THE WAY OF JESUS

Flourishing Life

The Gospel of Luke:
Vol II



A Series Study Guide

November 2025

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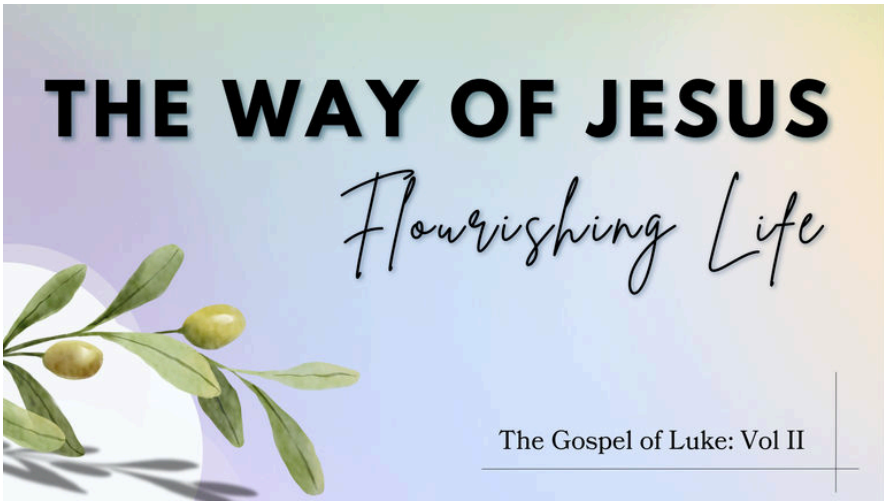


The Way of Flourishing Life

An Invitation to Follow Jesus through the Second Half of Luke

If the first half of Luke's Gospel invites us to sit at the feet of Jesus, to know His heart and experience the awe of His miracles, then the second half invites us to get up and follow Him—step by step, story by story, toward Jerusalem, the cross, and beyond.

Beginning in chapter 9, Luke shifts the focus of his narrative. Jesus "resolutely set out for Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51), and everything changes. From this point on, we are not simply observers—we're called to be disciples. We're drawn into the journey of following Jesus, and with that comes a question that echoes through every chapter: Will you come with Him?

This road is not easy. It is marked by costly love, radical mercy, and life-giving surrender. Following Jesus isn't about checking boxes or mastering doctrine. It's about

orienting our entire lives around His—being with Jesus, becoming like Jesus, and doing what Jesus did. This is the way of true discipleship. Joining Jesus on this path towards the cross, however, is also the way of true flourishing.

In a world chasing comfort, status, and self-preservation, Jesus offers something altogether different: deep peace, a grounded sense of purpose, and an unshakable hope. This is the abundant life He promised—not free from suffering, but full of meaning. Not ease, but joy. Not self-fulfillment, but a life poured out for others.

As you journey through these chapters of Luke, may your eyes be opened to the surprising beauty of the cross-shaped life. May you hear Jesus' call anew. And may you discover, in the shadow of sacrifice, the light of flourishing life.

Practicing the Way

The way of Jesus isn't something we admire from a distance—it's a life we step into.

Luke has shown us what that life looks like: Jesus walking with people, welcoming the broken, speaking truth, carrying the cross, and pouring Himself out in love. Now, we respond. His way becomes our way.

This life doesn't flourish by accident. It's cultivated through daily, deliberate choices. We orient our lives around three pursuits that shape us as followers of Jesus:

