

The background features a stylized landscape with rolling green hills. In the center, there is a white church with a steeple topped with a cross. To the right of the church is a smaller white house with a chimney. On the left side, there is a tree with a dark trunk and a rounded green canopy. The sky is a light blue color with several white, stylized clouds of various shapes. The text 'CHURCH FOR MONDAY' is centered in the upper half of the image.

# CHURCH FOR MONDAY

**SERIES  
GUIDE**

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## MADE FOR MONDAY

*Everyone has a Monday. It's the home where you live, and the people you love. It's your neighbors and hobbies, where you work or go to school. It's the causes that capture your heart. Those things—both ordinary and extraordinary—that make up all of life.*

Everyone has a Monday. But too often, churches have merely focused on Sunday, even though following Jesus has always been about all of life.

At Christ Community, we believe the local church, as God designed it, is the hope of the world. For that hope to multiply, it has to reach beyond an hour on Sundays into each and every day.

That's why we're passionate about helping every person in our church get ready for Monday.

Because we know that our greatest influence as a church comes on Monday, as we spread out into the various roles and responsibilities where God has placed us.

### **About this guidebook**

*This guidebook has been designed with Monday in mind. Our aim is to help you become a better follower of Jesus in all of life. That's why we've compiled articles and exercises into this guidebook to help support the content we'll be engaging at church each Sunday. These articles, studies, reflection questions, and conversation prompts are intended to support you in your personal journey of uncovering what it means to be ready for your Monday.*

*This guidebook is not a daily devotional. Nor should you consider it a weekly assignment. Rather, it is a resource created to help you apply God's teaching about vocation to your various roles and areas of responsibility.*

# SEVEN MARKS OF DISCIPLESHIP

For our church's Monday mission to be successful, we need to be disciples. And what is a disciple? A disciple is a whole and influential apprentice of Jesus.

Christ Community grows in missional effectiveness as we each embrace Christ's call to discipleship. The following seven marks give us a snapshot of what discipleship to Jesus looks like. While they don't outline everything that could be said, they do lay a solid foundation, helping us see what it means to live with upright hearts and skillful hands (Psalm 78:72 ESV).



1

TAKES UP THEIR  
CROSS



2

PUTS ON THE  
YOKE



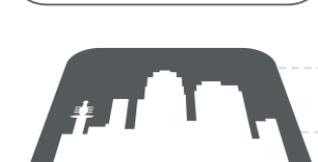
3

BUILDS THEIR  
LIFE ON THE  
BIBLE



4

LOVES THE  
CHURCH



5

SEEKS THE GOOD OF THE  
CITY BY

6

GIVING THEMSELVES AWAY

7

SHARING THE GOSPEL  
IN WORD AND DEED

WORKING DILIGENTLY FOR  
THE FLOURISHING OF ALL

# A DISCIPLE WHO'S READY FOR MONDAY...

## TAKES UP THEIR CROSS

### TRUSTING JESUS IN ALL OF LIFE

*A maturing disciple willingly accepts the high costs of following Jesus.*

#### This means a disciple:

- Receives forgiveness and offers it to others
- Manages their emotional and physical health well
- Stewards their sexuality biblically
- Holds neither too high nor too low a view of themselves
- Loves others wisely—and if married, lives in unity with one's spouse

1

## PUTS ON THE YOKE

### PURSUING INTIMACY WITH GOD THROUGH SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

*A maturing disciple cultivates life habits as pathways to enjoy God and do His will.*

#### This means a disciple:

- Loves the Word of God
- Prays in all circumstances
- Cultivates solitude and Sabbath
- Enjoys fellowship and worship with God's people
- Demonstrates the fruit of the Spirit

2

## BUILDS THEIR LIFE ON THE BIBLE

### SEEING EVERYTHING AS GOD'S STORY

*A maturing disciple sees the world biblically, recognizing God's Story provides meaning and guidance in all things.*

#### This means a disciple:

- Reads and interprets Scripture well
- Integrates essential biblical doctrines into daily life
- Obeys biblical principles in conduct and character
- Engages matters of justice, seeking the good of all
- Memorizes passages for contemplation and confidence

3

## LOVES THE CHURCH PRIORITIZING THE FAMILY OF GOD

*A maturing disciple commits to the local church and contributes to its growth and influence.*



### **This means a disciple:**

- Participates in Sunday worship by attending, learning, serving, and inviting
- Submits to the direction of the church body and its leadership
- Knows how their natural and spiritual gifts contribute to God's people
- Gives financial, verbal, and prayerful support to the local church
- Invites their church family into their Monday mission
- Sees the vital work of the church as something that happens on Sunday and on Monday—in the home, on the job, with their community group, friends, co-workers, and neighbors.

## SEEKS THE GOOD OF THE CITY GIVING THEMSELVES AWAY

*A maturing disciple lives a life of service as a thank you for the abundant grace of God.*



### **This means a disciple:**

- Gives generously of their time, their talent, and their treasure
- Shows hospitality to all people without prejudice
- Mentors others
- Creates and innovates, looking for insights for the common good
- Cooperates and integrates well with others

## SEEKS THE GOOD OF THE CITY

### SHARING THE GOSPEL IN WORD AND DEED

*A maturing disciple works zealously and prayerfully so that all may come to a robust new life in Christ.*

#### **This means a disciple:**

- Shares their gospel-shaped story with others
- Extends compassion to the marginalized
- Engages creation care with an environmental sensitivity
- Instills creativity in their integration of doing daily work and being on mission
- Supports the ongoing mission of the church around the world



## SEEKS THE GOOD OF THE CITY

### WORKING DILIGENTLY FOR THE FLOURISHING OF ALL

*A maturing disciple lives all of life as a seamless act of worship to God for the common good.*

#### **This means a disciple:**

- Embraces work as an opportunity for spiritual formation
- Knows how their gifts are used outside the church
- Sees work, both paid and unpaid, as one of the primary places where they love God and their neighbor
- Contributes their best effort in every circumstance
- Grows in economic wisdom



# A CHURCH FOR MONDAY

## GETTING READY FOR MONDAY

God uses all kinds of Mondays to advance His mission. Whether we're retired, in the office, at home, in school, on call, laid off, or volunteering, what we do every day matters to God and matters to our neighbor.

Far too often, churches have given their best energy to getting ready for Sunday. In the process, Monday has fallen off the radar. But what if that all changed?

What if Jesus' followers came to be known more for our Mondays than our Sundays? What if we recognized that the various roles and responsibilities that God has given us are intended by Him to be avenues through which we love and care for His world and our neighbors?

That would change everything.

## DISCOVERING VOCATION

For us to fully grasp Scripture's teaching about our Monday mission, we need to recover a proper understanding of vocation.

Our English word "vocation" is rooted in the Latin, *vocare*, which means "to call" or "to receive a call." Theologian Charlie Self notes:

*For almost two millennia in Christian-influenced communities and cultures, vocation referred to a religious calling: a monastic order, missionary work or parish labor. During the medieval era, vocation expanded beyond the religious callings and embraced medicine (the doctor), the law (the attorney) and teaching (the professor/teacher). Other occupations were respected, but not given the same status.<sup>1</sup>*

However, something remarkable happened during the Protestant Reformation. As church leaders rediscovered texts that taught about the priesthood of all believers (e.g., Exodus 19 and 1 Peter 2), they began to honor and understand everyday human work as being a God-given vocation as well. Again, Charlie Self observes:

*Martin Luther's delightful observation that Christian shoemaking is not about adding crosses to shoes but about making good shoes was a breakthrough for workers in all classes... In most gospel-centered communities [today], we are now seeing better elevation and economic empowerment of all believers, without despising the callings of those set apart by Christ to nourish the [church] Body and make Him known locally and globally.<sup>2</sup>*

Embracing the Reformers' robust definition of vocation allows us to reimagine what we do every day. Suddenly, what felt ordinary, unimportant, or mundane becomes a vocation—or a calling—from God.

## FIVE AIMS IN VOCATION

by Amy Sherman

“What am I supposed to do when I graduate?” Recently on a college campus, I heard again that plaintive, perennial cry. Vocational discernment is no easy matter and many 20-somethings feel real angst. If only I could offer definitive guidance! But of course I can't. No one can. God could if He wanted to, but from my 51 years of observation I'd say that the burning bush is a rarity. He usually lets us choose from among many good options, all of which are perfectly fine in His eyes.

