



Life with Jesus Guide

Discerning Your Next Step

Worship

- Walk with Jesus Daily

- Prioritize Worship

Community

- Share Life in Christ-centered Community

- Build up the Body of Christ

Mission

- Love Lost People

- Pursue God's Beautiful Kingdom

Forming disciples who love Jesus and follow His way.



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WELCOME

Forming Disciples who Love Jesus and Follow His Way —Greenwood Mission Statement

“The greatest issue facing the world today, with all its heartbreaking needs, is whether those who, by profession or culture, are identified as ‘Christians’ will become disciples—students, apprentices, practitioners of Jesus Christ, steadily learning from him how to live the life of the Kingdom of the Heavens into every corner of human existence.” – Dallas Willard

How is Jesus inviting me to follow him?

“Follow me,” Jesus says, calling us to be his loving disciples. In saying this, Jesus extends to us a magnificent invitation to make our home in his love as we walk with him and learn his way of life. He knows our weaknesses and fears, and he knows our path will require resilience, so if we say ‘yes’ to this invitation, he promises to unite us to himself through the Holy Spirit. His presence within us makes following him possible and ensures that we can become more and more like him. The result is that we experience abundant life with Jesus in God’s beautiful kingdom—now and forever.

But what does this mean in the day-to-day? How do we discern our next step in responding to Jesus’ invitation to be his disciple and to make disciples—how do we love him, live with him, follow him—and help others do the same?

We believe we follow Jesus in our ordinary lives by choosing to live by six core Discipleship Commitments, which we express through various Practices. In the following pages, we will introduce you to these six Commitments and direct you to corresponding Practices.

As we follow Jesus, the Commitments remain constant, but the

Practices related to those Commitments adapt with us as we grow. For example, our first Commitment is to Walk with Jesus Daily through Prayer and Scripture. Some Practices that help us do this are Praying the Lord's' Prayer, Memorizing Scripture, and the Prayer of *Examen*. In one season of our life, the Lord's Prayer might be life-giving, while at another memorizing a passage to pray during the day might be more helpful. The point is that whichever Practice we choose, we are still engaging in the Commitment to walk with Jesus daily.

As you explore each Commitment, you will find several elements to help you grow as a follower of Jesus:

- (1) A guided devotion to help you engage with this Commitment;
- (2) Questions for personal reflection about your engagement with this Commitment—in either brief or more extended times with the Lord;
- (3) Recommended Practices corresponding to this Commitment;
- (4) Questions to help you discuss your experience with this Commitment in community—with your small group or a trusted friend.

You will find a list of brief descriptions of all the Practices in the Appendix. The complete Practices of Jesus are located at GreenwoodCC.com/Practices.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN



Our Foundation

God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

Our prayer is that these Commitments will serve as a guide for our growth in Christ, not as checklists we perform for acceptance. The foundation of our life with Jesus will always be that God loved us while we were sinners rebelling against him, and in grace he redeemed us by his Son. Our commitments are how we respond in reverence and gratitude to his love and experience the fullness of this life for which we were saved.

Preparing Our Hearts

This is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son to be an atoning sacrifice for our sins. 1 John 4:10

Any time we reflect on how we would like to grow as disciples, we can expect that the enemy will want to undermine us by bringing a sense of condemnation or discouragement. So before you begin reflecting with Jesus about these commitments, please take a moment to center yourself on God's great love for you. All God's invitations flow from this love, and all your obedience will be empowered by the help of the Spirit.

Listening to God

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. John 10:27

Jesus says his followers will have the joy of learning to know his voice. He speaks to us today in many ways, but primarily through the Scriptures, life circumstances, fellow believers, and the "gentle whisper" (1 Kings 19:12), or what Henri Nouwen calls the "still small voice of love." In this guide, you will occasionally be invited to ask Jesus a question and listen for his answer. When you see this invitation, please take a couple of breaths to quiet yourself before

you ask Jesus to speak to you. Then simply notice what happens. Do you sense a wordless “nudging?” Does a phrase come to mind? Or a picture? Or a scripture verse? If nothing at all happens, don’t worry; Jesus’ answer may come to you at another time. Be content that you have given him space to speak. If something did come to mind, consider running it by a trusted friend. Also, remember that Jesus will never speak something to you that contradicts what he has said in Scripture.