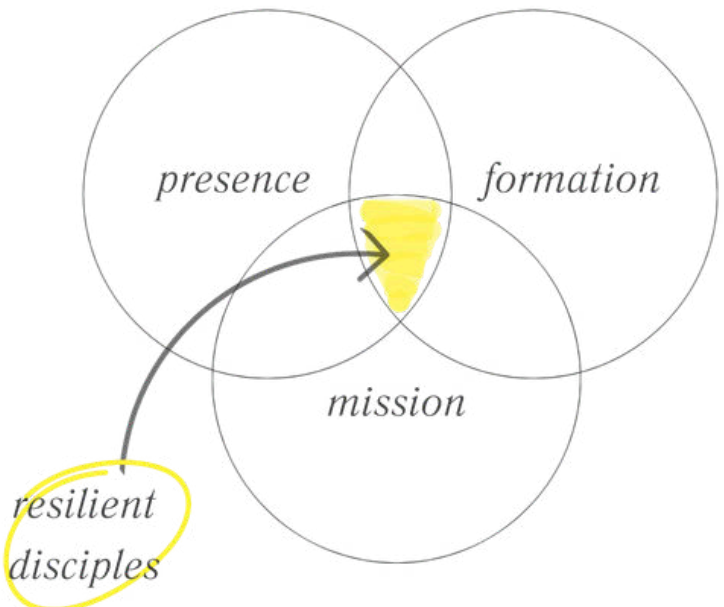
Be with Jesus.
Become like Jesus.
Do what Jesus did.

Jesus' disciples - then and now - flourish at the convergence of PRESENCE, FORMATION, and MISSION.

PRESENCE // To be with Jesus
Flourishing begins not with doing, but with abiding. We create space to slow down, to listen, to be still in His presence. Through rhythms of prayer, Scripture, and worship, we live in ongoing communion with the God who draws near. This is where peace and clarity begin.

FORMATION // To become like Jesus
We are all being formed by something. As disciples, we choose to be shaped by Jesus—His character, His priorities, His way. Formation happens as we submit to His Word, practice new habits, and let community refine us. Over time, our lives begin to reflect His.

MISSION // To do what Jesus did
Flourishing isn't kept to itself—it's shared. Jesus' way leads outward, into neighborhoods, schools, workplaces, and the margins. We serve, invite, give, and live with gospel intentionality. The same Spirit that empowered Jesus now sends and empowers us.



This is the way of Jesus. It's not always easy, but it is always worth it. As we walk in His presence, open our lives to His formation, and join Him on mission, we discover the very thing our souls were made for: flourishing life.

Additional Resources

Practicing the Way, John Mark Comer (Unpacking the rhythms of discipleship: to be with Jesus, to become like Jesus, to do what Jesus did.)

Luke (NIV Application Commentary), Darrell Bock (A deeply studied but pastoral account of Luke's gospel.)

Luke for Everyone, N.T. Wright (Helpful and accessible commentary on Luke's gospel and its background.)

Following King Jesus, Scot McKnight (Offers rich insight into the gospels, with strong themes of discipleship, mission, and Kingdom.)

God in My Everything, Ken Shigematsu (Grounded in the rhythms of Jesus but adapted for busy people, a great tool for becoming like Jesus.)

How to Pray, Pete Greig (Accessible and Spirit-filled introduction to prayer--for beginners and experienced Jesus-followers alike.)

J*oining Jesus on His Mission*, Greg Finke (A helpful guide for normal people wanting to live on mission in daily life.)

Miracle Work, Jordan Seng (Explores how ordinary believers can join Jesus' supernatural work--to do what Jesus did.)

Till We Have Faces, C.S. Lewis (A deep and reflective novel which explores the themes of spiritual formation.)

The Way of Jesus
Week 1

Date:
Speaker:
Main Scripture: Luke 12v54-13v9

SERMON TITLE

Don’t Miss the Moment

Main Points | Verses Used	Notes

REFLECTIONS

Reflect on how to apply today's sermon to your life

Quotes:

“We must allow the Word of God to confront us, to disturb our security, to undermine our complacency and to overthrow our patterns of thought and behavior.”

- John Stott

“Repentance is not beating yourself up. It is rethinking your thinking so that you can see reality from God’s point of view.”

- Dallas Willard

Week 1: Reflect and Discuss

1. Jesus says we can “interpret the weather” but miss “this present time.” What would it look like to become more aware to what God is doing right now in your life or community?

2. Sometimes tragedy or disruption can awaken spiritual clarity. Can you recall a time when hardship opened your eyes to God’s nearness or truth?

