

BAY LIFE CHURCH

PROJECT DEVOTIONAL

MADE



This Book Belongs to:

27-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Monday, September 14—Saturday, October 10, 2026



A Letter from Pastor Mark

Greetings Lifer,

Allow me to open up your time in this devotional with a prayer for you as you partake in its daily offerings—here we go:

First and foremost, I pray this guide starts you on a journey that takes you deeper into the Word and presence of God.

As you interact with what's been prepared for each day, may God open your eyes to His truth and your heart to His voice. May you experience His love and grace in fresh ways and be challenged to become more like Jesus in every area of your life.

May God flood your affections with Himself in ways that make you slow down enough to truly reflect on His grace and goodness to you. May you become acutely aware of His presence in your life. Spiritual growth awaits you, my friend—when we submit to and interact with our God, He makes all things new.

I pray that this exercise goes way beyond just finishing a devotional book prepared for you—I am asking God to use your daily time with Him to transform you from the inside out. May He renew your mind, deepen your

faith, strengthen your love for Him and for others, and help you discern what is good, acceptable, and pleasing to Him. And when you reach the end of this journey, may you be able to look back and see that God has indeed made you new—not just in what you know, but in who you have become.

Amen and amen.

Being Made New With You,

Devotional Instructions

Each weekday reading takes about ten to fifteen minutes.

1

Read the Scripture out loud. Even if you are alone, and especially if you are with your family.

2

Have one person read the reflection. Then sit with it for a minute before anyone talks. Silence at the start of a conversation is not a problem to solve.

3

Work through the discussion questions together. You don't need polished answers here, just honest ones. If a question stalls, skip it and come back. If one question takes the whole time, let it.

4

Weekends look different. Saturdays are a short prayer page. Sundays are a single page pointing you toward what you will hear that morning. Both are meant to take five minutes, not fifteen.

5

You will miss days. Everybody does. You don't need to go back and catch up on the days you missed all at once. You can just pick up on today's date and keep going.

6

A note to parents. You do not have to share your deepest struggle with your kids, but try to share something. Children learn what faith actually looks like by watching adults practice it in front of them, not by being told it is important.

The Journey

DEVOTIONALS

Devotionals are daily and follow the corresponding Sunday Message.

WEEK 1

SAUL OF TARSUS

DAILY | SEP 14–18

*Written by Brenton Shephard,
Care & Counseling Pastor
and Janet Reed, Care Ministry
Coordinator*

WEEK 2

JONAH

DAILY | SEP 21–25

*Written by Shane Clark, Life
Groups Pastor*

WEEK 3

THE WOMAN AT THE WELL

DAILY | SEP 28–OCT 2

*Written by Stephen Stough,
Communications Director*

WEEK 4

ZACCHAEUS

DAILY | OCT 5–9

*Written by Tom Eichen,
Executive Pastor*

MADE NEW EVENTS

09.26.26

PRAYER WALK

SATURDAY | 9–11:30AM

*Walk through the spaces the
Made New Project would renew,
praying for the lives that will be
changed within them.*

10.03.26

BOOTS & BBQ

SATURDAY | 5–8PM

*Delicious BBQ, live music, line
dancing, mechanical bull riding,
games, and fun for all ages.*

**Kids' activities will be in the
Student Center with RSVP
(3 months–5th Grade).*

10.04.26

LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT DESSERT

SUNDAY | 6PM

*Church leaders and volunteers
will lead by example and be the
first to make our commitments.*

**Childcare available with RSVP
(3 months–5th Grade).*

10.11.26

CELEBRATION SUNDAY

9 & 10:45AM

*We'll be gathering as a church to
give our first fruits and start off
the project strong.*

The Meeting

Read Acts 9:1–6 (ESV)



REFLECTION

Throughout life, we learn the importance of preparation. Whether it be practicing before a game, learning to cook meals, or getting ready for a performance, we are taught the value of working on our weaknesses. When we are adequately prepared, we're ready to give our best in all that we do.

Preparation is an important part of the Christian faith. The Bible tells us to “be prepared in season and out.” When we study our Bibles or listen to sermons, we lay the groundwork for God to change us. But God isn't limited to working through our preparations. He can change our lives anywhere at any time. He even comes to us in the middle of our sin to call us into a relationship with Him.

Saul's life is the perfect example of this. When he and Jesus meet, his heart and mind are dead set against Him. Though unprepared and initially unwilling, Saul surrenders himself to Christ there on the road to Damascus. When Jesus calls out to Saul, he is left with the same choice that we face. Will I be obedient and follow Him or will I continue on my own path?

We should do our best to prepare for the changes God wants to make in us—doing this devotional is a good step in that direction. But we need to recognize that God isn't limited to what we've prepared—He'll meet us anywhere at any time to draw us into life with Him.

DAY 01



DISCUSSION

1. Can you think about a time in your life where God called you when you were least expecting it? What did you learn through your obedience?
2. How can remembering what Christ brought us out of help us be obedient to new ways He wants us to grow in our faith?
3. Is there anything you've been struggling with trusting God with lately?

(If you're doing this devotional alone, reach out to a friend or family member to share what you've learned. If you're doing this with your family, share current struggles with each other and then pray for each other to grow in your faith. One more note to parents: though you may not share your biggest struggle with your kids, think about something you can share with them. It goes a long way to live out our faith for our kids' future.)



PRAYER

Father, you did not wait for us to be ready. You came while we were still running. Thank you that our welcome has never depended on our preparation. Give us ears for your voice today, and the honesty to answer when you use our name. Amen.

Then, in your own words: Thank God for His deliverance and ask Him to lead you through your struggles and doubts. Close your prayer by asking Him to continue challenging you (and your family) throughout this week.

The Men with Saul

Read Acts 9:7–9 (NIV)



REFLECTION

Have you ever read this story and wondered about the guys who were traveling with Saul to Damascus? Reread this passage and think about what might have been going through their minds as they watched the scene unfold around Saul. They watch as Saul is washed in bright light. They witness his panic as his ability to see is taken from him. They hear the confusion in his voice as he calls out “Who are you Lord?” in verse 5. Then Saul gets up and needs their help. What should they do? How should they help? They take Saul’s hand and lead him to Damascus as Jesus instructed him to do.

When God works in us during seasons of growth, we don’t always know why He’s doing it. Saul waited just three days for answers to arrive, but in many cases we may wait years before understanding why God is calling us to step out in faith and follow Him. Whether you’re learning to trust Him during major life changes, battling through health challenges, learning to trust Him through difficulties with your kids, or navigating unexpected career shifts, we can look to the response of these men and be encouraged to trust God’s plan by shifting our question to Him from “why” to “what do you need from me”?

