

beyond—

lifegroup guide

**NOW TO HIM WHO IS
ABLE TO DO FAR
MORE ABUNDANTLY
beyond ALL THAT WE
ASK OR THINK
ACCORDING TO
HIS POWER THAT
WORKS WITHIN US.
EPHESIANS 3:20**

BEYOND is for our entire church family to be inspired to live and give beyond ourselves. This journey will include a 6 week message series, LifeGroup experience, and daily devotionals. Together we hope to know God more deeply, and take the next steps so others may come to know God personally for the first time. We'll grow in our own relationship with God and build our faith as we look beyond where we are to the place He's calling us to go.

to our GraceLife Family

Ramona and I are so honored to be part of this church family. We are truly humbled that God has given us the privilege of leadership in His Kingdom to pastor GraceLife. It began with a vision, as we lived in another state and had another career. God put it on our hearts to return to my home state to help start a church that would specifically tear down the racial and economic barriers that were so prominently fostered here for generations.

It is amazing to see what God has done since then! From just four families in our living room, to a multi-ethnic, multi-generational church of over 2,000 worshipping together every weekend. GraceLife is truly reaching all aspects of this community. However, that reach has a limit if we don't make a change.

BEYOND is designed to help us make that change--specifically to make more room in order to reach more people. Yes, it will require sacrifice from each of us. It will take all of us coming together to be part of what God wants to do next, both in and through GraceLife.

Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly *BEYOND* what we can imagine! I hope you're as excited as I am to see what God will do through our church.



Pastor Jimmy Currence

Table of Contents

08	How to Use This Guide	
10	Our Vision	
12	Your Opportunity	
15	Key Dates & Events	
18	WEEK 1	God's Vision
26	WEEK 2	Surrender
46	WEEK 3	Hearing God's Voice
66	WEEK 4	Obeying God's Call
86	WEEK 5	Our God Does Miracles
104	WEEK 6	Leaving A Legacy

How to Use This Guide

The LifeGroup Guide has everything you need to go on the journey.

Weekly Message Notes

Each week begins with blank pages to take notes during the weekend messages. Use this space to jot down anything God speaks to you during the message series.

LifeGroup Guide & Discussion Questions

Next, you'll find scripture and discussion questions you'll use at your LifeGroup during the week. Be sure to bring your Guide with you to your LifeGroup.

Daily Devotional

Finally, you'll find the devotional we'll all read together as a church over five weeks. The devotional takes place five days a week, Monday through Friday, beginning February 12. Spend a few minutes reflecting on the questions at the end of each day. There is a place where you can write down anything God is saying to you.



Stories Change Lives

Stories are a reminder of the incredible things God is continually doing through our church. They give us hope while also inspiring and encouraging us as we are walking through life. Be sure to let us know what God speaks to you during *BEYOND*.

Share your thoughts and stories with us at gracelife.church/shareyourstory.

Our Vision

GraceLife Church exists to help people Know God, Find Life, Make A Difference, and Reach Our World.

GraceLife started as 4 families meeting together in a living room. In 2018, we moved into our current location on Clemson Rd. Since then, we have seen God use GraceLife Church as a beacon of light in the community to reach people.

Our current space is full, but heaven is not and at GraceLife our hope is to see as many people as possible transferred from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of Heaven. Our weekend service attendance is hitting over 2,000, and this is certainly cause for celebration. However, that means you may have a seat, but someone who has yet to make Jesus their King does not.

Every time we have opened seats, God has filled them. Together we want to make room for others to join us in all that God is doing at GraceLife Church!

Since moving into our current building in 2018:



1,020

People have made Jesus their King.



272

People have publicly declared Jesus is their King through water baptism.



1,198

People took next steps to getting involved through First Step.



2,000

average weekend service attendance.

Expansion Overview

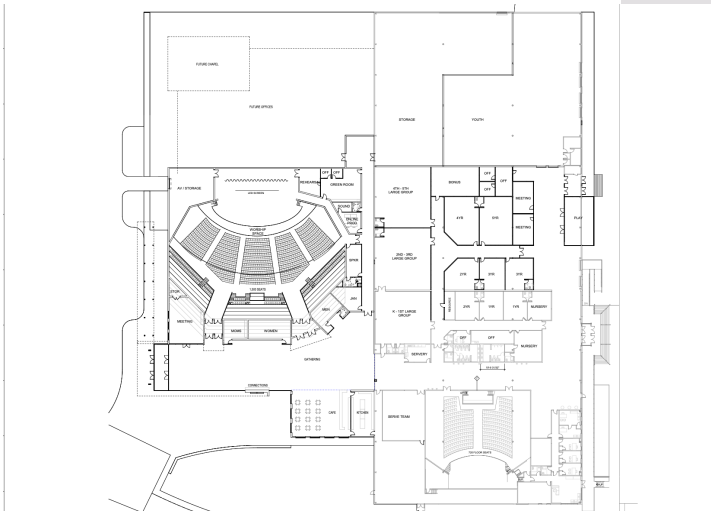
August 2023 marked 5 years since we moved into our first permanent home. We are at capacity, but there are still adults, students, and kids who need Jesus and a family like GraceLife. Saying “we’re full” is just not an option. We must expand to create more space to reach more people.

To continue caring for every person who walks in the doors at GraceLife, our physical footprint needs to expand—including a new Worship Center, NextGen space, and the outdoor gathering space.

BEYOND will begin in February of 2024 with a 3-year giving period with the goal of raising \$6 million to reach the financing threshold for the project.

- Build a new Worship Center with 1,500 seats
- Expand NextGen Space
- Expand the Lobby & Outdoor Space

TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$12-16M (approx.)



Your Opportunity

The **BEYOND** campaign is a 3-year journey designed to impact our region for Christ. We recognize this is a God-sized task far beyond the ability of any one person. Reaching our need of \$6 million will take sacrifices from all of us. What you are holding in your hand is a challenge to be prayerfully and financially involved in the vision of the **BEYOND** campaign.

You have the opportunity to make a pledge commitment, over and above your regular tithes.

Commitment cards are available to help you do so. To help you calculate your pledge amount, you can use the worksheet on the next page.

If you're feeling a little fearful, pray and ask God to help overcome your fear and to help you embrace the vision. As you begin to pray about how much God might want you to give, we encourage you to embrace this as a spiritual journey with God. We believe that God is going to bless you above and beyond your wildest expectations even as you step out in faith with us into the future of our church family.

**THIS WORKSHEET SHOWS THE IMPACT
YOUR GIFT CAN HAVE OVER 3 YEARS**

TOTAL GIFT*	ANNUAL	MONTHLY	WEEKLY
\$1,000,000	\$333,333	\$27,778	\$6,410
\$750,000	\$250,000	\$20,833	\$4,808
\$500,000	\$166,667	\$13,889	\$3,205
\$250,000	\$83,333	\$6,944	\$1,603
\$100,000	\$33,333	\$2,778	\$641
\$75,000	\$25,000	\$2,083	\$481
\$50,000	\$16,667	\$1,389	\$321
\$25,000	\$8,333	\$694	\$160
\$10,000	\$3,333	\$278	\$64
\$5,000	\$1,667	\$139	\$32
\$2,500	\$833	\$69	\$16
\$1,000	\$333	\$28	\$6

**THREE (3) ANNUAL TOTAL GIFTS THROUGH FEBRUARY 2025.
CALCULATION APPROXIMATIONS BASED ON 36 MONTHS (156 WEEKS)*



Making Room to Reach People

Key Dates & Events



FEBRUARY 1 & 4

***BEYOND* SERIES WEEK 1
+ SMALL GROUPS KICK-OFF**

FEBRUARY 8 & 11

***BEYOND* SERIES WEEK 2**

FEBRUARY 15 & 18

***BEYOND* SERIES WEEK 3**

FEBRUARY 22 & 25

***BEYOND* SERIES WEEK 4**

FEBRUARY 29 & MARCH 3

***BEYOND* SERIES WEEK 5
+ COMMITMENT WEEKEND**

MARCH 7 & 10

***BEYOND* SERIES WEEK 6
+ GOING BEYOND OFFERING**



Week One

GOD'S VISION

LifeGroup Guide

KEY VERSE

“Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay.”

HABAKKUK 2:2-3

Vision is a clear picture of a preferable future. God has a vision for each of our lives that He wants to make clear to us. Our ability to live in God’s vision for our lives is dependent upon us seeing that vision. God will reveal it to us as we turn our hearts toward Him, and truly desire to know and obey His will.

How do I know if my vision is from God?

1 – God’s vision for my life is always bigger than me.

Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

GENESIS 12:1-3

God’s dream for Abraham (Abram) was bigger than him and would ultimately impact the whole world. We are created to be a part of something that is larger than ourselves.

