at www.lifeventure.group/media

CONSIDER FIRST IMPRESSIONS

- If you could sum up your life with a simple motto, what might it be?
- Has anyone close to you died, whether it be a family member, friend, or pet? If so, how has the loss impacted you? Where did you seek comfort?
- Is this life all there is, or do you believe there is something more? What emotions or thoughts do you have associated with death?

READ GOD'S WORD

JOHN 11:21-27 (NLT)

21 Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died. **22** But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask."

23 Jesus told her, "Your brother will rise again."

24 "Yes," Martha said, "he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day."

25 Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying.

26 Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?"

27 "Yes, Lord," she told him. "I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God."

JOHN 11:41-44 (NLT)

41 So they rolled the stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, "Father, thank you for hearing me.

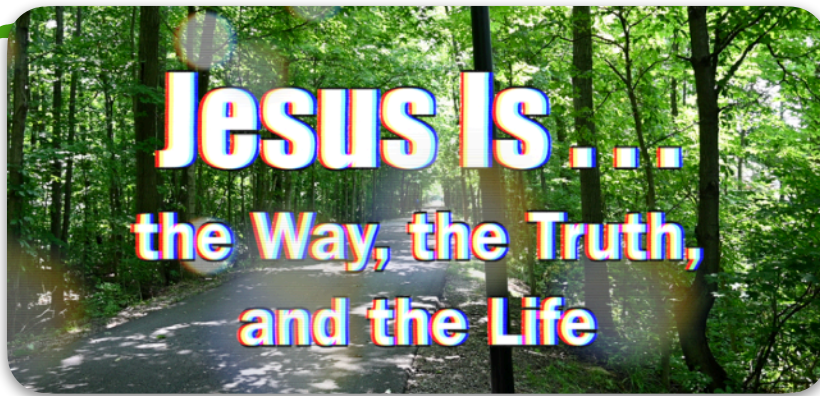
42 You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me." **43** Then Jesus shouted, "Lazarus, come out!" **44** And the dead man came out, his hands and feet bound in graveclothes, his face wrapped in a head cloth. Jesus told them, "Unwrap him and let him go!"

DIG DEEPER

1. After her brother's death, Martha laments to Jesus, "Lord, if only you had been here...." Have you ever wrestled with a similar situation or questioned God in some way? If you have, what circumstance caused it?
2. Do you believe that God always hears you? Why or why not?
3. Have you ever witnessed something unbelievable? Do you believe in things you've not seen?

TAKE YOUR NEXT STEP

In front of many witnesses, Jesus raised a man who had been buried in a grave for four days, an event not even his enemies could discount. The question Jesus asks Martha is one he asks of us today: "Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this?" Jesus wants to offer you a life that goes beyond our physical existence on this earth and extends into eternity. This free gift becomes available when you are willing to put your complete trust in him.



LET'S GET STARTED

In this day and age, questions about life's direction, truth, and the purpose of life dominate the minds and hearts of many. Whether through recent events in the world or personal troubles, we can see that nothing is certain and many things are outside of our control. In a world of anxiety and chaos, Jesus offers a promise that brings hope.

WATCH THE VIDEO

Watch *Jesus is... The Way, the Truth, and the Life* at www.lifeventure.group/media

CONSIDER FIRST IMPRESSIONS

- Consider a moment where you or someone you were with wasn't paying attention. Did it affect your safety or the safety of those around you? In what way?
- Recall a time your heart was troubled or anxious, either about a decision you needed to make or an event about to happen. In that situation, who or what did you put your trust in: yourself, others, God, or something else?

READ GOD'S WORD

JOHN 14:1-6 (NLT)

1 "Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. **2** There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? **3** When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. **4** And you know the way to where I am going."

5 "No, we don't know, Lord," Thomas said. "We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

6 Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me."

PSALM 139:16 (NLT)

You saw me before I was born.

Every day of my life was recorded in your book.

Every moment was laid out

before a single day had passed.

ROMANS 10:9 (NLT)

If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

DIG DEEPER

1. What do you think about Jesus' claim that he is the only way to his Father in heaven? If this is true, what are the implications of this declaration for people in our world?
2. Take a moment to reflect on your own spiritual journey. If you haven't yet come to trust in Jesus, what might it look like to start on the path of following him? If you already believe in Jesus, how has your journey been up to this point?