DAY 02



DISCUSSION

1. As you read through this passage, what stood out to you about the men traveling with Saul?
2. In what situations do you find it the easiest to follow God's leading and which situations do you find it the hardest? What makes those areas easier or harder for you?
3. How can shifting our perspective from asking "why" to "what do you need from me" help us follow God's leading?
4. How can you encourage the people around you to step out in faith this week?



PRAYER

Lord, you are at work in things we cannot see and will not understand for years. Teach us to stop demanding the reason before we take the step. And when someone near us is stumbling in the dark today, make us the hand that leads. Amen.

Then, in your own words: Take some time to thank God for the little blessings in and around your life. Confess the areas you're struggling with. Ask Him to bring the people you need to encourage you in your journey and ask Him to help you be an encourager to others as well.

Faith Over Fear

Read Acts 9:10–16 (NIV)



REFLECTION

Two things jump out to me as I read this passage. The first is the importance of choosing faith over fear. The second is that God can use anyone to help us move from where we are to where He wants us to be.

Imagine this. You're sitting at home, enjoying a nice cup of coffee as you plan what you'll have for dinner later that day. Then, you hear a voice calling out your name and telling you to go and help someone who you know has been actively looking to persecute people who share the same faith as you. I'm sure your initial response would be similar to Ananias', "God, are you aware of what You're asking me to do? This is dangerous." While it's generally wise to recognize danger and avoid it, there are moments when God calls us into seemingly dangerous situations to deepen our faith. He may challenge us to go on a mission trip we've been avoiding, or push us to share our faith with someone at work, or call us to step out in faith into a new career field. In each of these cases, we must choose to move beyond fear in order to step out in faith for Him.

In every phase of Saul's transformation into Paul we can note the constant, behind the scenes work of God. Sometimes God uses the people close to us to carry us into what He has in store, like He did with the men who traveled with Saul to Damascus. At other times, He works His plan through the life of a total stranger, like Ananias, to push us to where He wants us to be. When the path is clear, praise Him. When it's not, pray for what's to come. We may not always know the outcome, but we trust the One who does.

DAY 03



DISCUSSION

1. Who is someone God used to challenge you in your faith? How did they help you grow closer to Christ?
2. Why is overcoming fear so valuable in our faith?
3. What would you do if God called you to help someone like He did with Ananias?
4. Which phrase describes you right now: walking in clarity and gratitude in God's plan for your life, or waiting with uncertainty for what's to come? Share more about where you are.



PRAYER

Father, you send your people toward the very thing they fear. You have never once asked us to go somewhere you were not already working. Steady us. Make us willing before we are certain, and useful to somebody who needs what only you can do. Amen.

Then, in your own words: Spend some time thanking God for the people He's put in your life. Pray for the ones He'll send to be a help to you. Ask Him to use you as a help to others as well.

Sight Restored

Read Acts 9:17–19a (ESV)



REFLECTION

As soon as Ananias laid hands on Saul, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes. Those scales were more than a mere physical barrier. They represented the spiritual blindness that had kept Saul from seeing Jesus clearly. For three days he sat in darkness as God dealt with the condition of his heart. It is hard to imagine how frightening those days must have been for Saul. Yet God used that darkness to restore his soul and prepare him for a new purpose.

Many people around us also walk in darkness, needing the light and love of Jesus. Through the Made New Project, we are seeking to create an inviting space where children and families can learn about Jesus, encounter His love, and experience the life-changing power of the Savior. As we make things new in our facilities, we are asking God to continue to use us to pull the scales from the eyes of those living in spiritual blindness.

DAY 04



DISCUSSION

1. Think of a time when you were in darkness. What did it feel like? How might Saul have felt about being blind for three days?
2. What are the scales that keep us from rightly seeing and fully following Jesus?
3. Who do we know that is walking in darkness and needs the light and love of Jesus?



PRAYER

Lord Jesus, you open the eyes of our hearts. Before You, we were spiritually blind, but then You gave us sight. Thank you for calling us to Yourself—we don't deserve it, and could never earn it. Give sight today to someone we love who is still sitting in the dark. Use us to pull the scales from their eyes. Amen.

Paul the Preacher

Read Acts 9:19b–22 (ESV)



REFLECTION

His encounter with Jesus changed Paul's life! Paul had a new purpose, and God gave him a new beginning. Saul went from persecutor to preacher.

Paul's transformation reminds us that no one is beyond God's grace. No matter our past mistakes or who we once were, encountering Jesus offers us the chance for true change. Like Paul, we are called to share the good news with courage, trusting that God can use our stories to inspire others.

As we begin the Made New Project, let's pray for God's transforming work in our families, church and community, that our sacrifice and efforts would result in many stepping forward in faith. New beginnings are possible through Him!

A note on the name—Acts keeps calling him Saul for four more chapters before Luke tells us he was “also called Paul.” Saul was his Jewish name; Paul was his Roman name, and Paul means “small.” Scripture never says he chose it to stay humble—but it fits. The man who once made much of himself spent the rest of his life making much of Jesus.

DAY 05



DISCUSSION

1. Is there a mistake I find difficult to move beyond in my walk with Christ?
2. In what ways does Paul's story inspire or encourage me?
3. Who is God prompting me to invite to church or share the good news of Jesus?



PRAYER

Father, no one is past the reach of your grace. Thank you that our worst chapter is not our last. Give us the courage to proclaim what you have done in us to someone who needs to hear it. Amen.

Pause and Pray

Saul spent three days in the dark before anything made sense. Reflect on this past week in Saul's story for five minutes before you move on.



PAUSE

Look back. Which of the people in this week's passage did you see yourself in most? Saul on the road? The men holding his arm? Ananias, the guy told to go somewhere dangerous? You can share your answer with those present if you'd like.

Sit still for one minute. Reflect on what you've learned.

Then pray.

Tomorrow you will hear about a prophet who ran the other direction. Come ready.

DAY 06



PRAYER

Father, you came looking for a man who was not looking for you. You did not wait until he was sorry. You did not wait until he was ready. You met him on the road he had chosen and you called him by name, twice.

Thank you that this is how you have always worked, and that it is how you came for us.

We are not the ones who make anything new. You are. Keep us from thinking otherwise.

Where you are calling us to something that frightens us, give us Ananias' obedience. Where we are waiting in the dark without answers, hold us there until you are finished. And where someone near us needs an arm to lean on, let us be the ones who take their hand.

In Jesus' name, amen.