Resilience

*In this world you will have trouble. But take heart!
I have overcome the world.* John 16:33

Jesus said if we follow him we should expect trouble, relational pain, and persecution. This is on top of the heartache of life in a broken world that we share with all mankind. So as his disciples we need to equip one another and prepare ourselves to face these forms of suffering without losing hope, allowing the Spirit of God to form us ever more deeply into the image of Jesus.

Honoring our Relationships

*As God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves
with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.*
Colossians 3:12

We can also expect the enemy to want to undermine relationships that build us up in Jesus. Prayerfully cultivating trust is important. For instance, you might want to discuss with your friend or small group whether to give one another permission to ask these questions and how to have these conversations in a way that does not cause you to feel condemnation. We each have a story, and our personal history may impact how we’d like to approach these conversations.

FOLLOWING THE WAY OF JESUS

Discipleship Commitments

In our growing discipleship to Jesus, we aspire to:

Live with Jesus in Worship

- Walk with Jesus daily through prayer and scripture.
- Prioritize worship with God's people.

Live with Jesus in Community

- Share life in Christ-centered community through small groups and spiritual friendships.
- Use our gifts and resources for the building up of the body of Christ.

Live with Jesus on Mission

- Love lost people by praying for them, caring for their needs, and sharing Jesus with them.
- Pursue God's beautiful kingdom by seeking the renewal of a broken world.

LIVE WITH JESUS IN WORSHIP

 Walk with Jesus daily through prayer and scripture. 

Walking with Jesus requires prayer. As Martin Luther said, “To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing!” Prayer is how we commune and communicate with God. The practice of prayer can take many forms: gratitude, listening, intercession, lament, or contemplation, for example, and our prayer life can grow until we pray almost without ceasing.

If prayer is our spiritual breath, scripture is our food. Jesus said we live not by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. We can practice drawing life from God’s word in many ways: by simply reading it, or by engaging in *Lectio Divina*, memorization, or Bible study, or by keeping a phrase at hand to call to mind throughout the day.

A Guided Devotion

QUIETING

Please take one or two minutes to calm and quiet yourself. Silence your phone or put it in another room. Sit comfortably and take deep breaths, exhaling slowly. As you do this, pray “Abba” on the inhale and “Father” on the exhale. Remember God is with you. Attempt to rest in his presence.

READ AND CONSIDER: Luke 6:12-19

One of those days Jesus went out on a mountainside to pray and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles: Simon (whom he named Peter), his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James, son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who become a traitor. He went down with them and stood on a level place. A large crowd of his disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coastal region around Tyre and Sidon, who had come to hear him and to be healed of their

diseases. Those troubled by impure spirits were cured, and the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all. Looking at his disciples, he said: “Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil because of the Son of Man.

- Take a moment and list all the things Jesus had the power to do after spending the night in prayer. What do you notice?

- How would you describe the results of his time in prayer, his communing and communicating with the Father through the night?

- We see in this passage that Jesus’ teaching—his words to us—came from his deep fellowship with his Father. And, wondrously, we hold his words in our hands today. What does this say to you about the importance of daily rhythms of engaging with Scripture?

Additional Scriptures to Consider

Psalm 119:105, Matthew 6:9-15, John 8:31, John 15:4-5

Questions for Reflection with Jesus

Now that you have considered Jesus' commitment to the practice of prayer, please take a few moments to reflect in his presence about your engagement with this commitment.

- How do you currently walk with Jesus through prayer and scripture? Which of these practices do you find most life-giving?

- Do you sense the Lord inviting you to deepen or expand your life of prayer or deepen your life with him in Scripture?

- As you consider God's word, is there something that comes to mind—a promise you know is hard for you to believe, or a command you know you resist obeying? (If so, please take a few moments to pray to the Lord about this).

