



the
Neighborhood

Baptism Book for Kids


Helping you make the
biggest decision of your life!






A Letter to Kids:

If you're reading this book, that means you're interested in learning more about who Jesus is and how you can put your trust in Him. That is awesome! We are excited that you have this book in your hands. We want you to take your time as you go through the book and participate in all the fun activities that are in it.



All through this book when you see a question on the notecard like the one here, take some time to think about the answer and write your thoughts down. If you have a question about anything you read in this book, make sure you ask your parents, grandparents, or another adult in your life such as your small group leader or pastor.





A Letter to Parents/Guardians

Parents and Guardians! We want you to use this book too! While allowing your child to work through it independently, be available to answer their questions and guide them throughout the process.

This book will be a great conversation piece for you and your child over the next several weeks. Take advantage of those conversations. Here are some tips for you along the way:

- ◇ **Continue the conversation by asking your child questions.** This will help challenge them to think about what they're reading and learning about who Jesus is. You'll get a front row seat watching them grow in their knowledge and understanding if you ask good questions.
- ◇ **Give your child time.** They may be excited about getting baptized and want to do it right away! While that's wonderful, this is a process that shouldn't be rushed. We don't want them to feel pressured. This will be the most important decision of their life.
- ◇ **Allow the Holy Spirit to work.** Pray for the Spirit to work in your child's heart. Ask other friends and family to do the same.
- ◇ **Remember you're there to assist them** so they can make this decision on their own.

There is no greater joy as a parent than watching your child make this decision! We hope that this book is a useful resource to you as you walk through making this decision of faith and baptism.

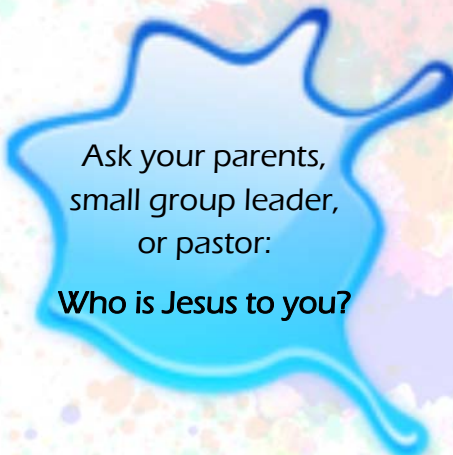
Pathway Church Children's Ministry Staff
kids@pathwaychurch.com



One of the first stories I heard about Jesus is in Matthew 8:23-27. Jesus had 12 men who followed Him. They were called His disciples. One day they were on a boat together with Jesus. A huge storm came and they were in great danger. But Jesus was asleep on the boat. The disciples came to him in a panic and yelled 'Jesus we're going to die, please save us!'

Here's what Jesus did "He replied, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" (verse 26) Then He got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm."

Whoa! What a story! The Jesus in that story was definitely not the 'sad looking wimpy guy' that I had imagined!



Ask your parents,
small group leader,
or pastor:

Who is Jesus to you?

After this, the disciples knew that Jesus was different. They asked the question, "Who is this that even the winds and the waves obey Him?" (verse 27)

Picture Jesus as a real living person who is able to make the wind obey him. The WIND! Do you know anyone else who can make the weather obey them?

Does this change how you think of Jesus?



Creation

Think of our world. Think of the way plants and animals have a way to eat, breathe, and sleep. Think of the sun and the moon and the different seasons of earth: spring, summer, fall, winter.

Imagine the order and detail that goes into the way a single flower can take in food from the soil and the sun and drink from the rain. How much more work does it take to make a human body? We breathe without thinking about it. We are able to walk, run, and play a musical instrument or play sports. The planets in space, the dirt and the ocean, animals, ocean creatures, and insects, and of course, people: all those things have a Creator! The first verse in the Bible, Genesis 1:1, tells us: "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth". What's more, Matthew 6:26 tells us "Look at the birds of the air. They don't plant or gather crops...But your Father who is in heaven feeds them. Aren't you worth much more than they?"

Write about or draw something you have made that you are proud of:



God was pleased with His whole creation, but people (that includes you and me!) are the only ones who He made **in His image**. Look up Genesis 1:26 if you don't believe this! God loves us so much and always wants what is best for us, so He is making a perfect place for us called **Heaven**. We will talk more about why we need Heaven in Section Two!

What do you think about when you hear the word Heaven?

Draw or write below:

A yellow notepad with blue horizontal lines for writing. There is an orange splat on the left side of the notepad.

