

Rebecca Manley Pippert



Your life with Christ

LIVE | GROW | KNOW

the goodbook
COMPANY

Live

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Contents

Introduction	5
How To Use This Booklet	7
1. How Do I know It Is Real?	9
2. What Is The Good News?	19
3. Is It Worth It?	31
4. A Time For Commitment	41
5. New Life In Christ.	51
Extra Resources	60

Introduction

I haven't always been a Christian.

In fact, there was a time when I was a resigned agnostic. Though I investigated various religions and philosophies, I was still left feeling unsatisfied. Then one day, it occurred to me that I had never actually read the Bible, or properly explored the meaning of Christianity. I realized I ought to investigate the evidence and consider the claims that Jesus had made.

My spiritual journey was a process. Over time, my search led me to commit wholeheartedly to Jesus Christ and continue my way through life with him as my Lord. And it has been the most exciting journey!

Becoming a follower of Jesus, however, didn't instantly eliminate all of my questions. Nor did it mean I understood everything from the start. I was concerned about whether my new-found faith would last. What would I do when new doubts arose? How would I handle the challenges of living obediently to Christ?

This is the reason that I have written LIVE. You may be someone who is still investigating Christianity. You may be a new believer. Or you may have been a Christian for longer, but you have recently felt the need to really get to grips with the Christian life.

I want to be a companion with you on your spiritual journey. I want to think with you about the questions and issues I had as a new believer. I want you to see, as I did, how Jesus Christ is both true and wonderful, and how we can enjoy life with him.

Thank you very much for joining me on this course. It is my hope and prayer that LIVE will prove to be thought-provoking and exciting; and that it will strengthen your faith in Christ and cause you to celebrate, with fresh awe and wonder, all that God has done for you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Becky". The script is fluid and cursive, with a large, prominent 'B' at the start.

How to use this booklet

Everything you'll need (apart from a Bible and a pen) is in this booklet. Each session has several different elements:



Introduction. Helps you begin to think about the main theme of the session. You can read in the booklets, or watch Becky on the DVD or download.



Historical Context. Explains what is going on in the part of the Bible you're about to look at.



Bible Study. This will take most of your time, as you look at the Bible together and share what you discover as you answer the questions in this booklet. A good Bible translation to use is the "NIV2011". There is space in the booklet to make notes, but it's not compulsory!



Live What You Learn. The Bible changes us in how we think and act. This section encourages you to think about what difference the section of the Bible you've been reading might make to you.



Life Stories. Listen to people sharing some of their story about how and why they became a Christian, or what life as a Christian has been like for them.



Following Jesus. Listen to Becky talk about the main themes of the session. There is a summary of what she says in your booklet.



Praying Together. A time to speak to God. Prayers don't have to be long or use complicated words; and feel free to pray silently in your head if you don't feel comfortable praying out loud.



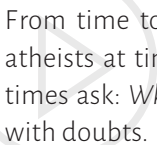
Going Deeper. Something for you to take home to read and think about between sessions. This is entirely optional. If you have any questions, do ask them at the start of the next session.

Note for Leaders: You'll find a concise Leader's Guide for the course, as well as the downloadable videos, at www.thegoodbook.com/live. You'll need the access code in your DVD case to be able to get onto the page.



I. How Do I Know It Is Real?

John 20 v 19-31



From time to time, every thinking person wrestles with doubt. Thoughtful atheists at times wonder: *But what if there is a God?* Sincere Christians sometimes ask: *What if Christianity is not true?* Even the disciples of Jesus struggled with doubts.

Our questions about faith vary. Some wrestle with the age-old question: *Why would a good and all-powerful God allow people to suffer?* Others may ask: *Are the biblical accounts of Jesus' life accurate? Is Jesus unique among the world religions? Has modern science made faith in God impossible?*

While there are different biblical answers to the sources of doubt, there is one answer that trumps them all. The apostle Paul said that the entire Christian faith rests on one foundation, the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (1 Corinthians 15 v 13-19). If the resurrection of Jesus is true, then our faith has a solid footing. On the other hand, if Jesus is not raised from the dead, then the strongest faith in the world is useless, because it is based on falsehood and deception.




Historical Context

The disciples had gathered in a room in Jerusalem on the Sunday after the crucifixion. It was three days after Jesus had died. Considering the events

of the last two days, it's hard to imagine a more depressed group of people. The disciples had pinned all their hopes on Jesus. Yet with Jesus now dead, it seemed his cause had suffered a permanent defeat. They were bewildered and grief-stricken. Not only had they seen Jesus arrested and shamefully crucified as a criminal, they themselves had fled and abandoned Jesus in his moment of trial—just as Jesus had predicted they would.

What are we to do with our doubts? Having questions and doubts are normal. Even Jesus' disciples had serious doubts, as we will see. So what caused them to become rock-solid certain that Jesus had risen?

 Bible Study

Read John 20 v 19-21a

- 1. Why are the disciples huddled together behind a locked door (v 19)? List several fears they might be struggling with.

- o What is the significance of Jesus suddenly standing among them without having to unlock the door?
