



LIGHT THE WAY

“Against all odds, by the 3rd century, Christianity had become a force to be reckoned with. We still do not really understand how this came about.” Karen Armstrong

“Christianity not only took over an empire, it radically altered the lives of those living in it... It was a revolution that affected government practices, legislation, art, literature, music, philosophy, and—on the even more fundamental level—the very understanding of billions of people about what it means to be human. However one evaluates the merits of the case, whether the Christianization of the West was a triumph to be treasured or a defeat to be lamented, no one can deny it was the most monumental cultural transformation our world has ever seen.” Bart Ehrman

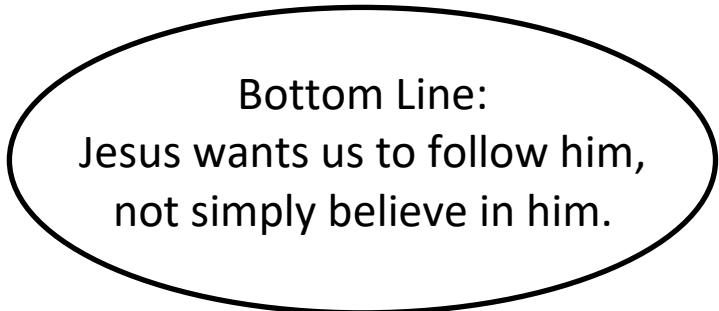
Believing in Jesus didn't change the world.

Following Jesus changed the world.

Believing in Jesus didn't bring light to the world.

Following Jesus is what brought light to the world.

“You are the light of the world.” Matthew 5:14



Bottom Line:
Jesus wants us to follow him,
not simply believe in him.

Clarification:

Believe vs Trust

“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.”

John 3:16

In the New Testament believing always involved trusting.

Commitment:

Following Jesus means trusting Him for who he is: "Lord Jesus Christ."

"The beginning of the good news about Jesus Christ, the Son of God..."

Mark 1:1 (NIV)

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen!"

Revelation 22:21 (TLB)

Jesus Christ

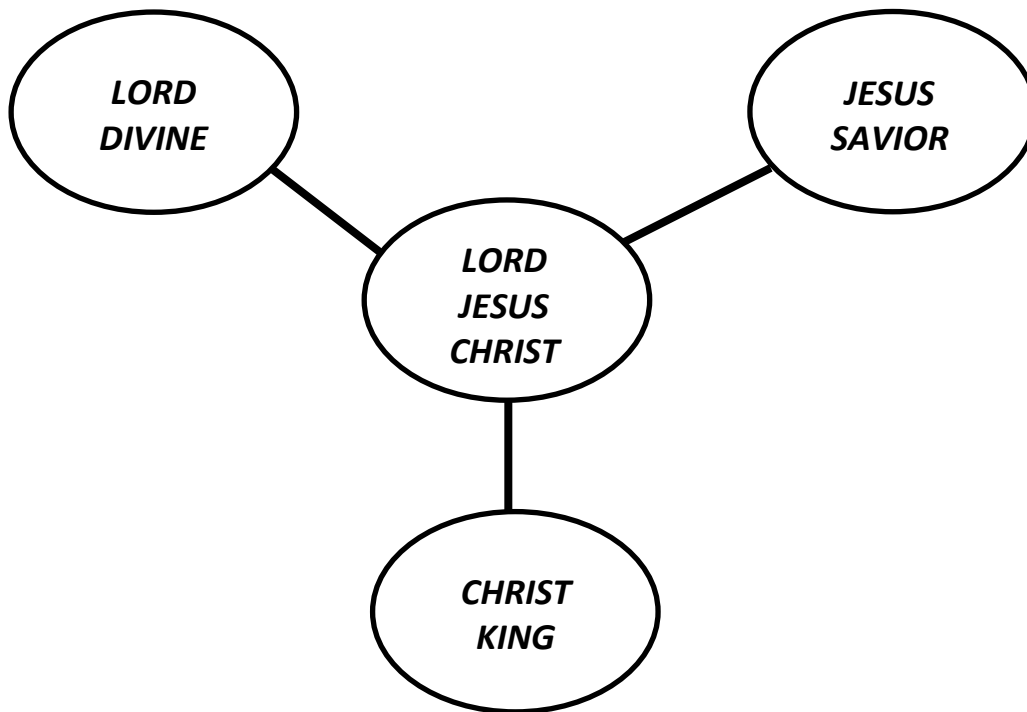
Christ ➡ Messiah (anointed one) ➡ King

Lord ➡ Sovereign / Divine

Jesus ➡ Savior (Matthew 1:21)

"She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

Matthew 1:21



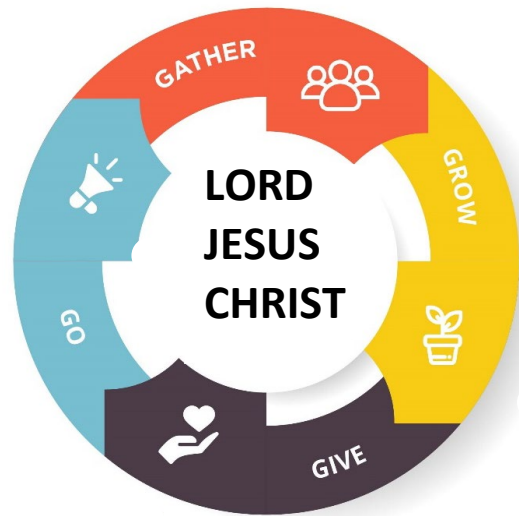
To follow Jesus is to live following the Lord Jesus Christ in every area of my life.

The better I know the one I am following,
the better I can follow Him.

"You can choose whether to follow Jesus or not. You cannot choose what following Jesus looks like." Andy Stanley

2025 Vision:

For River will shine brightly as a City on a Hill, led by 4,000 active disciples, individual beacons of light sharing the transformational message and life changing power of Jesus with every family in our community as we welcome 2,000 new believers to faith by 2025.



Discussion Questions:

1. What is the difference between believing and trusting?
2. Have you made the commitment to follow the "Lord Jesus Christ"?
 - a. When?
 - b. How has it impacted you?
3. Using the "Lord Jesus Christ" mind map – which of those branches do you most relate to Jesus through?
 - a. Which do you least and why?
4. Have you recently taken a next step in following Jesus (possible Gather, Grow, Give or Go) and what has it been?