You are here for a reason. God made you just the way you are for a special plan! What are some special things about you?




Heaven

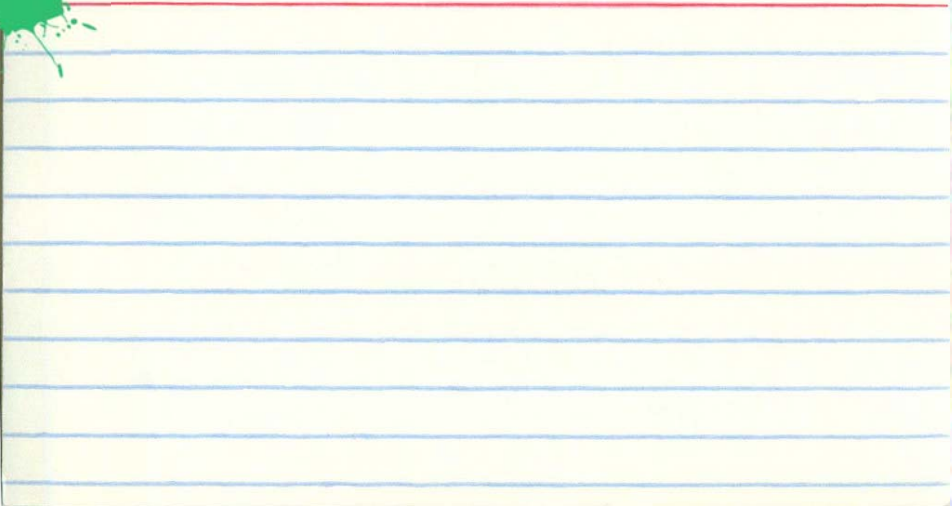
Revelation 21:4 tells us this about the world God is making for us: "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death...And there will be no more sadness. There will be no more crying or pain."

Imagine living with no crying or pain ever! John 14:2 also tells us that there are many rooms in the place He is making for us! As we read about Heaven, we can see that God is making a place that is big enough for everyone who believe and loves him. God is making a place that is a beautiful, perfect place with no sickness, sadness, or anything else bad in it.



What are some things that will NOT be in heaven?



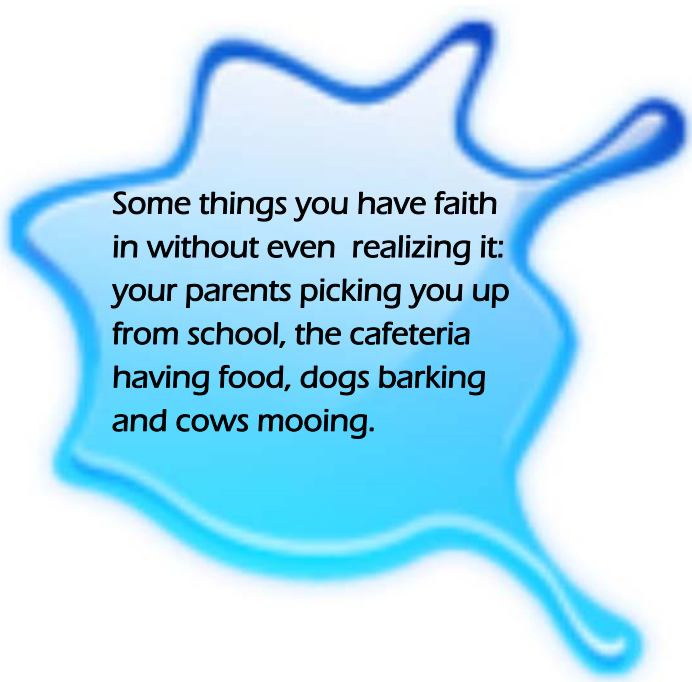
A yellow notepad with horizontal blue lines, positioned below the question. A green splat graphic is located to the left of the notepad's top-left corner.



Faith

So, let's talk about faith. The Bible says that faith is believing in something even though you can't see it. The disciples were so afraid that they lacked faith. They couldn't see what was going to happen.

We have faith every day and probably don't even realize it. For example, you're probably sitting in a chair right now. You had faith that the chair would hold you up without even thinking about it. You didn't sit in the chair and think *"I sure hope this chair doesn't break"* or *"I hope this chair was built strong enough for me to sit in it."* You had faith that the chair would do what it is supposed to do, which is hold you when you sit down. You just know that a chair will do what it's supposed to do.



