

RENOVATE



remove - replenish - rebuild

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” 2 Cor. 5:17

fasting BASICS

Biblical Fasting

Fasting is essentially giving up food (or something else) for a period of time in order to focus our thoughts on God. While fasting, our goal should be to take the time we would be eating or doing specific activities (phone, tv, etc.) and devote it to prayer, the Word, and worship. We are more sensitive to the voice of God and more attuned to hear what He has to reveal to us while fasting.

Preparing for the Fast

Get ready mentally and physically by cutting down on food (if fasting food) intake one week before the actual fast. Invite the Holy Spirit to speak to you and tenderize your heart.

Types of Fasts

1. Daniel Fast

Abstain from sweets, meat, alcohol, and eat mostly vegetables.

2. Complete Fast

Abstain from all solid food and drink only water and/or juice.

3. Media Fast

Abstain from watching movies, TV, and from social media.

During the Fast

Your body detoxifies as you fast which can cause mild discomfort such as headaches and irritability during withdrawal from caffeine and sugars. It is normal for the first few days to be the most challenging. Fresh fruit and fresh juice are helpful to mitigate sugar cravings. Make sure to drink plenty of water throughout the day. Spend the time you would normally use for meals to pray and seek the Lord. Keep a journal on what the Lord speaks to you.

How to End

Resist the temptation to overindulge in meals right after the fast ends. Rather, eat small portions of food, snacks, and liquids.

introduction: renovate

2 Corinthians 5:17 • Psalm 51:10

As we have just entered a new year it should be our desire more than ever to hear and respond to the voice of the Lord. However, with division, war, election cycles, and polarization on every side, it is very easy to become disillusioned. We instinctively react by hunkering down and staying locked into the same routines, often without evaluation or fresh illumination. As Christians we should be the ones that are not reactors to the events and calamities all around us but who see what God is doing and choose to partner with Him. We are to be a people that live in and diffuse fresh hope and faith to those around us.

We can do this because we have been made new in Christ. The old is gone and God has and continues to put the new inside of us because of Jesus Christ. It says in 2 Corinthians 5:17, *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”* ESV

In this new year, I believe the Lord desires to **renovate** the interior of our hearts and minds. In order for Him to do this we first have to yield and give Him permission. Second, we must embrace that renovation takes time, effort, and involves removing things we have grown accustomed to. Renovation also means we will have construction zones, inconveniences, and there will be demolition of old functional ways, habits, and routines so that refreshing and new updated interiors can be established.

All fresh vision and perspectives must be petitioned through the invitation of our hearts. Let's position ourselves to trust God's 3-fold process in His work in us; first the removal process, second the replenishing and third, allowing the Holy Spirit to rebuild. This verse that King David wrote, captures the essence of **renovate**. Psalm 51:10, *“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.”*

We must prepare and position our hearts to receive the vision, upgrades, and changes the Lord wants to do in each of us. We

certainly do not want to be like this person, in the sketch below, that gets exasperated with the process...

A man hired a contractor to renovate his kitchen. The contractor said to the man that he was nearly done. The homeowner said, "No way that you are - there is a giant hole in the granite countertop!"

Frustrated with how long the renovation had taken, the homeowner started yelling at the contractor and his assistant, who was standing in the hallway outside of the kitchen, demanding they leave. "Get out now!" the man shouted. Trying to allay his anger, the contractor asked for the homeowner to calm down and just let his assistant into the kitchen with the part he needed. "No!" the man replied angrily. "I'm through with you and your stall tactics!"

"You're not letting us finish the work. We're almost done, we just need to install one last thing, and you are preventing that," said the contractor. "I promise If you cooperate, we can have this house finished and avoid a costly legal battle where we'd both end up worse off. Now, please just let us install that sink!"

Haha, well it takes time and perspective to **renovate**. If each of us will embrace these next three weeks with proper endurance and

patience for what the Lord wants to do, we will receive an impartation for our own hearts and souls that is better than what we had in our last seasons.

Let all of our hearts cry be in this New Year, "Jesus, come **renovate** me!"

Brad Neuschwander
Senior Pastor





week one: **remove**

2 Corinthians 5:17

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation: The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”

Sometimes we don't even realize that things have gotten dirty. In week one we'll step into a time of cleaning house. Throughout Scripture the Lord invites His people into times of repentance, times where we allow His Spirit to point out what is old, dirty, or expired. In the next seven days we will discuss what it means to remove clutter and to demo the things within that are not of Him.

cleaning house

(01)

2 Corinthians 6:17-18, 7:1 • Isaiah 1:16-17

2 Corinthians 6:17 commands, *“Come out from among them and be separate.”* This is coupled with a promise in verse 18, *“I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters.”*

To become separate, we must *“cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit”* (2 Cor. 7:1). There’s a cleansing that God alone does in our lives, but there’s also a cleansing that God wants to do in cooperation with our own will and effort. Clarke’s Commentary says,

“How can those expect God to purify their hearts who are continually indulging their eyes, ears, and hands in what is forbidden, and in what tends to increase and bring into action all the evil propensities of the soul?”

Cleansing isn’t passive. It is proactive self-cleansing through Scripture, repentance, and the Holy Spirit. In this process, we are making intentional steps toward holiness that’s propelled by an increased

revelation of God and His promise of intimacy.

Holiness is a result of the removal of sin. As a fun example, I noticed one day a very sour smell coming from my garbage can in the pantry. I emptied the trash, cleaned inside and around the can, but for days the smell lingered and got worse. I finally thought, “move the can away from the wall.” You would think I would’ve thought of that first... Ugh! Sure enough, there was a cheese wrapper molding in the corner behind the garbage. This little guy caused a **huge stink**... wowsers. Even one little thing hidden that is not in right standing with God can cause a huge stink in our lives.

As we begin our fast, let’s start out clean and prepare our hearts to grow in the revelation that we are His sons and daughters. Like the cheese wrapper, how do you smell? What’s the aroma coming from your life? Ask yourself or a trusted mentor, friend, or loved one these questions and allow the Holy Spirit to speak.