But while it's difficult to say with precision what career a particular Christian should take up, it is possible to suggest some overarching vocational aims to pursue. Here are five—each with a story to illustrate.

## 1. CONSERVING AS SALT

Jesus calls us to be the salt of the earth. That means plenty of things. One of them is to preserve that which is good.

Harrison Higgins is a carpenter who is preserving the art of fine craftsmanship. He uses the same kinds of hand tools as did furniture makers from a hundred years ago. He revels in the beauty of natural woods and uses them, not chintzy particle board, for his creations. His goal is to make furniture that literally will last for a century. His work is “salty” because through this approach to his vocation, Higgins is preserving something valuable from the past. And, by seeking to make furniture that is truly durable he is resisting the corruption of our culture’s ethic of disposability.

## 2. BEING LIGHT

Jesus also called us “the light of the world.” Vocationally, being light can mean bringing imagination and innovation that illumines new and better ways of doing things.

Years ago interior designer Cynthia Leibrock was hired to design a residential facility for people with physical disabilities. This was a new challenge for her, stretching her into new arenas of learning. She realized that she could incorporate the principles of universal design into her project. Universal design strategies remove barriers to mobility by reconfiguring such things as doorways, hallways, kitchen countertops, storage drawers, and bathtubs. Changing the standard designs to accommodate people who are in wheelchairs, or who have limited strength, reach, or range of motion can open new vistas of dignity for the handicapped. These innovations make possible new levels of independence. As Leibrock likes to say, a person is in a house where he can do the things he wants to, he’s no longer disabled there.

Salt and light are familiar biblical images. My labels for the next three aims have both biblical warrant and Church history behind them, but are less familiar. My attention was drawn to these categories by my former pastor, Greg Thompson, during a sermon series he presented on the book of Ruth. In that classic story, Thompson noted how God did at least three things for Ruth. He met her exclusion with inclusion. In the face of her vulnerability, He offered protection. And in response to her poverty, He showed her generous justice. What God did for Ruth we can do for our neighbors, through all kinds of different labors.

### **3. ANSWERING EXCLUSION WITH INVITATION**

Addressing the problem of exclusion with invitation is a strong biblical theme. We see it in the Old Testament with God's insistence to the Israelites that they welcome the stranger and show compassion and justice to the alien and foreigner. And we see it in the New Testament's emphasis on practicing hospitality.

Jimmy Lin is answering exclusion with invitation through an innovative volunteer effort within the medical research community.

Jimmy's amazingly smart, holding both a medical degree and a PhD in something called "computational biology" (which is way over my head). He and several of his brainiac friends who work in prestigious medical research labs across the country have joined together in an initiative called the Rare Genomics Institute. These scientists have committed to volunteering a portion of their time to come alongside families of kids with extremely rare genetic diseases.

Roughly 250 million children worldwide suffer from these very rare diseases. Since each disease affects only a tiny number of people, these kids are excluded from traditional medical research. There's virtually no funding supplied for studying their conditions. Thus, families are left with little hope of understanding the disease afflicting their child, much less finding a cure. Rare Genomics pairs families with a research scientist who commits to creating a genome sequence map for their child, because this mapping process is the first step in gaining insight into measures that could help address the condition or mitigate its symptoms.

### **4. OFFERING PROTECTION TO THE VULNERABLE**

Meeting vulnerability with protection is also a strong biblical motif. We see it in the ancient biblical practice of establishing cities of refuge and in the New Testament's call to Christians to take care of widows and orphans.

In Phoenix, AZ, Nadine Grobmeier owns and manages Airport Park Auto Shop. As a widow, Nadine understands something of vulnerability. And she knows that some women feel susceptible to abuse when they walk into a car repair shop. (I know I do.)

Nadine is committed to addressing that problem. She's committed to honest dealings with her customers, and her shop has won several local awards for being a great business. But her care goes further. Nadine runs "Knowledge is Power" car clinics to teach women some basics of auto care and repair so that they are better able to defend themselves from dishonest mechanics.

## **5. MEETING POVERTY WITH GENEROUS JUSTICE**

Finally, the theme of meeting poverty with generous justice pulses throughout the scriptures. We see it in the Old Testament in such practices as the gleaning regulations, the 3rd year tithe for the Levites and the disabled poor, and the Jubilee. In the New Testament we hear the apostle Paul's exhortation to sacrificial giving and the apostle James' command to employers to pay their workers fairly.

In four cities across New Jersey, business entrepreneur Alfa Demmellash is working to bring economic uplift to her neighbors. Alfa came to the U.S. as a young teen from Ethiopia. Following her graduation from Harvard, she and her husband launched Rising Tide Capital to provide business classes and access to capital for underserved entrepreneurs, mostly struggling immigrants. Alfa generously shares her business savvy to provide opportunities for low-income people to create sustainable small businesses. Rising Tide serves about 600 entrepreneurs annually. In 2015, 73 trained entrepreneurs launched new businesses and overall, Rising Tide graduates created 228 new jobs.

The theologian Walter Brueggemann defines vocation as finding a "purpose for being in the world which is related to the purposes of God." We can be confident that the five aims discussed here are indeed related to His purposes. A job in any field that positions one to lean into these aims is clearly a good choice.

*Sherman, Amy L. "Five Aims in Vocation." Made To Flourish, 10 October 2016, [www.madetoflourish.org/resources/five-aims-in-vocation/](http://www.madetoflourish.org/resources/five-aims-in-vocation/)*

## MAKE IT PERSONAL: EXPLORING YOUR VOCATIONAL CALLING

### IDENTIFY YOUR VOCATIONS

List any roles, responsibilities, or relationships that God has called you to nurture and develop. (For example: Have you been called to follow Christ? Called to your place of employment? Called to parent a child? Called to care for a friend? Called to nurture your marriage?)

Be thorough and specific.

For those who follow Christ, the call to worship, obey, and cultivate intimacy with God is our **primary** calling. Other callings are **secondary**; however, this does not mean that they are insignificant or unimportant.

The secondary calling that takes up the majority of your time and attention is your **occupation**. Occupations come in all shapes and sizes. Various occupations include caring for children, volunteering at a non-profit, paid employment, etc.

### ASSESSING YOUR OCCUPATION

Think about the secondary calling that receives your primary attention and focus. That's your occupation. What is challenging or frustrating about your occupation?

### EVALUATING YOUR PERFORMANCE

What do you see as the biggest area for growth or development with respect to your occupation?

## CONTEXTUALIZING YOUR OCCUPATION

How do you see your occupation making a vital contribution to the mission of God in the world?

*For example, a stay-at-home parent might say, "I raise up image-bearers to love God and serve their neighbor in all that they do." An accountant might say, "I protect the mission of the organization by making sure we are solvent and people are compensated properly so that God can truly use us to bless others."*

## SHARPENING YOUR SENSE OF CALLING

Reflect on your occupation. In one sentence, identify how God may be inviting you to serve Him and others through that occupation. It may be helpful to ask yourself this question: Fundamentally, what is God inviting me to do through this calling for His glory and for the good of those around me?

## MOVING FORWARD: GETTING READY FOR MONDAY

Theologian Os Guinness once said, "The problem with Christians in America is not that they aren't where they should be—rather, it's that they aren't what they should be where they are."

We need to be ready for Monday. Ready to engage the various roles and responsibilities and vocations God has given us.

Our city and our neighbors desperately need our church to value the vocations of every person who calls Christ Community home. When we see our Monday roles and responsibilities as worship to God and love of neighbor, everything changes.

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

1. How are you currently responding to God's callings? (His primary call on you to Himself? And His secondary calls to significant relationships and important responsibilities?) Are you responding eagerly? Reluctantly? Wholeheartedly? Reservedly?
2. How does your primary calling to God affect the way you understand and fulfill your occupation?
3. Why is your faith-filled, Spirit-empowered engagement of your occupation just as important to our church as a pastor's?
4. What's one thing you need from your church to help you be more faithful and fruitful in your occupation?
5. During this eight-week "Church for Monday" journey, what are you hoping God might do in your heart as it relates to your occupation?

Take some time now to pray and ask God to make you more ready for your Monday.





# TAKES UP THEIR CROSS

A DISCIPLE WHO'S READY FOR MONDAY TAKES UP  
THEIR CROSS, TRUSTING JESUS IN ALL OF LIFE



Following Jesus is costly. That's not something we love to admit.