- Jesus, is there anything you want me to know about my life with you in prayer and scripture? (See "Listening to God" on page 5.)

Recommended Next Step

The Practice “Praying the Lord’s Prayer” is available at GreenwoodCC.com/P-R-A-Y. Please refer to this practice now. You will find guidance in praying the movements of the Lord’s prayer using the acronym PRAY (Praise, Repentance, Asking, and Yielding). If you are not accustomed to praying the Lord’s prayer, please consider making this a habit for the next week. Take perhaps ten minutes each day and pray through the movements—learning from Jesus how to pray.

Additional Recommended Practices:

Gratitude, Studying Scripture, Solitude, Memorize Scripture, *Lectio Divina*, Prayer of *Examen*, Fasting, Immanuel Prayer, Lament, Listening to God, The Lord’s Prayer

You will find detailed guides at GreenwoodCC.com/Practices.

Questions for Reflection in Community



What ways of walking with Jesus in prayer in scripture do you find most life-giving right now?

What was your experience with the guided devotion? If you have explored the Practice, *Praying the Lord’s Prayer*, were there any next steps that resonated with you there?

How do you sense Jesus might be inviting you to deepen your life with him in prayer and/or scripture?

How may we pray for one another about our daily walk with Jesus?

LIVE WITH JESUS IN WORSHIP

 Prioritize worship with God's people. 

Regular worship with God's people is essential for followers of Jesus. As Dave Mathis puts it, "I do not think it is too strong to call corporate worship the single most important habit of the Christian life." This is because the Holy Spirit is with us when we are together, helping us grow in joy and strength, in a way that he is not when we are alone. Growing disciples of Jesus must prioritize worship with God's people: the teaching, sacraments, praise, and presence together that happens at Greenwood on Sunday mornings.

A Guided Devotion

QUIETING

Please take one or two minutes to quiet yourself. Sit comfortably and take deep breaths, exhaling slowly. As you do this, pray "The Lord is my Shepherd" on the inhale and "I shall not want" on the exhale. Remember God is with you. Attempt to rest in his presence.

PRAYING SCRIPTURE: Psalm 95:1-6

Please pray the following praises as a reflection on our lives of worship in community:

*Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord;
Let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come before him with thanksgiving
and extol him with music and song.*

Take a moment to express your joy to the Lord for his salvation, for being your Rock. Thank your Father for anything you are grateful for or anything you appreciate about him.

*For the Lord is the great God,
the great King above all gods.
In his hand are the depths of the earth,
and the mountain peaks belong to him.*

*The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands formed the dry land.*

What helps you think about God's greatness: His creation? Jesus' miracles or teaching? Jesus' humble death on a cross? Express to him what moves you about these things.

*Come, let us bow down in worship,
let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker;
for he is our God
and we are the people of his pasture,
the flock under his care.*

Please think for a few moments about God as your Maker and your Shepherd who drew you in to become part of his people. Thank him for your church and pray his blessings upon the flock you belong to.

- Please go back through these verses and notice how many plural pronouns you find. What does this say to you about how God's people worship him?

- Why do you think God calls his people to worship together, as a flock, rather than individually? Consider the *Additional Scriptures* listed below for further study.

Additional Scriptures to Consider

Exodus 20:8-10a, Hebrews 10:24-25, Luke 22:19-20,
Revelation 5:8-14

Questions for Reflection with Jesus

- How do you currently demonstrate your commitment to worship with God's people? Does anything compete with this priority?

- What have you experienced with Jesus as you have worshiped with others?

- What do you find difficult about worshipping with God's people? Please take a moment to ask Jesus if there is anything he wants you to know about this.

- Jesus, what changes, if any, would you like to see me make as I consider how I prioritize worship in community?

Recommended Next Step

The Practice "Worship in Community" is available at GreenwoodCC.com/Practices. Please go to this Practice now. You will find teaching that further explores the significance of regularly gathering with God's people for worship, additional scriptures and quotes, and discussion questions for your small group.