3. Dallas Willard said, “Repentance is rethinking your thinking.” What assumptions, habits, or patterns might God be inviting you to rethink right now?

4. How does reframing repentance from “feeling bad” to “seeing clearly” change your understanding of it?

5. Jesus tells His listeners not to analyze or compare but to respond. When have you been tempted to analyze rather than respond to what God is doing?

6. This passage calls us to “wake up to mercy.” How does God’s mercy motivate change differently than fear or guilt?

7. How is God calling you to respond to this passage? Try writing an “I will” statement (“I will _____”) that captures your response. Then, go and do!

Jesus lived with a kind of holy awareness. Where others saw interruptions, He saw invitations. Where others saw problems, He saw the Father’s activity.

In John 5:19–20, Jesus said, “The Son can do nothing by Himself; He can do only what He sees His Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.”

Jesus wasn’t driven by hurry or pressure. He didn’t move from need to need, but from presence to presence. Every miracle, every conversation, every act of compassion flowed out of this posture of seeing and responding.

This is the heart of repentance as reorientation, learning to notice what God is doing and aligning ourselves with Him.

Most of us are skilled at reading the weather (maybe that looks like, predicting outcomes, scanning our calendars, managing our lives) but we can miss the wonder of what God is doing right now in our midst.

The invitation of Jesus is simple: “Don’t miss the moment. Look again. The kingdom of God is near.”

The Practice
To “see what the Father is doing,” we need to slow down enough to look. The prayer walk is a simple practice to open our eyes and hearts to the Spirit’s movement.

It’s not about “performing” prayers but practicing presence, becoming aware of God’s presence and activity in the ordinary spaces of our lives. You can do this in your neighborhood, workplace, school, or even your office hallway. Wherever you spend your everyday life is the perfect place to begin.

Step One: Prepare Your Heart
Before you walk, take a moment to pray:

“Father, open my eyes to see what You are doing. Slow me down enough to notice Your presence. Teach me to respond to Your movement, not just my agenda.”

Take a few deep breaths. Lay down expectations. This isn’t about outcomes; it’s about listening and growing in awareness.

Step Two: Walk and Notice
As you walk, move slowly.

Let your surroundings become your prayer list. Notice what draws your attention — a face, a home, a noise, a memory.

Ask:

- What might the Father be doing here?
- Where do I sense His compassion, His grief, His hope?
- How might Jesus want to bring life in this place?

You’re not trying to fix anything; you’re learning to see with Jesus’ eyes. If you’re in your office, glance at workspaces and pray silently for colleagues. If you’re walking your neighborhood, bless the homes you pass.

“Lord, let Your kingdom come right here — in this home, in this heart, in this story.”

Step Three: Listen and Respond
If someone crosses your path, pause and be present.
Maybe the Father is inviting you to listen, to encourage, or simply to smile. Perhaps He stirs compassion for a place of need you hadn’t noticed before. Maybe He gives you a burden to keep praying for a particular person.

You’re cultivating spiritual eyesight — the ability to interpret the time, to see beyond the visible and discern God’s invisible grace at work.

The Way of Jesus
Week 2

Date:
Speaker:
Main Scripture: Luke 13v10-17

SERMON TITLE

Bent People, Straight Grace

Main Points | Verses Used	Notes

REFLECTIONS

Reflect on how to apply today's sermon to your life

Quote:

“Define yourself radically as one beloved by God. This is the true self. Every other identity is illusion.”
- Brennen Manning

“Religion is the enemy of faith when it becomes a system for controlling God instead of a means of being led by Him.”
- Eugene Peterson

Week 2: Reflect and Discuss

1. The woman doesn’t call out — Jesus sees her first. Where in your life do you need to remember that God sees you, even when you feel unseen or unable to cry out?

2. Why do you think the synagogue leader reacts with indignation rather than joy? How does that response expose something bent in him?

3. When Jesus heals, He not only straightens her back but restores her dignity. How have you experienced God’s grace not just fixing something, but restoring who you are?