Each of our uniquely designed lives is intended to be lived out in the context of something bigger than just us. We are created in such a way that each of our specific purposes can only be realized in the larger context of the body of Christ.

God's vision for us also requires that He is able to move through our lives in powerful ways as we exercise our faith. Ephesians 3:20 says, *"Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us."*

If you are able to do it with hard work and good planning alone, you may not be looking at the whole vision.

A God-Sized Vision requires us to be dependent on the Lord. Think about Abraham. He was old and his wife Sarah was barren, but the Lord called him "father of many nations." It could only happen if Abraham was dependent on the Lord. Abraham had no ability to accomplish this vision in his own strength. There will be elements of God's vision for you that will depend completely upon God's supernatural, miraculous intervention.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Describe what you think God's vision is for your life?

Where will you be required to depend on God to accomplish this vision?

2—God's vision for my life is not just for me.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." **JOHN 3:16**

God's vision is about redeeming people out of the Kingdom of Darkness and transferring them into the Kingdom of God. His vision is about changing people's eternal destinies.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

If this vision for your life comes to pass, how will it impact others for the Kingdom of God?

3—God's vision for my life is compelling.

The definition of compelling is “evoking interest, attention, or admiration in a powerfully irresistible way.”

God's vision for your life grabs at your heart. It draws you in. It captivates you. It makes you restless until it becomes reality. You won't be able to let it go.

In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, “So shall your offspring be.”

ROMANS 4:18

Abraham lived with the vision that he would become the father of many nations. His vision was not just bigger than himself, it was inspiring and meaningful to others. God reiterated this vision to Abraham's son Isaac in Genesis 26. His descendants continued to live for this vision. Four generations after God spoke to Abraham, He used Abraham's great grandson, Joseph, to save the world from a devastating famine. And a couple thousand years after that, God used Abraham's descendant – Jesus – to save the world for all of eternity.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What plans or priorities in your life may need to be adjusted to accomplish God's vision for your life?

What part of the vision for your life do you think is compelling?

PRAYER

PRAY THAT GOD WOULD HELP YOU SEE HIS VISION FOR YOUR LIFE AND THE NEXT STEPS TO TAKE.

PRAY THAT GOD WOULD PREPARE YOU FOR THE FUTURE AS YOU WALK IN THE VISION HE HAS FOR YOUR LIFE.

PRAY FOR ANYONE IN YOUR GROUP WHO FEELS LIKE THEY ARE STRUGGLING TO SEE GOD'S VISION FOR THEIR LIVES.

PRAY THAT WE WOULD BE EXCITED & UNIFIED ABOUT GOD'S VISION FOR OUR GRACELIFE CHURCH FAMILY DURING THE ***BEYOND*** SERIES.

Week Two

SURRENDER

LifeGroup Guide

KEY SCRIPTURE

*Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a **living sacrifice**, holy and pleasing to God—**this is your true and proper worship**.*

ROMANS 12:1 (NIV)

The Bible is very clear in this passage. We are to continually offer our lives as a sacrifice to God. We are to live a life of sacrifice, or in other words, a life surrendered to God. Interestingly, in this passage Paul is showing us that we are not just a sacrifice, but a living sacrifice. The funny thing about a living sacrifice is it has a tendency to crawl off the altar. The life of surrender we live as Christians is a continual process - not a one-time action. We have to come back to it each day, each week, each year. Yes, there is an initial surrender when we come to Christ. However, there is a re-surrendering over and over and over.

The common misconception is that worship means to sing a song or visit a church. But worship is much more than that. When you worship something, you give it great respect, honor, and devotion. Whatever or whoever is first in your life IS the object of your worship.

After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac.

When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. So Abraham called the name of that place, "The Lord will provide"; as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided."

GENESIS 22:1-4, 9-14

1. God wants to be first.

This is a question of PRIORITY.

When something is first, that normally means it is important. What's important in your life? What or who is first in your life?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Life gets busy and there are always more things to do. But what gets cut first when life is busy? Is it extra time with friends? Is it the extra hours you spend at work? Is it the extracurricular activities? Or is it your time with God?

Is He first in your time? Your schedule?

Science tells us that humans have approximately 60,000 thoughts every day. Is God in those thoughts? Is He in your perspective when you look at the world?

Is He first in your thinking?

The relationships we have with people around us impact our life greatly. Are you in a relationship the Lord told you not to be in? Are you still hanging out with that group of friends that are not godly?

Is He first in your relationships?

Money plays a factor in the way we live our lives. When money is tight what budget line is the first to go? Your tithe? Your generosity?

Is He first in your budget?

2. God wants to be God.

This is a question of AUTHORITY.

Who is in charge, God or you? How often do you do what God says to do despite what you want? Did you forgive even when you did not want to? Did you give even though you wanted to keep it? Did you go to church on Sunday morning even though you wanted to sleep in? Did you do something for someone else even though you wanted to do it for yourself? The answer will tell you who is the authority in your life.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

Where do you need to do what God has called you to and not what you want to do?

3. God wants our hearts.

This is a question of DEVOTION.

What or who is your life dedicated to? When you are dedicated to something, you are loyal to it. Often, you don't know the depth of your loyalty until it is challenged. Look at Abraham. In Genesis 22, God asked him to sacrifice his son. This was his biggest challenge yet. But after all that Abraham had been through, God had his heart. He knew that God would provide.

Abraham said, "God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son."

GENESIS 22:8

DISCUSSION QUESTION

Have you ever had an experience where your loyalty and devotion were tested? Were you surprised by your response?

Is there anything or anyone keeping you from giving your whole heart to God?

After today's discussion, is there anything you think God may be asking you to surrender to him?

PRAYER

PRAY THAT YOU WOULD BE ABLE TO PUT GOD FIRST
IN YOUR LIFE.

PRAY FOR STRENGTH TO ALLOW GOD TO BE THE
HIGHEST AUTHORITY IN YOUR LIFE.

PRAY FOR YOUR HEART TO BE DEVOTED TO GOD
AND NOTHING ELSE.

PRAY THAT YOU & EVERYONE IN YOUR GROUP
WOULD BE ABLE TO SURRENDER FULLY TO GOD.

Monday

A REVOLUTIONARY LIFE

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

ROMANS 12:1-2 (NIV)

What a difference it would make if we only understood the abundant life God desires us to experience! We were made in God's image. As children of the Creator, we are heirs to everything He owns: "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it" (Psalm 24:1).

God desires the best for His children. All He requires for the greatest, most wonderful life is to surrender to Him. He expects obedience. He wants us to present ourselves as living sacrifices. He wants us to avoid the influence of the world. He wants us to be constantly renewed—to resurrender daily. Then we can know God's "good, pleasing and perfect will."

Best of all, He has already provided everything we need for a revolutionary life: "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples" (John 15:7-8).

He wants to fellowship intimately with us. He wants us to participate in His divine nature and enjoy all of His creation: "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (John 10:10). You can have a full, abundant, revolutionary life!

During these next weeks, get ready for a new life. Resurrender yourself to Him. Put God to the test and see how He will perform His Word in your life, how He will turn your heart's desires into realities. Dwight L. Moody, one of history's greatest pastors and Bible teachers, often said, "The world has yet to see what God will do with and through and in and by the man who is fully consecrated to Him." May we join those who seek to be that committed to the Lord Jesus.

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME?

HOW CAN I APPLY IT?

TALK TO GOD ABOUT IT.

WHAT'S GOD DOING IN YOUR LIFE THROUGH BEYOND? SHARE YOUR STORY
WITH US AT: WWW.GRACELIFE.CHURCH/SHAREYOURSTORY.

Tuesday

RESURRENDERING SELF

But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"

GENESIS 3:9

"Where are you?" That is not the question we want to hear, no matter where we are in life, for it requires us to take stock of ourselves and to get honest about the situation in which we find ourselves. We don't want to deal with where we are. We mostly want to find a quick, pain-free escape out of the challenges we face.

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they hid from Him. The Lord wanted to give them His best, but they rejected it. Yet even in the midst of their turmoil, disobedience and guilt, He wanted to show them the way back to fellowship with Him.

It is the same today. Christ came for this reason: "For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him" (John 3:17). "Adam—where are you?" God asked that question to get Adam to be honest about his dire situation. Each of us must answer this same question, taking stock of where we are. This is a prerequisite to rise above your challenges and move to a new level.

You cannot experience a revolution in your walk with God until you answer the question about where you are right now. The prodigal son, according to Luke 15:17, "came to his senses" before he could start the journey home. That is the first step toward any true solution. Likewise, Jesus made this truth abundantly clear when he said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick" (Luke 5:31).

"Where are you?" You will never move into a more exciting walk with God until you look up into the face of God, recognizing your ever-present need for His help, and saying, "I am here, Lord. Be merciful to me, a sinner."