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May we each find at the end of this fast, we have stepped into a deeper intimacy that makes us hungry for **more** of Him.

Jennifer Neuschwander
Senior Pastor

why we fast

(02)

Matthew 6:16 • Acts 14:21-23 • Joel 2:12

Recently I've heard of the many physical and regenerative benefits of fasting. Yet, that is not the purpose of fasting given in scripture. So why do we fast?

Fasting is an expression of humility before God, where we forgo comforts for the expressed purpose of pursuing God.

With that in mind, I've been asking myself, "how do I build an obedient practice of fasting?"

Matthew 6:16 says *"Now when you fast, don't go around looking miserable, like the hypocrites. They make sour faces so that people will know they are fasting. Yes! They have their reward already! When you fast, wash your face and groom yourself, so that no one will know you are fasting — except your Father, who is with you in secret. Your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."*

Before establishing a practice of fasting we must first learn from the model of Jesus. He fasted in the desert and hints at His practice in

Matthew 17 saying *"this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."*

Matthew 6 begins, *"when you fast,"* NOT, *"if you fast."* Dietrich Bonhoeffer says, "Jesus takes it for granted that His disciples will observe the pious custom of fasting. Strict exercise of self-control is an essential feature of the Christian life. Such customs have only one purpose — to make the disciples more ready and cheerful to accomplish those things which God would have done."

Three times in Matthew 6 we are directed to operate in secret. Giving in secret, praying in secret and fasting in secret. Three times it is repeated, *"then your Father, the One who sees in secret, will reward you."*

Do you desire the Father's reward? Ask the Lord to reveal what He would like you to abstain from, the answer may surprise you.

I challenge you to allow the Lord to disrupt what is comfortable. He tells us, *"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."*

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His grace is sufficient to accomplish any challenge that He lays before us. Let's advance this year in our willingness to abstain from life's comforts in order to pursue the power of God and to attain a heavenly reward.

Grace Konold
Staff Pastor

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

why we repent

Jonah 3:6-10 • Matthew 3:2 • James 4:8 • Psalm 139:23-24

We cannot afford to be unrepentant people. John the Baptist began preparing hearts for the coming of Jesus Christ by preaching, *“repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”* (Matt. 3:2). Likewise, Jesus’ first command was, *“repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”* (Matt. 4:17). Repentance is the avenue by which one experiences the fresh move of God. An unrepentant heart will keep us blinded to the Truth, missing the freedom that is available. Scripture shows that the unrepentant Pharisees missed Jesus the Messiah, but those that repented and believed were brought into closer proximity with God; they were cleansed of their sins, they tangibly experienced God’s goodness and breakthrough.

Sin separates us from God because we choose to rely on that which leads to death rather than rely on Christ (Isaiah 59:1-2). Repentance is a change of mind that prompts a change of behavior. It is a choice that takes humility, it requires dying to our flesh. We turn 180 degrees away from sin and

walk toward Jesus, allowing Him to cleanse us and renew us by His blood and His Word. In the story of Jonah, Nineveh’s sin beckoned the Lord’s judgement. In His mercy, God sends Jonah who preaches, *“Nineveh shall be overthrown!”* (Jonah 3:4). Scripture records, the people **believed God**. Their belief prompts a response and the nation goes on a fast, puts on sackcloth, sits in ashes, and calls out mightily to God. When God saw **how they turned** from their evil way, He relented of the disaster He said He would do (Jonah 3:6-8, 10).

So how do we turn? We must first believe God’s Word is Truth, then die to our pride by turning to God and confessing our sins (James 5:16), and obey what He instructs.

Today, let us draw near to God with repentant hearts (James 4:8). *“Lord, search me, and know my heart. Test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out any wicked way in me, and lead me along the path of everlasting life”* (Psalm 139:23-24) [Spend time allowing the Holy Spirit to speak to you].

Lord, today I repent for _____. I choose to turn from my sin and entrust this area of my life to You instead of relying on my own strength. Cleanse me with Your blood and show me the path to everlasting life [journal what the Lord says].

Valina + Jason
Jacksonberger

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

REMOVING *a* hard heart

(04)

Ezekiel 18:31-32, 36:26

One of the things I enjoy about farming is that many of the tasks that I do are so applicable to understanding God's Word. There is a hazelnut orchard on my farm that we use as a driveway to get to other fields all year long. The constant driving, over many years, has severely compacted the soil. It's to the point where nothing grows on the paths that have been created. We have beautiful green grass throughout the entire orchard except on this hard, compacted soil. The path has also become bumpy and rough to drive on and needs constant care to maintain. I have attempted to plant more seed to fill in the bare patches, but nothing ever grows. After 10 years of these practices the soil is at a place where we would have to bring a large tractor in and rip up the hard soil, smooth it back out, and then it would be ready to receive the seed.

Isn't the soil of our lives the same? We constantly drive on the pathways of our hearts never realizing that we are creating hard patches. Most of us would say that

hard places in our hearts are just created by sin, unforgiveness, or hard life circumstances. I would submit to you that in our Christian walk we can get in a rut. Sometimes we read the Bible the same way, pray at the same times, go to church and talk to the same people, never realizing that we have become callused towards the Holy Spirit. Sometimes our desire to look and feel like the **"good Christian"** causes us to get stuck in our religious mindsets, creating hard areas of our hearts that don't produce fruit and where we don't see growth in our lives.

So how do you break up the hardness in your life?

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the areas that need softening.
2. If you deal with sin patterns: ask forgiveness, find accountability, get prayer, and do the hard work of denying your flesh (it's worth it!).
3. Find good, godly men and women to come alongside you to encourage you and to challenge you.
4. Submit to the Father knowing that He will give you a new heart.

Aaron + Catherine
Smucker

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

removing stubbornness

(05)

Genesis 26:4-5 • Psalm 32:8-9 • Matthew 26:31-35, 69-74

Those who know me, know that I have a very strong will. This was not always the case. At one time I was just filled with pig-headed stubbornness. I hated the examples I had growing up so I would do things **my** way. I would be different. I recall one time when my mom was doing everything she could to change my mind about something to no avail. Exasperated, she finally stomped off gritting her teeth, saying, “I don’t know how you got so (fill in the blank) stubborn!” Hmm, I wonder. So much for being different.