4. The crowd rejoices at the end. Why do you think joy is such a key sign of the Kingdom’s arrival? How can we become people who celebrate others’ healing instead of critiquing it?

5. Sabbath is not about preserving appearances but participating in restoration. What might it look like to make Sabbath a day that restores others as well as yourself?

6. How is God calling you to respond to this passage? Try writing an “I will” statement (“I will _____”) that captures your response. Then, go and do!

7. Who can you tell about how God has met you in His Word? Pray for an opportunity to share it with them.

For centuries, Sabbath was meant to be the day when everything bent by burdens and worry was straightened again.

When Jesus heals the bent woman on the Sabbath, He's not breaking the law, He's revealing its heart. "Should not this daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day?" (Luke 13v16)

The Sabbath was never about preserving appearances; it was about trusting in God's restoration.

From the first rest of God in Genesis 2 to the promised rest of Hebrews 4, Sabbath points to freedom: freedom from striving, from production, from pretending. Where religion built fences around the Sabbath, Jesus opened doors.

He straightened what was bent and invited everyone to stand tall in grace. To keep Sabbath with Jesus is to step into the rhythm of rest and restoration. It's the weekly declaration: "I trust that God is making all things new."

The Practice
Whether a few hours or an entire day, make space to participate in a day of rest, which overflows into restoration for those around you.

Step One: Pause to Remember
Set aside intentional time this week—a few hours or a whole day—to stop. Before the pause begins, pray: "Lord of the Sabbath, teach me to rest in Your restoring love. Straighten what's bent by hurry, fear, or pride. Help me join You in setting people free."

Turn off what demands your production: the inbox, the list, the expectations. Let your heart breathe again.

Step Two: Receive Restoration
Ask the Spirit:

- Where am I bent or weary?
- What kind of rest would make me whole today?

Then choose one restoring practice:

- Take a slow walk and notice beauty.
- Read Scripture without agenda.
- Share an unhurried meal.
- Nap—without guilt.
- Worship with gratitude, not performance.

As you rest, remember: this is not avoidance; it's participation in the work of renewal.

Step Three: Release Restoration
Sabbath is never just for you; it spills over.

Ask: How can my rest set someone else free?

- Encourage a co-worker who's carrying a large load.
- Offer childcare to give a parent rest.
- Visit someone isolated or forgotten.
- Extend forgiveness that loosens a burden.

In doing good on the Sabbath, you echo Jesus' healing touch. You join Him in straightening what life has bent.

Reflect + Respond
"If you keep the Sabbath… you will find your joy in the Lord." Isaiah 58v13-14

> What has Sabbath meant to you in the past—restriction or restoration?
> Where do you sense God inviting you to rest and be renewed?

The Way of Jesus
Week 3

Date:

Speaker:

Main Scripture: Luke 13v18-35

SERMON TITLE

When the King Weeps

Main Points | Verses Used	Notes

REFLECTIONS

Reflect on how to apply today's sermon to your life

Quote:

“The work of salvation is always God’s initiative and always slow. But the Kingdom of God continues to work like yeast, hidden but irrepressible.”

- Eugene Peterson

“The Christian mission is impossible without tears. We must weep before we witness.”

- John Stott

Week 3: Reflect and Discuss

1. Jesus compares the Kingdom to a mustard seed and yeast. Why might He choose such small, ordinary images? What do they reveal about how God works?

2. Where do you see signs of God’s quiet, steady work (in your life, in our church, or in your city) that might be easy to overlook?

3. When Jesus says, “Make every effort to enter through the narrow door,” what kind of effort do you think He’s describing? What’s the difference between earning and urgency?

4. Jesus warns against merely being near the Kingdom without knowing the King. What parts of your life might still be “at the door” rather than “through it”?

5. How do you respond to the image of a King who weeps? What does this teach us about God’s character — and about how we might carry His compassion into our world?

6. How is God calling you to respond to this passage? Try writing an “I will” statement (“I will _____”) that captures your response. Then, go and do!

7. Who can you tell about how God has met you in His Word? Pray for an opportunity to share it with them.

The Open Door

Jesus was never vague about discipleship.