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Wednesday

RESURRENDERING RELATIONSHIPS

Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

COLOSSIANS 3:11

The Word of God is a textbook on relationships. At the heart of every page is the message of reconciliation. The life of Jesus exemplified this life, and we, as believers, must be involved in the ministry of building strong, positive relationships.

The apostle Paul understood this. Writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he touched on four major areas that have traditionally separated people: race (Greek or Jew), religion (circumcised or uncircumcised), culture (barbarian or Scythian) and economy (slave or free).

The answer to every challenge in society is Jesus Christ living through us.

A life of reconciliation starts in the heart. The primary issue is not race, religion, culture or economic standing. At the cross of Jesus Christ, all of us stand guilty. That is why Calvary stands for all as a means of reconciliation with God and each other.

This must certainly apply to everything we do as members of the same family: “Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers” (Galatians 6:10). Likewise, the ministry of reconciliation must extend to those outside the family. The cross of Jesus Christ does not belong to believers alone. We are called to share the Gospel with those around us through everything we do.

Resurrender your relationships today. Build bridges. Live your life as if you are the only Bible some people will ever read.

Moving into a new level with Jesus Christ begins when you start walking in the footsteps of the one whose Name we bear.

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Thursday

INTIMACY WITH GOD

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.

MARK 12:30

God desires close fellowship with you. He wants intimacy, so much so that He was willing to sacrifice His only begotten Son for your sake.

We are commanded to love God with all our soul. We are to love Him with all our emotions and will. He wants everything. To love God with all your heart means with every atom of your being. This is what God desires. He wants you to love Him supremely and with everything that is within you.

When you love Him with all your strength and when you seek the Lord with your whole heart, you will find Him: *“I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me”* (Proverbs 8:17).

You can know the amazing, intimate fellowship with Christ, but it requires spending time with Him. Ephesians 3:14-19 tells us how:

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Believers must be rooted and grounded through intimacy with God. Deep fellowship requires seeking to know Him more and more.

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME?

HOW CAN I APPLY IT?

TALK TO GOD ABOUT IT.

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Friday

VICTORY THROUGH SURRENDER

And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

1 JOHN 3:23-24

An instrument must be tuned before it is played. A violinist, for example, tunes the A string to the international pitch, or A-440. This means that the A above middle C is vibrating 440 times per second. Once the A is tuned, all the other strings can be adjusted to play harmoniously together. Otherwise, the result would be a cacophony of chaos.

Violinists know they must tune the strings often, knowing that an accidental bump or simply playing the instrument can result in enough variation to cause discord. Likewise, it is easy to get out of tune as humans. Christ is the standard. If we are not in a right relationship with Him, we cannot get along with others. We either vibrate in harmony with Him, or we slide into dissonance.

How do we stay in tune with Him? Obedience! Resurrender daily. We must allow Him to tune us to His perfect pitch. The Bible is very clear on this: *“And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight”* (1 John 3:22).

Jesus Christ remains the centerpiece of history, the most powerful force known to mankind. Massive armies have come and gone, powerful political systems have risen and fallen, all-powerful dictators and kings have crumbled to dust, yet all of them combined have never impacted the world as did Jesus Christ the Savior. He continues to change hearts and lives today. And because He died on the cross in shame, the Word of God declares that one day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that He is Lord. We can do this now by surrendering to Him over and over, rather than staying on our own discordant pitch.

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the 1990s, the number of publications on the topic of the effects of the environment on human health has increased steadily. This is not surprising, given the fact that the environmental health movement has become a major force in public health policy. The environmental health movement has been defined as a movement that seeks to improve human health by reducing exposure to environmental pollutants (Baker and Gochman 1992).

The environmental health movement has been successful in many areas, including the regulation of hazardous waste, the control of air pollution, and the reduction of lead in gasoline. However, the movement has also been criticized for being too narrow in its focus, focusing only on the physical environment and ignoring the social and economic factors that also affect human health. This paper will discuss the environmental health movement and its impact on public health policy, and will also discuss the need for a more comprehensive approach to environmental health.

2. Environmental health

The environmental health movement is a movement that seeks to improve human health by reducing exposure to environmental pollutants. The movement has been successful in many areas, including the regulation of hazardous waste, the control of air pollution, and the reduction of lead in gasoline. However, the movement has also been criticized for being too narrow in its focus, focusing only on the physical environment and ignoring the social and economic factors that also affect human health. This paper will discuss the environmental health movement and its impact on public health policy, and will also discuss the need for a more comprehensive approach to environmental health.

3. The environmental health movement

The environmental health movement is a movement that seeks to improve human health by reducing exposure to environmental pollutants. The movement has been successful in many areas, including the regulation of hazardous waste, the control of air pollution, and the reduction of lead in gasoline. However, the movement has also been criticized for being too narrow in its focus, focusing only on the physical environment and ignoring the social and economic factors that also affect human health. This paper will discuss the environmental health movement and its impact on public health policy, and will also discuss the need for a more comprehensive approach to environmental health.

4. Public health policy

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5. Conclusion

The environmental health movement has been successful in many areas, including the regulation of hazardous waste, the control of air pollution, and the reduction of lead in gasoline. However, the movement has also been criticized for being too narrow in its focus, focusing only on the physical environment and ignoring the social and economic factors that also affect human health. This paper will discuss the environmental health movement and its impact on public health policy, and will also discuss the need for a more comprehensive approach to environmental health.

Week Three



HEARING GOD'S VOICE

LifeGroup Guide

KEY SCRIPTURE

And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.

ISAIAH 30:21

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

JOHN 10:27

Before we can do something, we have to know clearly what we're supposed to do. If we don't know what we're supposed to do, then we can't do it. This is also true in our relationship with God. Before we can obey God, we must know what He's telling us to do. Hearing God's voice is the most important first step to obedience.

In the Middle East, even today in those nomadic areas, large flocks and herds of sheep can be found grazing in the same area. Each flock has a different shepherd, and, at times, hundreds of sheep will be milling around together. When one of the shepherds leaves with his flock, he calls out with a certain word or song, and out of the large flock the sheep follow their shepherd. When the shepherd speaks, his sheep know his voice, and they follow him. Sheep expect to hear from their shepherd. Sheep need to hear from their shepherd. They recognize their shepherd's voice and come at his call.

We are sheep and the Lord is our shepherd. If you believe that Jesus is your Lord & Savior, you can hear and recognize His voice. But the question still remains, how?

Here are 4 ways God speaks to us:

1. God speaks to us through the Bible.

Jesus said in Matthew 4:4: *But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"*

If we are going to learn the Spanish language, we've got to study Spanish. If we're going to learn to hear God, we need to study God's Word – the Bible. This is the primary way God talks to us. If you don't study a language, you won't be able to speak it. If you don't study God through His Word, you won't know God.

Unlike every other book in the world, the Bible is alive. Hebrews 4:12 says: *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

There isn't a topic of life that isn't addressed by the Bible. But the key is that we will never be able to learn it all overnight or once and for all. We have to continually learn what the Bible says to us. You won't wake up tomorrow knowing how to speak every word in Spanish. It takes time, practice, and repetition. It's the same for God's Word.

This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

JOSHUA 1:8

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What is your relationship like with reading the Bible?

Describe a time when God spoke clearly to you through Scripture.

2. God speaks to us through godly relationships.

Early on while Moses was leading the Israelites, he found himself exhausted from constantly having to manage the people's disputes. God used Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, to speak wisdom to Moses and give instruction on a better way to lead.

When Moses' father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, "What is this that you are doing for the people? ... Now obey my voice; I will give you advice, and God be with you!"

EXODUS 18:14, 19

God uses people to remind us of His Word, to correct us, to instruct us, to give us solutions, to counsel us, to give us ideas. Having godly relationships allows us to hear God through people. That is why it is important to be in a LifeGroup!

DISCUSSION QUESTION

Describe a time when God used a godly relationship to speak to you.

3. God speaks to us through circumstances.

The steps of a man are established by the LORD,...

PSALM 37:23

Sometimes our circumstances really frustrate us. Instead of allowing our circumstances to continue to discourage us, ask God what is happening. Ask Him if you should be doing something different or if you are off course.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

When has God used a seemingly negative circumstance to ultimately turn out for your good?

After today's discussion, do you think God is speaking through any of your current circumstances?

4. God speaks to us through the Holy Spirit.

There are a lot of people that think that God only speaks through the Bible, but His Holy Spirit is also seeking to communicate with us through an inner witness or voice. Romans 8:16 says: *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.*

An inner witness is an impression, a supernatural knowing. The Holy Spirit's voice can be heard in prayer or just as you are walking through life. The Holy Spirit's voice can produce: a strong, clear recurring thought; a deep, calming peace; genuine excitement; an inner warning, caution or "check." God will never tell you do something through the Holy Spirit that contradicts the Bible.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Share a time when the Holy Spirit prompted you - maybe you were encouraged to avoid a situation or encouraged to help someone.

