

Good News Guidebook



Dear Friend, Congratulations!

The journey on which you've chosen to embark is the most exhilarating adventure imaginable. It's in a life of following Jesus that we discover our true selves, find our God-given purpose, and daily come alive to the wide-open spaces of God's incomparable love.

A decision to follow Jesus is the most significant decision of a person's life. It takes boldness, faith, and humility. And for that, we applaud you!

What you hold in your hand is a 21-day guidebook that will help kickstart your new life of following Jesus. Each day explores various topics and ideas that all help to paint a picture of what life with God can look like.

Have you ever planted a seed? When you plant a seed, you plant it with a confident hope that, given a healthy environment and the nutrients it needs, it will become something like that picture on the front of the seed packet you're holding! Similarly, the pages that you're holding now are like that picture on a seed packet. Whatever your life looks like right now, given a healthy environment and the nutrients you need, day by day you will begin to grow and discover what a life of following Jesus can truly look like: a life of knowing God, growing in holiness, sharing in community and living on mission.

Each day concludes with a guided prayer as well as a passage of recommended Bible reading, chosen from the stories and teachings of Jesus found in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, that relates to that day's theme.

There's so much we want to say. And perhaps even more importantly, we want to hear your story! If you haven't already, please reach out at hil.so@eastcoast so that someone from your local campus who would love to join you on this journey can get in touch.

For now, we want to invite you on a 21-day adventure of discovering what this life of following Jesus is all about! Why not commit to setting a few minutes aside each day, make yourself a cup of your favorite coffee or tea, put aside your phone or other distractions, and watch what God can do in your life.

Let's follow Jesus together.

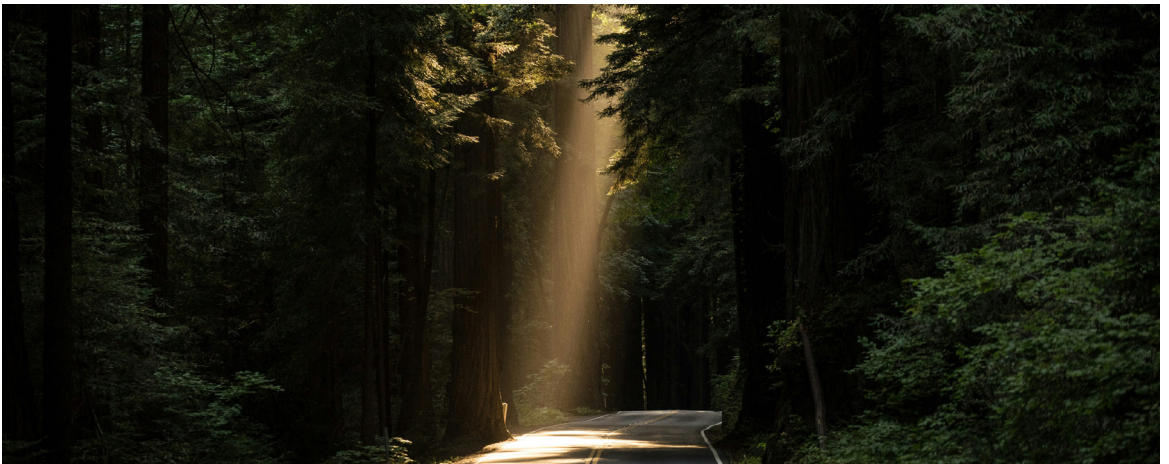
The Gospel

The plan...

When God created the world, it was good. All of creation was uncorrupted and wonderful! He gave humans a special place in His world, together with His presence and everything that they would need for life.

The problem...

Rather than trusting God's perfect plan, humans took matters into their own hands. We are still guilty of doing this today. And so, it is sin that has corrupted what once was stainless. You may have all sorts of ideas in your mind about what sin is. We're not just talking about breaking moral boundaries but rather trying to fulfill a desire by the wrong methods. The desire can often be good - like a longing for intimacy, fulfillment, or adventure. Those things are good! But when we try to satisfy those desires our own way, trusting ourselves more than we trust God, it always results in pain. Put simply, humanity's problem is that we're each trying to be our own god.



The good news...

There is good news! Because God is good and kind He has always made a way for us to turn back to Him, to be forgiven and healed. God's lasting solution was provided in Jesus who, being God Himself, was born as a human to preach the return of God's Kingdom – the return of His good plans and provision. Jesus not only preached it, but He lived it – healing people, forgiving people, including people, and setting people free from the devastating effects of sin. Ultimately, He demonstrated it on the cross by taking all the sins of the world upon Himself. After three days in the tomb, in one glorious moment for all the ages, He rose from the dead! In doing so, He conquered sin and defeated death itself so that it would no longer have power over us.

Just as Jesus willingly chose to do that for us, He now asks that we willingly choose to trust Him. That is why He taught us to repent: to make a choice to turn from living life according to our own wisdom and desires and to fully change direction, choosing to follow Jesus instead. Doing this is what enables us to become part of His Kingdom. When we choose to follow Jesus, He gives us His Spirit to empower us to continually trust, follow, and live as a part of His Kingdom every day. What Jesus called the "Kingdom of Heaven", a brand-new way of living, began on that day He was resurrected, and will one day be complete in what the Bible says will be a new heaven and new earth. Receiving salvation means responding to the invitation to take part in both what God is doing right now, in the present, and in that future that is called eternity.

What Jesus offers is the fulfillment of what we have previously only dared to imagine.

The invitation...

Jesus began something new. The question is: Do you want to be a part of it?

He loves you so much that He extends to you, right where you are, an invitation. God promises that when we respond to this invitation, He removes the separation between God and each of us and draws us into a relationship with Him that will last forever. He restores all that was broken – making right our relationship with God, with others, with His good world, and even with ourselves! This begins right now as we become part of His kingdom on this earth. One day this will result in our own resurrection, when our whole being will share in the new heaven and new earth as promised in the Bible.

**Now,
that is Good News!**



Day 1

Here is Hope

To say that life can feel uncertain probably feels like a big understatement. There seems to be a lot more things to be unsure of than there are things you can count on. As this is day one of this 21-day journey, there's a good chance that you woke up this morning unsure of what happened yesterday. Maybe you were in a church service, you felt God tugging at your heart and you chose to respond. Maybe it felt amazing, yesterday! But now, when facing the prospect of returning to your weekly routine, perhaps you're even uncertain as to whether or not that moment, yesterday, was real.

Hebrews 6:19 says **"We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure."** The hope that the writer of Hebrews speaks of is not just "hope" like you might speak of when you say that you "hope tomorrow is a good day" or that you "hope that your sports' team wins." No, this is a hope we can be sure of. This hope is Jesus! His love for you cannot be contained and His purposes cannot be defeated. No matter what your life has looked like until this point, you now have a hope that, in both this life and in the age to come, you've been invited into a life with God. You've responded to that invitation. And that is the greatest decision you could ever make!