Some things you have faith in without even realizing it: your parents picking you up from school, the cafeteria having food, dogs barking and cows mooing.



What are some things you have faith will happen without worrying about them?



Lined writing area for the first question.

What else can we not see but we know is there?

Lined writing area for the second question.





When we sin, it separates us from God. The first part of Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death..." We deserve death, or, a better way to say it, to be separated from God.


When Adam and Eve sinned, it separated us from God forever. When we sin, we are separated from God. Proverbs 15:9 says, "The Lord detests the way of the wicked, but He loves those who pursue righteousness." **God doesn't hate people.** He hates sin. He can't even be around sin or close to sin.

Think of it like this. Do you ever like to play outside? I sure do! Sometimes I like to go outside and play in the dirt or the mud. When I was a kid I would spend hours playing outside, especially in the summer. I would get dirty and sweaty and muddy and it was so much fun! At the end of the day, I would try to come into the house. But my mom had spent all day cleaning the house. **Do you think she wanted me to come in and get the house dirty? No way! Does that mean she didn't love me or stopped loving me? Of course not!** Sin is kind of like that.



When we sin, it doesn't mean God stops loving us. But just like when my mom didn't want me to come into the house all dirty, God doesn't want us to have sin in our lives. That sin separated not just Adam and Eve from God but it also separates us from God. Because we deserve separation when we sin and because God hates sin, we have a big problem. **Sin can't enter God's presence because Heaven is a perfect place and sin hurts others!**

There is nothing we can do to get back to God because of our sin. Sin is a big, big problem. That's the bad news, but we aren't done yet! There is good news! There is someone who came to help us get back to God. We will talk about that next!



What was a time you had a big, big problem, and you needed someone's help? Who helped you?

Section Three: Our Savior

Forgiveness

Remember Romans 6:23? We read the first part of it in the last chapter, "For the wages of sin is death..." That's the bad news part of sin. The great thing for you and me is that there's good news because there is a but in that verse. (No, not that kind of but!) Let's read what the rest of the verse says, "...**but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**"

Let's look at another verse that you've probably heard before. It's 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." There's that word again; eternal. It means everlasting or never-ending.

Remember in the first chapter when we talked about Heaven? This is what we're talking about! **We have the gift of Heaven because of what Jesus did for us!** But what did Jesus do for us? Last we checked, we had this problem of sin in our lives. The sin separated us from God and we're stuck with no way to get back to Him.

Maybe you've heard the words "The Gospel" or "Good News." Both phrases mean the same thing. They are the story of Jesus. Jesus came to earth, He died on the cross and God brought Him back to life on the third day. Jesus fought death **and He won!** Because Jesus did this, we are saved from sins. We are no longer separated from God and get to live with Him in Heaven forever!!





There's one more thing we need to know about Jesus and our sins. It's a word called **forgiveness**. What do you think this word means? Let's think of it like this: pretend you got a brand new device for your birthday. You loved that device! You played with as much as your parents would give you screen time. You loved the games on it and you showed it to all your friends. You kept it in a safe and special place in your room so it wouldn't break or get lost or stolen. One day, you showed that device to a friend. Pretend that friend started playing on it and then broke it on purpose. Your favorite device didn't work anymore.



Circle how you would feel:

- ◇ Mad
- ◇ Angry
- ◇ Frustrated
- ◇ Sad
- ◇ Upset
- ◇ Unhappy

You might have felt all of these feelings! That was your favorite device and your friend broke it on purpose!

What would it look like for you to forgive that friend? It would mean that your friend wouldn't have to replace your device. To forgive would mean you wouldn't ask him for the money to buy a new one. Forgiveness is not having any anger toward your friend because of what he did. Instead you just keep on being his friend.




Here's what Colossians 3:13 says, "Put up with one another. Forgive one another if you are holding something against someone. Forgive, just as the Lord forgave you."

Forgiving your friend from our imaginary story would be hard to do! **Forgiveness is hard.** But God forgives those who sin every time they ask for it. Every. Time.

Asking Jesus for forgiveness is the only way for our sins to be forgiven. No one else can forgive our sins. Jesus is the only one who can take the sin away. I John 1:9 says, "But God is faithful and fair. If we confess our sins, He will forgive our sins. He will forgive every wrong thing we have done. He will make us pure."

If we ask for forgiveness, He will give it to us.

Because Jesus died on the cross and was raised from the dead, our sins can be forgiven. All we have to do is ask.