Someone once asked Him, “Lord, will only a few be saved?”

Instead of giving a statistic, He gave an invitation: “Make every effort to enter through the narrow door” (Luke 13v24).

The door is open, but it’s not wide because the Kingdom isn’t entered by drifting; it’s entered by decision.

The narrow door isn’t about exclusion; it’s about intention. It’s the daily choice to align our will, habits, and hopes with Jesus. We pass through dozens of doors every day, into homes, offices, classrooms, shops. What if every doorway became a reminder of the Kingdom’s invitation?

Every door is a threshold: a place to pause, release what doesn’t belong, and re-enter life with Jesus at the center.

The Practice: The Threshold Prayer
This simple rhythm transforms ordinary transitions into holy moments. It turns the physical act of crossing a doorway into a spiritual exercise of awareness and surrender.

Step One: Prepare a Door
Choose one doorway you pass through often, your front door, office door, or classroom entrance.

Place a small visual reminder there (a cross, a stone, a note that says “Kingdom first”).

Each time you see it, pause briefly before you cross.

Step Two: Pause and Pray
Before stepping through, take a breath and pray quietly:

Inhale: “I step into Your Kingdom.”
Exhale: “I leave my fear behind.”

Let the moment slow you down. Pause for a beat, and remember that the Kingdom of God has come near – even in the very space you are about to enter. The Kingdom is yours to enter by aligning yourself with God’s will and reign.

Ask the Spirit to make you aware of what you’re carrying (resentment, distraction, fear, self-reliance) and imagine setting it down at the threshold.

Step Three: Step Through
As you physically step through the door, picture yourself crossing from one reality into another:
from self-effort to grace,
from anxiety to trust,
from apathy to love.

Throughout your day, every door can become a renewed decision: to enter conversations, work, and relationships with Kingdom awareness.

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Jesus reminds us that “the Kingdom of God is near” (Luke 10v9). It’s not far off, waiting for some future day; it’s as close as the next breath, the next conversation, the next doorway. Whether or not we can see it, the Kingdom is breaking in: quietly, persistently, right where we live and work.

Every threshold we cross becomes an invitation to believe that truth, to choose trust over fear, surrender over striving, love over indifference. Each time we whisper the breath prayer and step through a door, we’re practicing faith that God’s reign is already at hand. The Kingdom is near; step into it.

The Way of Jesus
Week 4

Date:

Speaker:

Main Scripture: Luke 14v1-24

SERMON TITLE

The Table is Ready

Main Points | Verses Used	Notes

REFLECTIONS

Reflect on how to apply today's sermon to your life

Quote:

“When Jesus wanted to explain to his followers what his forthcoming death was all about, he didn’t give them a theory; he gave them a meal.”
- Tom Wright

“Jesus didn’t run projects, establish ministries, or put on events; he ate meals.”
- Tim Chester

Week 4: Reflect and Discuss

1. The tragedy of the parable isn’t open rebellion but distraction. What distractions most often keep you from saying yes to Jesus’ invitation?

2. Jesus challenges His host to invite those who can’t repay him. What do these words stir in you about how we practice hospitality today?

3. How do you think the original dinner guests (religious leaders) would have felt about Jesus’ parable? What emotions or resistance might have surfaced? Why?

4. Jesus not only welcomes us but invites us to join His mission of hospitality. What would it mean for you to move from guest to host in God’s Kingdom?

5. The feast is ready — but participation requires presence. What spiritual or relational practices help you show up fully to God and others?

6. How is God calling you to respond to this passage? Try writing an “I will” statement (“I will _____”) that captures your response. Then, go and do!

7. Who can you tell about how God has met you in His Word? Pray for an opportunity to share it with them.

Make Room

The Table and the Tragedy of Distraction
When Jesus sat at the Pharisee's dinner table, He turned it into a picture of God's Kingdom.

He healed a man in pain, confronted pride, and told a story about a great banquet: a feast prepared, invitations sent, and empty seats waiting. "They all alike began to make excuses" (Luke 14v18).