Listen for it Today

This Morning: Jonah



REFLECTION

Saul was found on a road he chose. Jonah gets on a boat to get away.

One man was headed the wrong way and didn't know it. The other knew what God had asked but bought a ticket going the opposite direction. God used them both and gave up on neither.

Before the service, ask one question at the table or in the car:

Is there anything God has already made clear to you that you have been slow to do?

Nobody has to answer. Just let the question sit there while you listen.

One line to carry in:

“Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time.” —*Jonah 3:1*

Second time. Hold onto that.

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

God Calls Us to Make a Difference

Read Jonah 1:1–2 (ESV)



REFLECTION

Ever noticed how God often chooses ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things?

Throughout the Bible, God calls fishermen, shepherds, tax collectors, and even reluctant prophets to be part of His work. Jonah was no different. God called him to go to Nineveh and deliver a message to people who desperately needed to know Him.

At first glance, God's command seems surprising. Nineveh was a major and wicked city of Assyria, a people Israel had every reason to fear and resent. Yet God saw something Jonah wouldn't, namely people who needed His mercy. God's heart is always for people. He wanted the people of Nineveh to hear His message, repent, and experience His forgiveness.

As God's heart was with Nineveh, so it remains with all people today. Before Jesus returned to heaven, He gave His followers one final mission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..." (Matthew 28:19–20). God continues to invite ordinary people like you and me to help others discover His love.

That's why creating spaces where children can learn about Jesus matters so much. A welcoming, safe, and engaging Bay Life Kids Ministry isn't simply about classrooms or furniture. It's about creating opportunities for children to hear the gospel, build friendships, and discover that they are deeply loved by God. Every child who walks through our doors is someone God knows by name and loves completely.

Jonah's story begins with a choice. God called, but Jonah ran in the opposite direction. Over the next few days, we'll see how God continued pursuing Jonah. But today, let's pause and ask a different question: When God invites us to join His mission, how will we respond?

DAY 08

As a church family, we have an opportunity to provide an environment for more children and families to discover the hope of Jesus. This isn't simply about improving a building. It's about investing in future generations. Long after construction is finished, children will hear Bible stories for the first time, families will find community, and lives will be changed because God's people chose to say "yes" to His mission.



DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think God wanted Jonah to go to Nineveh?
2. What are some ways God calls us to "go" and make disciples today?
3. Why is it important for children to have a place where they can learn about Jesus?
4. How can our family help welcome new families to church?



PRAYER

Father, you have always chosen ordinary people for your work. You see the ones we overlook, and you send somebody to them. Thank you for whoever you send to us. Make us willing to be sent, and make us actually go when we are. Amen.

God Uses New Opportunities to Reach More People

Read Jonah 1:4 (ESV)



REFLECTION

For many, change is a chore. Whether it's moving to a new home, starting a new school, beginning a new job, or even rearranging a familiar room, change can be daunting. We like what is familiar because it feels safe. Yet throughout the Bible, we see that God often uses seasons of change to accomplish His purposes and reach more people. That's exactly what happens in Jonah's story.

After Jonah ran from God's call, he boarded a ship headed in the opposite direction. But God wasn't willing to let Jonah miss out on His greater plan. He sent a powerful storm that completely changed Jonah's course. At first glance, the storm seems like a punishment. But when we look closer, we discover it was really an act of grace. God wasn't trying to destroy Jonah; He was redirecting him. God loved Jonah too much to let him continue down the wrong path.

Even in the middle of the storm, God was accomplishing far more than Jonah could see. The sailors had likely never heard about the one true God. Yet through this unexpected situation, they witnessed God's power. After the sea became calm, they responded by fearing the Lord, offering sacrifices, and making vows to Him (Jonah 1:16). What looked like a disaster became an opportunity for people to encounter God. That's often how God works. Sometimes He uses unexpected changes to open doors that were never there before. While change can be uncomfortable, God is often preparing the way for something greater than we can imagine.

Maybe you've noticed that some of the most meaningful moments in your own life came through seasons of change. Looking back, what once seemed uncertain became an opportunity to see God's faithfulness in a new way. As we continue this journey together, let's embrace the opportunities God places before us. Change isn't always easy, but when it helps more people experience the love of Christ, it's worth it. Just as God redirected Jonah for the sake of others, He is inviting us to step forward in faith so future generations can know Him.

DAY 09



DISCUSSION

1. Is change usually exciting or difficult for you? Why?
2. Have you ever experienced a difficult situation that God later used for good? What did you learn from it?
3. Change can be good. Why do you think creating inviting spaces matters, especially for children and families visiting church for the first time?
4. How can an updated Kids Ministry area help children feel loved, welcomed, and excited to learn about Jesus?



PRAYER

Lord, you love us too much to let us keep going the wrong way. What feels like the storm is often your mercy. Thank you for every time you turned us around. Hold us steady in the change in front of us, and open doors we would never have found. Amen.

God Gives Opportunities to Start Anew

Read Jonah 3:1 (ESV)



REFLECTION

Who doesn't love a fresh start? There's something encouraging about beginning a new school year, moving into a new home, or planting a garden in the spring. A fresh start reminds us that the future doesn't have to be defined by the past.

The Bible reminds us that God is the God of new beginnings. After running from God's call, Jonah found himself in the last place he ever expected, the belly of a great fish. There, in the middle of his desperation, Jonah cried out to God. He confessed his need for the Lord and remembered that "Salvation belongs to the Lord!" (Jonah 2:9).

Then God did something remarkable. After Jonah was safely back on dry land, the Bible says, "Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time." God didn't give up on Jonah because of his failure. Instead, He graciously gave him another opportunity to obey and participate in His mission. That's what God's grace does. God doesn't simply forgive us and leave us where we are. He restores us so we can continue serving Him. Throughout Scripture we see this pattern again and again.

But God's fresh starts aren't only for individuals. Throughout history, God has continually renewed His people so they could better accomplish His purposes. He called Abraham to begin a new nation. He led Israel into a new land. He sent the early church into a new mission of reaching the world with the gospel. Again and again, God opened new doors so future generations could know Him.

When we invest in the next generation, we're investing in shaping young lives for eternity. Moses reminded God's people of this responsibility in Deuteronomy 6:6-7, encouraging parents to teach God's truth diligently to their children throughout everyday life. Every generation has the privilege of passing on faith to the next. We

DAY 10

have been blessed by those who invested in us, and now we have the opportunity to do the same for the children who will come after us.