Additional Recommended Practices:

Sabbath, Resilience: Finding Hope in Suffering

You will find detailed guides at GreenwoodCC.com/Practices.

Questions for Reflection in Community



What do you find life-giving about worshipping together—consider the singing, hearing the word, taking communion, connecting with others, blessing the children, and praying together?

Do you have priorities, hobbies, or health issues that make it difficult for you to attend Sunday morning worship regularly? What is this like for you?

What next steps do you sense Jesus is inviting you to take? If you have explored the Practice, “Worship in Community,” were there any next steps that resonated with you there?

How may we pray for one another about our commitment to worship in community?

LIVE WITH JESUS IN COMMUNITY

 Share life in Christ-centered community through  small groups or spiritual friendship.

God created us to thrive only by sharing life together. As Eugene Peterson asserts, “There can be no maturity in the spiritual life, no obedience to following Jesus, no wholeness in the Christian life, apart from an immersion in, and embrace of community. I am not myself by myself.” In Christ-centered community, we are intentional about “building one another up,” “encouraging one another,” “stirring one another to love and good deeds,” and seeing “Christ formed” in one another (1 Thessalonians 5:11, Hebrews 10:24-25, Galatians 4:19). This can happen in lots of ways: one-on-one friendships, small gatherings of women or men, or co-ed small groups.

A Guided Devotion

QUIETING

As you begin, quiet your heart and begin to focus on the presence of God with you. He has called you by name and called you to be a part of his people. Take a few minutes to center yourself with this simple prayer.

Inhale: I belong to You. Exhale: I belong to Your people.

READ AND CONSIDER: Acts 2:42-47

Read this description of the very first Christian community:

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

- What stands out to you as unique or striking about this community? How do you think this was possible?

- Consider the way this community engaged in sharing life together, being generous with each other, committing themselves to learning the “apostles teachings” (what Jesus had taught them), and witnessing to those around them. What does this vision of Christian community stir up in you?

- What difference would it make (in your life, in your church’s life, for the community around you) if you engaged in this type of community?

- Ask the Lord to bring to mind anything else he wants you to see about this community and ask for his insight into your own next steps.

Additional Scriptures to Consider

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, John 13:1-15, Colossians 3:12-17,
Philippians 2:1-5

Questions for Reflection with Jesus

- Who has Jesus brought into your life to walk with you and encourage you? What is life-giving in these relationships?

- What do you find difficult about this area of your walk with Jesus? Could it be one of these common barriers to community: busyness, conflict, idealism, past hurt?

- Jesus, how can I work through these barriers by your grace? How are you inviting me to deepen my life with you in community?

Recommended Next Step

The Practice of “Spiritual Friendship” is available at GreenwoodCC.com/Friendship. Take the next step in growing in community by engaging this practice which explores the nature of spiritual friendship, the barriers we face internally and externally to truly experiencing it, and tangible steps towards building these relationships.

Additional Recommended Practices:

Small Groups, Forgiveness and Resilience: Devoted Love in a Culture of Disconnection, and Bible Study

You will find detailed guides at GreenwoodCC.com/Practices.

Questions for Reflection in Community



In what ways have you felt relationally connected or disconnected from God's people recently? Why do you think that is?

What do you find difficult or life-giving about sharing life with other Christians?

What next steps do you sense Jesus inviting you to take in sharing life with his people? If you have explored the Practice of "Spiritual Friendship," were there any next steps that resonated with you there?

What do you feel you need from Jesus in order to pursue this? Pray for one another.

LIVE WITH JESUS IN COMMUNITY

 Use our gifts and resources 
for the building up the body of Christ.

We believe that each follower of Jesus, without exception, has gifts from the Spirit that are essential to the life of the church. For the church to thrive, it needs communicators, administrators, networkers, musicians, businesspeople, chefs, and intercessors (and many more) serving in its ministries. Together we want to discern and practice using our gifts in love, that we would experience the joy of being who God created us to be, and that others may be built up in Christ. In this way the church is equipped for its mission of being Christ to the world.