Even though our Savior modeled counter-cultural, Spirit-empowered, self-giving sacrifice by the way He lived, we frequently assume that following Him is supposed to make our lives easier, not more difficult.

When the costs of discipleship become apparent, we often find ourselves thinking:

*"I thought following Jesus was supposed to take care of all my problems..."*

*"I thought following Jesus was supposed to make things better, not worse..."*

*"I thought following Jesus was supposed to make me happy..."*

*"I thought following Jesus would protect me from the really bad stuff..."*

*"I thought following Jesus would help me avoid suffering..."*

These thoughts reveal our profound misunderstanding of discipleship to Christ. Rather, a maturing disciple recognizes and willingly accepts the high costs of following Jesus. This means they embrace the difficult work of receiving God's forgiveness and of offering it to others. They manage their emotional and physical health well. They steward their sexuality biblically, and hold neither too high nor too low a view of themselves. They love others wisely and generously. And if they are married, they live in unity with their spouse.

It's a costly, countercultural way of living in our broken world. But it's the way Jesus lived. And He invites us to do the same.





## THINKING DEEPLY: EVALUATING RISK

The narrative of Scripture demonstrates that God's people are risk takers. Whether it's Abraham leaving the land he knew, Moses moving towards the burning bush, Deborah standing up when no one else would, Esther fighting for her people, or Peter embracing Jesus' invitation to follow Him, the testimony of God's word is clear: The Christian life is a life of risk. It feels risky to trust God with big decisions, to follow Him when His way is countercultural, or to ask Him to intervene in a difficult situation.

The questions below are designed to help you examine your faith-fueled risk taking. Think of them like a mirror. They've been crafted to assist you in assessing your willingness to embrace the cost of following Jesus in all of life. To be clear, these questions aren't intended to instill guilt or shame. Rather, they've been shaped to help you see your own willingness to risk status, reputation, or well-being for sake of following Christ.

### FOR REFLECTION

- Are you willing to speak up when you see unethical decisions being made at work? Why or why not?
- Are you willing to speak truth to a friend, co-worker, or spouse even if it might cost you something? Why or why not?
- Are you willing to be in relationship with someone who believes, thinks, or looks differently than you? Are you willing to have your habits, ideas, and beliefs changed by that relationship? Why or why not?
- Are you willing to give more generously of your time, money, and talents even if it might interrupt your schedule or cause you to forgo personal comforts? Why or why not?
- Are you willing to take the risk of listening and doing what the Lord is calling you to do—whether it's leaving a job, investing in someone or in your family, starting something new, confessing sin, going back to school, working on your marriage, or seeking professional counsel? Why or why not?

# RISK-TAKING IS AN ACT OF WORSHIP

by Tim Hoerr

When we think about worship, particular images come to mind – gathering in a church service, listening or singing along to spiritual songs, rocking out to a worship band, quietly praying or talking with God, or perhaps kneeling, bowing or raising our hands.

But there are other, less obvious forms of worship.

Risk-taking is one such act of worship.

In what way, you ask?

To start, contemplate this scripture from the Gospel of Matthew (chapter 28, *The Message*):

*Meanwhile, the eleven disciples were on their way to Galilee, headed for the mountain Jesus had set for their reunion. The moment they saw him they worshiped him. Some, though, held back, not sure about worship, about risking themselves totally.*

From the above scripture, we see that risk-taking and worship are vitally linked.

Jesus's disciples risked it on a daily basis to follow him, just as many others have done and continue to do throughout history. I've come to understand in my own life that risk-taking in each day's course of events is essentially an expression of worship.

As we listen to the voice of God's Spirit and attempt to follow the instructions he provides, we'll often be prompted to take a risk.

For some of us, that risk will involve a major life change, such as a cross-country move, taking a new job, or going back to school in search of a new career.

For others, a risk could mean starting a new activity or joining a new affinity group, saying "no" to an opportunity, reaching out to a neighbor in need, or praying for a stranger.

Each person's opportunity to risk will look very different from those around him or her. And each day's opportunity to risk may look different from yesterday's.

Again in Gospel of Matthew we see the parable of the servants' investments, and how each risk or lack there of, spoke meaningfully to their master (from *The Message*):

*After a long absence, the master of those three servants came back and settled up with them. The one given five thousand dollars showed him how he had doubled his investment. His master commended him: 'Good work! You did your job well. From now on be my partner.'*

*The servant with the two thousand showed how he also had doubled his master's investment. His master commended him: 'Good work! You did your job well. From now on be my partner.'*

*The servant given one thousand said, 'Master, I know you have high standards and hate careless ways, that you demand the best and make no allowances for error. I was afraid I might disappoint you, so I found a good hiding place and secured your money. Here it is, safe and sound down to the last cent.'*

*The master was furious. 'That's a terrible way to live! It's criminal to live cautiously like that! If you knew I was after the best, why did you do less than the least? The least you could have done would have been to invest the sum with the bankers, where at least I would have gotten a little interest.'*

*Take the thousand and give it to the one who risked the most. And get rid of this "play-it-safe" who won't go out on a limb. Throw him out into utter darkness.'*

This story is the ultimate expression of devotion to the Master, via taking risks. He has given each of us so much – each according to his or her ability – and he continues to give.

He wants to see us use our talents, gifts, personality, and experiences in order to serve and glorify him, even if that means taking actions that make us vulnerable or uncomfortable.

He invites us into the risk – and warns us against playing it safe.

This might look different for each individual, but we each have gifts from God that can be used – risked – in order to multiply his goodness to those around us and to expand his Kingdom on earth.

John Wimber, founder of the Vineyard movement, was fond of saying “Faith is spelled R-I-S-K.” I always liked that saying, but generally interpreted it to mean expressing my faith through overtly spiritual acts like praying for someone, offering spiritual counsel or by giving gifts of charity.

It does indeed mean each of those things. But Wimber’s admonition is just as applicable to everyday life situations like the practical ones mentioned above.

I’m convinced that one of the most important ways that we align our personal life stories with God’s bigger story is through acts of risk-taking in the ordinary, everyday, work-a-day decisions we make.

As we step out in risk-taking, we’re saying to God, “I love you. I trust you I worship you.”

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*Hoerr, Tim. “Risk-Taking Is an Act of Worship.” Institute for Faith, Work & Economics, 22 June 2015, [tifwe.org/risk-taking-is-an-act-of-worship/](http://tifwe.org/risk-taking-is-an-act-of-worship/)*

## **MOVING FORWARD: PLACING COST IN PERSPECTIVE**

Jesus came to take up His cross. In the same way, His disciples must take up theirs.

Jesus promises that following Him is not easy. “It will cost you your life,” He says. But, it will save your soul. The cost of discipleship is high, yet the reward of discipleship is immeasurable.

When we focus on the high cost of following Jesus, He seems like a difficult and controlling task master. But when we see incredible reward—a full life, eternal life, life as it was designed to be lived—we see God’s graciousness and generosity more clearly. May this motivate and encourage us as we embrace the high cost of following Him!

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

1. How do you typically respond when you know a challenging task is awaiting you?
2. Do you often think of your discipleship to Jesus as involving suffering or difficulty? Why or why not?
3. What emotions do you feel when you're reminded that the Christian life is difficult?
4. What habits of thinking, speaking, and doing might you need to adjust to more readily embrace Jesus' invitation to costly discipleship?
5. How might Jesus be asking you to lay down your desires dreams, and demands to follow Him?
6. What is a costly task that you believe God is inviting you to embrace?





# PUTS ON THE YOKE

A DISCIPLE WHO'S READY FOR MONDAY PUTS ON THE YOKE, PURSUING INTIMACY WITH GOD THROUGH SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES



Discipleship to Jesus is costly, but those who follow Jesus are not invited to gut it out without guidance or support.

Instead, Jesus invites His followers to put on His yoke, to submit to Him and to walk beside Him eye to eye, shoulder to shoulder.

In the yoke, we apprentice ourselves to Jesus, learning His ways and His rhythms. Over time, we become like Him. His priorities become our priorities. His desires, our desires.

A maturing disciple cultivates life habits as pathways to enjoy God and do His will. This means they love the Word of God and pray in all circumstances. They cultivate solitude and Sabbath. They enjoy fellowship and worship with God's people. And they demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit as evidence of their intimacy with and apprenticeship to the Master.

## GETTING PRACTICAL: CREATING A WEEKLY PRAYER LIST

Prayer is a powerful discipline. In prayer, we commune with God, expressing our heart's longings and listening to God's voice.