God gave Jonah a second chance, and Jonah responded differently. This time, he obeyed. As God opens new opportunities for our church, may we respond with that same willingness. Let's embrace the fresh start God is providing and faithfully invest in the next generation. Years from now, children and families may come to know Christ because God's people chose to prepare today for what He wants to do tomorrow.



DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think God gave Jonah another chance after he ran away?
2. Have you ever been given a second chance? How did it make you feel?
3. Why is it important for us to invest in future generations of children and families?
4. How can our family contribute to creating a place where every child feels loved, welcomed, and like they belong?



PRAYER

Father, you are the God of the second chance. You do not forgive us and leave us where we are; you restore us and send us back out. Thank you that failure is not the end of our usefulness to you. Let us hand that same hope to the ones coming after us. Amen.

God Wants Everyone to Know Him

Read Jonah 3:5 (ESV)



REFLECTION

Have you ever received an invitation that made you feel special? Whether it was an invitation to a birthday party, a team, or a friend's house, being invited tells us something important: You matter. You're welcome here.

Throughout the Bible, God extends that same invitation to people everywhere. He wants everyone to know Him and experience His love. That's what we see in Jonah 3. After receiving a second chance, Jonah finally obeyed God's command and traveled to Nineveh. His message wasn't long. Jonah simply warned the people that judgment was coming if they didn't turn to God. Then something incredible happened. The people of Nineveh believed God. From the king to the common citizen, the entire city humbled themselves, turned from their sinful ways, and cried out to God for mercy. When God saw their genuine repentance, He showed them compassion instead of judgment. Why? Because every person in Nineveh mattered to Him.

This is the heart of God throughout the entire Bible. Jesus told the story of a shepherd who left ninety-nine sheep to search for the one that was lost (Luke 15:4–7). John 3:16 reminds us that “God so loved the world” that He gave His only Son. And 1 Timothy 2:4 tells us that God “desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” God's heart has never changed. Every child. Every teenager. Every parent. Every grandparent. Every neighbor. Every family in our community matters deeply to Him.

That is why creating welcoming spaces for children is so important. Of course, a building doesn't change lives, God does. But God often uses places and people to accomplish His work. Just as He used Jonah to bring His message to Nineveh, He invites us to create environments where children can clearly hear the good news of Jesus.

DAY 11

Think about your own story. Chances are someone made room for you. A parent faithfully brought you to church. A Sunday school teacher invested in your life. A volunteer greeted you with a smile. A pastor shared God's Word. Because someone cared, you had the opportunity to know Jesus. Now it's our turn. We have the privilege of making room for the next generation so that children who haven't yet heard about Jesus can experience His love for themselves.



DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think the people of Nineveh responded so quickly to God's warning?
2. What do you think it means that every child matters to God?
3. Who are some children or families in our community who may not know Jesus?
4. How can our church be a place where everyone feels welcomed, loved, and encouraged to grow in their faith?



PRAYER

Father, every person in this city matters to you the way that one did. Every child. Every neighbor we have never met. Thank you that somebody made room for us. Show us the family you want us to make room for now, and give us the warmth to do it. Amen.

God's Heart is Bigger Than Ours

Read Jonah 4:11 (ESV)



REFLECTION

Have you ever been excited about something only to discover someone else wasn't? Maybe your team won the championship, your family planned a vacation, or you celebrated a big accomplishment, but someone else just couldn't share your excitement. That's how the book of Jonah ends.

After God gave Jonah a second chance, Jonah obeyed and preached in Nineveh. The people repented, and God showed them mercy. It was one of the greatest spiritual awakenings recorded in the Bible. An entire city turned to God! You would expect Jonah to celebrate. Instead, he became angry. Why? Because God's heart was bigger than Jonah's. Jonah cared more about his own comfort and opinions than he did about the people God loved. So God gently taught Jonah a lesson. He caused a plant to grow and provide shade, then allowed it to wither away the very next day. Jonah became upset over losing the plant, and God used that moment to ask a powerful question: If Jonah cared so much about a plant that lasted only a day, shouldn't God care infinitely more about the lives of more than 120,000 people in Nineveh?

The book ends with that question hanging in the air. In many ways, it's a question for us, too. Do our hearts care about what God cares about? In our study this week, we've seen God's heart on display. He called Jonah because He loved the people of Nineveh. He pursued Jonah when he ran away. He gave Jonah a fresh start. He changed an entire city. Every step of the story reminds us that God's mission has always been about people.

When we invest in the next generation, we're joining God's mission. We're saying with our actions, "Children matter. Families matter. People matter because they matter to God." The prophet Micah reminds us that God desires His people "to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). As we

DAY 12

walk humbly with Him, He continues to shape our hearts to reflect His compassion and His love for others. The story of Jonah ends without telling us how Jonah responded to God's question. Perhaps that's because God wants each of us to answer it ourselves. Will we care about what He cares about?



DISCUSSION

1. What do you think God wanted Jonah to learn through the lesson of the plant?
2. Is there someone you find difficult to love or forgive? How does God's love for them challenge your heart?
3. Why is investing in children and future generations so important?
4. What kind of church do we hope future generations will experience, and how can our family help make that happen?



PRAYER

Lord, your heart is bigger than ours. We are glad for mercy on the days we need it, and we resist it on the days we would rather someone else not receive any. Forgive us for that. Keep working on what we care about until it matches what you care about. Amen.

Pause and Pray

Jonah's book ends with a question and no answer. Sit in that for five minutes.



PAUSE

Look back. God asked Jonah whether he should pity a city Jonah wanted judged. We are not told what Jonah said. The silence is the point. It leaves the question with the reader.

So ask it plainly. Is there a person, or a kind of person, you would rather God not be merciful to?

Sit still for one minute. Do not fill it.

Then pray.

If you are walking and praying with us this morning, pray for the rooms as you pass them. Then pray for the people who will sit in them.

DAY 13



PRAYER

Father, your heart is bigger than ours. That is good news on the days we need mercy and hard news on the days we would rather someone else did not get it.

You did not give up on a prophet who ran. You sent a storm to turn him around and called it grace. Thank you for every time you have done that for us and we only understood it later.

Make our hearts match yours. Where we have decided somebody is too far gone, change our minds. Where we have made our own comfort the measure of what matters, break that.

You know every name in this city the way you knew every name in that one. Teach us to care about what you care about.

In Jesus' name, amen.

Listen for it Today

This Morning: The Woman at the Well



REFLECTION

Jonah was sent to a city he did not want to save. Today Jesus goes to a place his own people avoided, and stops at a well in the middle of the day.

Watch who starts the conversation.

Before the service, ask one question at the table or in the car:

When have you felt like the person nobody expected God to bother with?