A biblical example of stubbornness is Peter telling Jesus he will never fall away as Jesus tries to tell him he will deny Him. Jesus tells him **again** but Peter stubbornly says he will go even unto death if he must (Matthew 26:31-35). That act of stubbornness left Peter unprepared for one of the most gut-wrenching moments of his life (Matthew 26:69-74). Also consider the life of Saul who stubbornly persecuted the church. Jesus confronted him, saying, “*It is hard for you to kick against the*

goads” (Acts 26:14). Galatians 6:8a says, “*Whoever sows to please their own flesh will reap destruction.*”

How then does our destructive stubbornness change into a godly resolve? Jesus gave us a perfect example in the garden. His flesh cried out to try to avoid the cup of the cross, but His spirit insisted “*not my will be done but Yours.*” (Matthew 26:39). I’m also reminded of the parable of the two sons (Matthew 21:28-29). The one son said, “*I will not*” (stubbornness) then went away and reconsidered (repented). Galatians 6:8b says, “*Whoever sows to please the Spirit will reap eternal life.*” Peter, Paul, and, of course, Jesus took that same character trait of a strong will and submitted it to God. All were able to stand in the face of actual death and reap eternal life. By submitting to God, He **has** changed, **is** changing, and **will** continue to change, our fleshly stubbornness into a Godly resolve and a positive strong will to be used for His glory and His purposes.

Kelly
Henry

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removing what hinders vision

(06)

Matthew 7:3-5 • Proverbs 27:17

"Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye." (Matt. 7:3-5 ESV).

On our honeymoon, Aaron lost his prescription sunglasses straight into the reef. We grabbed our snorkels and began to swim around and around looking for them. There was a piece of coral growing in the reef that looked like two gray saucers attached to each other. To me it was obvious that this was not the sunglasses; but to Aaron, who was now visually impaired, it was quite the trip up. Even though I was telling him what was true, he did not believe me. Don't worry, we did eventually find them, and our marriage was spared.

Vision is a funny thing. You don't realize what you can and cannot see until your vision changes (either for the better or for the worse).

Sometimes that vision changes with the addition of another pair of eyes, or with the addition of a new filter, like prescription sunglasses. The Holy Spirit can reveal blind spots to us and can also help us remove filters that we have placed over our eyes. These filters can be things like bitterness, unforgiveness, sin, disappointment, etc.

The Lord often uses other people in our lives to help point out our blind spots, like our spouses, parents, best friends, and of course our pastors. This is one of the reasons why being plugged into the local church is so important. We can't always see a true picture of ourselves. We need the Holy Spirit and our fellow believers to help us take out the specks, and sometimes the logs. Proverbs 27:17 explains this as iron sharpening iron. The process of improving our vision might be uncomfortable but it's necessary to gain heavenly perspective of our lives.

Aaron + Christine Kost
GenChurch Leaders

renovate

removing idols

(07)

2 Chronicles 33:15 • 2 Kings 23:4-6 • Matthew 5:30

This last year, in the process of planning for our new baby girl and getting everything ready for her arrival, there were a few areas of the house that needed to be deep cleaned, or cleaned out entirely. Every time we got into a project, it always seemed to take way longer than we anticipated, because as we removed things from closets and bedrooms, we found there was a lot more junk and useless stuff to get rid of than we originally thought.

Isn't that how these kings are responding to the idols in the temple? These two passages remind us of Matthew 5:30, when Jesus talked about the attitude we must have when getting rid of whatever leads to sin. *"If your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away..."* When we deep clean the house, we have to get rid of the mess and clutter. We have to talk through what bad habits leave the house dirty and change them, or else the mess returns. Spiritually it is like this as well. It is easy to let the mess build up. Issues start small, like a passing thought, but

neglecting those thoughts, they lead to sin, or a big "mess"... Jesus encourages us to approach our "mess" with a tenacious attitude, as in Matthew 5, cutting it off at the root, and throwing it away. Just like the ferocity of the kings in 2 Chronicles to take the idols out of the temple, outside of the city and destroy them.

Cleansing the temple was a great cost. The kings had to **remove** every altar, every idolatrous priest, and every symbol that could twist or coerce the people's hearts back to sin.

Here are some questions to ask yourself as we come to the end of the first week. What idols are in your heart that the Lord is helping you become aware of? As the Holy Spirit is cleaning out your "mess," what things are there that you didn't anticipate?"

God doesn't just want us to get rid of things, He wants us to remove anything that can lead us back into the idolatrous condition He cleansed us from. Let this prayer of David be our prayer today as we

close this devotional, and this week of removing.

“Who can discern his errors? Declare me innocent from hidden faults. Keep back your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me! Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer” (Psalm 19:12-14).

