

*Beginning the Walk*  
**JESUS**  
THE TRUTH

RON AND MARY BENNETT



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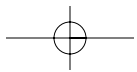
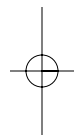
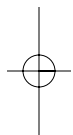
## *About Beginning the Walk*

This study is part of a three-book series called *Beginning the Walk*. These studies are designed to help believers begin their new life with Christ. Although intended for individual use, they can also be used with a mentor or in a small group. However you use this series, you won't need an extensive church or religious background to get started. Each study begins right where you are — with the basics. The series includes the following three studies:

- *Jesus: The Way*
- *Jesus: The Truth*
- *Jesus: The Life*

We recommend you begin with the book *Jesus: The Way*. Each study contains six lessons with a key Scripture verse at the beginning of each lesson. A lesson will probably take thirty to forty-five minutes to complete, but don't feel bound by that time frame. If you get through them faster, that's okay. And if you spend more time in each lesson, that's okay too.

The majority of the Bible passages used in this series are included in the text of the lessons. Still, we highly recommend you have a personal Bible as well. In addition to reading the Scripture in the lesson, you may want to look up the references and read them in your own Bible. This will broaden your understanding as you discover more about the context of the Scripture passages.



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*We* want to express our appreciation to Bob Walz for his outstanding coaching and invaluable advice in the development of this material. His insight and encouragement were a constant source of energy and motivation.

## *Introduction*

*My* mother owned a grand piano that was built in 1925 by the Bush and Lane Company of Michigan. It was her most prized possession. The piano had a black lacquer finish, ivory keys, and a rich sound. I learned to play the piano on this grand instrument, spending countless hours practicing throughout high school. Great memories and feelings were etched deep into my heart over those years.

Later, the piano was unwisely stored in a damp basement for many years. The dampness took a toll. The once-beautiful finish rippled, the ivory keys chipped, and the strings slacked. When it was recovered from the basement, the piano had to be completely rebuilt and refinished. After months of work by an expert craftsman, it was completely restored with new pins, felts, hammers, keys, and strings. And the finish was reconditioned to a beautiful mahogany elegance.

A few years ago I inherited the piano, and we carefully moved it to our new home in Kansas City — a home that had been designed with a large great room specifically to accommodate this anticipated family heirloom.

So how much is this piano worth? There are several factors that determine the value of the instrument. One is the reputation of the original makers. Were they highly skilled craftsmen? Another factor is the musical tone. Does it produce quality sound? A third factor is previous ownership. Who has previously owned or played it? A final factor is the price paid for it. How much is someone willing to pay?

In many ways, we are like this grand piano. We have been designed and made by the Creator of the universe. We are the result of quality workmanship and capable of beautiful music. We have been repurchased by the very life of Christ and are now being restored under His ownership. We are God's priceless heirlooms. And there is a special place in His home designed just for us.

But how do we view ourselves? Do we see ourselves as priceless? Do we really believe we have great personal worth to God . . . to others . . . to ourselves? Or do we view ourselves as garage sale merchandise? Some people put a lot of effort into trying to look successful and important. Others, burdened with past mistakes, see themselves as expendable and worthless.

The following study will explore who we are in light of our relationship with God. We will discover the truth of our value as we look at our new

identity in Christ. Much of what we will learn comes from the gospel of John.

The gospel of John was written by one of the twelve original disciples who was also one of Jesus' three closest friends. In his gospel, John focused primarily on Jesus' teachings.

Each lesson begins with a key verse. Write this verse on a 3 x 5 card and commit it to memory. As you review the verse several times each day, it will become a natural part of your new way of thinking.

As you continue your walk, you will study the following word pictures to help you understand who you are in Christ:

- His Workmanship
- His Sheep
- His Child
- His Follower
- His Branch
- His Dwelling Place

## LESSON 1

*His Workmanship*

## NEXT STEPS

God places great value on us because we are uniquely made in His image. Even though that image has been marred and distorted, He paid the ultimate price to gain the right to restore us once again to beauty and significance.

*Yet, O LORD, you are our Father.  
We are the clay, you are the potter;  
we are all the work of your hand.*

ISAIAH 64:8, NIV

Recent discoveries in molecular biology have revealed the incredible complexity of even the simplest cell. Scientists have learned that a unique “motor” capable of rotating at 40,000 rpm powers the tail-like structure of a simple bacterial cell. This single part of the simple cell is made up of forty indispensable and unique parts.\*

As humans, we are exponentially more complex than this single element. And we have incredible potential for creative accomplishments. In spite of this, much of the scientific community still claims that human beings are the result of evolution, that there is no Intelligent Designer. Rather, they argue, people are a product of chance. In their estimation, our value is no greater than the things around us. Value is only what we make it to be.