Nobody has to answer. Just let the question sit there while you listen.

One line to carry in:

Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again.”

—*John 4:13–14*

She came for water. She left with something else.

[illegible]

Already at the Well

Read John 4:5–10 (ESV)



REFLECTION

I was rereading the story of the woman at the well recently, and something stood out that I'd never caught before. Jesus was already at the well. In fact, John tells us he "had to pass through Samaria" (v. 4). I don't think it's much of a leap to say our Savior was waiting for her.

And notice when she came. The sixth hour. Noon. The hottest part of the day. She came alone, likely avoiding the stares and whispers of the other women. She came carrying her shame. And Jesus was waiting.

My wife and I have served here at Bay Life for over two decades. In that time we've met people from every background and walk of life you can imagine, and one thing keeps jumping out. In stories too numerous to list, people say some version of the same thing: "I wasn't looking for him, but Jesus was there. Waiting. Welcoming me. Giving me hope. Calling me to new life." If you stop and let it sit for a second, it lands like an "a-ha." Jesus was already at the well.

How many times have we turned, failed, or wandered off from what we know is true, only to find that Jesus never stopped pursuing us? He doesn't meet us with shame or humiliation. He meets us with an invitation. He knows we're thirsty, and he offers us living water. He renews our hope, restores us in truth, and calls us into a life of real worship and grace-filled love.

Jesus still beckons us today, toward new life and new hope only he can give. The water is his gift. Our part is to recognize who stands in front of us, ask, and receive.

DAY 15



DISCUSSION

1. **Think of a season when you were just moving through life and Jesus met you there.** Did you recognize him at the time, or only looking back? *If it stalls: What tipped you off that he'd been there all along, even if you only saw it later?*
2. **Where are you tempted to believe you have to find your own way back to Jesus?** How does it change things to picture him already there, already inviting you closer? *If it stalls: If he's the one doing the pursuing, what does that take off your shoulders?*
3. **The woman was surprised Jesus would even speak to someone like her.** Who in your life assumes that Jesus, or the church, isn't for someone like them? *If it stalls: What makes a person decide, before they ever walk in, that this isn't a place for them?*
4. **Our church is renewing the places where people gather to encounter Jesus.** What's one way your family could help someone feel welcomed, hear the good news clearly, or take a step toward him? *If it stalls: Who's one specific person, and what's one specific thing you could do this month?*



PRAYER

Father, you were at the well before she was. You have been ahead of us the whole time, waiting in places we never expected to find you. Thank you that you meet us with an invitation and not with shame. We are thirsty. Give us the living water. Amen.

The Smaller Debt

Read Luke 7:36–50 (ESV)



REFLECTION

Picture the room. Jesus is reclining at a respectable man's table, and a woman the whole town knows by reputation slips in behind him. She says nothing. She simply weeps, wets his feet with her tears, wipes them with her hair, and pours out perfume she likely saved for a long time. Everyone is uncomfortable. Simon, the host, is certain that if Jesus really knew what kind of woman this was, he would pull away.

Instead, Jesus tells a story. Two people owe a debt, one enormous, one small. Both are forgiven freely. Which one, he asks, will love more? The answer is obvious, and that is the point. Her tears are not the price of her forgiveness. They are the response to it. She loves much because she has been forgiven much.

And Simon? He has done nothing wrong, exactly. He has simply assumed his debt was small.

That is the quieter danger, and if I am honest, it is usually mine. I am rarely the scandal at the table. I am more often the one being polite, doing the minimum, certain I did not need much grace. But a debt I could never repay was still cancelled. The only question is whether I will love like someone who knows it.

Grace was never meant to leave us composed. It was meant to undo us.

DAY 16



DISCUSSION

1. **Read the scene again slowly.** Simon and the woman are in the same room with Jesus, but they do everything differently. What does each one actually do, and what does each one not do? *If it stalls: Who touches Jesus, and who keeps their distance?*
2. **Jesus tells the parable before he says her sins are forgiven.** Why that order? What would change if he had told it the other way around? *If it stalls: Does she weep to earn forgiveness, or because she already has it? How can you tell from the story?*
3. **Simon isn't guilty of anything dramatic. He just assumed his debt was small.** Where do you catch yourself making that same assumption? *If it stalls: When is it hardest for you to believe you needed much grace, and not just a little?*
4. **The woman's love showed up in something specific and costly:** her tears, her hair, her perfume. What would extravagant love, not tidy or minimal, actually look like for you this week? *If it stalls: What's one thing love would do here that mere politeness never would?*



PRAYER

Lord Jesus, our debt was never small. We have been polite when we should have been undone. Thank you for cancelling what we could not have paid in a hundred lifetimes. Let that land deep enough to change how we love, and let it cost us something this week. Amen.

Born From Above

Read John 3:1–15 (ESV)



REFLECTION

Nicodemus comes to Jesus at night, and he comes with credentials. He is a Pharisee, a member of the ruling council, a teacher other teachers listened to. If anyone had earned a seat near God by study and discipline, it was this man. He opens graciously: Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who comes from God.

And Jesus, almost before the sentence lands, says something that must have stopped him cold. No one can even see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.

Nicodemus takes it the plain, physical way. How can a grown man be born a second time? But John tells the exchange with a word that holds two senses at once: again, which is how Nicodemus hears it, and from above, which is what Jesus turns out to mean. That gap is the whole point. Being made new is not a second attempt at the first birth. It is a birth we cannot perform on ourselves at all. It comes down; it is given; the Spirit does it, like wind we feel but never command.

Here is why this unsettles the respectable more than anyone. We can improve. We can study, serve, show up for years. But Jesus tells the most devout man in the room that none of it adds up to new. New is not achieved. It is received.

That is not a scolding. It is a relief.

DAY 17



DISCUSSION

1. **Read the exchange again.** Nicodemus says “we know,” and then Jesus tells him there’s something he doesn’t yet see. What does Nicodemus already understand, and what does he miss? *If it stalls: What is he sure of when he arrives? And what does Jesus say he still needs?*
2. **Jesus says the new birth is something the Spirit does, “like the wind,” not something Nicodemus can produce.** Why would that be hard news for an accomplished, religious man specifically? *If it stalls: What can’t you achieve by trying harder, no matter how disciplined you are?*
3. **Nicodemus had every credential and still needed to be born from above.** Where are you tempted to trust your track record, years of faith, service, being “a good Christian,” instead of grace? *If it stalls: If being made new can’t be earned, what does that change about how you stand before God?*
4. **New life is received, not achieved.** What would it look like this week to stop performing for God and simply receive what he gives? *If it stalls: Where are you working for acceptance you already have?*



PRAYER

Father, we cannot give ourselves new life. We have tried, and we have called our trying faith. Thank you that being made new is your work, your gift, done by your Spirit and not by our effort. Let us stop performing for what you have already given. Amen.