It's also an effective way we care and advocate for our country and our communities, our families and our friends.

Mother Teresa said, "God shapes the world by prayer. The more praying there is in the world, the better the world will be, the mightier the forces against evil."

Prayer is one way we come against the evil in this world, and the evil in our lives.

This is why creating a prayer list is so important.

An intentional prayer list can help to give direction and variety in our daily prayer life. Because there is so much worth praying for, an intentional list makes sure our prayers are as wide and expansive as God's heart.

Below you will see a sample template for a weekly prayer list.

Adapt it to the passions, vocations, responsibilities, and realities God has given you. Then use it daily to grow in your communion with God and in your care for our world.

## SAMPLE WEEKLY PRAYER LIST

**Sunday** - Start and end your day by praying for the pastors, elders, and leaders of the local and global church. Thank God for the community of saints He has brought around you.

**Monday** - Start and end your day by crying out to God about the broken areas in your life and in the lives of those you love. Let God know about what burdens you, and let Him carry it.

**Tuesday** - Start and end your day by praying to God about the brokenness surrounding our culture, country, city, and neighborhood. Ask God to bring renewal through His faithfulness and through His church. Pray specifically for our political and governmental leaders.

**Wednesday** - Start and end your day by confessing your sins and shortcomings to God and receiving His forgiveness in Jesus by His Spirit.

**Thursday** - Start and end your day by lamenting with God about the injustice of racism, the exploitation of the vulnerable, and the neglect of the marginalized in our churches and world. Pray for individuals and organizations that advance and advocate for justice in our world.

**Friday** - Start and end your day by asking God to reveal Himself to you by showing how He is still actively working in your life and in the world. Ask Him to speak to you.

**Saturday** - Start and end your day by expressing your thankfulness and gratitude to God for all He has given you, and for how He cares for you as your Faithful Shepherd.

## THINKING DEEPLY: EMBRACING REST

Sabbath is a biblical command from God to welcome rhythms of rest in our lives. At the heart of Sabbath is the willingness to trust God by stopping and surrendering to Him.

This isn't easy.

More often, we allow pride, fear, and idolatry to keep us from obeying this biblical command.

Though so much stands in the way of Sabbath in our current cultural climate, here are four ways we might keep Sabbath and practice the rhythm of rest.

### STEP ONE: STOP

On Sabbath, we embrace our limits. God is God. He is indispensable. We are His creatures, and we have limits. Ceasing from work reminds us that the world continues working well without us. Sabbath is meant to be God's gift to us, reminding us that we are human beings and not human doings.

The core spiritual issue that prevents us from stopping is our lack of trust. When we trust God and obey His commands, He provides. The question is: Do we trust Him enough to stop? To cease from work for one day each week? For the next few weeks, pick one day to embrace as Sabbath. Ruthlessly prevent work activities from entering this time. Recognize that your protection of this time is a spiritual exercise that grows your trust in God.

### STEP TWO: REST

Once we stop, what are we to do with all our Sabbath time? The answer is simple: whatever delights and replenishes us. This might include exercising, reading, spending time alone, spending time with family, playing board games, going for a walk, and resting in God's presence in prayer. Take time now to write out things that delight you and replenish you. Make this your starter list for what you do on your Sabbath day.

### STEP THREE: DELIGHT

After we cease from working and as we participate in things that give us life, we must also take time to delight in those things. Sabbath isn't just about doing the things we enjoy. In other words, Sabbath isn't designed to be yet another occasion to write a checklist and cross off accomplishments. Rather, Sabbath is made for a slower pace.

In Sabbath, God invites us to delight in Him, and to delight in His good creation. Sabbath is when you slow down and smell the roses. Think ahead: What are some tangible things you can do to remind yourself to delight during your Sabbath?

### STEP FOUR: CONTEMPLATE

The final, critical component in practicing Sabbath is to spend time in contemplation of God. After Christ's resurrection, the Church made Sunday their Sabbath so that they could gather together and feast on God's presence, on Scripture, on His body broken and His blood shed, and on the goodness of community. Sabbath is designed to be a time of communal contemplation of God. How will you make time with God a priority during your Sabbath?

If you would like to learn more about healthy rhythms of rest, work, and Sabbath, we recommend *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* by Peter Scazzero.

## GATHERING IDEAS: REIMAGINING THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

Pursuing intimacy with God through the spiritual disciplines is difficult for many reasons.

Our world moves at lightning speed, while the disciplines require a slower pace.

Our society is fascinated with what's new and next, while the disciplines are ancient and steady.

Because the spiritual disciplines are so countercultural, it can be hard for us to imagine how we might incorporate them into our daily lives. Here are a few ideas as to how you might engage the disciplines of meditation, prayer, fasting, study, simplicity, solitude, submission, service, confession, worship, friendship, and celebration in your day-to-day life.

- **Take a walk** in the afternoon to practice the discipline of solitude. Read a Psalm before you begin. As you walk, reflect on God's character while you enjoy His created world. Enjoy unrushed moments with Him.
- **Find time to spend** with a trusted friend, and engage the discipline of confession. Speak honestly about your spiritual health, about what worries you and what excites you. Admit where you've fallen short. Ask for prayer and for a reminder of God's grace.
- **Give a gift.** To grow in the spiritual discipline of celebration, surprise a loved one with a gift. Your gift might be a handwritten note, or a book that's encouraged you, or box of their favorite candy. Let them know how much they mean to you, and how grateful you are that God has allowed them to be part of your life.
- **Turn off Netflix**—or Hulu, or ESPN, or your favorite cable news channel—for one week to explore the discipline of fasting. In the time that you normally spend consuming media, reach out to God in prayer. Lift up the needs of a friend, or of a family member, or of someone you know at church.
- **Volunteer at church**, at school, or at an organization doing good work in our community to engage the spiritual discipline of service. Make a commitment and keep it. As you volunteer your time and your energy, remember that Christ Himself came not to be served, but to serve.

For more on spiritual disciplines, we suggest *The Spirit of the Disciplines* by Dallas Willard and *Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster.

## MOVING FORWARD: TRAINING VERSUS TRYING

We know that embracing our unique Monday mission is difficult. So how do we prepare?

Dallas Willard argues that to perform appropriately in those moments when we're "on the spot," we must be preparing while we're "off the spot."<sup>3</sup> Preparation, he says, comes through regular engagement with the spiritual disciplines.

The spiritual disciplines help us grow in our ability to love, serve, and work for the good of our neighbors by training us in advance to respond well when challenging occasions come in our particular vocations.

If the mission God has called you to has felt overwhelming or exceedingly demanding, you don't need someone to tell you to "try harder." Instead, you need to be reminded of Jesus' invitation to "train better"—to hear the invitation once more to cultivate intimacy with Him by pursuing the spiritual disciplines.

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

1. Think about the ways you would love for God to shape and form you. What would you like to see change in your life?
2. How do conversations about spiritual disciplines make you feel? Confined? Excited? Ashamed? Open?
3. Do you feel like you're **training** to grow or **trying** to grow in your relationship with Jesus?
4. In light of your weekly rhythms and your personality, which spiritual discipline is easiest for you to embrace? Which is most difficult?
5. If you were to live more intimately connected with God, what differences might your family notice? Your coworkers? Your friends?
6. What discipline would you like to more fully incorporate into your life? Why?





# BUILDS THEIR LIFE ON THE BIBLE

A DISCIPLE WHO'S READY FOR MONDAY BUILDS THEIR LIFE ON THE BIBLE, SEEING EVERYTHING AS GOD'S STORY



The Bible is God's true telling of the story of our world. In it, we discover that God made the world good, that human sin ruined it, that Jesus Christ redeemed it, and that one day everything will be made right and new. This story is our lens for understanding reality.

A maturing disciple sees the world biblically, recognizing that God's Story provides meaning and guidance in all things. This means a disciple reads and interprets Scripture well, integrates essential biblical doctrines into daily life, obeys biblical principles in conduct and character, engages matters of justice, seeking the good of all, and memorizes passages for contemplation and confidence.

## THINKING DEEPLY: BIBLE QUIZ

The Bible tells us how far God is willing to go to rescue, redeem, and save a rebellious people. The Bible is not a book of facts, but a story pointing to the One who gave His own life for us. Therefore, knowing, believing, and engaging the Bible is a worthwhile task. To help you think well about your own engagement with God's Word, we thought it might be fun to ask you a few questions to see how much you know the Bible. Don't cheat. Answer honestly. Let's begin!