Which way do you most commonly hear God speak to you?

PRAYER

PRAY TOGETHER FOR DISCIPLINE TO STUDY THE WORD OF GOD AND THE SENSITIVITY TO HEAR THE HOLY SPIRIT. IS THERE ANYONE IN YOUR GROUP WHO FEELS LIKE THEY STRUGGLE TO HEAR GOD'S VOICE? IS THERE ANYONE WHO FEELS LIKE GOD HAS TOLD THEM SOMETHING SPECIFIC THAT THEY WOULD LIKE PRAYER FOR?

PRAY THAT OUR GRACELIFE CHURCH FAMILY WOULD BE RECEPTIVE TO HEARING GOD'S VOICE.

PRAY THAT GOD WOULD SPEAK TO EACH INDIVIDUAL DURING THE *BEYOND* SERIES.

PRAY THAT THE LEADERSHIP OF GRACELIFE CHURCH WOULD CONTINUE TO HEAR GOD'S VOICE AS WE GO FORWARD WITH OUR FUTURE.

Monday

HEARING GOD'S VOICE

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me..

JOHN 10:27

There are many voices clamoring for our attention. These voices seek to guide, distract, direct and even destruct. It is important to understand those voices and ultimately learn to discern God's true voice.

The most obvious voice that wants to direct our lives is our own. The "flesh" is a powerful voice. The mind tells us what to think. The will tells us what we want. The emotions tell us what to feel. According to Romans 8:5, this voice often rises from the natural, human flesh—*"Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires."* We see images. We have emotions and feelings. Desires are ever-present. The "flesh" is unreliable, at best.

Another type of voice which seeks to direct us is the voice of people all around us. God does speak through others, but there are many "other" voices that are destructive. How do you know?

The third type of voice you will hear early, often and long is the voice of the enemy of your soul. The devil deceived one-third of heaven's angels, and he has perfected his act immensely since tricking Adam and Eve. No, he doesn't necessarily appear as the red, cloven-hoofed terror with a pitchfork. Often he appears through our thoughts. He distracts with a barrage of ungodly messages. He seeks to overwhelm, terrorize, seduce and do whatever it takes to destroy you and your loved ones through his voice. No wonder God tells us, *"Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour"* (1 Peter 5:8).

God's voice, thankfully, is assured for each of us who call upon His name. His voice, how-

WEEK 3 | HEARING GOD'S VOICE

ever, is often the most subtle of all voices, since He seeks to speak through each person's spirit, not through the clamoring of the flesh and outside voices.

We want to hear God through supernatural, spectacular, sensational and scintillating words. God seldom speaks that way. He seeks to direct our paths through His presence, His Word, His Spirit, prayer, and even through circumstances. To hear His voice, however, we must learn to go beyond the shallow surface and go deeper where the Spirit of God lives within us.

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME?

HOW CAN I APPLY IT?

TALK TO GOD ABOUT IT.

WHAT'S GOD DOING IN YOUR LIFE THROUGH BEYOND? SHARE YOUR STORY
WITH US AT: WWW.GRACELIFE.CHURCH/SHAREYOURSTORY.

Tuesday

LISTENING THROUGH GOD'S WORD

"It is the glory of God to conceal a matter; to search out a matter is the glory of kings."

PROVERBS 25:2

God's glory is concealed through His Word, but the believer can see His glory revealed through careful searching of that Word. God's Word is a treasure to be discovered. The deep truths cannot always be mined by merely scratching on the surface. Everywhere, it seems, the Father has given guideposts which point toward the ultimate treasure, His Son, Jesus Christ.

To mine these eternal riches, even as with earthly jewels or precious ores, you are required to dig beneath the surface. That is why it is so important to ask the Father to give supernatural wisdom as you search the Word for fresh, priceless, life-giving resources every day.

God's Word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our paths:

You, O Lord, keep my lamp burning; my God turns my darkness into light. With your help I can advance against a troop; with my God I can scale a wall. As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the Lord is flawless. He is a shield for all who take refuge in him. For who is God besides the Lord? And who is the Rock except our God? (Psalm 18:28-31)

God's Word can illuminate our life today:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men (John 1:1-4).

Spend time each day reading God's Word, for it is the pathway to God's will and direction, taking us from a place of uncertainty to a glorious mountaintop of victory. The Bible will conform us into the image of our Savior as we seek to hear God's voice.

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME?

HOW CAN I APPLY IT?

TALK TO GOD ABOUT IT.

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Wednesday

LISTENING THROUGH PRAYER

Pray continually.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:17

The story is told that during the First World War a British soldier was caught one night while creeping secretly back to his tent from a nearby wooded area. He was immediately hauled before his commanding officer and charged with holding communications with the enemy. The man pleaded that he had gone into the woods to pray. That was his only defense.

"Have you been in the habit of spending hours in private prayer?" his officer asked roughly.

"Yes, sir."

"Then get down on your knees and pray now like you've never prayed before!" the commander ordered.

The young man knew he could be shot at sunrise for the crime he was accused of committing. He knelt and poured out his soul in a powerful prayer that could have only been inspired by the Holy Spirit.

"You may go," the officer said in hushed tones after the soldier finished praying. "I believe your story. If you hadn't drilled often, you couldn't have done so well at review."

The young man had a breakthrough that saved his life. He did so because he had prepared for that breakthrough for some time, not knowing what challenges he would face. He had learned to commune with God intimately.

Prayer brings a revelation of self, allowing us to see ourselves in the light of who God is. This revelation of self is always followed by a revelation of God and His mercy.

Prayer brings cleansing. As you confess your sins, He cleanses you, allowing you to come boldly to the throne of grace with a pure heart.

Prayer reveals the Word of God, and positions us under His leadership and direction. Psalm 119:18 tells us, "*Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.*"

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME?

HOW CAN I APPLY IT?

TALK TO GOD ABOUT IT.

WHAT'S GOD DOING IN YOUR LIFE THROUGH BEYOND? SHARE YOUR STORY
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Thursday

LISTENING TO GOD'S SPIRIT

And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you. Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation--but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

ROMANS 8:11-16

Listening to His voice brings happiness, peace, direction and abundance. If you truly want to understand how the Holy Spirit speaks, read and reread these profound words found in Romans 8. How do you listen to God's Spirit? Paul the apostle proclaimed, "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (2 Corinthians 13:14). What did he mean?

- Fellowship requires spending time in His presence.
- Fellowship means sharing with Him, pouring out our hearts and listening to Him.
- Fellowship implies participating with Him. The Holy Spirit wants to become our partner in everything we do.
- Fellowship requires intimacy. God has chosen to pour out His love "into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us" (Romans 5:5).
- Fellowship includes friendship. The Holy Spirit longs to be our closest friend, someone with whom we can share our deepest secrets.
- Fellowship also implies comradeship. One of the Greek meanings of "fellowship" is "commander." The Holy Spirit wants to be our captain, a loving, friendly commander, instructing what we should do and where we should go.

WEEK 3 | HEARING GOD'S VOICE

• Fellowship gives power to share what God has done in our lives. Jesus said, *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”* (Acts 1:8).

Are you listening for His voice? Recognizing His voice requires hearing it often. Seek fellowship with Him, and invite Him into every area of your life.

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME?

HOW CAN I APPLY IT?

TALK TO GOD ABOUT IT.

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Friday

LISTENING TO GOD THROUGH CIRCUMSTANCES

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him." ... and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. — Matthew 2:1-2, 9-10.

MATTHEW 2:1-2, 9-10

What an unusual set of "circumstances" God designed to lead the wise men to the birth of Christ. The nearest planet to earth is thirty-seven million miles away. The nearest star is twenty-five billion miles away. Whatever light the wise men saw, traveling at 186,000 miles per second, had actually exploded at least five years before Christ's birth for the sight of the explosion to reach earth. Some would call this star a mere "circumstance." We know better!

Just as God gave the wise men an illuminated pathway to the Son of God, in His perfect plan, we can trust the pathway He gives us. Proverbs 3:5-6 tells us, *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."* This passage assures us that if we really want the will of God and ask for it, He will see to it that we get it!

The only way to victory and accomplishment as believers is to trust God to keep us and guide us moment by moment, not to be ruled by circumstances. We have the choice between relying on judgments made upon the best facts we can gather, or on judgments made on those facts as we seek God's guidance. We can learn to discern God's hand through both positive and negative circumstances; however, circumstances are not always an indication of God's plan for our lives. Maturity comes to believers who are less and less vulnerable to circumstances, for we know the promise found in Psalm 37:23-24: *"If the Lord delights in a man's way, he makes his steps firm; though he stumble, he will not fall, for the Lord upholds him with his hand."*

Whatever circumstances happen, we can know that God is in control.