A Guided Devotion

QUIETING

As we consider using our gifts, we might be tempted to become self-focused, either becoming puffed up with our talents and abilities, or discouraged due to our lack of resources, skills, or knowledge. But spiritual gifts are just that: gifts. And our power to use them comes from dependence on the Spirit who gives them. Take a moment to center yourself on his providing presence with you.

Inhale: Holy Spirit. Exhale: I depend on You.

READ AND CONSIDER: Romans 12:4-10

Here is Paul's exhortation to the church in Rome on serving one another:

For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully. Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love.

- Stay for a moment with the metaphor of the “body” of Christ. We are each indispensable members, and we are each dependent on the whole. Functioning together, we are Christ’s presence in the world. What is challenging or compelling to you about this vision?

- What is it like to hear that each of us (you included) has been given special gifts by the Spirit? How would it change things for you to think of your abilities as “gifts” entrusted to you by God?

- What is the role of love in the exercising of our gifts, according to this passage?

- Take a moment and ask the Lord what else he might want you to see in this passage. What might he be drawing your attention to?

Additional Scriptures to Consider

1 Corinthians 12-13, Ephesians 4:11-16, 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Questions for Reflection with Jesus

- What gifts and resources do you see that God has given to you? Take a moment to thank him for how he has made and

equipped you uniquely, or bring to him any confusion you have about how this is true.

- What ways do you feel joy using your gifts and resources to build up the body of Christ?

- In what ways have you struggled to do this? Why do you think this is?

- Jesus, is there any way you are inviting me to deepen my commitment to serve your body? What do you want me to know about this?

Recommended Next Step

The Practice “Discover Your Spiritual Gifts” is available at GreenwoodCC.com/Discover-Your-Spiritual-Gifts. As your next step in growing in this commitment, explore this Practice where you can delve into the meaning of our spiritual gifts and enter into a process of discerning how God has equipped you uniquely. This sets the groundwork for learning to then use these gifts in loving service to others.

Additional Recommended Practices:

Serve, Giving, and Making Disciples

Find detailed guides at GreenwoodCC.com/Practices.

Questions for Reflection in Community



Has anyone ever affirmed your gifts? If so, what was that like for you? Consider taking time to affirm or add to what gifts you see in each other.

Where do you experience the most joy in serving others in the body of Christ?

What barriers or opportunities do you see ahead of you for using your gifts and resources to build up the body? If you engaged in the Practice, “Discover Your Spiritual Gifts,” where did that shed any further light on next steps for you?

How can we be praying for or supporting one another as we seek to live this out?

LIVE WITH JESUS ON MISSION

 Love lost people by praying for them, caring for their needs,  and sharing Jesus with them.

At the heart of sharing the gospel is learning how to love the people Jesus loves, in the way that Jesus loves. Our love for others is often short-lived and short-sighted, but God's love is limitless and life-giving. And so, from the fullness of God's heart, Jesus' love is poured into us so we may love others (1 John 4:19). It flows into our personal relationships as we pray for, care for, and share Jesus with our family, neighbors, co-workers, and friends. And our love for the lost extends to all peoples as we partner with what God is doing to the ends of the earth.

A Guided Devotion

QUIETING

Please take one or two minutes to quiet yourself. Sit comfortably and take deep breaths, exhaling slowly. As you quiet your mind and heart, slowly say this centering prayer several times, "The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God" (Exodus 34:6).

READ AND CONSIDER: Luke 5:17-26

One day Jesus was teaching, and Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there. They had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal the sick. Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven." The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, "Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, "Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? Which

is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the paralyzed man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on and went home praising God. Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, "We have seen remarkable things today."

- How did these men who carried the paralyzed man show love to their friend? What challenges did they have to overcome to get their friend to Jesus?

- What were the men hoping that Jesus would do for their paralyzed friend? How did Jesus respond?

- What do we learn through Jesus' response about brokenness and healing? Why was the forgiveness of sins the greater miracle?