Still Outside

Read Luke 15:1–2, 25–32 (ESV)



REFLECTION

Jesus tells this parable because “respectable” people are grumbling. Sinners keep coming to him, and the religious crowd doesn’t like it. *This man welcomes sinners and eats with them, they say.* So Jesus tells them about a father and two sons.

The younger son takes his share, wastes all of it, and comes home with nothing. Then, to our shock and amazement, the father runs to him, throws a robe on him, and puts on a feast. That’s real. That’s the whole point of grace... the father runs. But there’s a second son, and the feast exposes the other half of what’s going on. The “good” brother won’t go in. His father comes out to him, and in a rush, it all comes out: *these many years I served you, and you never gave me even a young goat.* A lifetime in his father’s house, faithful, hardworking, and in all of it he never once believed what was already true: *all that is mine is yours.*

Here’s what gets me. The beauty of the younger son coming home is explosive grace; it’s shocking, emotional, beautiful... in short, it’s powerful. But it’s this contrast with the older brother that makes his hard heart stand out like a sore thumb. Worse, the older brother is the one I recognize.

Growing up, I was the responsible one, the second of six. My dad worked long hours under a lot of pressure, so holding things together often felt like it landed on me. And I did it. I went without. I gave up paychecks, changed diapers, mowed lawns, you name it... I likely did it better than anyone. I told myself that’s what love looks like. But somewhere along the way, going without stopped being love; I started keeping records. I’d done so much that nothing anybody gave back could ever square it.

So when grace showed up for people I figured had earned their own mess, that record was right there in my hands. I stood outside with my arms crossed. Certain I belonged at the “party,” but absolutely certain I wouldn’t be the one celebrating.

God’s still working on that in me. I’d even say sometimes I’ve become a cautious

DAY 18

optimist. But it hasn't been one moment... it's been years of him prying my fingers loose and telling me to come inside. I've changed... a lot. But sometimes, even now, I'm still standing near the door.

The father is still out there, pleading. Jesus never tells us whether the son goes in.



DISCUSSION

1. **Read verses 1–2, then the older brother's scene.** Jesus tells this whole thing to people grumbling that he welcomed sinners. Which brother did they see themselves in, and on which one do you land? Be honest: Is your gut reaction to the party “finally!” or “must be nice”?
2. **A lifetime in the house, and the older brother still kept records.** Where do you catch yourself keeping a record, treating your faithfulness like a bill God still owes you? *If it stalls: When someone who “earned their own mess” gets grace, what actually rises up in you?*
3. **Jesus never tells us whether the older son went in. He leaves him in the yard with the door wide open.** Why do you think Jesus ends it there? And where's that door still standing open for you? *If it stalls: If the door's open right now, what would it actually cost you to walk in?*

Made New isn't about earning a seat. It's about a Father who keeps coming out to the yard. As a church, we're not building something to reward the faithful. We're clearing the way for more people to come inside.



PRAYER

Father, you run to the ones who wasted everything, and you walk out to the ones who never left. Forgive us for the records we keep. Help us believe what has always been true: we are with you, and all that is yours is ours. Bring us inside. Amen.

Come and See

Read John 4:28–30, 39–42 (ESV)



REFLECTION

You’ve probably seen it on a coffee mug or a T-shirt. “Preach the gospel; if necessary, use words.” It’s cute. It’s also, if I’m honest, mostly kitsch. Because when you go looking, that isn’t what Scripture tells us to do. Scripture tells us to open our mouths and share the good news. With words.

Which brings us back to the woman at the well. She’s talked with Jesus. He’s told her everything she ever did, and instead of shrinking, she runs. Watch what she does first, though. She leaves her water jar behind. She came to that well for water, and she walks away without it. I don’t think that’s an accident. She’d found living water; the jar could wait.

And notice what she doesn’t do. She doesn’t go home to clean up first. She doesn’t fix her life, settle things, get respectable, and then go tell people. She goes as she is, straight into town, and says the truest thing she can: “Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?” She doesn’t have all the answers. She’s found the one who does, and she wants to introduce you to him. And the town believes, first because of her, then because they met him for themselves.

I led a mission trip this summer to our camp partners in western France. It’s a working trip; we provide real services, real labor. But I kept telling our team one thing: we can’t just work here, we have to share. People don’t discover the truth of Scripture because we did nice things for them. They discover it because somebody was bold enough to say it out loud. Sometimes we treat that as someone else’s job. The pastor’s job. The minister’s job. Somebody in full-time ministry. That’s not what God asks of us. He asks us to be faithful, to step forward with our story, and to trust that he’ll give us the words.

We don’t make anyone new. We can’t. Christ in us makes all things new. Our job is smaller and simpler than we think. We remove the obstacles between a person and Jesus, and we say the two words she said. Come and see.

DAY 19



DISCUSSION

1. **The woman went to tell the town before she had anything about her life sorted out.** Where do you catch yourself thinking you need to be more put-together before you could talk to someone about Jesus? *If it stalls: What would you feel like you had to fix first? Who told you that was the requirement?*
2. **Her testimony was basically a question: “Can this be the Christ?”** Does it change anything to know a witness can sound like “come and see” instead of having every answer ready? *If it stalls: When someone shared their faith with you, did it land more as an argument or an invitation?*
3. **We can quietly decide that sharing is the pastor’s job, or the “ministry people’s” job.** Where have you handed that off, and what would it look like to pick it back up? *If it stalls: What’s the story you’d tell if you decided it was yours to tell?*
4. **She left her jar because she’d found something better.** What’s one thing you’re still carrying to the well that Jesus is inviting you to set down? *If it stalls: What would setting it down actually look like this week?*

Made New is how we’re clearing obstacles between people and Jesus, renewing the places where our church says “come and see.” A kids space where a child can actually hear the story instead of three rooms at once. Sound and screens in the Worship Center that carry the words instead of getting in their way. We don’t make anyone new. We just want more room for the ones he’s making new.



PRAYER

Lord Jesus, we do not make anyone new. You do. Thank you for making our part small and clear. Go, and say what you have done for us. Take the fear out of our mouths. Put one name in our minds, and give us the words when we get there. Amen.

Pause and Pray

She left the jar and went back to town. Give this week five minutes before you move on.