God doesn't promise that the journey ahead will be easy. He never said it will be comfortable or that it won't require a healthy dose of perseverance. But what He does promise is that you now have an anchor for your soul: a hope that can never be taken away. This isn't just good news for when you're in a church service on a Sunday. God is with you every day, in every circumstance, in every challenge and in every triumph.

Let these words boldly sink into your heart today. You now have hope in Jesus. So much of life can feel uncertain. No doubt, at the very start of this journey, your mind and your heart are full of questions. But start here. **John 17:3** says, **"Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent."** That's it. It's the beginning and it's the end. Right here, right now. You can know God. You can know hope.

Pray

Why not take a moment to pray. If you don't know what to pray, say something like this and then allow a moment of quiet for God to speak to you.

"Lord Jesus, thank You that I can know You. Thank You that, despite what I might be facing and the uncertainties of life, You give me a hope that I can count on. Help me be confident of this today. Please speak to me and show me who You are. I want to know You more. Amen."

Recommended Reading

Luke 1:35-45

Day 2

The Old Has Gone!

Have you ever picked up a new hobby or joined a club? Maybe you can remember a time when you began a new relationship or moved to a new city? In any of those memories, there may have been a lot that changed, but chances are high that the majority actually remained the same.

Beginning a life of following Jesus is different. **2 Corinthians 5:17** says, **“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here!”** You might still know the same people, work the same job, and live in the same house, but the fact is that EVERYTHING has changed. Life with Christ is more than a hobby or a club, it’s more than a belief system or moral standard for living. It runs to the very core of our identity. It means that just like Jesus was crucified, buried and raised to life again, so too have our old selves been replaced with the new. The apostle Paul writes in **Galatians 2:20**, **“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”**

Did you know that the Bible speaks of two kinds of baptism that we can take part in as followers of Jesus? You’ll often hear about both in weekend church services and both are all about this idea of a brand-new life and identity!

Baptism in water is an outward demonstration that you are a new creation. We are lowered into the water just as Jesus was placed in the tomb, and we are lifted from the water in new life just as He was raised to life again! How cool is that!

Baptism in the Holy Spirit (while certainly less wet) is also an immersive moment when the Holy Spirit (God) consumes us and fills us from head to toe, signifying that we no longer identify by the ways of this world but by God’s Spirit who empowers us to live as new creation people.

You can talk to the team at your local campus about being baptized in water and about having someone pray with you so that you may be baptised in the Holy Spirit as well!

Throughout your day today, remember that though circumstances may seem the same, everything has changed. You have begun a new life as a follower of Jesus. You’re no longer measured by your successes, your achievements or your relationships. You no longer have to follow the same patterns of self-destructive decisions or chasing a mirage of happiness. Your identity and value is in Jesus. That’s something that we can spend a lifetime understanding! Start today. Start now.

Pray

Again, why not take a moment to pray. You can pray something like this:

“Jesus, thank You that everything has changed. Because of You I have a brand new life. This seems like a lot to wrap my head around, but please show me what this means and what this new life can look like. Thank You that You love me and want what’s best for me. Amen.”

Day 3

Don't Go Alone!

Have you ever been in the unenviable circumstance of showing up to a party or an event without knowing if anyone you knew would be there? You enter the room. If anxiety had a particular rhythm, your heart is perfectly beating it in your chest... and then comes that overwhelming sense of relief as you spot a friendly face that you know. "I'm not alone after all!"

This life of following Jesus is something personal but it is definitely not solitary. Having friends for the journey is not only an important idea, it's God's design. As a matter of fact, did you know that in the New Testament the word "you" in the plural form outnumbers the word "you" in the singular by two to one? That means that the community of believers following Jesus together is more than just the sum of our individual parts.

This is what the Bible calls "the body of Christ". **1 Corinthians 12:27 says, "Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it."** What this means is that "the Church" is not a building and it's not a meeting. The Church is the family of God, His body, the believers unified together in community.

Now, is the church perfect? No! It's made up of imperfect people. But it is God's design. It's the way that He has chosen to bring His kingdom to the earth.

You may have heard someone say in a weekend church service that you're not designed to do this journey alone. They were right! What they meant was that we (the church) are saying to you (now also the church) that we belong together! If you haven't already let us know the best way to get in touch, this is why it's so important that you take that step. Following Jesus on your own isn't just bad practice, it's not possible.

Why don't you take a moment to consider who you have in your life to do this journey with. Perhaps it's a parent or a trusted friend. Perhaps it's even someone who invited you to church! If no one comes to mind straight away, you can use this hil.so/eastcoast to allow us to get in touch. Someone will call you who can help point you in the right direction. This can take boldness and courage, but it's worth it. We want to do this journey together!

Pray

Let's again take a moment to pray. You can pray something like:

"Thank You, Jesus, that I belong as a part of Your family, Your Church. Thank You that You see past my imperfections and see me in the purpose for which You created me. Help me live today knowing that I'm not alone!"

Recommended Reading

John 21:1-17

Day 4

God's Plan for the Earth

Perhaps you're familiar with the words of Matthew 6:9-13, what we know as "The Lord's Prayer". This prayer was never intended to be confined to religious rhetoric. These words are Jesus' answer for teaching His followers how to pray.

In His example of how to pray, Jesus includes the line "Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." This is God's plan for the earth: that what is true in the Kingdom of heaven would be true all over the earth: no pain, no sickness, no war, no hate, no sin. This was Jesus' mission. This is our mission.

As Christians, we follow the teachings of a man called Jesus of Nazareth. His teachings and the stories of His life on earth are recorded in what are known as the gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, as well as part of Acts (which is sort of a sequel of Luke.) We read in Matthew 4 about the start of Jesus' public ministry. **Matthew 4:17 "From that time on Jesus began to preach, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.'"** This was the crux of what He preached. His is a Kingdom, not of conquest and control, but of love and grace. He is a King that doesn't rule with a fist but serves with an open hand.

Everything He taught in the pages that follow that passage in Matthew fit under that banner of "change the way you're thinking and living, because the Kingdom of heaven is here." Jesus was, and is, the King of this kingdom. So well was this known that, when He was crucified, the name "King of the Jews" was plastered above His thorn-adorned head. His Kingdom was established on that hope-filled day when He won the battle over death itself through His own resurrection. This Kingdom was established in the resurrection of Jesus and will one day be complete when He returns again. For now, we find ourselves in the middle, a part of God's plan for His Kingdom coming to earth.

This is what is known as the gospel – the good news – the Kingdom of heaven is here. Jesus is the King of that Kingdom, and it's a Kingdom for which He himself has made a way for you to be a part. That is good news!

Pray

As you pray today, why not pray the words of Matthew 6:9-13, giving special consideration to praying that His Kingdom would come - His plan for the earth.

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one."