Ask an adult:
What is something
you have needed
forgiveness for?



Write some things here that Jesus can forgive you for :

A yellow rectangular box with horizontal blue lines, intended for writing. The box is positioned below the text prompt and is surrounded by a colorful, abstract background of splatters and dots in various colors like purple, green, and orange.

Section Four: BARF!

What do you need to do?

To take the next step toward putting your trust in Jesus, all you have to do is BARF! Well, not that kind of BARF. Let me explain.

Hopefully, after you've gone through this book, you're ready to put your trust in Jesus. This is not an easy decision but it's the most important decision you'll ever make. All you need to do is BARF.

Believe. Jesus tells us, "And whoever lives by believing in me will never die" (John 11:26). Jesus is talking about eternal life!

Remember what we said eternal life was? Never-ending life. We are promised this in heaven if we put our trust in Him! Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God and can forgive your sins? If so, move on to the next step:

Accept. Accept Jesus into your life as your Savior. In Romans 10:9 it explains, "Say with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord". Believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead. Then you will be saved". Are you ready to accept Jesus into your life? It's the most important decision you will ever make. We don't want to rush you! But if you've come this far, you have learned so much about Jesus, how sin hurts our relationship with Jesus, and how Jesus took all the punishment for your sin. If you believe that and are ready to trust Jesus with your whole life, then do what Romans 10:9 says!



Pray: “Jesus, I know you are Lord. I believe You died for my sins, and that God raised You up to be alive after You died. I want You to be in my life forever as my King and Savior”. Take your time on this step. Ask an adult (your parents, a small group leader, or your pastor) if you want to talk about it or have questions! If you have **Believed** and **Accepted**, move on to the next step:

Repent. Do you know what repent means? If this is your first time hearing about it, let me explain. Repent means to feel very sorry for the wrong things - the sins - you have done in your life. Repent doesn't just mean to say you're sorry though. Repent means two things. One, it means you are very sorry. Two, it means that you “turn away” and will stop doing those wrong things, or, you will stop the sin you have been doing. Acts 2:38 says “**All of you must turn away from your sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then your sins will be forgiven.**”

Have you repented? Have you told Jesus you are sorry for your sins and that you want to stop? That's wonderful! Does this mean that you are going to stop sinning forever now? Sadly, no. We still live in a world that is sinful. We will never be perfect until we are in heaven. But now it is different! You will always have Jesus by your side and in your life now, and He will offer His forgiveness again and again even though you will keep messing up! **His grace and forgiveness are always there for you!**

Have you...

- Believed?
- Accepted?
- Repented?

Turn the page for the last step!



Follow. Are you still with me? Have you **Believed, Accepted, and Repented?** Now we are at the last step, and this one will last your whole life! Now that you have accepted forgiveness of your sins, you will **Follow** Jesus the rest of your life. Following Jesus is not why you will be with Him in Heaven, but following Jesus faithfully helps you stay close to Him and learn more about Him. Learning about Jesus is important because He loves you more than anyone else ever will! Following Jesus is SO important that we have written two sections about it! We will tell you more about what following Jesus looks like in sections 6&7.

But first...

Remember the verse on the page before this one? Acts 2:38 says **“All of you must turn away from your sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then your sins will be forgiven.”** Remember that “repenting” is what ‘turn away from your sins’ means in that verse above. Being baptized is the next step in that verse. It is the first step of “Follow”! Baptism does not save you, but it is what Jesus asks us to do when we decide to follow him. Baptism is a picture of us letting Jesus wash away our sins. It is the first thing we can do to show Jesus we want to be obedient to him. There is nothing special about the water. People in the Bible and all over the world today are baptized in churches, pools, lakes, rivers, sometimes even in bathtubs! It really is that simple: Mark 16 tells us “Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved...”.



Do you believe?

Do you want to be baptized?

Write your name below if you have **believed, accepted, and repented**, and are now ready to **follow** by being baptized!

Name

Date

If you wrote your name above, show your parents or pastor!

If you would like to take the first step in Following by being baptized, please talk to your parents, small group leader, or pastor for more information. We can't wait to celebrate with you!


www.pathwaychurch.com/baptism

kids@pathwaychurch.com

Section Five: After Your Decision

Have you BARFed? (I hope you have not actually barfed, if you have, please seek help immediately!) Have you Believed, Accepted, Repented, and are you ready to Follow? That's wonderful! **The Bible tells us there are angels rejoicing about your decision right now!** Luke 15:10 says "...There is joy in heaven over one sinner who turns away from sin". That means God and his angels are rejoicing over you right now!