Additional Scriptures to Consider

Leviticus 19:18, Matthew 28:19-20, Luke 10:25-37,
1 Timothy 2:1-6

Questions for Reflection with Jesus

- Who are the lost and hurting people in your life right now? How might you 'bring them to Jesus' for healing as these friends did?

- Is there a way that God is inviting you to pray for them or compassionately care for their needs?

- What are your greatest strengths in praying, caring, or sharing the gospel with others? What are your greatest barriers and fears in loving lost people well?

- Jesus, is there someone in my life who is ready to hear the good news of Jesus? (Please pause for a moment and notice if anyone comes to mind.)

Recommended Next Step

The Practice "Share the Gospel" is available at GreenwoodCC.com/Practices. Please go to this Practice now. You will find teaching that acknowledges our struggle with sharing the gospel in our cultural moment and also the paradigm-shifting hope of the way of Jesus. Instead of focusing on the transfer of correct information, what if the focus were on genuinely loving people well? In this Practice, along with scripture, quotes, and discussion questions, are practical tools to help you share the gospel with others.

Additional Recommended Practices:

Hospitality, Resilience: Facing Persecution

Find detailed guides at GreenwoodCC.com/Practices.

Questions for Reflection in Community



How did you come to know Jesus? Who were the people who shared him with you and how did they do it?

Are there any lost people the Lord has placed on your heart?

In what ways is the Lord inviting you to love lost people? If you have explored the Practice “Share the Gospel,” in what way is the Lord inviting you into loving lost people through prayer, care, or share?

What resistance or excitement comes up for you when you think about sharing the gospel? How may we pray for one another about loving lost people well?

LIVE WITH JESUS ON MISSION

 Pursue God's beautiful kingdom by seeking 
the renewal of a broken world.

Though God created all things to flourish in right relationship under his reign, our world has been broken by sin. As his followers, he calls us to seek the renewal of his reign on earth as it is in heaven until he returns and makes all things right. We each seek our role in bringing this renewal, whether by compassionately caring for the poor and suffering, advocating for justice for the oppressed, or pursuing healing for those wounded by sin.

A Guided Devotion

QUIETING

Please take one or two minutes to quiet yourself. Sit comfortably and take deep breaths, exhaling slowly. As you quiet your mind and heart, slowly say this centering prayer several times, “His Kingdom come, his will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10).

READ AND CONSIDER: Isaiah 58:6-8

Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard.

- When God speaks to Israel about true fasting, he is speaking about their spiritual devotion—what it means to be in right relationship with God. What activities, according to this passage, reflect a righteous person? How does this change, challenge, or coincide with your view of what “righteousness” is?
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- How would you translate this passage in our own cultural moment? Who are the oppressed of our day and what are the injustices of our time?

Additional Scriptures to Consider
Micah 6:8, James 1:27, 1 John 3:16-17

Questions for Reflection with Jesus

- Where has God given you a heart for the brokenness of the world? How might he be using you to bring the renewal of God's beautiful kingdom?

- Where have you ignored or insulated yourself from the brokenness of the world?

- Jesus, is there something you would like me to do to advance your beautiful kingdom into this broken world? What resources or gifts have you given to me to do this work? (Please pause for a moment and listen for how God might speak to you.)

- Who can pray with you about your life on mission?

Recommended Next Step

The Practice “Do Justice” is available at GreenwoodCC.com/Do-Justice. Please go to the practice now. You will find teaching that will explore more of this idea of “doing justice.” It will help you see the heart of God in response to the injustices around the world and our community and guide you in how you might respond. Plus, it will give you small group questions to help you continue to process this important topic of “doing justice.”

Additional Recommended Practices:

Hospitality, Resilience: Facing Persecution, Lament

You will find detailed guides at GreenwoodCC.com/Practices.

Questions for Reflection in Community

What areas of injustice or suffering in the world particularly move you? Have you seen God’s kingdom bring renewal in the world?

How might God be inviting you into his compassion and justice in response to this broken world? If you explored the Practice “Do Justice,” what did you find interesting and how did God speak to you?