### QUESTIONS:

1. What are the first five books of the Torah?
2. Who are the three patriarchs?
3. To whom were the 10 commandments given?
4. Which cupbearer to a foreign king rebuilt the wall of Jerusalem?
5. What was Jesus' first miracle?
6. Who was the Roman Governor that sentenced Jesus to death?
7. What is the book of Acts about?
8. Who wrote the book of Revelation?

## ANSWERS:

1. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
2. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob
3. Moses
4. Nehemiah
5. Turning the water into wine at Cana
6. Pilate
7. Establishment of the church/Jesus' mission continued through the Holy Spirit and His church
8. John

## LOOKING INWARD: BIBLE QUIZ SELF-ASSESSMENT

So, how did you do? Better than you anticipated? More poorly than you had hoped? Were you surprised by your results? Or did you perform as you expected?

Let's be honest, an eight-question quiz is hardly a comprehensive measure of one's engagement with Scripture. But our hope is to get you thinking about your own level of immersion in the biblical story. Simply put, if you don't know the story, it will be hard to see everything through it.

### TIPS FOR IMPROVING YOUR BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

One of the most common misbeliefs about the Bible is that the Bible was written *to us*. Though that sentiment is correct, it's not exactly accurate. We must always remember that the Bible is an ancient text, written thousands of years ago with a particular audience in mind. Yes, the Bible is written *for us*, meaning that we can learn from and apply the Bible to our lives. But the Bible was not written *to us*, historically speaking. With that in mind, here is a simple process for studying a passage of Scripture:

- **Seek to understand** the passage in its context. Do some research. What is the historical, literary, and biblical context that helps make sense of all that is being said? Commentaries on individual books of the Bible, as well as in-text articles in study Bibles, are helpful in this regard.
- **Spend time reflecting** on what the author intended to communicate to the original audience. What questions or concerns did they have? What did the author want them to know or see?

- **Ask how this passage helps** us understand who Jesus is and how the gospel works. The Bible is, after all, the story of Jesus. Both Old and New Testament passages have something to teach us about God, His love for us, His work on the cross, and our redemption.
- **Apply the Scripture** to your own life. In light of the author's original meaning and the passage's message about Jesus and the gospel, how should you respond?

This process might seem difficult at first, but there are some ways to improve. Here are a few options:

- If you like a hard copy, we'd recommend purchasing *Living by the Book* by Howard Hendricks. This is a great resource that comes with both a book to read and a workbook for practice.
- If you prefer digital courses, Simeon Trust offers an online course for \$19 called *First Principles*. It focuses on the fundamentals of studying and teaching the Bible. You can find the course at [SimeonTrust.org/courses/first-principles](https://SimeonTrust.org/courses/first-principles)
- We also love the website [TheBibleProject.com](https://TheBibleProject.com). This website has videos covering individual books of the Bible, as well as videos that explore different themes found across the pages of Scripture.

## THE BIBLE IN A SENTENCE

The Bible tells one cohesive story from beginning to end. At Christ Community, we call this the four-chapter story of creation, fall, redemption, and new creation.

Each of the four chapters tells us something critical about God, humanity, the world, and reality. It's important that we know the Bible in its entirety to accurately understand God's work in the world. But it's also important for us to know the thesis of the Bible—its main idea—so that we can stay focused in our study and be clear in our communication about the Bible with others.

In 2011, Dane Ortlund, a Senior Vice President for Bible Publishing at Crossway, asked a variety of distinguished Bible scholars, pastors, and theologians to summarize the story of the Bible in a single sentence. Here are some of their responses:

***Mark Dever***

God has made promises to bring His people to Himself and He is fulfilling them all through Christ.

***Kevin DeYoung***

A holy God sends his righteous Son to die for unrighteous sinners so we can be holy and live happily with God forever.

***John Frame***

God glorifies himself in the redemption of sinners.

***David Helm***

Jesus is the promised Savior-King.

***Andreas Kostenberger***

“God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

***George Robertson***

The Bible is the record of God’s promise of and deliverance through Jesus Christ.

What about you? How would you summarize the message of the Bible in a single sentence?

## **ACTING WISELY: RAISING BIBLE-LOVING CHILDREN**

God has decided to reveal His character, priorities, and design to humans through the Bible. That’s why it’s important that we not only study it ourselves, but also share it with our children.

Here are some practical tips for raising Bible-loving children:

- **Find an Appropriate Bible.** Depending on the age, maturity, and development of your child, some Bibles are more appropriate or exciting than others. Perhaps your child would enjoy an illustrated Bible? Or maybe they're ready for a study Bible with notes? Take a trip with your child to a bookstore and enjoy selecting a Bible they'll love. This will help them see that the Bible is a special book worth treasuring.
- **Create a Plan.** Children thrive on structure. Help them think about when and how they will read their Bible. Will they read their Bible in the morning or in the evening? Will they read a few verses? A chapter? Or will they follow a Bible-reading plan? (For help finding a Bible-reading plan for children, see your Children's Ministries pastor.) As the old adage goes: "Failing to plan is planning to fail." Without a manageable, realistic Bible-reading plan, your child will find it difficult to engage God's Word.
- **Ask Them Questions.** Though it might not always seem like it, children flourish when their parents engage them with questions and conversation. Ask them questions about their Bible reading: What are you learning? Was anything confusing? What did you like about what you read? Don't think of questions as a way to quiz or drill down on your child, but as a way to engage them in conversation.
- **Set an Example.** It will be hard for a child to fall in love with their Bible if they see that their parent doesn't love theirs. We believe parents are the primary nurturers of their child's faith. The best way to raise a child who loves their Bible is to let your child see you use and love yours.

## MOVING FORWARD: LIVING THE STORY

Studying the Bible doesn't just change what we think, it changes what we do.

The Bible shows us God's design for human flourishing, Christ's love for all people, the Holy Spirit's power to carry out God's purposes, and our ultimate hope of living with God in His restored world. It's a wonderful and remarkable text.

As we engage Scripture, we must remember that it helps us to live well in all of life. Be it through biblical narratives, poetry, wisdom, or instruction, the Bible has much to say for how we live and move and work in the world God made.

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

1. Do you have a favorite book of the Bible or a favorite verse of the Bible? What is it? Why?
2. What does your engagement with the Bible look like? Regular? Irregular? Hasty? Deliberate?
3. What is the last thing God taught you through His Word?
4. How has the Bible changed the way you think about something, or the way you responded to someone?
5. When you think of your vocation, what Bible passages come to your mind?
6. What book of the Bible do you want to study next?





# LOVES THE CHURCH

A DISCIPLE WHO'S READY FOR MONDAY LOVES THE CHURCH, PRIORITIZING THE FAMILY OF GOD



Followers of Jesus have a true home. It's called the local church.

The local church, as God designed it, is a place where relationships are formed, learning occurs, sin is challenged, formation is facilitated, and mission is empowered. It's a place to belong. A place to grow. And a place to serve.

It's the hope of the world.

A maturing disciple commits to the local church and contributes to its growth and influence. This means a disciple participates in Sunday worship by attending, learning, serving, and inviting others. They submit to the direction of the church body and its leadership and know how their natural and spiritual gifts contribute to God's people. They give financial, verbal, and prayerful support to the local church, and invite their church family into their Monday mission. Maturing disciples see the vital work of the church as something that happens on Sunday and on Monday—in the home, on the job, with their community group, friends, co-workers, and neighbors.

## LOOKING BACK: EXAMINING YOUR CHURCH HISTORY

Jesus loves His church. He launched it, after all. And He continues to build, sustain, shape, guide, and cherish His church. However, local churches can be messy and broken places.

Even though churches are tangible expressions of the family of Christ on earth, they're made up of sinful people who are still "under construction," so to speak. That's why it's important for us to love the local church, but also to be honest about our experience with church—naming ways our churches have influenced us positively, and identifying areas that in our lives that might require extra attention or patience in light of our previous church experience.

The following questions are crafted to help you reflect upon your experience of church.

1. What was the first church you ever attended?
2. What do you remember from that experience? How did it shape your understanding of what it means to be part of a church?
3. What's a church-related memory that brings you great joy? Why?
4. What's a church-related memory that's more difficult to think about? Why?
5. What do you appreciate about Christ Community?
6. Where would you like to see our church grow?
7. How can you help our church family become a church that's ready for Monday? The kind of church that follows Jesus in all of life?