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME?

HOW CAN I APPLY IT?

TALK TO GOD ABOUT IT.

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Week Four



OBEYING GOD'S CALL

Message Notes



LifeGroup Guide

KEY SCRIPTURE

Jesus replied, "All who love me will do what I say..."

JOHN 14:23

What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? ... If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

JAMES 2:14-17

Obedience is ultimately a condition of the heart. Sure, you can use the threat of punishment or pain to force someone to obey you, but that's not the same as someone obeying out of a heart of obedience. It's no different with our relationship with God. He wants us to obey Him out of a heart that has been changed, not because we "have to" or because we've been forced to obey.

This is the fourth week of our **BEYOND** series, and last week we talked about hearing God's voice - the important first step to obedience. Today we're going to look at the concept of obedience, the fears that keep us from obeying God, and the steps we can take to obey God in a greater way.

Hearing God is vital to our walk as a Christian. However, hearing God and obeying God are two different things.

In the John verse, we see that obedience is not a rule book, it's a condition of the heart. Obedience is the process of surrendering, hearing God's voice, and then acting. The essence of obedience is loving God. In James, we see the importance of our faith being demonstrated by our obedience and commitment to Christ.

Many people battle with obedience. However, most of the time it is not direct disobedience but rather delayed or partial obedience. Partial obedience is obeying up until a point of insecurity or discomfort. Delayed obedience happens when we wait to respond, when we question God, or we compromise our obedience.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Why do we directly disobey God sometimes? Why do we delay obedience sometimes?

Three different fears that tempt us to disobey God are the fear of failure, the fear of man, and the fear of the unknown.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Can you think of a time when God told you to do something, but you faced one of these fears. What happened?

For you, which of these fears seem to surface more than the others and why?

In this lesson we are going to learn 3 Steps to Walking in Obedience:

1. Believe God is for you.

Obedience starts with one thing – knowing that God is good.

God is the perfect Father. He is all knowing, all seeing, and all powerful. He has our very best interests in mind. He is not out to extract the joy from our life but to optimize our life.

If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

MATTHEW 7:11

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

ROMANS 8:31

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

JEREMIAH 29:11

We see in these verses that God is for us, He loves us, and has a distinct plan for our lives. We see that God wants to provide for us and is mindful of who we are – and where we are.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What characteristic of God from these verses most sticks out to you? Why? Why is it, at times, hard to believe God is for us?

2. Don't be limited by your own understanding.

In the Old Testament, God called the Israelites to go into the Promised Land. Moses sent twelve spies to scout the land that God told them was theirs. Ten out of the twelve came back and said “Hey, the inhabitants in the land are big, and we can't overtake them.” They were limited by their understanding. But instead of listening to the others, one spy, Joshua, heeded God's voice and had the faith to say, “God is bigger than any giant, than any obstacle.”

Don't be surprised when you hear God asking you to obey and it doesn't seem to make sense. If you know God is for you and believe His promises, then you can have faith like Joshua did.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Describe a time when you felt called to obey but it didn't make sense to you at the time. How did you respond?

3. Just do it.

When you hear the voice of God, confirm it in His Word, in prayer and through godly counsel if you need to – but then just do it. Don't live in the fear of what others may say, think or do.

Obedience precedes the miraculous. God told Noah in Genesis 6, “*Go build yourself an ark,*” and he did it, even though everybody was making fun of him, and said “This is the craziest thing.” God told the leper, Naaman, in 2 Kings 5, “*Go dip seven times*” in the Jordan River. He obeyed; when he did, he was supernaturally healed. Jesus told Peter in Matthew 14, “*Come to me on the water.*” Peter obeyed. The miraculous happened. He walked on the water.

Our obedience releases the power and provision of God in our lives.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This may seem like a simple question, but it's important: Why is it sometimes necessary to just step out in faith and obey?

Is there something God has been asking you to do? What positive impact could your obedience have in the lives of those around you?

PRAYER

PRAY TOGETHER TO NOT ONLY HEAR THE VOICE OF GOD BUT OBEY IT. IS THERE ANYONE STRUGGLING WITH OBEYING GOD IN SOME AREA OF THEIR LIFE.

PRAY THAT GOD WOULD CAPTURE OUR HEARTS AND THAT WE WOULD OBEY HIM OUT OF OUR CHANGED HEARTS.

PRAY THAT WE WOULD BE PEOPLE WHO OBEY GOD IMMEDIATELY AND THAT HE WOULD OVERCOME OUR FEARS.

PRAY THAT GOD SPEAKS TO US ABOUT OUR INDIVIDUAL ROLE IN THE *BEYOND* JOURNEY, WE WOULD HEAR HIS VOICE, STEP OUT IN FAITH, AND OBEY.

monday

UNDERSTANDING GOD'S PLAN

So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

MATTHEW 6:31-33

We know from God's Word that He cares about the things that concern us and the decisions we face every day, both huge and small. He understands what makes us tick, and He knows our needs. Likewise, He cares about the choices we face: *"For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even to the end."* (Psalm 48:14). More importantly, He desires for us to make decisions that reflect His will in our lives: *"Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is."* (Ephesians 5:17).

With these verses in mind, here are three quick principles for knowing God's plan for our lives:

God's will is available only through the Lord Jesus Christ. While the world seeks guidance through a variety of beliefs and rituals, the Savior proclaims Himself in a clear-cut way that leaves no room for error or misinterpretation: *"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me'"* (John 14:6).

To know God's will in your life, you must first offer your life to God. The apostle Paul wrote, *"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God this is your spiritual act of worship"* (Romans 12:1). We must be willing to be living sacrifices before we can be used by Him as a reasonable service. Only then can we begin to understand His design for our lives.

To know God's will, your mind must be renewed supernaturally. Romans 12:2 tells us, *"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is his good, pleasing and perfect will."* When we consistently present ourselves to God by spending time with Him and reading His Word, He will transform us and show us His plan.

WEEK 4 | OBEYING GOD'S CALL

God's plan is perfect and complete. He seeks to bring each believer into His perfect will. With the Psalmist, we must pray, *"Teach me to do your will, for you are my God; may your good Spirit lead me on level ground"* (143:10).

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME?

HOW CAN I APPLY IT?

TALK TO GOD ABOUT IT.

WHAT'S GOD DOING IN YOUR LIFE THROUGH BEYOND? SHARE YOUR STORY
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Tuesday

THE ROLE OF OBEDIENCE

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

JAMES 1:22 (NIV)

Have you ever tried giving advice to someone who didn't want to listen? Maybe it was a child or a friend, a co-worker or a boss... or a spouse— but we'll let that one go! It's not that they couldn't physically hear you, but you knew they wouldn't listen to what you had to say. When you know someone won't listen, does it make you want to talk with them?

In a similar way, why would God speak to us if He knows we won't listen? You'll hear God a lot clearer when you predetermine to listen and obey what He says. Think of it like tuning in to your favorite radio station. You have to tune in to the right frequency in order to hear. What's God's frequency? It's a heart prepared to obey.

When you determine to follow God's way, it places you in a position to hear His voice more clearly. We don't obey simply because God is good. We obey because He's God. What He says is absolute for our lives. So right now, determine in your heart that when God speaks to you during this **BEYOND** journey, no matter what He says, you will obey. And you'll be amazed at how much clearer His voice will be.

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME?

HOW CAN I APPLY IT?

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Wednesday

PRICELESS LESSONS OF PERSISTENCE

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.' "For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care about men, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming!'"

LUKE 18:1-5

We live in an "instant" world. We have little tolerance for anything that requires patience or persistence. Therefore, maybe it is not surprising that too often believers have the attitude that our relationship with God should be something like a cosmic vending machine — "Do it, Lord, NOW!"

We get so charged up to see instant results that we forget God's timing and divine providence are always perfect. We neglect to remember that His infinite wisdom should not be challenged by our human, finite reasoning and expectations.

A major part of obeying God is not giving up, even when faith is not rewarded instantly.

Jesus believed in persistence. One of His parables was given to teach us that we should not give up and lose heart. He told the story of a widow who went to a wicked judge. Her request was that she would somehow get justice. The judge, either too busy or disinterested in the case, said "Go away!" What was the woman's response? She firmly declared, "No, I am not leaving until you do what I am asking of you." Finally, because of her tenacity, the judge agreed to hear her case because she would not give up.

After telling this story, Jesus said, *"And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off?"* (Luke 18:6-7).

WEEK 4 | OBEYING GOD'S CALL

Christ never criticized the woman in the parable because she was unrelenting. He didn't say she was lacking in faith. He commended what she did.