We might not be angels, but we want to rejoice and be happy over you too! **You have just made the most important decision of your life.** Your pastors and small group leaders want to know about it! Tell your parents, your small group leaders, your pastors, and any other important adults in your life! We want to hear your good news. We want to be praying for you and ready to encourage you as you learn to Follow Jesus!



Who are you going to tell about accepting Jesus?
Write their names below:



Think of a time when you have been really, really, really excited. Write or draw below about what you were excited for.

An orange splat graphic with radiating lines, positioned to the left of the writing area.

A series of horizontal blue lines on a yellow background, intended for writing or drawing.

Do you remember how you felt then when you were really, really excited? That is how God and His angels feel about you accepting Jesus right now!

Section Six: How are You Different?

You Are a New Creation!

What is a way that you are different now from when you were a baby? Lots, right? You have learned to walk, run, and dance! **You can probably name a hundred ways you are different now than when you were a baby.** You have even learned to eat different food! Babies first can only have milk.

In the same way, the Bible compares new believers in Jesus to babies! Jesus calls becoming a new believer being “born again”. You are a new believer in Jesus! 2 Corinthians 5:17 says “When anyone lives in Christ, the new creation has come. The old is gone! The new is come!”. As a new believer, you are a ‘new creation’. Jesus will create a new way for you to think, learn, and love others. Just like a baby, you might start slow. Like a new plant growing from a tiny seed, you might see change come slowly.

Don’t get discouraged! Keep following Jesus and He will continue making you a ‘new creation’!





Ask an adult: "Tell me about a big change that has happened in you from when you were my age."

Tell an adult about the big change that Jesus is making in you!

Section Seven:

Growing in Your Relationship

Four Steps

Once you've put your trust in Jesus, you'll spend the rest of your life growing and learning. There are lots of ways you'll do this. We want to encourage you to do just four things:

□ Read your Bible

The Bible is God's Word and the story He gave to us of how Jesus rescued us from our sin. How do you communicate with a friend when you can't see them? In the old days, we would write a letter. You may send a text or a message or a video message. That's a lot like what the Bible is for us. It's God's way of communicating His message, His story. Even though the stories in the Bible happened a long time ago, they are true and still important to us today. (Hebrews 4:12)

When you first open a Bible, it can seem a little intense. It's a big book with a lot of words and it might be hard to start. Here are a couple of tips when starting to read your Bible:

- ◇ Get a Bible printed in the NIV version. This version is great for kids! It takes some of the big words and makes them easier to understand.
- ◇ Start in the book of John. John is all about the life of Jesus and it's a great place to start learning.
- ◇ Ask lots of questions. If you have questions about something in the Bible, ask your parents or small group leader. They may not always know right away but they're there to help you find the answers.



- ◇ Do your weekly God Time card that you receive in the Ballpark or on Main Street. It's a great way to review what you learned in the Neighborhood. When you do your God Time card each week, it helps you get into the habit of reading your Bible.

□ Prayer

Do you have a best friend you love to talk to? Could you just talk to them all day? What if you had a best friend but never talked to them? Prayer is like talking to your best friend. You wouldn't have a best friend that you never talk to. The same is true with God. To have a friendship with God, you talk to him. Prayer is how you talk to God.

The best part about prayer is that you can do it anywhere. You can also say whatever is on your mind; you don't have to use big fancy words. Anyone can pray, not just grown ups or pastors. (Matthew 7:7)



Jesus gives us an example of how to pray in Matthew 6. Here's an easy way to remember it:

DATA

Describe God. Tell God how great He is! Tell him all the great things about who He is. This is also known as "praise"!

Ask for forgiveness. We talked about this in Section 4. When we ask God for forgiveness, he forgives us. Every. Time. Because of what Jesus did, God freely gives us his forgiveness.

Thank God. Don't just ask God for a bunch of stuff. Tell Him thank you for all the things He's done for you.

Ask God for needs. Don't just ask Him for what you want but for what you really need. Also, ask God for what other people need. Maybe your friend is sick or your aunt is looking for a new job. Ask God for those things.

❑ Going to church

This is the most fun part of being a Christian! We go to a super fun church where we get to see our friends in the Farm and the Ballpark, sing worship songs, and learn about Jesus in a fun way.