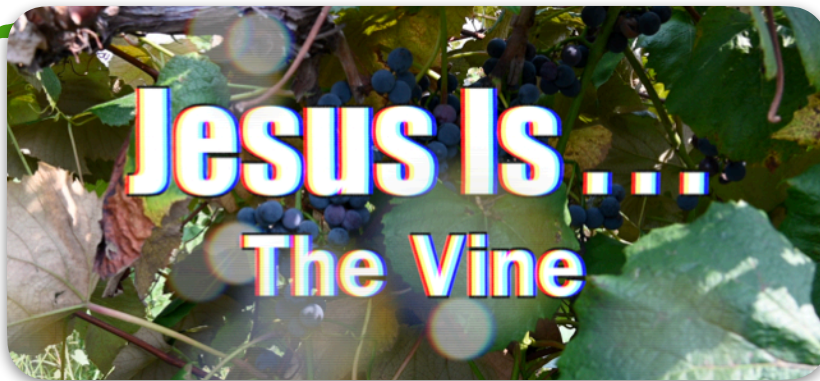
the Way, the Truth, and the Life

TAKE YOUR NEXT STEP

When the disciples shared their anxiety with Jesus, he reminded them to trust in him and the promise that he is the way, truth, and life. Even in the hardships and trials, Jesus is with you and will guide you.

Are you ready to trust him with your life?

If so, offer to him a simple prayer of faith expressing your belief in him as your risen Lord, the one who is ready to lead you throughout your life. If not, please keep an open mind as you watch the final episode.



LET'S GET STARTED

Vineyards were plentiful in ancient Israel, providing grapes that were then crushed into wine to be served at their daily meals. Jesus takes this image of a vineyard to express his desire for people to grow strong in him—but he also adds a warning about what will happen to those who choose not to remain with him.

WATCH THE VIDEO

Watch *Jesus is... The Vine* at www.lifeventure.group/media

CONSIDER FIRST IMPRESSIONS

- Think about something in your daily life that requires pruning, correction, or editing, such as gardening, writing, leading others, or raising children. In what ways did you take steps to ensure it or the person would be better and healthier?
- What is something in your life that you realize may need pruning or even to be totally removed?

READ GOD'S WORD

JOHN 15:1-8 (NLT)

1 "I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. **2** He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. **3** You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. **4** Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me.

5 "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.

6 Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. **7** But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! **8** When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father."

ACTS 2:38 (NLT)

Peter replied, "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

DIG DEEPER

1. What is the connection between a vine and its branches? What do you understand it to mean when Jesus said, "I am the vine and you are the branches"?
2. Based on this passage, the function of a branch is to bear fruit. If you are a branch, what kind of fruit would you like to see in your life? What kind of fruit do you think God would like to see?
3. Despite our best efforts, we all struggle with sin. What is an area of your life where you would like to experience God's forgiveness?



TAKE YOUR NEXT STEP

Jesus demonstrated his love for us through his death on the cross. He defeated sin and death so that each of us may live an abundant life with him, free from guilt, shame, and even death. But while freely given, we have a choice to receive it or not. The decision we have to follow or not follow Christ has lasting, even eternal, consequences.

Would you like to take a step of faith and follow Jesus today?

Are you ready to admit your sin to God and ask him for forgiveness?

Do you desire to surrender your life to Jesus and be baptized into his name?

Jesus Is...

Living It Out

Throughout this series, we've been discovering who Jesus is to find our own answer to his question that he asks each and every one of us—Who do YOU say that I am?

Which metaphor in this series connects best with you and why?

- The Bread of Life
- The Light of the World
- The Gate and the Shepherd
- The Resurrection and the Life
- The Way, the Truth, and the Life
- The Vine

Having considered Jesus' words, who do you say that he is?

MORE NEXT STEPS

The journey in discovering does not end here.

- We encourage you to spend time each day reading the complete gospel stories written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John to learn more about the amazing words and life of Jesus.
- Begin praying simple prayers to God asking him to give you wisdom, insight, and direction for your life.
- Connect with a Bible-believing group of people to experience community and explore more questions.

If you would like to talk with someone more about where you are spiritually and even receive some guidance for next steps to consider, please send us an email at connect@LifeVenture.group. One of our staff will reach out to you.

May God bless you as you continue on your spiritual journey. May he help you experience the depths of his love for you, the beauty of his plan for your life, and the power of his transforming Spirit.

Until next time,

Scott LaRue
Follower of Jesus