Recommended Reading

Matthew 27:27-37

Day 5

Jesus is Lord

In this day and age, mention of words like “king” and “kingdom” can generate all sorts of feelings. Largely seen as the bygone age of knights, castles, and war, a king’s relevance in the 21st century is certainly not what it was at the time of Jesus. Similarly, the word “lord” may seem to be a more fitting description of a fictional character than of the loving God you’re coming to know.

Romans 10:9 says, “If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”

Saying that Jesus is Lord may not seem like much today. It may not be a costly thing to say. But for a moment imagine being a Christian in ancient Rome where saying that ‘Jesus is Lord’ also meant that you were saying that Caesar was not! These words could cost everything!

Perhaps even the idea of God as creator fits neatly within your worldview. That makes sense. But Jesus wants to be our Lord, the King of the Kingdom of which we are now a part. Saying that Jesus is Lord means that He is the ultimate authority in my life. It means that what He says is truth and what He asks me to do I will do. Just as a king can’t be partially a king, Jesus can’t be partially Lord of your life. Either He is Lord of all, or He is Lord not at all.

If this sounds like a big deal, that’s because it is! Our world today champions the idea of a self-made man or woman who retains sole control over their concept of truth and authority. Surrendering ourselves fully to King Jesus is significant, and... it’s wonderful!

Philippians 2:6-11 is the most beautiful description of King Jesus:

“Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

This King is kind. This Lord is loving. He is the God we can gladly follow.

Pray

As you pray today, why not take a moment to consider areas of your life in which you may need to release control to King Jesus. In your words, ask Him to take those things and invite Him to be Lord of your entire life. You can pray something like:

“Lord Jesus. Thank You for loving me. Thank You that You are kind and safe. Right now, I want to let go of control of [whatever it may be for you] knowing that You can do a better job of it than I can. Help me to trust You and follow You every day of my life. Amen.”

Day 6

Transform -ed

There are few archetypes of transformation in the natural world more dramatic than that of the humble caterpillar. Seemingly destined for a slow-motion life, its stubby legs do their best to avoid untimely demise as a potential meal for each passing bird. Upon beginning construction of its cocoon, it appears to be fashioning its own coffin. But then, after a couple of long weeks, a beautiful butterfly emerges! That process is known as metamorphosis, a derivative of the Greek word “*metamorpho*”, which is the word the Apostle Paul uses to describe our own process of transformation as Christians.

2 Corinthians 3:18 “And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into His image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” Our journey of following Jesus involves a process of complete transformation, akin to a caterpillar becoming a butterfly. It ultimately causes us to look more and more like Jesus.

There are various words in the New Testament which are used to describe different aspects of this process - words like sanctification, redemption and repentance. Repentance is not a scary term. As a matter of fact, it’s wonderful. Romans 2:4 actually says that it’s God’s kindness that leads us to repentance! Repentance simply means a complete turning in the opposite direction. It’s what happens when we realize that we’ve been living life for ourselves, our own way, doing our best to play god, and then we turn completely the other direction to follow Jesus. It’s also what happens regularly in our faith journey when we realize that there are still things that God desires to grow and develop in our lives. When we let go of control of those things and repent, we are allowing Him to make something beautiful out of that space.

Whether it be our impatience, our desire for control, our preoccupation with money or influence, our addiction to a substance or an emotional rush chased through immoral means, God invites us to name those things and pray prayers of repentance, surrendering them to God and turning the other way. Just like a child becoming a teenager, a teenager becoming an adult, or... a caterpillar becoming a butterfly, this process of transformation is amazing! **1 John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”**

Pray

As you take a moment to pray, ask God if there is anything that He might be wanting you to turn away from in order to turn towards Him and His plan for your life. Talk to Him about those things. You can pray something like:

“Jesus, I know that in this particular area of my life, I haven’t been living Your way. I want to change. Help me to follow You in this area. Thank You for forgiving me! Thank You for loving me. And thank You for setting me free. Amen.”

Recommended Reading

John 3:1-6

Day 7

Friends of Your Future

Many people have said “show me your friends and I will show you your future”. There’s a lot of truth in that statement. Whether it be an interest in a particular food, sport, or activity, or important matters like politics or moral standards, people are constantly influenced by those they spend time with the most.

This raises an important question. If you want to be a passionate follower of Jesus, and your friends will influence who you become: Are your friends influencing you to be the kind of person that you now want to be? **Proverbs 12:26 says “The righteous choose their friends carefully, but the way of the wicked leads them astray.”** It’s something worth considering.

If you’re beginning this journey of following Jesus, then there’s a good chance that a lot of your friends are perhaps more in line with who you were rather than who you are becoming. That’s ok! Does that mean that you need to cut those friendships off? While that can certainly be considered as an option with prayer and wise counsel from time to time, for the most part the answer would be - no, of course not. Perhaps the best decision for you right now isn’t to replace your existing friendships but to add to them.

This is part of why planting yourself in a church community is so important. It’s within a church community that you can find friends of your future, people who will spur you on, sharpen you, and encourage you to be the person that God created you to be. A great way to find these friendships can be to talk to our team about joining a connect group or even a team that serves together. Those are each great ways to get to know good people!

While we’re talking friendships, consider these words of Jesus for a moment... **John 15:15 “I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.”** What a friend we have in Jesus! A friend like no other. He is a true friend of our future.

Pray

As you pray today, ask God for His leading and wisdom regarding your friends and influences. Ask Him if there are any people who might have too much negative influence in your life. Ask Him for help in finding better influences. And thank Him for the miracle that Jesus calls you friend! You can pray something like this:

“Lord Jesus, thank You that You call me friend! I never want to take that for granted. Please show me where I might have people with too much influence in my life who aren’t helping me become the person that You created me to be. Give me wisdom as I navigate these friendships. Help me find great friends of my future and help me be that friend for others. Amen.”

Recommended Reading

John 6:60-68





Day 8

You Have a Story to Tell

Have you ever experienced something incredible that you just couldn't wait to tell your friends or family about? Perhaps you once met someone famous. The subsequent enthusiastic text to your friends started with, "You're not going to believe this....!" Maybe you had a dinner at a previously undiscovered restaurant and you knew that anyone who went there would have their minds blown just as yours was! Or maybe while on a recent holiday you built up the courage to conquer a roller coaster and you couldn't get to your phone fast enough to share the hilarious mid-ride photo of your melting face. Those are good stories to tell. But guess what. You've got one that blows all those stories out of the water.

You've met Jesus. You were lost but now you've been found. You were captive to the things of this world but now you are free. Your soul has begun to come alive to the things of God. Jesus loves you more than you ever imagined possible! That is a story worth telling!

In **Acts 4:18-20** we read about some of the disciples standing before the authorities who were trying to get them to stay quiet about their faith in Jesus. **"Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, 'Which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.'"** The disciples experienced then what you might well be experiencing right now. God has done something incredible in your life. It's impossible to keep a lid on that!