Keep your requests constantly before the Lord. Don't give up. Don't stop asking. Don't stop seeking. Don't stop knocking at your Father's door.

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME?

HOW CAN I APPLY IT?

TALK TO GOD ABOUT IT.

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Thursday

OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S WORD

The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple.

PSALM 19:7

Roadmaps are handy. GPS is even more incredible. Both, however, fail to compare to the amazing spiritual roadmap-GPS available through God's Word.

The more we devote ourselves to God's Holy Word, the more we open ourselves up to the greatest wisdom in the universe. The wiser we become, the more we realize that God requires obedience to His instructions.

The Hebrew meaning of wisdom includes separating yourself to God, opening your life to Him, and allowing Him to reveal His roadmap to you. Throughout the Scriptures, wisdom and obedience are tied together. Moses, for example, taught us that wisdom consists in knowing and doing the commandments of God. Deuteronomy 4:5-6 says: *See, I have taught you decrees and laws as the Lord my God commanded me, so that you may follow them in the land you are entering to take possession of it. Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people."*

Essentially, Jesus said the same thing in Matthew 7:24: *"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock."*

Godly wisdom means hearing and doing God's Word. People who obey Him and humble themselves to Him understand the fact that the fear of the Lord is the beginning and unending source of all true wisdom.

WEEK 4 | OBEYING GOD'S CALL

If you want God to work on your behalf, the first step is total obedience to His Word. People often quote John 8:32 — “...*you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.*” The verse before it is seldom quoted — Jesus said, “*If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.*” Hold to His teaching and obey His Word!

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME?

HOW CAN I APPLY IT?

TALK TO GOD ABOUT IT.

WHAT'S GOD DOING IN YOUR LIFE THROUGH BEYOND? SHARE YOUR STORY
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Friday

THE POWER OF AGREEMENT

Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.

MATTHEW 18:19-20

Many people read Matthew 18:19-20, but they neglect what Jesus taught in the verse before: "I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

As Jesus taught, agreement is the key to releasing the power of the Almighty. It is through agreement with God and His people that we move from the natural to the supernatural, from the ordinary to the extraordinary.

How important is the unity of believers? Throughout the Bible when people were in unity, the results were remarkable:

- Moses joined with Aaron and Hur for great victories.
 - Naomi and Ruth received an answer from God.
 - David made a covenant with Jonathan.
 - Jesus ministered with His disciples.
- The prayers of Paul and Silas brought deliverance.

Is it any wonder why the Bible admonishes us to come into agreement with each other? Glance through the New Testament and see how often we are told such things as:

- "Love one another" (John 13:34).
- "Serve one another in love" (Galatians 5:13).
- "Be humble and gentle...bearing with one another" (Ephesians 4:2).
 - "Forgive...one another" (Colossians 3:13).
- "Encourage each other" (1 Thessalonians 4:18).
- "Build each other up" (1 Thessalonians 5:11).
- "Spur one another" (Hebrews 10:24).

WEEK 4 | OBEYING GOD'S CALL

Throughout Scripture, we are told the importance of agreement. Unity is commanded by Christ — *“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another”* (John 13:34). Jesus prayed, *“... that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe...”* (John 17:21).

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME?

HOW CAN I APPLY IT?

TALK TO GOD ABOUT IT.

WHAT'S GOD DOING IN YOUR LIFE THROUGH BEYOND? SHARE YOUR STORY
WITH US AT: WWW.GRACELIFE.CHURCH/SHAREYOURSTORY.

Week Five



OUR GOD DOES MIRACLES

LifeGroup Guide

KEY SCRIPTURE

You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:11, NIV

So far in our **BEYOND** series, we've talked about surrendering our lives to God and living His way. We've looked at hearing His voice, and we've discussed obeying His call. Today, we're going to talk about preparing for a miracle. We will learn how we can see supernatural miracles take place in our lives by partnering with God.

From the Bible we learn why and how miracles take place. It is interesting to note that the only miracle that was included in all four Gospels is the feeding of the multitude. In this lesson, we are going to take some time to look into that miracle in order to learn how a biblical miracle works.

Get started by reading John 6:1-13 together as a group:

After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick. Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?" He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little." One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but

what are they for so many?" Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number. Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted. And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost." So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten.

1. A miracle begins with a need.

Jesus had been teaching all day and it was getting late. The people were getting hungry and needed to eat. There was a definite need and problem. How did the miracle begin? It wasn't with faith or prayer. It started with a need. There is one thing you can say about every miracle in the Bible – each one begins where there is a need or problem. The good news is – most of us have problems and needs. The rest of the good news is – if we have a problem or a need, we're a candidate for a miracle. If we have big problems we are set up for big miracles. The only person who has a real problem is the person that doesn't have a problem or a need – because they think they don't need God!

Right now, GraceLife Church is a candidate for a miracle because we are in a place of need. We need: more seats on for weekend services, more space in the children's and nursery areas, and more space to do life together. So, we're in great shape as a family because we are positioned for a miracle.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What needs are you or someone close to you facing right now? Maybe it is a medical, financial, spiritual, or emotional challenge.

2. A miracle requires an act of faith.

In this story, there was a clear need. The people were hungry. And even though the boy was also hungry, he offered up what he had. This was a sacrificial act. But it was filled with faith. He believed that Jesus would do something with it, and Jesus did. Not only was the boy's hunger satisfied, but thousands of people were also fed.

A biblical miracle requires us to be part of how God does it. The boy didn't sit back and watch food fall from heaven—he gave his! Moses didn't sit on the shore and watch the water part—he stepped into it! Jesus told the lepers to go to the priest—they were healed AS THEY WALKED! You'll be hard pressed to find a miracle that didn't include instructions for a human to do something in faith.

3. A miracle blesses people.

The Bible says, “*everyone had their fill.*” That means everyone ate, and even possibly had seconds. Imagine the little boy as he watched the basket go around and the first person took a piece of fish and bread, then the next person, then the next, and so on. Everyone was blessed by the miracle demonstrated through the boy's lunch.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Have you ever been blessed by a miracle either in your own life or in the life of someone near or far? What was that experience like for you?

4. A miracle glorifies God.

Even though the boy and the disciples had a part to play, it is only by God's power that the fish & bread were multiplied. The people marveled at the power displayed through Jesus, and God ultimately got the glory.

If you keep reading the story in John, the people wanted to literally make Jesus their king. And that's the point even now. When people see God's glory, they are compelled to make Jesus the King of their lives!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Describe a time when you experienced God's glory and you were compelled to worship him.

PRAYER

PRAY FOR THE MEMBERS OF YOUR GROUP THAT THEY WILL TRUST GOD AND PUT THEIR “LUNCH” IN HIS HANDS.

IS THERE ANYONE WHO NEEDS A MIRACLE IN THEIR LIFE RIGHT NOW? DO THEY FEEL THEY HAVE A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON THE SITUATION?

PRAY THAT GOD WOULD PREPARE OUR HEARTS FOR THE MIRACLE THAT HE IS GOING TO PERFORM THROUGH OUR *BEYOND* JOURNEY.

PRAY THAT WE WOULD BE SENSITIVE TO HEAR GOD’S VOICE AND THAT WE WOULD BE OBEDIENT TO PARTNER WITH HIM IN WHAT HE WANTS US TO DO.

PRAY THAT GOD WOULD USE YOUR OBEDIENCE TO MEET NEEDS IN YOUR DAY-TO-DAY LIFE AS YOU SEEK TO PARTNER WITH HIM.

Monday

THE GOD OF MIRACLES

Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.

ACTS 2:22

People today want to see what they are getting. They want the facts before their eyes. Is it any wonder the world desires to see real Christians reflecting a God of miracles?

Jesus lived in the midst of miracles during His three-year ministry on earth. The things which He did—the resurrection of Lazarus, healing the blind, restoring the maniac—could not have been done through human power. He performed these miracles, not in secret, but before friends, family, enemies, critics, outcasts and the elite alike. His works were such that those around Him could not deny the facts. And He freely welcomed examination of His miracles.

The apostle Peter recounted, *“We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty”* (2 Peter 1:16).

Jesus, before He ascended into heaven, sent out His followers with this miracle-filled mandate, *“I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father”* (John 14:12).

A life filled with miraculous power begins with a holy dissatisfaction with the way things are. Jesus came to earth to change things for all eternity. The apostles understood that they were agents of change. They were to take His message of salvation and miracles to the nations. They spent the remainder of their lives carrying that message to a lost and dying world.

God desires to intervene miraculously in the hearts and lives of all mankind. He has called us to continue this miracle-filled legacy that extends throughout the Old and New Testaments until today! Are we willing?

WEEK 5 | OUR GOD DOES MIRACLE

Meanwhile, the world wants to see the facts, the “greater works.” This will only happen when enough believers experience a holy dissatisfaction with the way things are, a Spirit-breathed discontent, a desire for God’s intervention in everything we do.