PAUSE

Look back. This week put the mirror on the responsible ones. Simon at his own table. Nicodemus with his credentials. An older brother out in the yard with his arms crossed. None of them did anything scandalous. That was the problem.

So ask it plainly. Have you been assuming your debt was small?

Sit still for one minute. Do not fill it.

Then pray.

See you tonight at Boots & BBQ!

DAY 20



PRAYER

Father, you were at the well before she got there. You came out to the yard. You met a teacher at night and told him the truth he had not earned.

We have spent a long time being respectable. Some of us have been in your house for years and still have not believed what is already ours.

Forgive us for the record-keeping. Forgive us for loving little because we assumed we were forgiven little. Undo that in us.

Thank you that new is not something we achieve. It is something you give. Let that land as relief and not as a scolding.

And where you are sending us back into town with a story we do not feel qualified to tell, give us the courage to say two simple words. Come and see.

In Jesus' name, amen.

Listen for it Today

This Morning: Zacchaeus



REFLECTION

Last week a woman came to a well alone. This morning a man climbs a tree because he is too short to see over a crowd that has no interest in making room for him.

Watch who Jesus stops for, and watch what it costs the man to be found.

Before the service, ask one question at the table or in the car:

What would you climb a tree for?

Kids will have an answer for this one. Let them go first.

One line to carry in:

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” —*Luke 19:10*

Seek. He is the one doing the looking.

Tonight: Leadership Commitment Dessert, 6PM.

If you serve in a leadership role here, this evening is yours. Next Sunday belongs to all of us.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no text or other markings on the paper.

He Came

Read Luke 19:1 (NIV)



REFLECTION

There is an old 1971 song that begins: “God sent His Son, they called Him Jesus / He came to love, heal, and forgive.” Two words—“He came”—are doing enormous work. Think about what it means that the Son of God did not wait for the world to clean itself up before arriving. He came to Jericho, a prosperous, bustling city full of complicated people, and he simply passed through it. Not to a conference hall or a temple. Through the streets.

Our church is in the middle of its own kind of renovation, a remodeling of our Bay Life Kids space. Concrete, drywall, fresh paint. It can look like construction for a while before it looks like anything beautiful. But here is the truth behind every hammer swing: Jesus steps into the mess before the makeover. He entered Jericho not after it had sorted itself out, but while it was exactly as it was. The same is true of every family he walks into. He does not wait until your marriage is healthy, your kids are obedient, or your finances are stable. He comes first. Transformation follows his arrival. It does not precede it.

Every remodeling project begins with someone deciding to show up and do the work. Jesus showed up. That is always where “made new” starts.

DAY 22



DISCUSSION

1. Think of a season in your life when things were far from “put together.” Looking back, where can you see that Jesus was already present in that season, even before you recognized it?
2. In what area of your family life right now are you waiting to let God in until things feel more in order? What would it look like to invite him into the mess today?
3. How does knowing that Jesus came to Jericho—a wealthy, complicated, morally messy city—change the way you see your own neighborhood, workplace, or school?
4. The Made New renovation is meant to create space for life change. What is one specific way a more welcoming space at our church could help someone in your life take a step toward Jesus?



PRAYER

Lord Jesus, you came into a city that had not cleaned itself up, and you came into our lives the same way. Thank you for not waiting until we were presentable. Come into the part of this home we have been tidying before we would let you see it. Amen.

Climbing to See

Read Luke 19:3–4 (NIV)



REFLECTION

Zacchaeus was a wealthy man. He had authority, connections, and money. There was very little in Jericho he could not have if he wanted it. And yet, something about Jesus made him abandon his dignity completely. He hiked up his fine robe and ran. He climbed a tree. A grown man, a chief tax collector, scrambling into a sycamore like a boy.

The sycamore-fig was a common tree in Jericho: thick trunk, wide branches, low to the ground, easy to climb, almost comically accessible. Zacchaeus did not need great athletic ability or spiritual credentials to get up there. He just needed to want a glimpse of Jesus badly enough to look ridiculous.

Sometimes the thing that keeps us from growing spiritually together is the fear of looking unsophisticated. Praying out loud together feels awkward. Opening the Bible and not knowing where to start feels embarrassing. Showing up at a church event feels vulnerable. But Zacchaeus reminds us: the people who encounter Jesus are usually the ones willing to look a little foolish to get close to him.

The Made New Project asks us to think about what barriers keep people from seeing Jesus. Crowded or confusing spaces become one more barrier for families already unsure about walking in. When we remove them, we make the tree lower, we make the tree lower, easier to climb, for families who are curious but not yet sure.

DAY 23



DISCUSSION

1. Is there something in your spiritual life that you've avoided because it felt awkward or vulnerable, like praying together, attending a group, or serving? What would it take to just climb the tree anyway?
2. Zacchaeus was motivated by genuine curiosity about Jesus. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you describe your own hunger to know Jesus more deeply right now? What's driving that number?
3. Who in your circle of family, friends, or coworkers do you sense is curious about Jesus but hasn't taken a step yet? What's one way you could "lower the tree" for them?
4. As a couple or family, what is one spiritual habit, however small, you could start this week that would help you keep your eyes on Jesus together?



PRAYER

Father, we have let our dignity keep us at a distance and called it being sensible. Thank you that you were never impressed by our composure and never asked for it. Make us hungry enough to look a little foolish, and quick to lower the tree for somebody else. Amen.

He Knows Your Name

Read Luke 19:5 (NIV)



REFLECTION

Zacchaeus had not introduced himself. He had not sent word through a friend. He was hiding in the leaves, watching. And Jesus looked right at him, called him by name, and invited himself over.

This is one of the most quietly astonishing moments in all of the Gospels. Jesus did not say “hey, you in the tree.” He said Zacchaeus. The name means “pure” or “just,” a name this man had probably not lived up to and had perhaps long since given up on. Jesus says it anyway. Fully knowing who Zacchaeus was and what he had done, Jesus called his name and said: I’m coming to your house.

The theological word for this is grace. It is not earned. Zacchaeus had done nothing to deserve a personal invitation from the Son of God. He had only wanted to see. And yet Jesus came to him specifically, not to the crowd, not to the religious leaders watching from the street. To him.

In our own families, it is easy to believe that God is interested in other people’s stories, the dramatic conversions, the visible transformations. But the story of Zacchaeus insists that Jesus knows your name. Your specific, ordinary, complicated name. And he is not waiting at a distance. He is looking up into whatever tree you’re hiding in and saying, I’m coming to where you are today.