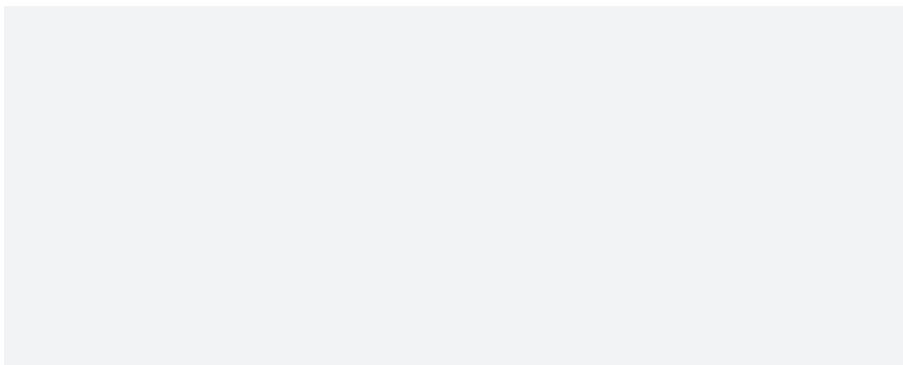
Trent + Jacque Cargill
Youth Pastors

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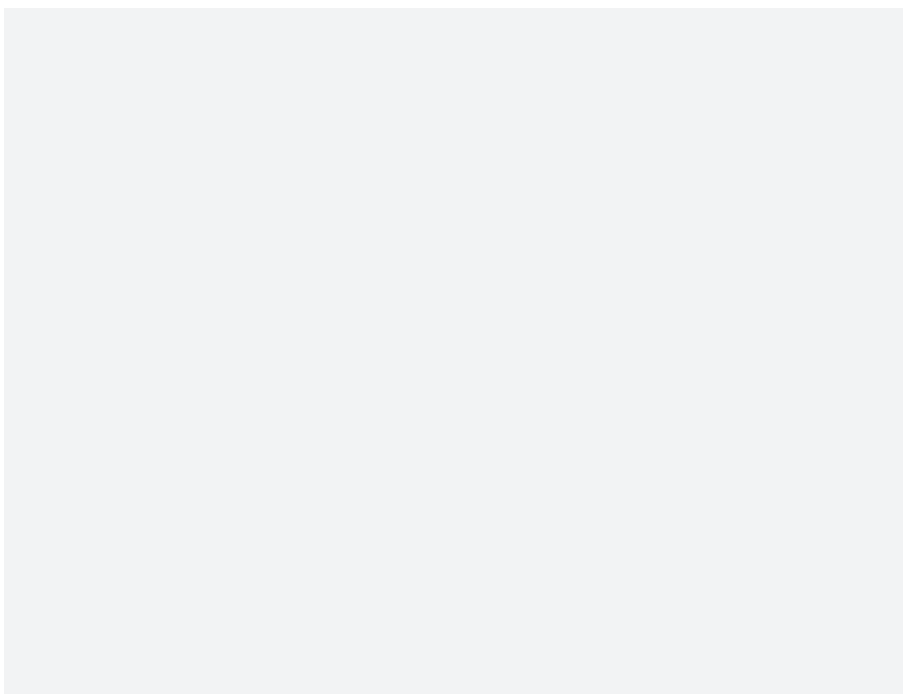
week one reflection

*At the end of each week take additional time to talk to the Lord
and reflect as you answer the questions below.*

1. Why are you fasting? List three reasons.



2. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any areas that need a **HOUSE CLEANING**. Repent for the things He uncovers and allow Him to bring truth to those areas of your life. Remove and surrender anything He asks you to.





week two: **replenish**

Now that we've cleaned out the old, we're ready to receive the new. It is essential that we restock/replace the things we've removed with the things of the Lord. This second week is a time to get close, tune your ear, and receive from God. Let His Spirit **restock** the rooms of your soul and begin to fill you with what you need for the year ahead.

FULL *of* what?

(08)

Galatians 2:20, 5:22 • Matthew 5:6

Welcome to week two! Last week was about renovating out the old man by having an encounter with the living God, this week we focus on replenishing and refreshing after demolition.

After an encounter, a lot usually happens; family, work, entertainment... These things on their own are not sin, but they can become sin when we let them take the place God is meant to have. Derek and I would like to take you on a mini journey on how we have had to make the shift from encounter to renewal.

A few years ago, I (Derek) was challenged on whether or not I was "crucified with Christ." I remember when I asked the Lord into my heart. I remember when I was

baptized. I tried my best to raise my kids in the church and to tithe. But this challenge kept festering in my heart, "Was I actually crucified with Christ, and how would I know?" The scripture that kept chewing at my soul also became the scripture that became my answer:

Galatians 2:20, *"I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."*

Being crucified with Christ isn't just giving Him your first, or best, it's giving Him everything. I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.

The replenishing and refreshing is **letting Jesus set up house the way He wants**. Let's ask ourselves with honesty and humility, "Do I want to go back to old appetites? Or have I tasted and seen the goodness of God, and now I hunger and thirst for His righteousness alone?"

Matthew 5:6 *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."*

the SECRET place

(09)

Psalms 91:1, 63:1-3

Chloe and I met while working at a children's group home in Seattle. My schedule was not ideal, ending my work week with a 16-hour shift at 11:00pm. Chloe wanted to spend time with me, to know me better, so she changed her schedule to match mine. After a while, I moved down to Roseburg. Chloe continued working the same schedule. But now, after finishing her 16-hour shift she would promptly drive down to Roseburg, arriving in the middle of the night, just to spend time with me. To know me better.

The Scriptures are God's love letters to you. His heart, His desires. As you abide with Him, as you spend time with Him, reading His love letters to you and talking with Him in prayer—pouring out your thanks for **all** His attributes, and your love for Him, He reveals His heart to you in a deeper way.

Holy Spirit has a great many things to share with you. It takes changing your schedule, even when it's not ideal. Running to Him, even in the middle of the night, with a surrendered heart. Hungering for

more. And as He refines, purifies, changes you, your relationship grows. You will know, understand, and see that the Lord is your safe place, your protector, your fortress, and you will learn to **trust** Him.

As the Bride of Christ, we encourage you to change your schedule, habits, and thoughts—to kindle a fire, a passion for the Lord. Read the Scriptures daily, His love letters to you. Spend time talking with Him in prayer. Ask the Lord, "What do you want to tell me today?" Then **listen** to what He says and **write it down**. Cherish what He tells you.

The Lord longs to dwell with you. To be in relationship with you. He is wooing you with His love letters (the Scriptures) and His loving voice (Holy Spirit). Will you make time for Him and answer His call, and say, "Yes Lord! I am here. I want to know You more. Change me."

We pray a hunger and desire bubble up in you. A passion and desperation to take root. A longing to know Him better and to run to the Secret Place.