## CHURCH IS SUPERNATURAL

One of the most beautiful things about the church is the common identity that comes from our shared love. Simply put, churches are formed when people who love, believe, and cling to Jesus with their whole hearts come together. This makes church unique.

Indeed, churches bring together people from all walks of life—people with various socioeconomic statuses, from diverse ethnicities, with different genders—because of their common commitment to Jesus Christ. This is beautiful.

What is even more remarkable, however, is that Jesus did not leave His church after forming His church. He didn't bring a bunch of folks together, and then invite them to figure out how life together ought to look all on their own. He actually promised to be with His church. This means the church is, in a very real sense, supernatural.

Of course, we can carry out the tasks required to make church “work.” We can schedule services, rehearse songs, sign up to serve, and write sermons. But we can't change people's hearts, no matter how much we desire or try. We can't force people encounter God. We can't manipulate people into true conviction and heart change. We can't manufacture a family on mission. The only explanation for all of this is that Jesus is still active in His church by His Spirit, supernaturally.

When Jesus was on earth, He told his disciples that He had to go. However, He said that His church would not be alone for long, because He'd be sending another advocate to us, His Spirit (John 14:15-21). God's Spirit has come. And now, every time we gather together as one body, Jesus is present by His Spirit.

Do you believe that?

Jesus said in Matthew 18:20, “For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.” The church is not magnificent because of its coffee, donut holes, facilities, or programming. The church is magnificent because of the One who gathers it together and shows up in its midst.

This is how the church becomes a community where dry bones are given rivers of life. This is how hearts of stone are renewed to hearts of flesh. This is how people who were once dead are given life. It's because of Jesus' presence that people who feel like they don't belong find belonging. All of this is possible because the presence of Jesus through His Spirit helps us gather together and grow together.

## FINDING ENCOURAGEMENT: STORIES FROM OUR CHURCH

From the very beginning, Christ Community has been committed to being “a caring family of multiplying disciples, influencing our community and world for Jesus Christ.” While we’re far from perfect, God has been kind to us. He has formed us into a community where relationships are deepened, hearts are transformed, and missional fruit is observable.

We’re often encouraged by the stories of those who’ve come to call our church home. Our prayer is that these two stories will encourage you as you continue to consider what it looks like for you to love the local church, prioritizing the family of God.

### ***Love Through Ups and Downs***

“I remember the night well. We were sitting around the living room in the home of one of our community group families, and I realized we were having a conversation in much the same way I would engage with my biological siblings. There was a relaxed atmosphere and level of vulnerability that had not been present to the degree I experienced that evening. As I sat there, I literally felt my body and mind relax as I settled into the interactions and thought, “This group is family for me!”

My community group has been a tremendous place of connection, support, encouragement, challenge, fun, and care, but it didn’t just happen that way. In order to create the sense of family that I enjoy and appreciate so much, individuals who were once strangers had to be willing to create space in their lives for one another. We also had to make the choice to trust and be vulnerable with each other, and to honor one another’s vulnerability. Finally, we had to make the choice to continue investing in one another, and allowing the others to invest in us, even when the interactions were a little messy or uncomfortable.

I am grateful for Christ Community for many reasons, but especially because I have had this experience of family in a variety of contexts in this church. Our church is not perfect because the people in it are not perfect. However, I have experienced many people seeking to love and serve each other well.

Fred Rogers is quoted as saying, ‘Love doesn’t mean a state of perfect caring. To love someone is to strive to accept that person exactly the way he or she is, right here and now—and to go on caring through joyful times and through times that may bring us pain.’ I have been blessed to find people at Christ Community who embody this on a consistent basis!”

- *Danna Dahl*

### ***Church Is a Gift***

“Sometimes I wonder if my whole life is really just a journey of learning to love well. Not just learning how to love others, which is certainly important, but also how to accept love. Like many, I have experienced disappointment and pain within the church community. It would be easy to pull away and nurse those wounds. I’m sure at times I have. But I don’t believe that is what we are called to do. Christ emphasizes that it is essential that we love God and love others.

So simple and so very hard.

Learning to love well is a process. I long for community and connection with others and at times pull away from that very thing. I currently live very far from my family. As a single parent to three kids, this is sometimes overwhelming and lonely. I am often awed at God’s gentleness in reminding me of the local ‘family’ he has provided. Whether through a quick text reminding me that I am not alone or people showing up with meals for my family when I was very sick, I have experienced God’s love and provision through his people. I think this must be the core. We have such significant power to heal or wound. In the same way that the pain I’ve experienced has come through people, so has deep, grace-filled love.

There is great power in showing up and being present. This is how the process of becoming love unfolds, in learning to journey together. These are the hallowed spaces where we engage in love as action. As family, this is often messy, awkward, and even unsure. And it is always imperfect. And, ironically, I think that is why I choose to embrace it. God doesn’t ask for perfection, he asks for authenticity and humility. He reminds me I am not alone and tells me to remind others of the same.

As I lean into embracing Christ’s great command to love, I am so thankful for the gift of this family. A place I don’t feel that I need to have it all together or look a certain way. A place where all of my awkwardness and contradiction can be embraced, challenged, and, above all, loved. A place I can both ask for and offer help. I know it’s only the smallest peek, but I believe that loving one another in our homes, neighborhoods, businesses, and church families is a glimpse into our eternal belonging in God’s kingdom.

- *Rebecca Wood*

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

1. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of church?
2. Why do you think Jesus established the church?
3. How has a local church helped you persevere in a difficult circumstance? What did that church do well during that season?
4. How did you first come to be involved in a local church? (Did someone invite you? Offer to bring you? etc.) What **specifically** made you continue engaging that church after your first visit?
5. If you were to invite someone to our church, what would you say? What do you think is the most appealing aspect of our church to those who might consider visiting?
6. What is the greatest obstacle that prevents you from being as invested as you might like to be in church?





# GIVES THEMSELVES AWAY

A DISCIPLE WHO'S READY FOR MONDAY SEEKS THE GOOD OF THE CITY, GIVING THEMSELVES AWAY



We live in the wealthiest nation in the history of the world, yet somehow find ourselves restless and unsatisfied. Even in our immense material blessing, we want more and more.

Perhaps our restlessness isn't rooted in what we don't have, but in what we don't give. Maybe, just maybe, our lack of generosity fuels our lack of satisfaction.

Those who follow Jesus recognize that generosity isn't just a command God gives, it's who God is. Our God is a giver, and He invites His people to do the same.

A maturing disciple lives a life of service as a thank-you for the abundant grace of God. This means a disciple gives generously of their time, their talent, and their treasure, and shows hospitality to all people without prejudice.

A disciple also mentors others. They create and innovate, looking for insights for the common good. They cooperate and integrate well with others in their workplaces, schools, and communities.

## BIBLE STUDY: GIVING SACRIFICIALLY

Jesus looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the offering box, and he saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. And he said, "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

*Luke 21:1-4 (ESV)*

Jesus upholds a poor widow as the paradigm of sacrificial generosity. This should encourage us all. Regardless of our resources, we are each able to leverage what has been entrusted to us for the good of others and for the mission of God.

### QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. Read Luke 20:45-47. How does this passage give helpful context to what Jesus says in Luke 21:1-4?
2. Whom does Jesus identify in this passage? Underline, circle, and highlight key words and phrases that specify the various people whom Jesus is addressing.
3. What do you think this passage meant to the original audience? How would they have understood it?
4. What does this passage help us understand about living as people who give ourselves away?

5. Given what this text would have meant to those who first heard and received it, how would you apply this text to our day?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. As a result of going through these questions, did you see the passage in a new way? What did you learn?

## **TAKING ACTION: MAKING A PLAN FOR GENEROSITY**

Generosity doesn't happen by accident. Without a plan to be generous, the odds are good that you won't give yourself away for the good of others. This is why it's important to make a plan to volunteer, to serve, to help and to host others. It's also important to make a plan for your finances. Plans for our money are called budgets. Do you have one?

The first step to effective budgeting is gaining an accurate assessment of your current income and expenses. In other words, you must be honest about how much money you bring in each month, as well as how and where you spend your money, if you're going to make a successful generosity plan.