You may not have all the answers to people's questions about theology, philosophy or the moral standards of the world. But the fact is that people will argue with all of that anyway. What your friends and family are less likely to argue with is your story. Not everyone may want to hear and, depending on your religious background, telling your friends and family that you've decided to follow Jesus might actually be a really big deal. But more often than not, our response can be that of the disciples, "I can't help but tell you about what I've experienced!"

Don't underestimate the power of your story. Sharing with people what God has done in your life, or even inviting them to church, is a part of you living on mission.

Pray

As you pray today, ask for God's leading as to who you might be able to share your story with. And ask for His courage to do just that. You can pray something like this:

"Jesus, I want to thank You for everything You've done for me. Thank You that You love me. Thank You that You've forgiven me. Thank You that You've given me true life. Help me know with whom I can share my story. And give me the courage and the words to follow through. Thank You that You love my friends and family even more than I do. I pray that they would come to know You just as I have. Amen."

Recommended Reading

Mark 5:11-20

Day 9

God is Love

In the English language, love is a funny word. With one breath we can declare our undying love for our spouse and with the very next breath we confess our love for ice cream. Same thing. But not the same at all!

Becoming people of true love, with no agenda and no parameters, is ultimately what happens the longer and more closely we follow Jesus. This is because love isn't just something that God does, it's who He is! **1 John 4:8, "Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love."** When we get to know God, we get to know love. You can pause and think about that for a moment!

If you want to do some extended Bible reading, read Matthew 5, 6, and 7. These chapters are what's known as "The Sermon on the Mount" which is the most famous collection of Jesus' teachings. Throughout the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus flips the listeners thinking on its head, blowing their minds with a way of thinking and living that they had never known before. In Matthew 5:43-47 Jesus says that His followers, the people of his Kingdom, should not just love the people that love them in return, but love their enemies as well! This was unheard of!

When it comes to how we relate to each other as humans, secular historians point to the life and teachings of Jesus as the biggest cultural shift in history. Jesus came to a world divided by a chasm of social classes, and He taught that the first will be last and the last will be first. (Matthew 20:16) He came to a world that placed no value on women and He smashed down barriers to show unconditional love to those that society would have said He shouldn't have even spoken to. (John 4:1-26) Hospitals, schools, and the very concept of human rights all find their origin in the teachings of Jesus.

There is truly nothing like God's love. Using words to describe His love is like trying to describe a sunrise. Its beauty can't be confined by human language. You can never be reminded too many times that God loves you. He loves you with a love that knows no boundaries or limitations, because He Himself is love.

Pray

As you take a moment to pray today, why not start by thanking God for His love. Then pray these words of **Romans 8:38-39, "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate [me] from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."**

Recommended Reading

Matthew 5-7

Day 10

Followers of The Way

Contrary to the opinion of Shakespeare's prima donna, *Juliet*, you can tell a lot about something by its name. It would be wise to keep your distance from the species of snake called a *death adder*. Touching *poison ivy* won't be a pleasant experience. A *mobile phone* was always destined to travel with its owner and a *toothbrush* is fulfilling its purpose when being used to... brush teeth.

Did you know that the earliest Christians didn't call themselves "Christians"? That name, as we read in Acts 11:26, was first used by residents of the city of Antioch as a sort of political mockery towards those who identified as followers of King Jesus. As if not to shy away from a taunt, these first Christians soon embraced the term as their own. So, if Christians didn't call themselves Christians, what name did they go by? The Book of Acts tells the story of the early church. Throughout this story we read that they called themselves "followers of the Way". So much can be learned from a name! This name shows us that those people were not identified by a system of beliefs, rather by a way of living.

The same is true for us today. We are still followers of the way. We are far more identifiable by how we live than what we believe. After all, if we truly believe that Jesus is the Son of God, the King of heaven and earth – if He is the way, the truth and the life – then wouldn't the most logical course of action be to drop everything to follow His way of living?

Jesus set an example for us in how to live like heaven here on earth. Jesus didn't say that the world would know that you're a Christian because of what you believe, what you write on Facebook, or what church you attend. Jesus said in **John 13:35** **"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."**

Imagine living like Jesus. Imagine loving like Jesus. If this seems like an impossible prospect, you're on the right track. It is impossible. On our own, we can't possibly live like Jesus no matter how hard we try. The good news is, Jesus has made a way! Through His resurrection, the power of the Holy Spirit, and through following His example we can grow to become more and more like Him. Our thoughts, feelings, words, and actions can become what Jesus would think, feel, say, and do if faced with our circumstances.

To be clear, there's nothing wrong with the word "Christian". But consider for a moment that you are now not only a Christian, but you're a follower of the way of Jesus. That is something that we can spend a lifetime pursuing!

Pray

In your prayer today, why not express again your desire to follow the way of Jesus. You may not even know exactly what that looks like. That's ok! That's the point. We're all learning as we go. *"Lord Jesus, I want to follow Your way every day of my life. Help me build my life on what You say and teach. Show me how to live like You and give me the courage to do just that! Amen."*

Recommended Reading

John 14:5-14

Day 11

But what about...?

Can you remember a time when you really wanted to ask a question, but didn't? Whether it be a fear of asking questions in school or an unwillingness to consult instructions when assembling flat pack furniture, somewhere along the way asking questions has become almost culturally taboo.

It wasn't like this when Jesus walked on earth with His disciples. In Jesus' culture, asking questions was encouraged. Rather than being a sign of weakness, questions were seen as a necessary part of life in community. The good news is that this hasn't changed today! As followers of Jesus sharing in community, asking questions (big or small) is a vital part of growing together.

No doubt you have a lot of questions about your faith, God, and life. That's ok! It would be dishonest to pretend otherwise. It's also ok to acknowledge that asking questions might feel intimidating or uncomfortable. But what you do with those questions is important. Google might not be the best place to ask, "what is my purpose in life?" Answers on social media are limited, at their best, and harmful, at their worst. Sometimes our friends, colleagues, or family just may not have the answers to the questions we want to ask.

Fortunately, we are invited to bring all of our questions to both God and our church community. Hear this clearly: God is not intimidated by your questions. You can bring anything to him through prayer! God doesn't want our best fake smile and polished script. He wants our honest hearts, no pretence and no masquerades. He welcomes us, questions and all.

Additionally, the church community is God's designed forum for us to work through our questions. You'll hear us often talk about connect groups. One of the purposes of connect groups is to facilitate relationships and a space for you to share your story and ask questions. There are courses specifically designed to walk through some of the big questions of faith and following Jesus. And importantly, all around you in a Sunday service are people just like you, people on a journey of following Jesus. Amongst those people you'll find some who are just a bit further along that journey, people who perhaps many years ago asked the same questions you're asking right now. Talk to our team about how we can help you get connected to any one of these things. You can use hil.so/eastcoast to get in touch if you haven't already!