Those “lucky” enough to be beautiful, wealthy, smart, and influential are thought to be valuable and important. Even though these are temporary qualities — easily lost in a moment — we value them. We show honor and favoritism to those who appear particularly successful and to those we deem “very important people” based on economic or social status or even outward

\**Unlocking the Mystery of Life: The Case for Intelligent Design* (Colorado Springs, Colo.: Focus on the Family, 2002), video.

L1

appearance. In short, we believe some people have more value than others. Yet there are obvious consequences of such thinking, including lack of self-respect or respect for others.

God never intended this tenuous sense of personal value to guide His people. God wants us to know the truth that we are stamped with His likeness from the beginning. We may be marred and scarred, and we may need major refinishing, but we are still uniquely created in His divine image.

#### UNIQUELY MADE

In the beginning the Word already existed. He was with God, and he was God. He was in the beginning with God. He created everything there is. Nothing exists that he didn't make. (John 1:1-3, NLT)

Q1. What do these verses say about Christ?

Q2. Read Genesis 1:20-28 and 2:7. According to these verses, what is the difference between the way God made the animals and the way He made human beings? What does this imply about our value?

Q3. What do you think it means to be created in God's image? How are we like God? How are we not like God?

Q4. How does the truth that you are created in God's image affect the value you attribute to yourself?

Read what the Bible says about God's creative process in Psalm 139:13-16:

*For you created my inmost being;  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.  
I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
your works are wonderful, I know that full well.  
My frame was not hidden from you  
when I was made in the secret place.  
When I was woven together in the depths of the earth,  
your eyes saw my unformed body.  
All the days ordained for me  
were written in your book before one of them came to be. (NIV)*

Q5. What is implied in this passage about our unique design?

#### ULTIMATE VALUE

King David was a prominent Old Testament character. He first was a shepherd, next became a fugitive, and finally ruled as the greatest king of Israel. Besides being a great warrior, he wrote poetry, some of which is recorded in the Old Testament book of Psalms.



L1

Q6. Read the following passage from Psalms and circle what King David said about the importance of people in relation to the rest of creation.

O LORD, our Lord,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!  
You have set your glory  
above the heavens.  
From the lips of children and infants  
you have ordained praise  
because of your enemies,  
to silence the foe and the avenger.  
When I consider your heavens,  
the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars,  
which you have set in place,  
what is man that you are mindful of him,  
the son of man that you care for him?  
You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings  
and crowned him with glory and honor.  
You made him ruler over the works of your hands;  
you put everything under his feet:  
all flocks and herds,  
and the beasts of the field,  
the birds of the air,  
and the fish of the sea,  
all that swim the paths of the seas.  
O LORD, our Lord,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth! (8:1-9, NIV)

Q7. Look up the following verses in your Bible and notice how Jesus placed value on people by the way He treated them. Compare this with the value placed on the same people by others.

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JESUS' VIEW

OTHERS' VIEW

**Little children**  
(Mark 10:13-16)

**An immoral woman**  
(John 4:7-10,16-18,27)

**A blind man**  
(Mark 10:46-52)



L1

Although we have been created in God's divine image, that image has been marred and distorted. Yet God still values us.

In Luke 4:18-19, Jesus said,

*"God's Spirit is on me;  
he's chosen me to preach the Message of good news to the poor,  
Sent me to announce pardon to prisoners and  
recovery of sight to the blind,  
To set the burdened and battered free,  
to announce, "This is God's year to act!"*

Q8. Based on this passage, how did Jesus illustrate the value He placed on broken people?

Q9. How do you respond to the idea that you were handcrafted by God and therefore are very valuable?

- \_\_\_\_\_ This is a new idea and difficult to believe.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The idea appeals to me, but I have many more questions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have heard this before, but I still struggle with seeing myself as valuable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I believe this truth, but the circumstances of life make it easy to forget.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am grateful God made me, and His handiwork gives me a great sense of value.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

L1

Q10. Finish this sentence with the truths you have discovered from your study: Because I am God's workmanship, created in His image . . .

### SUMMARY

In all of God's creation, people are unique. When God created us, He made us for a personal relationship with Himself. Even though sin has spoiled the original design, God still values us. Jesus Christ enables us to be new people. As new people, we are able to experience a rich relationship with our Creator God.

### PRAYER

*Dear God, Your creation is awesome. The incredible size, variety, and complexity of all You have made overwhelms me. When I read in the Bible that You made me special and desire a close relationship with me, I can hardly believe it. Thank You for sending Jesus to put me back together and to enable me to develop a close relationship with You.*