What step of further generosity (finances, gifts, time, or resources) might the Lord be inviting you to in this area? In what way might you need to pursue greater experience of knowledge about “doing justice”?

What resistance or excitement comes up for you when you think about being a part of God’s justice? How can we pray for one another about “doing justice”?

SHARE LIFE WITH JESUS: WHAT COMES NEXT?



Congratulations on completing your first pass through the Life with Jesus Guide. We hope you have grown in Jesus to love God more deeply and follow his way more intentionally. We also hope you will return to this guide in the months and years ahead to continue to discern next steps as you grow and to share Jesus with others.

If you desire a deeper dive into Life with Jesus, we recommend the following:

- The Practices of Jesus: Please read through the appendix of Practices to find new Practices to help you grow in different areas. Even better, go through a Practice in your small group or with friends.
- Life with Jesus Classes: Greenwood will periodically offer four-week classes that explore the Discipleship Rhythms of Worship, Community, and Mission (i.e. four weeks on Worship, four weeks on Community, and four weeks on Mission).
- Life with Jesus Discipleship Mentors: Starting in the coming year, we will provide Life with Jesus mentors who will help you one-on-one as you process the Life with Jesus Guide.
- Share the Life with Jesus guide with someone else. (See below) For further help or training, please reach out to one of our pastoral staff or elders.

Jesus' last words to his disciples, which reverberate through history to us, are "All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations," (Matthew 28:19). To grow in Christ means to share the incredible gift of life with Jesus that he has given to us by making disciples who make disciples.

This can sound daunting; in fact, it is simply being spiritually intentional in relationships. Just as this guide has led you into conversations with God and others, it can lead you into spiritual conversations with someone else. So, who might God be inviting you to meet with and walk with through this guide? Take a minute and allow God to bring someone to mind. Maybe it is someone in your small group, someone you serve with at church, someone in your family, or even a co-worker. Who do you know who would be enriched by a deeper life with Jesus? Once that person or persons comes to mind, reach out to them, and see what the Spirit of God might do.

APPENDIX

THE PRACTICES OF JESUS GreenwoodCC.com/Practices

Bible Study: Jesus said we do not “live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God,” (Matthew 4:4). We can be nourished by the word of God in many ways. In this Practice, we focus on learning to study the Bible together with a group.

Do Justice: Jesus gave of himself to care for the vulnerable and sick, feed the hungry, oppose prejudice, and rescue lost people from oppression. In this Practice, we explore how we can follow him by becoming people who advance the beautiful Kingdom of God through doing justice.

Discover Your Gifts: Jesus knew exactly who he was and what God had gifted him to do. In this Practice, we learn to discover our gifts so that we can grow in confidence about our role in God’s beautiful Kingdom.

Fasting: Jesus fasted forty days before he battled the devil in the wilderness. In this Practice we learn how fasting can amplify our prayers and strengthen us spiritually.

Forgiveness: As he hung on the cross, Jesus forgave those who were killing him. Likewise, he says we must forgive those who sin against us. In this Practice we learn the journey of the heart that allows Jesus’ suffering on the cross to satisfy our need for justice so we can grow in forgiving love.

Giving: Jesus gave everything to save us, and he calls us to be sacrificial givers as well. In this Practice we learn to resist the power of money to master us (Matthew 6:24) by growing in joyful generosity.

Gratitude: Jesus showed us that his Father is good, generous, and beautiful. In this Practice, we experience how exercises in gratitude help us to know him more truly.

Hospitality: Jesus came from his Father to invite us home—to offer us the hospitality of the Kingdom. He wants us to do the same for others. In this Practice we explore how to make space for others to experience the welcome of Jesus.

Immanuel Prayer: Jesus is called Immanuel—God with us (Matthew 1:23). He promised to always be with us (Matthew 28:28) and encouraged us to “abide in his love” (John 15:9). In this Practice, we explore the form of prayer known as

contemplative prayer, or Immanuel prayer—a way of cultivating awareness of God with us and soaking in his love.