Here are a couple of reasons going to church is important for growing our trust in Jesus:

◇ **Worship:**

When we sing to God with our friends, it's a special moment. Ephesians 5:19 says, "...Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord." You might be thinking, 'I'm not a good singer', or 'I don't really like to sing.' That's ok as long as we're paying attention and listening to the words of the song and not being a distraction.

◇ **Small group:**

One of the best ways to grow is by being in a small group. Our small groups happen at our weekend services. All you have to do is pick a time to come with your family! We have great leaders who love you and help you grow in your faith. They help you with answers to your tough questions. They are there for you when you need them. They've also been known to throw a great party!

◇ **Hearing and learning God's Word:**

Each time we go to church, we hear and learn all about the Bible. Like we learned before, the Bible is God's story, God's message to us. When we come to church, we hear about the Bible in a fun way! Our teachers and leaders in the Ballpark and Farm do a great job of making the Bible fun and interesting. A great way to grow in your relationship with God is to come to church and learn more about His Word.



□ **Share the good news**


Matthew 28:18-19 says, "Then Jesus came to them. He said, 'All authority in Heaven and on Earth has been given to me. So you must go and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.'" **Our job now as Christians is to go and tell others the Good News!** How do we do that? I'm glad you asked!

◇ **Invite our friends**

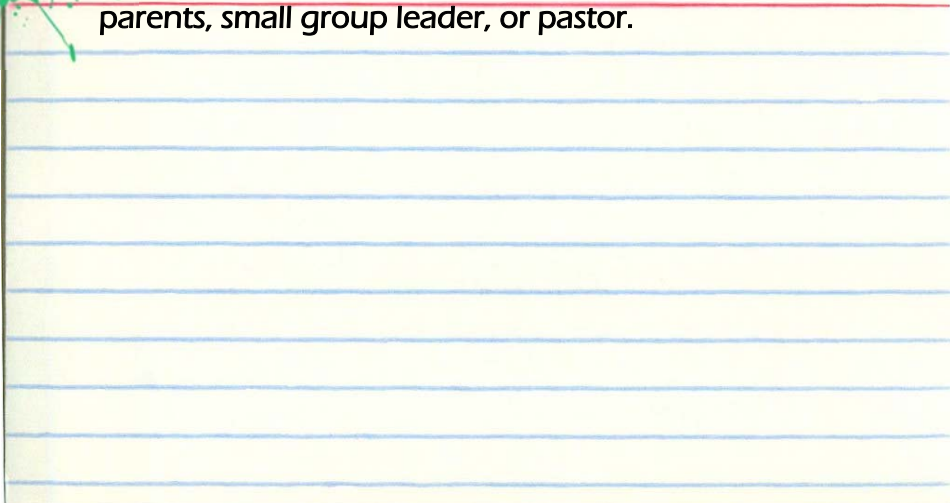
Do you have fun at church? Don't you want others to have fun at church with you? Then we should be inviting others to church! We all have friends that don't know anything about Jesus. The best way for our friends to hear about the love of Jesus is for them to come to church. Bring your friends to church with you! Offer to give your friend a ride or meet them by the check in area. Show them that you'll do just about anything to make sure they come and hear about Jesus!

◇ **Share Jesus with our friends at school, neighborhood and other places:**

Tell other people what you believe about Jesus. Share with them why you go to church and why you got baptized. Tell your story to others about why you put your trust in Jesus and why you have faith. This is a great way to make disciples!



Write down any questions you would like to ask your
parents, small group leader, or pastor.

A rectangular area with a light yellow background and horizontal blue lines, intended for writing questions.



This may be the end of the book, but this is just the beginning of the great adventure you're about to go on with Jesus. Putting your trust in Jesus will be the best decision you'll ever make and you'll never stop growing and learning more about Him!

As you grow in your friendship with Jesus and learn more about His plan for your life, we hope you never forget that you're now a part of God's family. No matter what you go through in life, you will not be alone. You can trust Jesus no matter what!

Now it's time to celebrate! Have a party, eat some ice cream, hug your small group leader, call your grandparents, eat pizza or whatever else you might do to celebrate. We're proud of you and we know so many others are too! God's got big plans for your life!



Parents,

We hope you've enjoyed this journey too! If you or your child has any questions about what they've learned, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. This is an important decision and we want to make ourselves available to answer any questions you or your child might have.

Pathway Next Generation Ministries

kids@pathwaychurch.com



This book belongs to:

A large empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for writing the owner's name.