Take a look at your credit card statement from this past month or at receipts you've saved. Try to classify your spending in the following categories:

**Giving** - Regular Church Giving, Charitable Donations, Missions Support, etc.

**Housing** - Rent, Mortgage, Electricity, Gas, Internet, Water/Sewer, etc.

**Food & Groceries** - Food, Household Items, Personal Care, Pet Care, Prescriptions, etc.

**Lifestyle** - Clothing, Restaurants, Cell Phone, Recreation, Gifts, Subscriptions, Books, Movies, etc.

**Transportation** - Car Payment, Gas, Insurance, Vehicle Maintenance, Bus Fare, etc.

**Savings** - Emergency Fund, Retirement, Goals, etc.

**Debt** - Student Loans, Credit Card Debt, etc.

## FOR REFLECTION

- How much are you spending in each category?
- Does the amount you spend in any category surprise you?
- Is there a category in which you'd like to increase spending?  
A category in which you'd like to decrease spending?
- When you consider your finances, do you feel optimism? Anxiety? Nervousness? Excitement?
- Generosity is only enabled with a plan. If you'd like to dive deeper into financial best practices, consider joining a Financial Peace University course. Classes are offered at Christ Community and at other venues around the city. To learn more visit [DaveRamsey.com/FPU](http://DaveRamsey.com/FPU)

## THINKING DEEPLY: INVESTING YOUR TIME AND YOUR TALENT

Jesus' followers aren't merely called to financial generosity. We're also invited to be generous with our time and talents. Take time to reflect on your calendar, your skills, and your abilities. How can you be generous with the other skills, abilities, experiences, and schedule God has given you?

- **Think about your personality.** Is it easy for you to connect with people? Are you a good listener? Are you able to recognize strengths in others? Do people walk away from you feeling more energized and renewed?

*Can you think of a way to generously steward the personality God's given you?*

- **Think about your skills.** Do you have a specialized skill that others value? Can you do something others find difficult? Are you a hard worker? Are you able to learn tasks quickly? Do you have physical strength, or patience, or problem-solving abilities?

*How might you leverage the skills God has grown in you for the good of others?*

- **Think about your time.** Do you have lots of free time? Do you rise early in the morning? Is there an afternoon you have off? Are you able to pray for extended periods of time? How do you spend your lunch break?

*How is God inviting you to be more generous with your time?*

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

1. Is it easiest for you to be generous with your time, your talent, or your treasure? Why?
2. What do you think prevents you from giving more of yourself away?
3. Think of your vocation. Are you retired? At home? In the office? In school? What does generosity look like in your context?
4. Are you aware of any needs at your church campus or in your community? Is there anywhere God is leading you to invest more?
5. When did you make your first budget? Did you enjoy the process? Why or why not?
6. How do you plan to celebrate any commitments you might make to increased generosity?





# SHARES THE GOSPEL IN WORD AND DEED

A DISCIPLE WHO'S READY FOR MONDAY SEEKS THE GOOD OF THE CITY, SHARING THE GOSPEL IN WORD AND DEED

There's no better news than the gospel. And followers of Jesus have been commissioned to share that news in what they say and do.

The gospel is the incredible announcement that God has taken loving action on humanity's behalf. God sent Himself as a perfect sacrifice for His people. Jesus Christ came to earth, died for human sin and rose again, defeating death. And those who trust Him are freed from the guilt, punishment, and condemnation of sin and are granted eternal life and joy. The gospel is the good news of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, which if you trust it, saves you from sin and gives you new life now and for eternity.

A maturing disciple works zealously and prayerfully so that all may come to a robust new life in Christ. This means a disciple shares their gospel-shaped story with others. They extend compassion to the marginalized and engage creation-care with an environmental sensitivity. They embody creativity in their integration of daily work and being on mission, and also support the ongoing mission of the church around the world.

## GETTING PRACTICAL: HOW TO SHARE YOUR FAITH

Before we dive deeper into how we might more effectively share the gospel in word and deed, we need to remember the mission of the church. The church has been called to two important areas of focus: Personal Transformation and Cultural Transformation.

Personal Transformation is what we typically think of as "saving souls," and Cultural Transformation is what we frequently describe as "meeting physical needs." A great irony is that most of Jesus' followers know they are to care about personal transformation, but don't engage it, while most of Jesus' followers are actively engaged in cultural transformation through their work, but aren't aware of it.

Throughout this workbook, we've sought to explore how our individual callings and vocations are part of the cultural transformation, or the renewal, of all things. Yet, we don't want to forget that the gospel and the mission of the church are also focused on personal transformation.

Therefore, we're going to spend some time thinking how we might speak about the good news of the gospel with more intentionality and clarity. Here are some helpful next steps as we seek to live out the mission of the church in all of life.

### **KNOW THE GOSPEL STORY**

We must begin by knowing the grand gospel story—the story of Creation, Fall, Redemption, and New Creation (Ought, Is, Can, Will). When we know this story fully, believe it deeply, and treasure it genuinely, it will naturally become something we love and want to share with others.

Think about that level of excitement you feel when you get to speak about your favorite music artist or your alma mater. That same type of passion comes through when we know, believe, and treasure the gospel story.

- Do you know *the* gospel story? Could you point someone towards specific Bible verses to help summarize the gospel story?
- Do you believe the gospel story fully? Or do you have doubts? What resources could you explore to help you with your doubts?
- Do you treasure the gospel story, or do you find it stale and unexciting? Why do you think that is?

### **KNOW YOUR GOSPEL STORY**

Once you know the gospel story, you must also take time to know your own story. How has the gospel story intersected with your life, reshaping dreams, challenging priorities, and bringing freedom? How are you following Jesus today? This can be an especially powerful tool because our culture values personal narrative. It is to our advantage to know our story well and to be ready to speak, as we receive opportunities, about God's intersection with our life.

- What are the major events or turning points in your gospel story?
- How would you describe your faith journey if you had 15 minutes with someone? Five minutes? One minute?
- What has God been teaching you recently that could be exciting and attractive to others?

## **KNOW OTHER PEOPLE'S STORIES**

Finally, if we're going to be successful in sharing the gospel with our words, we have to know the story of others. We need to be involved in people's lives, so that we might know how to apply the gospel to their unique needs, fears, challenges, questions, and pains.

- Who is in your life on a regular basis? Are you aware of their faith journey?
- What questions could you ask to become better acquainted with how the gospel might intersect with their experience?
- How can you continue to show them the love of Christ as you pray for opportunities to verbally share the good news of Christ?

## **AN ENCOURAGING SNAPSHOT: LEARNING FROM MISSION ADELANTE**

Mission Adelante, a dynamic ministry in Kansas City, KS, launched in September 2005. Alongside ten volunteers, Jarrett and Kristen Meek sought to bring the gospel in both word and deed to Latino immigrants in the KC metro area. The idea was simple: offering English language classes and organizing outreach Bible studies for children would help meet the physical and spiritual needs of the community.

After four months of English classes and tutoring, Mission Adelante celebrated the newly birthed faith of two friends who accepted Christ and joined the Mission Adelante house church.

Since that time, dozens of others have come to faith in Jesus through the advocacy, economic, evangelistic, and community-based efforts of Mission Adelante.

Mission Adelante is fueled by some core gospel beliefs:

*“We believe that God’s call to love our neighbor is at the heart of all His commands and finds a special expression in the way we extend hospitality, compassion, and friendship to people from other places. We see immigrants and refugees first and foremost through the lens of the incomparable love and grace of God through Jesus Christ.*

*The dual call of the Greatest Commandment and the Great Commission, to love my neighbor as myself and to make disciples of all nations, compels us to move quickly past cultural preferences, economics, and secular political discussions, to emphasizing the immense love of God for people from other places.*

*The repeated Biblical mandate to welcome the stranger and to care for widows, orphans, and immigrants calls our attention to the acute and particular needs newcomers face as they struggle to navigate a new language, a new culture, and an entirely new way of life in the challenging environment of urban America. Mission Adelante loves to welcome and walk with our new neighbors, to hear their stories, to share in their joys and struggles, and to invite them to follow Jesus with us as part of a new community. It’s a mission field in our own backyard!”*

## **GOING DEEPER: MEMORIZING GOSPEL VERSES**

The good news about Jesus is the story of Bible. It jumps off each page. However, some verses are particularly clear and helpful when it comes to presenting the gospel to others. We’ve collected some below. Perhaps you might memorize some of these verses in order to improve in your effectiveness of sharing the gospel.