Brian + Chloe
Bradford

meditating ON God's Word

(10)

Job 23:12 • Psalm 119:18, 111 • John 8:31-32

Kathy and I had been hiking along a narrow path through cactus and creosote bushes in a stretch of desert just east of Phoenix when in the distance we saw a lone figure moving towards us. He seemed to be very animated and was chanting something in a sing-song fashion. As he drew near we realized this was a small African-American man wearing a Chicago Cubs uniform. He was dancing along the path and chanting at the top of his voice “B-I-B-L-E, B-I-B-L-E; basic instruction before leaving earth.” His joy and animation uninterrupted, he bounced past us and moved into the distance, still waving his arms and singing at the top of his lungs like a man who had just struck gold. Weird!

I can see how one might think of the Bible as a believer’s instruction manual. Unlike the world’s manuals, however, God’s instruction requires Holy Spirit revelation before application. As Psalm 119:18 puts it; *“Open my eyes that I might see wonderful things in your law.”* In fact, the scriptures actually do

demonstrate and instruct believers in how to know and follow God. The answers are there for the asking, and sometimes, the waiting.

How do we as believers receive/hear His instruction? One way is to sit at His feet as did Mary of Bethany. Devote time and focus to be in His presence, abide. Jesus said, *“...if you abide in my Word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free”* (John 8:31-32). Open your B.I.B.L.E. and invite the Holy Spirit, allowing Him to speak as you listen. Allow God to take you deeper into His Word to a place of intimacy and revelation.

If you really want to know the truth, to know Jesus, do the one thing that is necessary and spend time alone with Him; face to face, heart to heart. Just the two of you in the secret place. Remember, He said He stands at the door and wants to

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come in and visit with you over a meal. Open the door and spend some time visiting with your best friend. Abide. You might just find yourself dancing through your desert.

Dennis + Kathy
Snyder

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

ABIDING *in* the vine

(11)

John 15:4-5 • 1 John 3:24 • Psalm 15

Is there anything worse than being just out of wifi range? You might be trying to send a text, watch a video, or listen to music, but because of constant connecting and disconnecting, you get frustrated by not being able to use your phone or laptop the way you want to.

The word “**abide**” means to remain, and this is what we are called to do by God. 1 John 3:24 says that in order to remain in connection with God, we have to keep His commandments. It also says to determine if we are remaining in Him, He sent His Spirit. Psalm 15 talks about the qualifications of those who can “*abide in His tabernacle*”; those that walk uprightly, speak truth, and do good to those around them.

How do we know if we are following the Word of God and keeping His commandments? By being constantly in the Word! The Word is the plumb line of all truth, all righteousness, and is the source of connection to the Holy Spirit. The more time you spend in the Word, the more you will see your connection to the source grow. John

15:4-5 speaks to God being the vine and us being the branches - and the evidence of connection to the vine is the fruit we produce.

As you go through the fast this year, devote more time to the Word. As you read His words, are they pointing to things that need alignment in order to let you abide in Him? Check your spiritual connection to God’s wifi and see if you need to move in closer in order to operate fully in the power you are called to wield.

James + Sharaya D’Anna
Creative/Kid’s Pastor

renovate

WORSHIP *that* replenishes

(12)

2 Corinthians 5:17 • Ephesians 4:23-24 • Psalm 138:2-3

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” 2 Cor. 5:17 (ESV)

“...to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.” Eph. 4:23-24 (ESV)

“I kneel in worship facing your holy temple and say it again: “Thank you!” Thank you for your love, thank you for your faithfulness; Most holy is your name, most holy is your Word. The moment I called out, you stepped in; you made my life large with strength.” Ps. 138:2-3 (MSG)

The replenishing of the spirit man is found when we position our heart and mind in the place of true worship. **The key is what our attention is fixed on.** King David gives us a great example in Psalm 138:2-3 *“I kneel in worship facing your holy temple and say it again: “Thank you!” Thank you*

for your love, thank you for your faithfulness; Most holy is your name, most holy is your Word. The moment I called out, you stepped in; you made my life large with strength.” As he worships, David is in a position of looking to Jesus, glorifying God’s character, and expressing gratitude. The replenishing and strengthening is coming to him as he calls on the name of the Lord and pours out praise.

We can learn a lot from David’s display of worship, and also the prophetess Anna in Luke 2:37. The Bible says that she actually lived in the temple day and night, worshipping in fasting and prayer. Because of this lifestyle of abiding, she was expectant and ready to encounter Jesus when she met Him. Her purity in worship was key to a closeness with the Lord and a **replenishing** that brought great joy when she met the Messiah.

With both David and Anna, they were not replenished from their own ability or desire. Rather, looking to the Lord and abiding in

His presence allowed for a replenishing to take place that they didn't have to strive for.

As you spend time with the Lord today, try and shift your perspective from one that tries to refresh through the old self and its patterns, and let God instead come and renew your mind and stir up a heart that desires to see Him and remain in His presence. Allow Him to bring the outpouring of replenishing in response to your living sacrifice of worship.

Emily + Aaron Mann
GenChurch Leaders

speaking IN tongues

(13)

Jude 1:20 • 1 Corinthians 14:4 • John 4:10-11

Jude 1:20 says, *"...building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit;"*

1 Corinthians 14:4, "He who speaks in tongues edifies himself..."

Our key verses explain why speaking in tongues is vital to the believer, **it builds our faith**. The Lord is building us up as the Holy Spirit flows through us (Psalm 127:1). When we speak in tongues, we are filling our house with God's Word spoken by God Himself (1 Corinthians 14:2)!

We are saved by faith. All believers begin with a measure of faith (Romans 12:3). We exercise the spiritual gifts according to our level of faith (Romans 12:6). The Christian walk should be one that results in ever-increasing faith. Speaking in tongues builds our faith (Jude 1:20; 1 Corinthians 14:4). What could be more faith building than to experience God Himself speaking through you?

This is so powerful because we have to yield ourselves completely to God's Spirit in us. We know that any power we have comes from

Him. When we speak in tongues, we are experiencing His power flowing through us.

The importance of speaking in tongues was evident on the day of Pentecost. Jesus told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49, Acts 1:8). The church was birthed when 120, who were obedient to His last words, spoke with tongues. The evidence of that birth came in a way they couldn't corrupt or take credit for and the world couldn't deny.