Lament: When Jesus cried from the cross, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46) he was quoting Psalm 22 and practicing an ancient form of prayer known as lament. In this Practice, we learn to honestly bring our sorrow and confusion to God so we may receive his comfort and strength.

Lectio Divina: Jesus said we live not by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. In *Lectio Divina* we learn the practice of listening as God speaks to us through his word.

Listening to God: Jesus often said, “whoever has ears, let him hear,” (Matthew 13:9). He was looking for those who were listening to God—leaning in to hear and to amend their lives accordingly. In this Practice, we explore how to develop the discernment to recognize the voice of God.

The Lord’s Prayer: When Jesus’ disciples asked him to teach them to pray, he gave them what we call the Lord’s Prayer. In this Practice, we learn to pray the movements of this prayer using the acronym P.R.A.Y.

Making Disciples: Before Jesus ascended, he told his disciples to “go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life,” (Matthew 28:19). In this Practice, we learn to draw from what we have learned about life with Jesus in order to come alongside other believers and help them grow in him.

Memorize Scripture: Jesus memorized scripture, and he recalled his father’s words when he needed to lament, face opponents, or resist temptation. In this Practice, we learn how memorization helps us rest in the presence of God, resist temptation, and root ourselves in God’s redemption story.

Prayer of Examen: Jesus said he was always watching to see what his Father was doing so that he could join in (John 5:30). In this Practice, we learn to watch for God’s movements so that we can walk more closely with him.

Resilience: Devoted Love in a Culture of Disconnection: Jesus lived out an astonishing devotion to his friends, and he says to us, “As I have loved you, so you must love one another,” (John 13:34). In this Practice, we explore how we can become “devoted to one another in love,” (Romans 12:10).

Resilience: Facing Persecution: Jesus was “despised and rejected” (Isaiah 53:3), and he warned that we would experience the same. But he also told us to “love our enemies” as he did (Matthew 5:44). In this Practice, we explore how to grow in resilience when we find the world hates us (Luke 21:17).

Resilience: Finding Hope in Suffering: Jesus is a “man of sorrows, acquainted with grief,” (Isaiah 53:3), and he tells us that we too will have trouble. But he also encourages us to “take heart” (John 16:33). Certain practices, explained here, help us take heart by guiding us through suffering to hope and deepening love.

Sabbath: Jesus made a practice of Sabbath-keeping—setting aside one day a week for resting in God. In this Practice we learn to rest and to heal from our frazzled and exhausted lifestyle.

Serve: Jesus modeled and taught this surprising teaching: “The greatest among you shall be your servant,” (Matthew 23:11). As the greatest man to ever live, he was also the most humble servant. In this Practice we explore how we can obey his teaching by finding our place to serve the body of Christ.

Share the Gospel: Just before Jesus ascended to heaven, he told his followers to “go and make disciples of all nations,” (Matthew 28:19). This Practice helps us grow in obeying this command, the command the church calls “the great commission.”

Small Groups: In the gospels we see Jesus doing almost nothing alone—instead, he does life with small groups of friends. We emulate him by creating or joining a small group of fellow believers characterized by commitment, vulnerability, and intentionality about deepening one another’s love for God and others.

Solitude: Jesus needed solitude to ground himself in his God-given identity and for spiritual strength. In this practice we learn to make space to know God and be known by him.

Spiritual Friendship: Jesus’ primary relationships were friendships characterized by devoted love. He called his followers to emulate him in forging such friendships. In this Practice we learn to deepen our friendships in the body of Christ.

Studying Scripture: In scripture we see that Jesus’s ministry is infused with a deep knowledge of God’s word. If Jesus saw his need to rely on and study God’s word, how much more should we? In this Practice you will be led through the first steps in learning how to go deeper into scripture, either using Sunday’s preaching as a springboard, or engaging in your own inductive study of scripture.

Worship in Community: Jesus was passionate about creating a community of worshippers who worship God in Spirit and in truth (John 4:24). In this Practice, we learn about the necessity of prioritizing worship with God’s people.



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