Pray

As you pray today, why not take time to acknowledge to God that you might have more questions than answers right now. You can pray something like this: *"Lord Jesus, it sounds silly to say but I acknowledge that You're God and I'm not. I have a lot of questions right now. (Tell Him what those questions are). Thank You for meeting me where I am, free from judgement. Thank You for walking this journey with me. Thank You for welcoming me into Your family. Amen."*

Recommended Reading

John 9:1-5

Day 12

To the Least of These

A famous quote attributed to numerous people, including St Francis of Assisi and the Bishop Desmond Tutu says, "There is only one way to eat an elephant: one bite at a time." Whoever said it first clearly wasn't a vegetarian. Regardless, the truth is that big things are often accomplished by doing a lot of small things.

In the face of war, famine, political unrest, and crime, the prospect of being a part of God's Kingdom coming to this earth can seem to be an impossible undertaking. How do we change a world that seemingly needs so much change?

Jesus said in **Matthew 25:37-40**, "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'" True to his message that the Kingdom of heaven is unlike any kingdom people have ever imagined, Jesus declared that if His followers fed someone who needed food, gave clothing to someone who needed clothes, or visited someone who was in prison, it was as if they did those things for Jesus Himself! The Kingdom of heaven is not reserved for those with microphones, platforms, followers, or charisma. No matter who you are - your background, your personality, your education, or your talents - you are invited, through the example of Jesus and power of the Holy Spirit, to change the world.

The age-old adage rings true, that we can't do everything, but we can do something. When we choose to love the unlovable or show kindness to a neighbor who seemingly doesn't deserve it. When we opt for serving over being served, humility over a fight. When we feed the hungry and clothe the homeless. In all of those situations we are actively participating in the Kingdom of heaven coming to earth.

How do you change the world? By changing your world. And how do you change your world? Through one act of love at a time. This is what it means to live on mission.

Pray

As you pause to pray today, take a moment to reflect on ways that you might be able to serve and love. Maybe you haven't thought about this before, but what are some things that you already do that are actually a part of the kingdom of heaven? Are there any ways that you interact with particular people or are there opportunities you have to show love to others and in doing so show love to Jesus himself? "Lord Jesus, I want to be a part of Your kingdom coming to this earth and to my world. Show me opportunities, that I may not already see, to demonstrate love to others in the same way You would. Help me act on those things, whether they're seemingly big or small. And may it all be done as worship for You. Amen."

Day 13

Creator and Companion

A paradox is a statement or idea that seems to contradict itself, yet upon close inspection often rings true. Statements such as “less is more”, “the only constant is change” and “the more you learn, the less you know” seem to be opposing ideas but reveal a truth through literary design. Life with God is full of paradox. How could it not be? After all, we’re talking about *knowing God*. No other world religion even attempts to portray its concept of god as one who desires to befriend those he fashioned.

The psalmist, David, was a shepherd boy turned king. A poet, a musician, a forgiven sinner, and an ancestor of Jesus himself. Imagine him sitting outside on a cool, dark, clear, night... near a fire, as a shepherd... just as he would have done countless times before. Looking up into the star-speckled sky, he penned the words of **Psalm 8:3-4**:

“When I consider your heavens,
the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars,
which you have set in place,
what is mankind that you are mindful of them,
human beings that you care for them?”

On this night, when David paused to look up at the stars, he was overcome by perhaps the greatest paradox of all: that God is the creator of the universe AND He is the companion of our souls. Think about that for a moment. God is unlike anyone you’ve ever known. He speaks and the universe obeys. He can’t be contained but, rather, He holds the rhythms of time and tide in His hand. Yet, in all His vastness, He’s not distant. He is close. He cares for you with infinitely more love and compassion than anyone else ever could. Jesus, God born in human flesh, was named Emmanuel which means “God with us.” He is still Emmanuel. God is with you.

As you go about your day today, think about that. When you look up and see a whimsical cloud drifting across the midday sky or when you take in the distant galaxies at night, when you see a bird soar or a butterfly glide, consider that God made what you are seeing. When you interact with another person, realize that they are covered in the fingerprints of the Creator. Then remember that this is the same God who sees you, knows you, loves you, and wants more than anything to be with you.

He is your creator and companion.

Pray

In prayer today, give to God the worship He deserves as God, and the thanks He is due as friend. If you don’t know what to pray, pray this: *“Lord Jesus, when I stop and consider the fact that You’re the creator of the universe, yet You see me and love me, I’m a bit overwhelmed and lost for words. I want to give You the praise that You deserve. You’re God and there is no one like You, but thank You that You’re not far away. Thank You for choosing me. Thank You for being my constant companion. I love You Jesus. Amen.”*

Day 14

At the Feet of the Teacher

Even in the 21st century, titles still reveal a lot about who a person is. If you've ever had to address someone as "Your Highness" you were most certainly meeting royalty. "Doctor" preceding someone's surname pays homage to their education and expertise in their respective field. "Sir", "Miss", or "Madame" show respect. Words like "mate", "buddy", or "amigo" are expressions of friendship.

Most often, when Jesus was addressed directly in the Gospels (the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John), He was called "teacher". "Teacher" was, and still is, a key descriptor of the relationship between Jesus and His followers. He is the teacher and we are His students.

Luke 6:40 says, "The student is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher."

This verse describes the journey of following Jesus. He has said to all of us, "Come! Follow me. Learn from me." Responding to that call is what is known as "salvation". It's the miracle of beginning a brand-new life as a follower of Jesus. But this isn't the end! As a matter of fact, it's just the beginning. It's the opening ceremony for a lifetime of following, learning and growing to become more and more like Jesus.

Learning from a teacher takes humility. It takes acknowledging that they know more than we do. If we have any hope of learning, we must start with a willingness to admit that we will very soon encounter situations where they are right and we are wrong. And we must change accordingly. Our level of humility will determine our level of learning. In a culture such as ours, this could seem radical. But if the King of Heaven ruling by becoming a servant of all humankind isn't countercultural, what is?

He is a patient teacher. A kind teacher. A loving teacher. So whether it be reading the Bible in your own time, hearing scripture taught in a church service, in prayer, in connect groups studying together, or even in reading this devotional that you hold in your hands right now, consider consciously taking the role of the student so that you might learn from everything that Jesus, the teacher, has to say.

He is our Lord, He is our Saviour, He is our friend, and He is *our teacher*.

Pray

As you pray today, take time to express your commitment to learn from Jesus, the teacher, and invite Him to help you learn and grow. You can pray something like, *"Jesus, you're my Lord, my Savior, my friend, and my teacher. Help me to learn everything that You would want to teach me. I want to build my life on Your teaching and Your way of living. Thank You for your patience with me as I have embarked on this journey of following You. Amen."*





Day 15

I've Got Your Back

Many diverse societies across the earth are known for their unique cultural nuances. Everyone knows that Brazilians are passionate! Germans are renowned for their methodical approach to life, and Italians speak with their own emoji 🇮🇹! But what are followers of Jesus known for? Or perhaps a better question is what *should* we be known for?