Jesus told the Samaritan woman at the well that she could have living water flow through her (John 4:10-11; 7:38). Isaac went through a process of purifying and digging wells as he returned to the place God had promised (Genesis 26:18-25). Speaking in tongues washes our wells with the water of the Living Word that flows directly from the throne of God (Ezekiel 47; Ephesians 5:26). It keeps us from running dry or becoming stagnant, as His life fills us and flows through us.

Speak in tongues first thing in the morning, in your car, before praying in your understanding, as part of your worship, throughout your day. This will make it so a part of your life that you will begin to discern when God wants you to pray in tongues.

The Samaritan woman said to Jesus “*the well is deep*” (John 4:11). Each of us is a deep well and God’s heart is that living water flows through us. Speak in tongues and let the river flow!

Charlie + Brenda
Cline

[illegible]

listening & **seeing**

(14)

John 10:27 • Romans 10:17 • Revelation 3:20-22

My alone time with Holy Spirit is precious to me. I purpose this time to worship Him and to listen to Him speak. It's often a time when I open the rooms of my heart and allow Him to remove anything that hinders my intimacy with Him. He always comes to replace what He removed with truth and restoration that **replenishes** my soul.

I love this time with my Good Shepherd. In John 10:27 Jesus says, *"my sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me."* By faith, I silence everything and tune into the frequency of His voice. Romans 10:17 tells us *"faith comes by hearing and hearing through the Word of Christ."* When I read His Words of life, I center my attention on what He wants to reveal to me, I seek answers to questions and ask for His perspective on things. My faith grows! My foundation is made solid! In His presence I get everything I need for life and Godliness!

In Revelation 3:22 the Lord says, *"he who has an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit says*

to the churches." This is good news for us church! He's telling us we can have an ear to hear what the Spirit is speaking to us. He is inviting us to look eyes with Him and engage in intimate friendship.

He says, *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and He with me. The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on His throne"* (Rev. 3:20-21). I don't know about you, but I want to be a conqueror through Christ Jesus! If I stay close enough to hear Him knocking on my heart, and I open the door to Him daily, I know the Good Shepherd will lead me in the way, the truth and the life that can only be found in Him.

Do you know Jesus as your Good Shepherd? Do you know His voice? Does He have your ear? If you are struggling with knowing the voice of God, I encourage you to engage daily in active worship, repentance, prayer, reading of His

Word, and surrounding yourself with other saints who have godly fruit in their lives. Ask the Lord to give you an ear to hear His voice so you may know what His Spirit is saying to you. Invite Him to clear out the old and receive the new! Get close, tune your ear to receive from God. Let His Spirit restock the rooms of your soul and fill your spirit with what you need for the year ahead!

Mike + Heidi
Winklepleck

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

week two reflection

*At the end of each week take additional time to talk to the Lord
and reflect as you answer the questions below.*

1. What is one way the Lord has replenished your soul this week?

2. Take 15 minutes to pray in tongues followed by 15 minutes sitting quietly before the Lord. Write down what He says to you.

week three: **rebuild**

Once we are filled, what we do next is crucial. We've cleaned house, and allowed the Lord to fill us with new things, but how do we build? Week three gives us practical steps on how to build with what we've received from Him.



BUILDING *on* the rock

(15)

Matthew 7:24-27 • Joshua 1:8 • Hebrews 11:1

Standing bedside in the ICU, I watched as every breath was labored and painful. My thoughts raced, is this his last breath? How am I going to live without this man in my life? He is my inspiration, protector, provider, a source of joy and laughter and so many memories. This was a storm I wasn't ready to go through.

Life storms come in all different shapes and sizes. Everything from losing a loved one, illness, relational conflicts, and financial challenges to name a few. And it's not "if" a storm comes but "when." How we prepare for the storm will determine how we weather it.

Before a hurricane makes land fall the people will barricade their houses with plywood and sandbags, secure valuable possessions, and seek refuge out of the storm's path. Those who "do" these things will often return to find their home in better shape than those who don't.

So, how do we prepare for life's storms? Matthew 7:24-27 tells us we must be anchored to the

Rock, the one who is the creator of everything. It's clear that we must **do** two things. First, listen to the voice of God as found in His Word. The Bible is the ultimate standard for knowing God's voice and thus we must be passionate for it. Joshua 1:8 tells us to "*study it continually.*"

Second, **do**, or obey, His Word. Faith is believing what God has said to you which turns into evidence or proof that it will happen, Hebrews 11:1 NLT. We increase our faith, by obeying His word. Every time we obey it is like putting another anchor down into the Rock. Not only does it prepare us for life's storms but leads us to living victorious lives where the power of God works through us.

I encourage you to ask God to give you a hunger and passion for His Word. Keep praying this and He will answer. Next, ask Him to give you the grace and strength to **do** all He says. You will be firmly anchored to Him as you **do** and obey Him, and you will not only survive life's storms but be stronger because of them.

That day I watched as my father took his final breath and held my mother as she lost the love of her life. Probably one of the hardest days of my life, and yet Jesus was there and gave me a peace that surpassed understanding. Jesus truly is our Rock.

Andy + Patty Jenness
Children's Pastors

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

building WITH action

(16)

Genesis 6:13-22 • Hebrews 11:7

For years we dreamt of doing an addition to our home, to make it fit the needs of our family better. We hand drew plans, we talked, we prayed, and yet the house remained the same. I didn't wake up one day with a bigger home ready to be decorated. It wasn't until we stepped out in faith, put hammer to nail, that the building began to happen.

In the story of Noah, Genesis 6:13-22, God laid out a plan before Noah.

"The end of humanity has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of people; and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth. Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood..."

Noah heard the plan and the instructions from the Lord and he knew what needed to be done. He stepped out in faith and obedience to what the Lord had asked and started to build. Noah didn't sit back and wait, hoping that someone else would come do it for him. He didn't wish it would build itself

without him and his family putting in the work.

Sometimes the first step is the hardest. We may fear the unknown, we may fear what man might say, we may fear failure, but do we have a stronger fear of the Lord?