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME?

HOW CAN I APPLY IT?

TALK TO GOD ABOUT IT.

WHAT’S GOD DOING IN YOUR LIFE THROUGH BEYOND? SHARE YOUR STORY
WITH US AT: WWW.GRACELIFE.CHURCH/SHAREYOURSTORY.

Tuesday

ELIJAH'S TEST

Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him."

1 KINGS 24:21

One of the greatest stories in the Old Testament of God's intervention took place on Mount Carmel when Elijah openly threw down the challenge to 450 idol-worshiping prophets of Baal. He did so by asking the question, "Which one is the true God?" This was not a test for the timid. Elijah wanted the people to see a concrete, unique demonstration of God's intervention and power.

Each side quickly agreed to make an altar of wood and stones with the meat of a bull placed upon it. The worshipers of Baal prepared the bull, placed it on the altar, called on the name of Baal from morning until afternoon. They even leaped around the altar, cut themselves with knives and cried loudly to heaven. No response.

Then it came for Elijah's test. He prepared an altar with twelve stones, one for each of the tribes of Israel. After the wood and the meat were in place, he asked for four barrels of water to be poured over the sacrifice to prove the power of the Almighty. Then Elijah told the helpers to douse the sacrifice a second and third time with four more barrels of water each time. There was so much water that it ran all around the altar and filled the trench that encircled it.

Elijah then looked up to heaven and offered one of the most powerful prayers ever recorded: "O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. Answer me, O Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, O Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again" (1 Kings 18:36-37).

God's servant had a specific request and God gave a specific answer: "Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked

WEEK 5 | OUR GOD DOES MIRACLE

up the water in the trench. When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, "The Lord—he is God! The Lord—he is God!" (1 Kings 18:38-39).

Elijah lived life with holy dissatisfaction towards the idol worship that ran rampant throughout the land. Today a statue near Mount Carmel in Israel, commemorates the victorious and divine intervention over the false prophets, and the Old Testament account has emboldened centuries of believers to become courageous agents of the Kingdom.

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME?

HOW CAN I APPLY IT?

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Wednesday

ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS

He went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

ACTS 9:1-6

Saul had a clear-cut agenda. He had received authority from the high priest to persecute Christians throughout the region. That was his purpose in traveling to Damascus. Then God intervened!

God changed everything in an instant. Note that Saul, soon to be called Paul, did not debate theological dogma or even the significance of what happened. He simply asked: "Who are you, Lord?" The answer, "I am Jesus," was enough to impact the world for all eternity. Saul did not know this, of course. He was told to wait for more instructions. He did not know that he was making a transition from leadership in Jewish society to being used to turn the world upside down with the Gospel. He did not know that he would be used by the Holy Spirit to write more than half of the New Testament. All he knew was that he was giving up all that he had previously attained, and he did so without argument.

Everything changed on the road to Damascus. He went from being the persecutor to becoming a chosen vessel of God's intervention to the world, for the Lord told Ananias to minister to the blinded Saul, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel" (Acts 9:15).

Though we may not be headed to Damascus today, wherever we go, we have plans and agendas that crowd our lives. We are called to a greater pathway. Discard your agendas for God's divine intervention!

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Thursday

GOD'S INTERVENTION IN YOUR FAMILY

I will contend with those who contend with you, and your children I will save.

ISAIAH 49:25

God has promised that He will fight for you and your family. The principle of salvation for your household is clearly given throughout the Bible.

God established the family from the beginning, as expressed in Genesis 1:27-28: *“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number.”*

Genesis 7:1 declares, *“The Lord then said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and your whole family, because I have found you righteous in this generation.”* Noah's entire family was saved from the flood. That principle comes through loudly in the Exodus 12 account of the first Passover: *“Each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household”* (v 3). It was not a lamb for each person. The shed blood was to cover every person in the household.

Then in Joshua 24:15, we read: *“But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”*

In the New Testament, Acts 16:14-15 shares the story of the Lydia, a new believer in Jesus: *“The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message...she and the members of her household were baptized.”* Recorded later in that same chapter, the Philippian jailer, became not only a new believer, but also witnessed the miracle of salvation for his entire household.

WEEK 5 | OUR GOD DOES MIRACLE

Because of the principles given throughout Scripture, you have the legal right to claim every member of your family for Christ. The promise is yours. Of course, each person in your family has free choice. Ultimately, each is responsible to God for the decision to accept or reject His simple plan of salvation, but we can intercede that God will draw loved ones to Himself. God loves our family even more than we do, so much that He sent His Son to die for them. He wants to save your household and bring them into a new dimension of relationship with Him.

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Friday

OUR CHALLENGE

You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

1 PETER 2:5

We are called to a life of miracles, and the greatest miracle of all is salvation. The greatest calling, as a result, is our commission as “*living stones*.”

“*Living stones*”—what does that phrase mean? God has called believers to lives of holy dissatisfaction with a lost and dying world. “Living stones” are called to touch our generation in a powerful, dynamic way, winning multitudes of souls. We have been given the divine directive and privilege of taking the message of God’s saving and healing power to the ends of the earth.

Throughout the centuries since Jesus Christ gave the Great Commission, every believer has received a divine mandate from heaven to share the Gospel: “*Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation*” (Mark 16:15). That calling was demonstrated in the lives of the disciples who were transformed into bold, dynamic witnesses for Christ. The world was changed forever.

The late J. Hudson Taylor, a dynamic English missionary to China during the 1800’s, said, “The Great Commission is not an option to be considered; it is a command to be obeyed.” His life as a “living stone” was a powerful example. At his death in 1905 the China Inland Mission he led included 205 mission stations with over 800 missionaries and 125,000 Chinese Christians.

We must never become content and complacent with the victories of yesterday, for the future is filled with new and incredible opportunities to proclaim the Gospel. The best is yet to come! There are millions of souls waiting to hear the Gospel, and we must not be distracted or delayed from doing what God has called us to do together.

WEEK 5 | OUR GOD DOES MIRACLE

Best of all, we have the greatest reward waiting, for on that great day we who are “*living stones*” have the blessed hope of standing before the Chief Cornerstone to hear, “*Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord*” (Matthew 25:21).

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the 1990s, the number of people in the world who are poor has increased. The number of people who are poor has increased from 1.1 billion in 1980 to 1.5 billion in 1995.

There are a number of reasons why the number of people who are poor has increased. One reason is that the world population has increased. The world population has increased from 4.5 billion in 1980 to 5.5 billion in 1995.

Another reason is that the world economy has not grown fast enough. The world economy has not grown fast enough to create enough jobs for all the people who are poor.

A third reason is that the world economy has become more unequal. The world economy has become more unequal, with the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer.

There are a number of things that can be done to reduce the number of people who are poor. One thing is to increase the world economy. Another thing is to make the world economy more equal.

There are a number of things that can be done to increase the world economy. One thing is to increase trade. Another thing is to increase investment.

There are a number of things that can be done to make the world economy more equal. One thing is to increase social services. Another thing is to increase education.

There are a number of things that can be done to increase social services. One thing is to increase health care. Another thing is to increase housing.

There are a number of things that can be done to increase education. One thing is to increase the number of schools. Another thing is to increase the quality of education.

There are a number of things that can be done to increase the number of schools. One thing is to increase the number of teachers. Another thing is to increase the number of classrooms.

There are a number of things that can be done to increase the quality of education. One thing is to increase the number of books. Another thing is to increase the number of teachers.

There are a number of things that can be done to increase the number of books. One thing is to increase the number of libraries. Another thing is to increase the number of bookstores.

There are a number of things that can be done to increase the number of teachers. One thing is to increase the number of teacher training programs. Another thing is to increase the number of teacher salaries.

There are a number of things that can be done to increase the number of classrooms. One thing is to increase the number of school buildings. Another thing is to increase the number of desks.

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Week Six



LEAVING A LEGACY

LifeGroup Guide

KEY SCRIPTURE

Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a few cents. Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on.”

MARK 12:41-4

We have been reading the story of the widow for thousands of years. And some may still be asking, “why is this important?” “Why was what she gave worth more than all the others?” The answer is simple and something we might just gloss over. She gave from her heart.

Now, as cliché as that may sound, its true. Notice how scripture tell us it was “all she had to live on.” She had nothing else. But she recognized the importance of investing in the place where Lord dwelt. She invested in something that would last well beyond her years – the temple and ultimately, the body of Christ. She was leaving a legacy, and we have the same opportunity today.

So, how do we live a life that leaves a legacy?

1. We prioritize differently.

Our perspective always affects our priorities. How we see determines how we live.

How do you see the world?

Is it a place where people are greedy and only want to take advantage of your resources? Then you may be less likely to give when God tells you to.