Throughout the teachings of Jesus, we see that He wants His followers to be known as people who have each other's backs, people that are quick to forgive and avoid gossip as if it were the plague, people that share in a community that truly puts the good of others first.

When teaching His followers how to pray in **Matthew 6:9-13** (what we know as The Lord's Prayer) He includes the line in **verse 12, "And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors"**. Jesus goes on to say in **verses 14 and 15, "For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."** He doesn't leave much to the imagination when it comes to the value He places on us forgiving each other! Forgiveness is not easy. But it is a hallmark of the people of God.

If there is anything as harmful to relationships as unforgiveness, it's gossip. **Ephesians 4:29** is a great objective for us to live by. **"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."** Imagine a community of people who lived by that standard! How wonderful would it be? How *safe* would it be! By God's grace, we can all be a part of working towards that collective goal. The fact is that there is no perfect church. This is because every church is made up of imperfect people. We all make mistakes. This is why forgiveness is even needed! With relationships come disappointments and with community comes the opportunity for offence. We can't control others, but we can control ourselves. We all have the opportunity to respond to the call of Jesus, to be people committed to have each other's backs.

In prayer today, take a moment to ask God to help you search your own heart and see if there is anyone that you may need to forgive or to ask for forgiveness from. This can be a daunting prospect. You may benefit from chatting with someone at church who is further along the journey than you are, someone who may have wisdom on how to approach your situation. If you haven't already you can use hil.so/eastcoast to have someone from your local campus get in touch to chat.

Pray

You can pray: *"Lord Jesus, thank You for loving and forgiving me. Would You help me to love and forgive others in the same way? Help my speech become only what builds others up for their benefit. I want to be a part of the solution, not the problem. I want to contribute to Your family as You intended us to be. Amen."*

Recommended Reading

Matthew 18:21-35

Day 16

Stewards of Grace

Have you ever been entrusted with something precious that you didn't own? A steward is someone who looks after something that belongs to someone else. If it's precious to the owner, it's precious to the steward. Did you know that the Bible says that you are a steward of God's grace?

1 Peter 4:10 says, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."

How cool is that! This means that God's fingerprint is on your life. Your personality, your talents and your innate passions are all a gift from God, His grace personified! Maybe you thought you were just a funny person. That's God's grace! Did you think that you just happened to enjoy whipping up a feast and hosting people in your home? That's God's grace! Maybe you knew you always had a creative mind that solved problems in ways that others couldn't. That, right there, is God's grace embodied in your very being. It's this grace of which we are all stewards, the caretakers of what belongs to God.

It doesn't stop there. That verse we read says that your gifting has a purpose! You have a God-designed purpose. Your number has been called. You've been commissioned. Part of your God-given mission is to serve others. That's so much of what being a part of the Kingdom of God is all about. We're not in it for ourselves, using our gifts and talents purely for our own gain. Rather, as stewards of God's grace, we use what He has entrusted to us to serve others for the common good. In church services, you'll hear us talk about giving financially to God through tithes and offerings which is a way that we worship God and demonstrate that we trust Him. So many people that choose to give in this way do so because they've learned that this isn't just charity, but that *everything* we have has been entrusted to us by God! We're just stewards of what has always belonged to Him.

Imagine living on mission each day like that, with that kind of purpose and intentionality. Imagine living knowing that your gifts, every part of what makes you you, are intricately and intentionally configured by God so that you might enrich the lives of others and be a part of His Kingdom being established in this world. You are a steward of God's grace!

Before you pray, if you have read this and are thinking to yourself that you don't know what talents or gifts you might have, or maybe you don't believe that there's much special about you at all, then perhaps you could speak to someone about this. That's a fantastic thing to talk about with someone like a connect group leader or pastor who is a bit further along the journey and can help you see how you are uniquely designed for an incredible purpose.

Pray

Why not pray something like: *"Lord Jesus, thank You that You've created me for a purpose. Help me to truly be a faithful steward of the grace with which You've entrusted me. Help me see that every gift I have is a gift from You. I want to take good care of it and use it to its full potential in the way that You designed. Amen."*

Day 17

A Lamp to My Feet

If you've ever found yourself lost in the dark, unable to see the path in front of you, you know that can be a very unsettling thing. Sometimes life can feel like that. Like we're disoriented in the darkness and can't see the way forward. Fortunately, God has not left us in the dark. **Psalm 119:105 says, "Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path."** His word illuminates our way, like a lamp casting a ring of light, one step at a time. This is why the Bible is so important. It is so much more than just an ancient story or historical book. The Bible is God's word. It is one of the most important ways that we grow in knowing God personally.

The Bible is made up of 66 books from Genesis through Revelation. It's broken into two sections called The Old Testament (39 books) and The New Testament (27 books). While the entirety of the Bible, either explicitly or implicitly, points us to Jesus, what separates the timeline of the Old Testament from the New Testament is the birth of Jesus.

Breaking it down a bit further - Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are called "the Gospels". Gospel means "good news". Together, with the beginning of Acts (which is actually a sequel to Luke) they tell the stories of Jesus' life on earth — His teaching, accounts of His miracles, His crucifixion and resurrection, and the commissioning of His followers. Because we follow the teachings of Jesus, it would make sense to grow in familiarity with His teachings through these books. If you're wondering where to start with reading the Bible, start there! Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts.

You could think of it this way. The Gospels are like the classroom. It's where the teacher does his teaching. The bulk of what you need to know is right there. The rest of the New Testament, largely letters to churches or individual people, are like a tutorial. That's where what you learned in the classroom is unpacked, where questions are answered, and where real-life application is made clear. If the Gospels are the classroom and the rest of the New Testament is the tutorial, you could think of the Old Testament as what the teacher studied to prepare them to teach you. The Old Testament (like all of scripture) leads us to Jesus. But simply because it was written in an age, language, and culture that is far removed from ours, it sometimes takes a bit more deep diving to understand. It was the foundation from which Jesus taught and is therefore integral and relevant to our faith today.

There are so many ways to read and study the Bible and many great resources like the YouVersion app, which makes the Bible available on your phone. If you're wondering where to start – start with the Gospels. Then talk to a connect group leader about reading plans or study guides that you could do together.

Pray

Take time to pray and thank God for His word. *"Thank You Jesus, for Your word that is a lamp for my feet. Thank You that You speak to me through the Bible, that it's relevant to me today and that it helps me know You more. Amen."*

Recommended Reading

Luke 24:36-49

Day 18

Les Pièce de Résistance

Les Pièce de Résistance is the most important work of an artist. It's the centrepiece of a meal crafted by a Michelin-hatted chef. It's the greatest accomplishment. It's the masterpiece.

Did you know that you are God's masterpiece? **Genesis 1:27** says that humankind was made in His image. You are His representative on earth and the centrepiece of the Creator's handiwork.