Hebrews 11:7 *"By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that is in keeping with faith."*

Noah had a holy fear of the Lord, he trusted the Lord more than he trusted his own understanding. And because of Noah's faith and obedience his family was saved.

What has the Lord asked of you recently? Is there an area where you need to step out in faith and trust the Lord? Ask the Lord today what action you need to take and what work He wants you to start.

Matt + Jenni Eads
Family Pastors

renovate

BUILDING *with* (17) the Spirit

Exodus 31:1-11

This passage shows the attention to detail God has for His purpose. He gives us the tools and the people we need in our lives to accomplish His will. I love that God gave the people special skills and insight to build the tabernacle as He described.

Building by the Spirit can be just as specific. It can be spiritual as well as physical.

I remember recently having lunch with my family at a restaurant. As we were preparing to leave, my focus was on getting our kids cleaned up while also making sure that our youngest couldn't reach anything on the table to spill or throw. The Holy Spirit brought to my attention that my phone was still sitting on the table. Mentally, I said, "Okay, Holy Spirit, I see my phone and need to remember it when we leave. Noted." In the back of my mind I knew the Holy Spirit meant, "put it in your backpack now", but I was hoping the acknowledgment and mental note would suffice. Unfortunately, the phone remained on the table and I did not realize until we were

almost home. Having to go all the way back for it later that evening was certainly an inconvenience.

This is just one of many examples when God has prompted me to hear His voice and I did not obey or listen completely. There are also many moments I can recall when I took the time to listen and obey fully. By doing so, it made a small difference in that moment, a big difference in a situation, and maybe even a life changing difference I may never know the full impact of. Each time I follow the prompting of the Holy Spirit, it makes such a tangible difference!

Lord, I pray that you would increase my sensitivity to hear the Holy Spirit. Help me to pause and follow your prompting, down to the details and to completion. Lord, help me to hear from you more often and more clearly, that my faith would increase and my relationship with you would deepen. Let my life be built on you more and more each day, in the small details all the way to the life changing decisions. Amen.

Brody + Dana McGowan
Café Leaders

renovate

building & **protecting**

(18)

Nehemiah 4:17-18a

The title of “developer” is a monicker I would’ve never guessed would be mine. However, it’s a job calling put upon all of us to be restorers, rebuilders, and leaders of rejuvenation.

All our construction projects with old buildings the past eight years in downtown Springfield have been fraught with opposition, not only with permits and costs, but also with people. For decades this part of our city has been a den of darkness and taking back territory from the enemy never happens without the commitment to working while being armed.

Kingdom rebuilders have prophetic vision few can see, which enables them to look past obvious blight to picture something fully restored. Having this kind of vision in one hand, can’t happen without the protection of the vision in the other. Daily this becomes a heavy lift in the gym of the spirit and will. We must believe our individual callings, beyond what is comfortable, are worth the war. Using both heart and hammer, we find a bolder walk of faith that is

both pushing back attackers one day, and another, placing rocks in the foundation.

Kingdom works are works though that **MUST** be accomplished for God’s hand to be evident in this world. Building churches abroad or mending relationships in your own neighborhoods are works which the Father has created for you to engage uniquely. The way they ultimately get accomplished is **when each of us decide to be ok with building and battling at the same time.** Peace never comes before war but is the product of warriors doing what is necessary, right and true in the face of combat, risk and threat.

Our collective mission is to constantly be about the task of protecting the efforts of rebuilding and rejuvenation. God has invited us to partner with Him to take what is broken and condemned and fight for its redemption and renewal. Why? Because our purpose is Christlike, to make what has lost its value, valuable again.

And to build toward that kind of faith warrior label, is definitely worth fighting for.

David
Loveall

renovate

BUILDING *with* (19) a plan

Haggai 1:7-9

Does a builder not first consult the architect? Do they begin to build without first a plan? When we allow God to remove things from our lives, we are, in a way, allowing God to place us on his drawing board.

In a previous career, as an electrician, we would have the opportunity to do what is called “design/build”. Meaning, we were trusted by the contractor to design the project and build what we knew would be best for the construction at hand. This was always preceded first by a consultation; obtaining either a set of drawings, a rendering, or a sketch; and always a project walk. Without any of these, we would be building blind. There is no project, big or small, that runs smoothly, and is completed within the proper time frame, that doesn’t have proper planning from the very get go.

Why should our daily walk with the Lord be any different? We all know bad habits are hard to break, and good ones are not easy to build. If we partner with God to remove bad habits, then

we must put effort into creating good habits! The key to success in allowing God to rebuild our life starts with our daily routine. Each new day is an opportunity for God to expand the set of drawings that are your life. Not from your own design, but from His. We must let the Lord dictate what His priorities are in our day to day. This will lead to a life of following His priorities.

I challenge you to move from the place of living each day driven by our own desires/priorities to the place where we put Him first. Practically, this looks like prioritizing God through worship, prayer, and reading His Word. **We must learn to consult His plan for our lives first**, weighing our decisions against the Holy Spirit and Scripture. Only then will God be able to develop within us what He has planned, and from that will spring forth blessings.

As Pastor Tony Kemp said “Find out what God wants to do in your current circumstance, and how He wants to do it, then do it God's way.”

Travis + Carrie
Ray

renovate

WHAT *are you* building on?

(20)

Ephesians 2:10 • Psalm 91:9-12 • Matthew 7:6-27

This time 7 years ago my husband and I were in the process of building our home. The greatest thing about the build was getting to customize every detail. Bigger closets, nice appliances, paint colors, barn wood doors, hard wood floors...etc. I wanted the home to be ours, to be personal, to be what we dreamed of. However, I had a strong conviction from the Lord that beyond what we wanted, the house needed to be the Lord's. It needed to be built with Him in mind. So, when the structure of the house was up, **Tim and I took an evening to go to the house and write scriptures on all the wood beams in the house.** I wanted this house built on solid foundation, the Word of God. I wanted His truth to be throughout every room we walked into. That had to be the most important thing.

"But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with

a great crash" (Matthew 7:26-27).

