

*Following Jesus Discipleship Program*

for

**JESUS Film Harvest Partners**

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## Preface

The *Following Jesus Discipleship Program*, also known as *Following Jesus*, is closely associated with the *JESUS* film. But it does not directly depend on the film. *Following Jesus* begins where the *JESUS* film concludes. It begins with the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. The *JESUS* film is based mostly on the Gospel of Luke. The *Following Jesus Discipleship Program* uses the stories found in Luke for the lessons. This is called a narrative method.

*Following Jesus* is a Christ-centered discipleship program. This also means that *Following Jesus* is God-centered. The program concentrates on who Jesus Christ is. It concentrates on what following Jesus means. The program does this because we want to encourage worship of God in all things. This means that *Following Jesus* does not concentrate on being a new Christian. The program first emphasizes how the Christian is “in Christ.” Then the program deals with how Christ is “in the Christian.” The order is very important in the New Testament. Being a Christian means we turn away from being centered on ourselves. It means now we are centered in Christ.

*Following Jesus* asks and answers two questions: “Who is Jesus?” and “What does it mean to be His disciple?” *Following Jesus* shows the new Christian just how costly following Jesus will be. It openly presents the radical nature of discipleship.

*Following Jesus* has three standards:

**Standard A.** The entry standard introduces new Christians to the basic elements of Christian faith and Christian life. Completion of this standard should prepare a person for baptism and for receiving the Lord’s Supper.

**Standard B.** At this standard young Christians will advance to a higher level of understanding their new faith in Christ. They will learn what it means to be a part of the Church. They will learn what it means to live in the power of the Holy Spirit. And they will learn the importance of Christian service.

**Standard C.** The third standard helps new Christians get an overall picture of the biblical story. It introduces them to some of the most important parts of Christian history that affect Christian belief and practice. The three standards together help prepare a person for church membership.

The material that follows can be converted to other formats. Hopefully “stick men” figures will be mobilized to tell the discipleship story for pre-literate peoples. Extensive illustrations can be used in conjunction with the material. The program can be placed in video and audio format. Picture books can be employed. The material is written at the fifth/sixth grade reading level (U.S.A. levels) and can therefore be readily translated into other languages.

Each standard contains several lessons. A teacher will need a minimum of one to two hours to complete each lesson. More time should be taken if needed and if possible.

The lessons, including questions and activities, are purposely designed for oral instruction. Thus, books and paper are not necessary. However, if people in discipleship groups have copies of the lessons, learning may be facilitated.

The lessons are best used in groups of new Christians. But they can be used to instruct just one new Christian. The lessons may be used by all evangelical groups.

God calls some Christians to become Christian ministers. When someone that God has called completes the three standards, then that person will be ready to begin the Course of Study for ministerial development in the Church of the Nazarene.