Psalm 139 is amazing and well worth a read. If you have a moment, open it now and read the whole Psalm. **Verse 13-14** say, **"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."**

On our journey of following Jesus, we grow to become more and more like Him. Similarly, and with a bit of nuance, on our journey of following Jesus, we grow to become more and more like *ourselves*, the person God created us to be. Apple seeds grow to become apple trees which produce apples. Sunflower seeds grow to become sunflowers that blanket the fields in glowing yellow, following the sun from dawn 'til dusk. As we follow Jesus, in a healthy environment and with the right nutrients, we grow to become our true selves.

Again, if you have time for extended reading, **1 Corinthians 12** is a fantastic chapter that talks about the unique gifts within the church, the Body of Christ. Not everyone is the same! It's in the diversity of humanity that we see the full reflection of who God is and who He intends for us to be. Gifting, talents, personality types, and life-shaping experiences are all unique. We're invited to learn to be mature and confident in who God made us to be and to celebrate the uniqueness in others.

So the question is: who are you? Or perhaps more importantly, who has God designed you to be? This is another important conversation to have with a connect group leader, pastor, or a seasoned Christian with insight in this area. You may have a very clear idea right now of who you are and what your unique gifting is. On the other hand, you may have no idea and even exploring this concept brings up pain from the past. Either way, it's on our journey of following Jesus that we grow as we become more and more like Him and more and more like our mature true selves, the person God intends for us to be. That is a pretty exciting journey!

Pray

In prayer today, why not take an extra few minutes, perhaps with a journal, and ask God to speak to you about who you are and who He created you to be. Start with this: *"Lord Jesus, thank You for creating me wonderfully and uniquely. Thank You for loving me so much that You fashioned the essence of who I am by Your design. Would You show me who You want me to be? Show me what gifts You've given me. Give me wisdom and discernment to know what is from You. Amen."* Now take a few moments, in quiet, to allow God to speak.

Day 19

You Have a Seat at the Table

We've explored the ideas that you are uniquely and wonderfully designed for a God-given purpose. You're a steward of His grace and empowered to grow to become your true God-designed self. Today we'll look at this through the lens of the community, the family of which you're now a part. The good news is that when that family gathers for dinner, you have a seat at the table!

If you didn't read **1 Corinthians 12** yesterday, take a moment to read it today. You'll see again the wonderful diversity of each unique part of the Church (the body of Christ) unified, but not uniform, in community. Hear this in the depths of your heart. You have a seat at the table. If the people of God are a jigsaw puzzle, you are one of the pieces. You are unique. And your place in the picture can't be filled by someone else. You may want to pause and just think about that for a moment.

There are two primary avenues by which the people of our church begin to find their place within the community. These are through joining a connect group and/or a team that serves together. We've seen time, and time again, that when someone takes the step to become a participant in a connect group or team, they move from being an attender of a church service and truly become unified in community. They find friends who champion their unique gifting as well as the places they can use their talents and passions to serve others, just as God intends.

Connect groups are small groups of people that gather regularly in homes, in cafes, or around activities. They are often made up of people from similar age groups and geographic locations. By gathering in connect groups we develop lasting relationships and provide a place for people to hear each other's stories, explore questions, open the Bible, and pray together. Connect groups are also our primary way of supporting one another in practical ways through the highs and lows of life.

Service teams take on all sorts of forms that give an opportunity for various talents to be utilised. People that are naturally very friendly can extend a warm welcome on the front doors or help people find a seat. Those who love cooking can prepare food or make coffees. Those with a heart for the seemingly marginalized can get their hands dirty by serving our community in practical ways. Chaplains, trades people, counsellors, musicians, singers... the list is endless. These, and many more, are areas in which you can get involved that enable each person to build meaningful relationships while contributing to the greater good in their unique way. Chat with our team at your local campus if you want help getting involved in any of these ways!

Pray

Take a moment to pray and thank God that the invitation to the table is ultimately from Him, directly to you. Say *"Thank You, Jesus, that You invite me into Your family and to Your table. Thank You for creating me for a unique purpose. Help me find the friends and build the right relationships that will enable me to become all You want me to be. Amen."*

Day 20

Love Never Fails

If you've ever been to a Christian wedding, then the chances are high that you've heard **1 Corinthians 13** read. As fitting as that is, this passage is not written just for weddings, describing the love between a husband and wife. It's written to describe the ultimate aim of living on mission: to be people of love.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres."

As we learned in day nine, love isn't just something that God does. Love is who He is. As His followers, our mission is to grow in that same love. He invites us to become people of love, transforming a world in which true love is the most desperate of needs. You don't have to look far to find someone who tests your patience or someone to whom showing kindness is a challenge. Envy, boasting, and pride all come quite naturally. It's hard to honor others and seek their good over our own! You get the idea. Loving is not easy.

But through the power of the Holy Spirit and following Jesus' example, we can truly become people of love. God transforms us into people of love as we surrender to Him in prayer, worship, reading the Bible, and being with Jesus. **Galatians 5:22-23** lists "Fruit of the Spirit" - what is produced in our lives when we allow the Holy Spirit to shape us. The first thing on this list is love! When we invite God to work in us, to shape us, to bring about maturity in us when we live in obedience to what He teaches, we will begin to exhibit a love that we never knew possible. A love that transforms families, communities, cities, and the world.

What would it look like for you to become a person of love in your family? What about in your workplace? What would living as a person of love look like in your school, university, or when you step into your local café tomorrow morning? This is a question that we can spend a lifetime answering. Remember that if it seems impossible that's because it is! But for God's love, our mission to love is a futile endeavor. **1 John 4:19** says, "We love because he first loved us." That is why we can live and love on mission. Love never fails.

Pray

As you pray, thank God for His love. Invite the Holy Spirit to deeply work within you, developing you into a person of love. You can pray this: *"Lord Jesus, thank You for Your love that is beyond comprehension. Help me know that love more and more. And as I respond to Your love for me, help me become a person of love, showing love to everyone I encounter just as You would love them. Amen."*

Recommended Reading

Matthew 5:43-48

Day 21

Go Ahead! He's Listening

Congratulations! You made it to the last day of this Good News Guidebook that, hopefully, has served to kickstart your life of following Jesus. From here, our team at your local campus can help you with what's next. There are so many options available and many ways that we can help you continue your journey toward knowing God, growing in holiness, sharing in community, and living on mission.

It seems fitting to end in the same way we began – with the good news that you can know God, personally. Any good relationship involves good communication. Our relationship with God is no different. This communication is what the Bible calls prayer.

Various things may come to your mind when you think of prayer. You might picture someone kneeling at an altar, hands folded at their chest. Perhaps when you think of prayer you think of repetitious, recited rhetoric. Prayer, very simply put, is talking with God. Talking with God involves what we say to Him as well as what He says to us. Sometimes prayer is sitting silently in God's presence.