“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” **Mark 10:45**

“But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” **Romans 5:8**

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” **Romans 6:23**

“For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” **2 Corinthians 5:21**

“The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.”  
**1 Timothy 1:15**

“In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation [*or, atoning sacrifice*] for our sins.” **1 John 4:10**

## **MOVING FORWARD: ENGAGING GOSPEL MINISTRY**

Followers of Jesus have tremendous news to share. And we've been called to share it consistently and courageously. May we all be committed to joining in the work God is doing in the world and to prayer.

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

1. What's the greatest difficulty you face when it comes to sharing your faith?
2. What have you found to be helpful in initiating gospel conversations with others?
3. Think of your vocation. How do you promote the gospel mission of cultural transformation through what you do every day?
4. When you think of your own faith story, what makes you thankful and happy to have met and embraced Jesus?
5. How do you plan to improve in your ability to share the gospel in word and deed?
6. Who is someone God might be directing you to pursue by praying and planning for a gospel conversation?





# WORKS DILIGENTLY FOR THE FLOURISHING OF ALL

A DISCIPLE WHO'S READY FOR MONDAY SEEKS  
THE GOOD OF THE CITY, WORKING DILIGENTLY  
FOR THE FLOURISHING OF ALL.



Following Jesus has always been about all of life. What we do with the majority of our time matters to God. In fact, where we spend most of our hours becomes, by definition, the primary place where we honor God and love our neighbor. Whether our days are spent in offices, outdoors, at home, in classrooms, or in front of a screen, the work we do—both paid and unpaid—is a key catalyst in our discipleship and mission.

A maturing disciple lives all of life as a seamless act of worship to God for the common good.

This means a disciple embraces work as an opportunity for spiritual formation. They know how their gifts are used outside the church, and see their work—both paid and unpaid—as one of the primary places where they love God and their neighbor. They contribute their best effort in every circumstance and are committed to continued growth in economic wisdom.

## BIBLE STUDY: LEADING LIVES OF WORSHIP

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

*Romans 12:1-2 (ESV)*





# FOUR WAYS TO FLIP THE SWITCH ON WORK AS WORSHIP

by Chris Chancey

The lunch room was the perfect place to fight.

My high school cafeteria only had a couple windows allowing sunlight in, so it depended heavily on the massive system of fluorescent bulbs that stretched across the length of the room. When the lights were off, it took ten minutes or more for the bulbs to warm back up enough to illuminate the vast space.

As an innocent bystander, I watched as an accomplice flipped the lights off, a loud commotion erupted from the center of the room, kids shouted, chairs toppled over, and, in the midst of it all, a faculty member flipped the lights on to no avail. Over the next several minutes, the room slowly illuminated. But by the time it was lit, the dispute was settled, the lunch money was stolen, and hooligans were calmly back in their seats.

This memory reminds me that flipping a switch does not always have immediate results.

Similarly, understanding God's command for us to use our skills and resources for his glory does not immediately transform our outlook on work.

Work may be written and preached about as if living your faith at, in, and through work is as easy as flipping a switch, but that's just not the case.

Like the teacher at my school who flipped the lights, once you grasp a theology of work you might expect to immediately see clearly and have a fresh perspective from which to approach the day's activities.

The truth is, "work as worship" is a mindset that must be cultivated over time.

I recently spent some time with a friend and mentor named Steve, a successful investment banker at one of the country's most prestigious investment banks. He actively engages in a work as worship mentality, or "workship," in his work.

I was curious how this outlook became the norm for Steve and how the rest of us might foster the same daily perspective. He shared with me some predictable yet practical steps.

### **START WITH PRAYER**

Steve never minded talking about his faith at work if the opportunity presented itself. But outside of being a nice guy, that was the extent of his workplace Christianity. Then, in 2008, in the depth of the financial crisis, Steve transitioned into a new role and was desperate to see God intervene.

“The recession was a horrific time to start a new job as an investment banker,” he said. “I knew the only way I would be successful is by daily asking God, according to Ephesians 2:10, to make me aware of the good works he has prepared for me to do.”

The first factor in cultivating a worship mindset is the daily petition for it.

Ask God to help you develop a vision by which you see every task or project as an opportunity to honor him. It may be days or months before you begin to notice the shift in how you process your work, but habitually and earnestly praying about this every day will help you adhere to Paul’s admonition in Romans 12:2: “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect” (ESV).

### **BE A SERVANT**

Steve began discovering ways he could serve those in his office. He realized several younger colleagues were coming to him seeking guidance and mentorship. He recognized investing in these young professionals was a means of worshipping God at work. In response, Steve intentionally created space for this mentorship on his calendar and even formed a monthly book club with young men in his office.

Once a work as worship mindset begins germinating, you’ll begin to notice many ways you can serve those around you. Showing the love of Christ by serving coworkers and customers is one of the most compelling means of honoring God with our work. When this servant heart is birthed out of a godly discernment in your workplace, you notice and take action in ways that confirm God is at work within you, and you uphold the words of Jesus in John 13:35: “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (ESV).

## **PURSUE EXCELLENCE**

Steve always believed his clients deserved nothing less than his best when it came time to sell their businesses. Through prayer and service, Steve began to sense he was honoring God in the pursuit of excellence for his clients.

This mentality earned him the right to speak truth into the lives of those around him. It earned him the right to share his faith with more conviction.

Steve told me a story about a time he sat down across from a coworker who was considering leaving the company for a role with a smaller firm. “Before giving my own advice, I just asked him if he had prayed about [it],” he recalled. “He told me he had not, which gave me an opportunity to share about some of the ways God has helped me make important decisions through prayer.”

Steve went on to say, “If you do your work with excellence, serve the client, and serve your colleagues, you’ll be surprised at the extent to which your views, even the counter-cultural ones, get a fair hearing.”

Working with excellence builds a reputation that points to Jesus. A career for the glory of God begins with cultivating a heart of worship in your work and recognizing he alone is our audience. May we live out Colossians 3:23: “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men” (ESV).

## **GET STARTED**

Understanding that God has called us to worship him in our work is only part of the process. Incorporating this theology of work into our lives requires intentionality.

A daily commitment to prayer and discernment, along with bringing your best effort to the table and faithfully serving those around you, will help you cultivate this workshop mindset over time, not overnight.

So go ahead and flip the switch. It may take some time for the bulbs to heat up.

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*Chancey, Chris. “Four Ways to Flip the Switch on Work as Worship.” Institute for Faith, Work & Economics, 21 April 2016, [tifwe.org/four-ways-to-flip-the-switch-on-work-as-worship/](http://tifwe.org/four-ways-to-flip-the-switch-on-work-as-worship/)*

## MAKING IT PERSONAL: A PRAYER FOR THE WORKPLACE

We're used to praying for many things—safety, health, wisdom—but not always our work. The prayer below has been crafted with Monday in mind. Perhaps you might use it as a guide to write a prayer of your own, a prayer rooted in your unique vocation and calling.

*Heavenly Father, in your divine and gracious providence you have placed me in this particular vocation and workplace. It is my heart's desire that I glorify you in and through my work today. May I do my work well, and may my mind be renewed as I meditate on the truths of your Word. Draw me near to you. Lord Jesus, let my workplace be a place of discipleship where I am learning from you as I work. As I walk in the power of the Holy Spirit, may the character qualities of Jesus be increasingly evident in my life. Use my life and my work to further your redemptive purposes in the world and to enhance the common good. Amen.*

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

1. Think about your upbringing. What were you taught about work? How was work discussed and presented?
2. Remembering that we define work primarily by **contribution**, not **compensation**, how would you describe your work right now?
3. How would those who are around you in your work (your co-workers, co-volunteers, children, classmates, etc.) describe you? Are you pleased with their assessment of you? Or are there things you wish you could change?
4. If work is a form of worship, how should the way you approach your work change?

5. What concrete steps are you taking to become a more fruitful worker? What concrete steps are you taking to contribute to the flourishing of others?
6. Is it difficult or easy for you to see how your work contributes to the common good? Why?
7. What has God been teaching you about Himself through the work you do every day?

## **MOVING FORWARD: IDENTIFYING FIVE TAKEAWAYS**

Over the past eight weeks, we've talked about what it means to be a Church for Monday. Specifically, we've examined how we might grow in our discipleship to Jesus, so that we might follow Him better in all of life.

What are five key ideas or practices you will take away from this series? List them below:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.







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an Evangelical Free Church

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