Everything we build, whether it's our families, friendships, our ministries, our jobs, our relationship with Jesus, is built upon something. We either build on solid truth, on righteousness, on faith or we don't. The health of the entire house depends first on the foundation.

One of the scriptures we used when building was Psalm 91:9-12. As we faced trials and hard times through the years, we began to go back to the foundations we built our family on. The Word. We've quoted these scriptures multiple times. Even though the house is complete, we continue to build our family on that solid foundation.

As we go through life we will go through seasons when we need to repair what has been built, maintain what is functioning, or even update what isn't working. We must be continually evaluating what we are building with when these times come. The Word of God must be our go to. The Bible gives us every tool we need to build, maintain, and rebuild. **What have you been building on?**

Tiffany
Monson

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building **disciples**

(21)

Matthew 28:16-20 • 2 Corinthians 5:20

As a young girl, I had a damaged identity, and no real understanding of God. I remember coming to youth group with some friends and meeting the pastor there. He began to speak words of life over my future and without me even realizing it, my life began to change. He encouraged me, prayed with me, and recognized the God-given gifting in me. Over time, that 11-year-old girl, who had struggled with fear, depression, and shame began to see the truth. That pastor saw me from God's perspective, and that perspective changed my entire outlook. Without that fatherly voice and intentional care in that season, I don't know where I'd be today. It's incredible that God sends people to us that help change the trajectory of our life.

In the Great Commission passage, Jesus commissioned each of us to go and make disciples. Discipleship is rarely glamorous, but it is vital for Christian development. Discipleship looks like serving people, praying with people, reading the Bible

with people, teaching people, challenging people, and doing life alongside people! Jesus modeled this type of discipleship and He has called us to do the same. Here are a few practical tips on making disciples.

1. Pursue disciples: We think that disciples will just show up on our doorstep one day and ask us if we will disciple them. Although that may happen every once in a while, 99% of the time, you must be intentional to pursue disciples. Jesus modeled this. Simon Peter and Matthew were working in their respective professions when Jesus called them to become His disciples. In the same way, pray about who God is asking you to pour into and be faithful and intentional to spend time with them, reach out to them, and bring them to church!

2. Share your life: Someone wanting to learn a new language will often surround themselves with people that speak that language. When someone immerses himself in a language in this way, there is a focused acceleration that leads

to quick, effective learning. Similarly, the disciples were immersed into the life of Christ. They talked, ate, traveled, ministered, and prayed with him! They were in such close, constant proximity to him that their minds became saturated in the ways and lifestyle of Jesus. Just like Jesus, we are called to share our lives with those we are discipling. It's rarely convenient, but always rewarding.

Spend some time praying about who God has placed in your life to disciple and pour into!

Scott & Larissa Graham

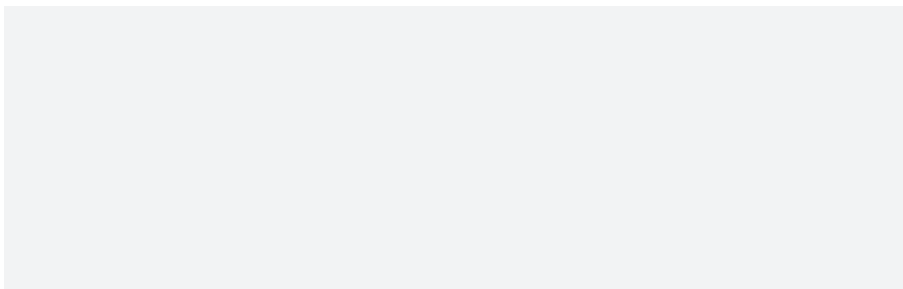
Scott + Larissa Graham
Associate Pastor

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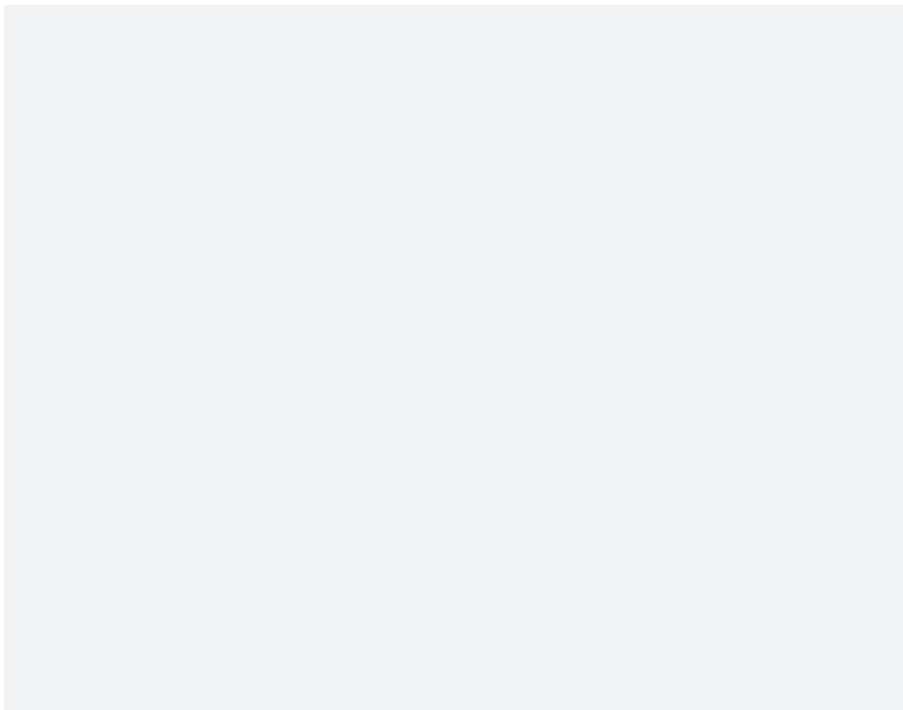
week three reflection

As we end the fast, take a little extra time to reflect on all that God has spoken and done for you in the last 21 days.

1. What are some practical things that you've learned in this fast that you can implement into your everyday life?



2. Take a moment to think about how Jesus has revealed Himself to you during this fast. Jot down any encounters you've had, including all the details that you can remember.



name:



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