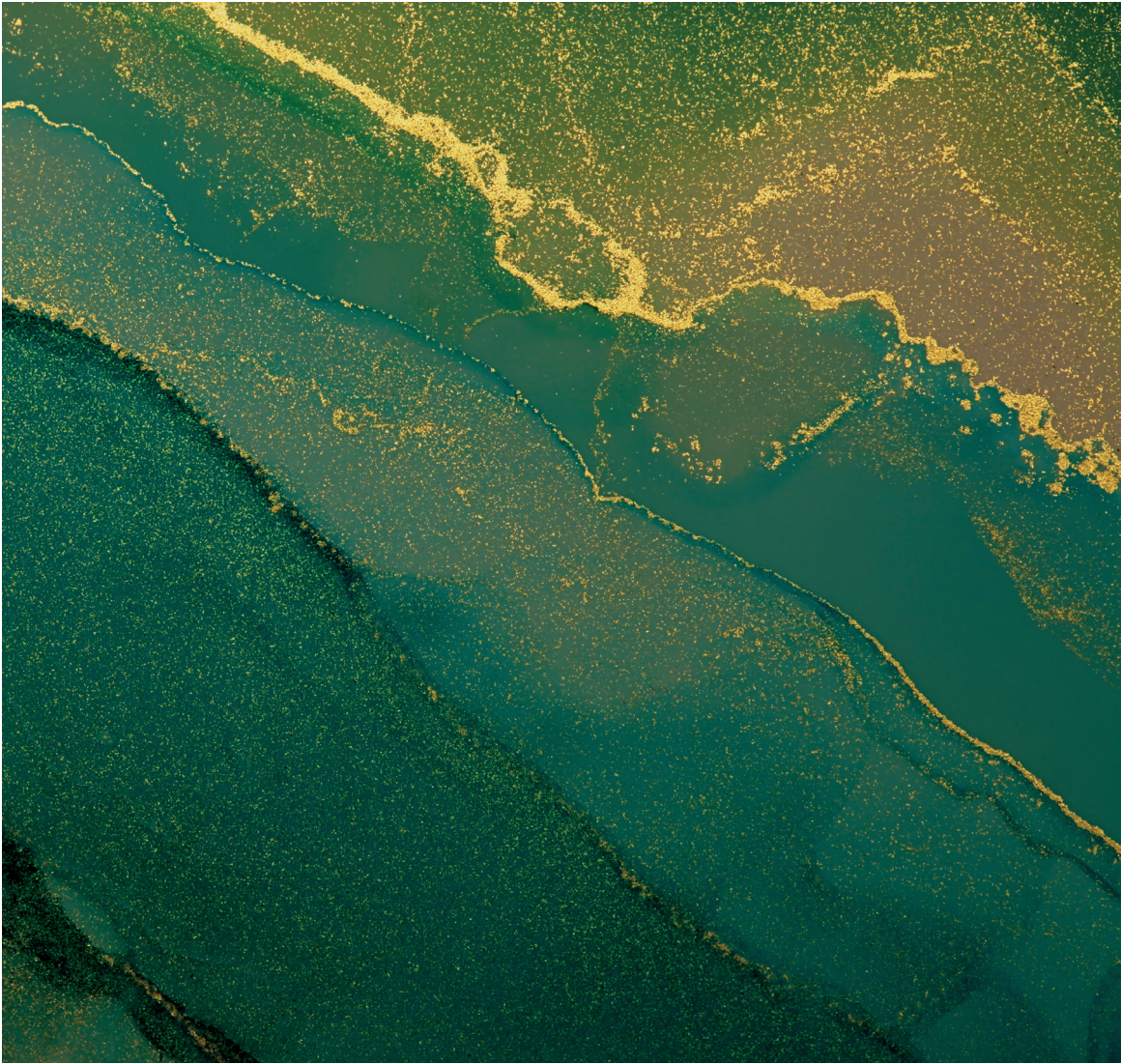
Jesus says in **Matthew 7:7-11** “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him.” When we talk to God, it need not be with eloquent words or polished presentation. He simply invites us to speak. Tell Him what's on your heart. Tell Him about your gratitude and tell Him about your disappointments. Jesus only asks us to knock.

Prayer doesn't stop there! Just as in a shared moment with any close friend, it would be unnatural if we were the ones doing all the talking. God speaks to us. God speaks to you. The primary way that God speaks is through scripture – His word. But as we grow in our relationship with Jesus, we become increasingly familiar with His voice. Often as a whisper in our hearts, His is a voice that guides us, loves us, and periodically corrects us. Sometimes in prayer we just sit in silence and enjoy being with God. **John 10:27** says “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.”

As you conclude today, and this entire 21-day guidebook, know that whoever you are, you can speak to God and He speaks to you anytime and anywhere. This is prayer. And this is knowing God.

Pray

Today, in your own words, start with worship. Thank God for who He is and everything that He has done for you. Tell Him what is on your heart. Tell him about your desires, your hurts, your successes and your failures. Place those things before Him and then, having invited Him to speak to you, sit in silence for a moment. Ask Him for what you need. And ask Him to continue leading you on your journey of following Him.



Welcome Home

We want to say the hugest welcome to YOU! We are so glad that you have joined us for this 21-day journey. We are so excited that you are beginning your brand-new life with Jesus!

We hope that, wherever you find yourself in our church, you have had a wonderful experience and that you feel right at home. We believe that every person matters to God and that He has an incredible plan and purpose for you.

As a church, we stand ready and eager to continue to help you in your journey forward with Jesus.

Lots of love,



Phil and Lucinda
Global Senior Pastors
Hillsong Church



Chrisnan and Dani
Lead Pastors
Hillsong Church
East Coast



Nick and Irene
Campus Pastors
Hillsong Church
New Jersey



Jimmy and Megan
Campus Pastors
Hillsong Church
Boston

Our Statement of Beliefs

We believe
that the Bible is God's Word. It is accurate, authoritative and applicable to our everyday lives.

We believe
in one eternal God who is the Creator of all things. He exists in three Persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. He is totally loving and completely holy.

We believe
that sin has separated each of us from God and His purpose for our lives.

We believe
that the Lord Jesus Christ as both God and man is the only One who can reconcile us to God. He lived a sinless and exemplary life, died on the cross in our place, and rose again to prove His victory and empower us for life.

We believe
that in order to receive forgiveness and the 'new birth' we must repent of our sins, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and submit to His will for our lives.

We believe
that in order to live the holy and fruitful lives that God intends for us, we need to be baptized in water and be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit enables us to use spiritual gifts, including speaking in tongues.

We believe
in the power and significance of the Church and the necessity of believers to meet regularly together for fellowship, prayer and the 'breaking of bread'.

We believe
that God has individually equipped us so that we can successfully achieve His purpose for our lives which is to worship God, fulfil our role in the Church and serve the community in which we live.

We believe
that God wants to heal and transform us so that we can live healthy and blessed lives in order to help others more effectively.

We believe
that our eternal destination of either Heaven or hell is determined by our response to the Lord Jesus Christ.

We believe
that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming back again as He promised.

**Let's follow
Jesus
together**