DAY 24



DISCUSSION

1. Have you ever felt like you were on the margins, watching faith from a distance, not sure you qualified for Jesus' attention? What does it mean to you that he called Zacchaeus by name from the crowd?
2. The name Zacchaeus meant "pure" or "just," a name he hadn't lived up to. Do you ever feel like there's a gap between who you are and who God intended you to be? How does this story speak to that?
3. Jesus said "I must stay at your house today," not "I'd like to" or "if you're open to it." He was intentional and specific. Is there an area of your life or home that you've kept off-limits to God? What would it mean to open that room?
4. How does the idea that Jesus personally seeks people out, not waiting for them to come to him, shape the way you think about sharing your faith with others? With your own kids?



PRAYER

Lord Jesus, you know our names. Not the crowd's name. Ours. Thank you that you came looking, and that you invited yourself in before we had one thing to offer you. There is a room in this house we have kept shut. Come in there too. Amen.

Repentance That Costs Something

Read Luke 19:8 (NIV)



REFLECTION

Nobody told Zacchaeus to do this. Jesus had not issued instructions, made demands, or preached a sermon on repentance. He had simply come to dinner. And yet something happened at that table that turned Zacchaeus inside out. The man who had spent his career extracting wealth from others now stood up, publicly, and gave it away.

Jewish law set restitution at 120% for voluntary confession of fraud. Zacchaeus goes far beyond the normal requirement: he voluntarily promises a 400% repayment. This was transformation showing itself in the most concrete possible way: money. The thing Zacchaeus had made his entire identity around was now flowing in the opposite direction.

Real encounters with Jesus always produce real change. Not because we are shamed into it, but because something reorients when we actually sit with him. The Made New Project is built on this idea, that genuine spiritual transformation shows up in the visible, tangible parts of life. In how we spend money. In how we treat people. In what we do with the spaces and resources we've been given.

Our investment in this Bay Life Kids space is exactly that kind of tangible response, a community saying: we believe what happens in these rooms matters for eternity, and we want to put real resources behind it. Zacchaeus didn't just feel differently after meeting Jesus. He did something differently. That's the model.

DAY 25



DISCUSSION

1. Is there an area of your life where you know what needs to change but you've been waiting for someone to officially tell you to change it? What is keeping you from making that move?
2. Zacchaeus's repentance was specifically financial, the very area where his sin was rooted. Where in your own life is God asking you to be transformed in the area that is hardest to surrender?
3. Talk about a time when generosity, giving something away, actually changed you more than it helped the recipient. What did that experience reveal about your heart?
4. As a family, what is one tangible step you could take, financially or otherwise, that would demonstrate your belief that God's work in your church and community is worth investing in?



PRAYER

Father, real change shows up in the place we hold tightest. You have never shamed us into it. You have only sat down with us until we wanted to. Do that again. Then give us the courage to act on it where it actually costs us something. Amen.

Salvation Has Come to This House

Read Luke 19:9–10 (NIV)



REFLECTION

Jesus ends his visit to Zacchaeus's house with one of the clearest mission statements in the Gospels: "The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." This is what the whole story has been building toward. Every detail, the tree, the name, the dinner, the repentance, has been in service of this single reality: Jesus came here on purpose, and Zacchaeus is the reason.

Notice what Jesus calls him: "a son of Abraham." This was not a spiritual metaphor. It was a declaration of restored identity. Zacchaeus had been cut off from his community, treated as a traitor to his people. In one sentence, Jesus places him back inside the covenant family. He is no longer the chief tax collector who sold out his neighbors. He is a son of Abraham. He belongs.

This is the heartbeat of the Made New Project. The remodeling of our Bay Life Kids space is not primarily about drywall and lighting. It is about creating a house where "salvation has come," where kids and families who feel like they're on the outside looking in can encounter Jesus and be told: you belong here, and you can become a son or daughter of the living God.

Every family that walks through our doors carrying a complicated story, like Zacchaeus climbing his tree, is exactly the person Jesus came to find. Our job is simply to make sure they can see him when they get here. And then to watch what Jesus does when someone gets close enough to hear their name called.

DAY 26



DISCUSSION

1. Jesus declared that Zacchaeus was “a son of Abraham,” restoring his identity in one sentence. Is there a false identity, shame, failure, “not enough,” that you are carrying that Jesus wants to speak over differently? Share it with each other.
2. The phrase “today salvation has come to this house” suggests that faith has a moment, a day when everything changes. Can you point to a moment like that in your own story? If not, what is standing between you and that kind of encounter?
3. Jesus said he came “to seek and to save the lost.” Who in your family’s life, a friend, a neighbor, a child’s classmate, is lost and needs someone to seek them out? What would it look like for your family to be part of that seeking?
4. The Made New renovation is designed to help more families find their way to Jesus. What would it mean for your family to be personally invested in that mission, not just financially, but in showing up, serving, and welcoming? What is one concrete commitment you could make together?



PRAYER

Lord Jesus, you came to seek and to save, and you found us. Thank you for saying we belong when everything in us argued otherwise. Speak over the false name we still answer to. Then send us out after the ones you are still seeking. Amen.

Pause and Pray

Twenty-seven days. Tomorrow is Celebration Sunday. Take ten minutes tonight instead of five.



PAUSE

Look back at all of it. A persecutor stopped on a road. A prophet who ran and got a second chance. A woman who came to a well alone at noon. A tax collector up a tree. Not one of them went looking for God.

Every single time, he came first.

Then look at tomorrow. In the morning we make our commitments and bring our first fruits. If you have already decided what you are doing, good. If you have not, tonight is a fine time to decide it together, out loud, with the people at your table.

A few things worth saying plainly.

This is a response, not a requirement. Nothing you give tomorrow makes God love you more than he already does, and nothing you withhold makes him love you less. That is the whole point of the four stories you just read.

First fruits means it comes off the top, not out of what happens to be left. It is an old practice and a simple one. You give first, and you trust God with the rest.

And if you are new here, or visiting, or still working out what you believe: tomorrow is not about you writing anything down. Come and celebrate with us. That is enough.

Sit still for two minutes. Do not fill it.

Then pray.

See you in the morning.

DAY 27



PRAYER

Father, you have made us new. Not because we cleaned ourselves up first, and not because we were the ones looking.

Thank you for the road, the storm, the well, and the tree. Thank you that you are still doing this.

Tomorrow we bring what we have. Take the fear out of it. Take the pride out of it too. Let us give like people who know exactly what we were given.

Make these spaces new for the people you are still making new. And let us be the kind of church that a person can walk into carrying anything at all.

In Jesus' name, amen.



Bay Life
CHURCH

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