Do you think that the world is closed off and not worth a second look? You may not be living open-handed the way the Lord has called.

Do you think that the world is a place where only those who are on top win? You may live your life building your career or your agenda, but God calls us to build His church!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What priorities need to change so that your life is aligned with living a life of legacy?

After today's discussion, where do you think you may need a perspective shift on how you see the world?

2. We put our heart in something bigger than ourselves.

This sounds so inspiring, but it also causes us to make a choice. What is bigger than you?

Some might easily say, "my heart is all for the Kingdom of God!" But where is your treasure? Jesus told us that "*where our treasure is, there your heart will be also*" (Matthew 6:21).

King David said "*Moreover, because I have set my affection on the house of my God, I have given to the house of my God...*" (1 Chronicles 29:3a). David "set his affection" on the house of God. He told his heart what was important. He was placing his treasure towards the temple.

Putting our hearts in something bigger than ourselves is not something that just happens, it is something we have to constantly decide we are going to do. It's more than a good intention, it is a choice.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What is your heart invested in? Where do you put your treasure?

3. We sacrifice for something that will outlast us.

Let's look at Paul, who wrote most of our New Testament. He was shipwrecked, stoned, left for dead, bit by a snake and so much more. He knew that the road would be long and hard, but he kept going. He kept sharing the Good News. He kept sacrificing for something that would outlast him – the Kingdom of God. He knew that it was more important than him.

The simple truth is that the road will be hard. But feel encouraged because through all the challenges, all the struggles, all the persecution, the Church still moves forward. The Kingdom of God still advances.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Describe a time when you have been the recipient of someone else's sacrifice. What kind of impact did it have on you?

A legacy will always outlast you. Power and money do not last forever. Think as far back as the Babylonians, the Ottomans, the Romans – they are all gone but we still talk and learn about their empires!

A legacy always comes back to what happens after you're gone. So, what makes a legacy last? The answer: the impact you leave on people.

Jesus invested his life into fishermen, tax collectors and nobodies! After his resurrection, his disciples carried the Good News around the globe. AND it's an impact we are seeing 2,000 years later! When you are in Jesus, your legacy will keep going even after you are gone.

So, what kind of legacy are you going to leave?

PRAYER

PRAY TOGETHER THAT GOD WOULD CONTINUE TO USE YOU TO BE A PART OF BUILDING HIS CHURCH ON THE EARTH.

PRAY FOR GUIDANCE TO CONTINUE TO WALK IN A WAY THAT LEADS YOU TO LEAVE AN IMPACTFUL LEGACY FOR THE KINGDOM.

PRAY THAT GRACELIFE WOULD CONTINUE TO HAVE A LEAGACY AS A PLACE WHERE THE LOST MAKE JESUS THEIR KING.

Monday

GOD'S VISION

Where there is no vision, the people perish...

PROVERBS 29:18, KJV

Vision is a powerful motivator. When we receive and embrace God's vision for our lives, He empowers us to work together toward the fulfillment of that vision. Just imagine what God could do if we tapped into His vision for our lives, our church, and our community.

Here are three characteristics of a vision that's from God. First, God's vision always aligns with His mission and is bigger than you. If you can accomplish it in your own strength, it's probably not God. Our entire **BEYOND** journey is a God-sized vision that only He can do. Second, God's vision always releases passion in you. God's vision will not let you go. It draws you in. It captivates you and pulls you toward God's goal for your life.

Finally, God's vision impacts future generations. Psalm 127:1 says, "*Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it,*" and verse 3 continues, "*Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord.*" You see, a God-vision is something that can only be accomplished through Him, but it ultimately has to do with family. It leaves a lasting impact that is felt for generations.

What we're building at GraceLife isn't really about buildings. It's about family. It's about building something beyond ourselves for the next generation. What do you think God's vision for your life looks like? How do you think that vision could impact others?

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME?

HOW CAN I APPLY IT?

TALK TO GOD ABOUT IT.

WHAT'S GOD DOING IN YOUR LIFE THROUGH BEYOND? SHARE YOUR STORY
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Tuesday

RISK IT ALL

Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father’s house, to the land which I will show you; and I will make you a great nation.”

GENESIS 12:1-2A

Abraham’s story paints an incredible picture of how to live a life of surrender. In Genesis 12, God tells Abraham to pack up everything and move hundreds of miles away. Notice God says, “to the land which I will show you.” This means Abraham didn’t know where he was headed when he left.

Now at this point in his life, Abraham was 75. That’s retirement age, not adventure age! What’s more, Abraham was successful. He was wealthy and had built a nice life for himself. He had servants, livestock, and extended family. Abraham had to be willing to risk it all to follow God to a land he didn’t even know. With no guarantee of safety or success, all Abraham had was God’s Word.

Just like Abraham, you’ve probably worked hard to carve out a nice life for yourself and your family. To have your needs met. To be a success. What if God interrupted your plans and asked you to risk it all—to go on a journey you don’t even know where it will take you? Could you do it? Would you go? The amazing thing about God is that when we surrender ourselves to Him, we always end up gaining more in the end.

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HOW CAN I APPLY IT?

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Wednesday

GOING BEYOND

Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,

EPHESIANS 3:20

Is there a need in your life that seems so impossible that only God can do it? Maybe you can hardly imagine it coming to pass. Ephesians 3:20 tells us that God can go beyond what you can ask or think. Whatever you need, whatever you ask, whatever you think, our God can do *“far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think.”*

Where does God want to take us? Beyond ourselves. Beyond what we can ask or think. God’s ability to move in your life is greater than your ability to understand. As we align our view of God with His true character, we have the opportunity to experience His power at work within us. We get to experience Him going beyond.

Responsible, good-hearted people start with, “Well...if I do my best, here’s what I think I can do.” That’s noble – but God wants to go beyond that. You can do that by yourself – you’re not depending on Him to come through for you.

That’s the real challenge – will we be willing to put ourselves out into uncomfortable, unfamiliar territory?

That’s where God meets us. That’s where we grow. That’s where He goes beyond.

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME?

HOW CAN I APPLY IT?

TALK TO GOD ABOUT IT.

WHAT'S GOD DOING IN YOUR LIFE THROUGH BEYOND? SHARE YOUR STORY
WITH US AT: WWW.GRACELIFE.CHURCH/SHAREYOURSTORY.

Thursday

THE NEXT LEVEL

Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God.

PSALM 20:7

In order for us to live God's way, we have to trust Him. We have to believe that He is for us and that He's not going to hurt us or take advantage of us. But learning to trust God is a process. Here's what that process looks like:

First, God calls you to do something. No matter where you're at, God will call you to join Him at some new level, some new challenge. But that means sacrifice and surrender. So next, you'll wrestle with God. "God, was that really You or just the pizza? God, that's crazy! How could You ask me to do that? What will people say?" But what comes next changes everything—you hear God speak. You receive revelation. Maybe it's in a prayer time, or maybe it's through someone else. But it fills you with vision and passion. Then finally, you come back to God, openhanded, and you re-surrender.

You never outgrow this process of trust. Spiritual maturity isn't skipping a step, it's moving through the steps faster. Remember, whenever you reach re-surrender moments with God, they are actually invitations to join Him at the next level. As you embark on this **BEYOND** journey, think about where God is trying to take you with Him. Are you ready to go to the next level?

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Friday

THE BLESSING OF UNITY

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!

... For there the Lord commanded the blessing—life forevermore.

PSALM 133:1,3B

One of the incredible distinctives of GraceLife is that we are an “everyone church.” We’re not a group where only a few “spiritual people” do all the work. We all pitch in. We all play a part. That includes you! And that’s why our **BEYOND** journey has been so amazing. It’s something we’ve done together. We heard from God. We stepped out in faith. We gave our gifts. And we did it together. Everyone. Not equal gifts, but equal sacrifice.

There’s a word that’s sometimes used in our English language called “synergy.” Synergy is defined as “the cooperation of two or more things to produce a combined effect greater than the sum of the individual parts.” In essence, synergy means we accomplish more together. This is exactly what happens when God’s people come together in unity to achieve God’s vision. Think of it like this:

Our unity + God’s supernatural power = Miraculous results

As we wrap up our journey this week, take some time to reflect on everything God has done over the past five weeks. What has He done in you? What has He done in our church? Reflect on His blessings and His goodness. And remember, this is only the beginning. The best is yet to come!

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Notes



How do we look beyond where we are to the place He's calling us to go?

No matter where we are in our walk with Christ, He's always encouraging and inspiring each of us to take our next step and do our part to reach people.

This Guide is designed to equip you for the journey, show you how to engage your faith in new ways, and help you grow in your relationship with Christ. Together, we'll learn how to look beyond where we are to the place He's calling us to go.

[**gracelife.church/beyond**](https://gracelife.church/beyond)