No one in the parable rebelled against the invitation. They were simply busy, good things got in the way of ultimate things. A field to inspect. Oxen to test. Family to attend to.

The host's heartbreak is that the feast was ready, but the hearts of the guests were elsewhere.

Distraction is one of the most subtle enemies of the Kingdom. It fills our calendars, crowds our tables, and dulls our hunger for God. When we live distracted, we miss the presence of grace already sitting at the table.

Hospitality, both giving and receiving, is one of the ways God pulls us back. To set a table, linger at a meal, or truly listen to another person is to resist hurry and remember: the feast is now, the Kingdom is near.

The Practice: Make Room at the Table
This week's practice invites you to open space (in your home, schedule, and heart) for someone who might otherwise be left out. It's an act of attention as much as compassion.

Step One: Prepare the Space
Look at your week and identify where distraction has taken the place of presence.

What could you release, one meeting, one evening, one hour lost scrolling through your phone, to make room for connection?

Set a time to share a simple meal or coffee with someone God brings to mind, perhaps a neighbor, coworker, or friend you rarely slow down to see.

Step Two: Practice Presence
During the meal, practice holy attention. Put away devices. Be unhurried. Ask curious questions:

- “What’s been giving you life lately?”
- “What are you thankful for in this season?”

Hospitality is not about perfection but presence. Let your focus be the person, not the menu.

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From the beginning, Jesus built His ministry around tables. He taught at them, healed beside them, and welcomed people who never thought they’d receive an invitation. The table was never just furniture for Him.

When we slow down long enough to make room for one another, we join Jesus in His way of restoring the world one table at a time.

The tragedy of the parable isn’t open rejection, but quiet distraction; people too busy to taste grace. The feast is still ready, and the invitation still stands. So don’t rush past the moment. Clear the table, open the door, take your seat – and pull up a chair for someone else.

The Kingdom is near — and there’s room for more.

The Way of Jesus
Week 5

Date:
Speaker:
Main Scripture: Luke 14-25-35

SERMON TITLE

The Cost of Following Jesus

Main Points | Verses Used	Notes

REFLECTIONS

Reflect on how to apply today's sermon to your life

Quote:

“Christ says, ‘Give me all. I don’t want so much of your time and so much of your money and so much of your work: I want you.’”
- C.S. Lewis

“To be a follower of the Crucified means, sooner or later, a personal encounter with the cross.”
- Elizabeth Elliot

Week 5: Reflect and Discuss

1. Why do you think Jesus challenges the large crowd with such hard words? What might He be exposing in their motives for following Him?

2. Jesus tells two short parables — the builder and the king. What’s the shared warning in both, and how does it clarify what true discipleship means?

3. What does Jesus mean by “salt that loses its saltiness”? How might a disciple lose their distinctiveness today?

4. Where have you seen the difference between an emotional response to Jesus and a considered, lasting commitment?

5. Jesus said, “Whoever loses their life for My sake will save it.” How have you experienced this paradox — loss leading to greater life or freedom?

6. How is God calling you to respond to this passage? Try writing an “I will” statement (“I will _____”) that captures your response. Then, go and do!

7. Who can you tell about how God has met you in His Word? Pray for an opportunity to share it with them.

Daily Altars

When Jesus invited people to follow Him, He never disguised the cost: “Whoever does not give up everything they have cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14v33).

He wasn’t being harsh; He was being honest. Love always demands all of us. Following Jesus isn’t about adding something spiritual to an already full life; it’s about placing our entire life on the altar before Him

In Scripture, an altar is a meeting place between God and His people, a sacred space where heaven touches earth. It’s where people worshiped, surrendered, and renewed covenant with God.

- Noah built an altar after the flood to give thanks.
- Abraham built altars as acts of trust and obedience.
- Elijah rebuilt the altar to call the people back to God.
- In the New Testament, the altar shifts from stone to spirit: we become the living altar. Paul writes, “Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, this is your true and proper worship” (Rom. 12v1)

So when we talk about “building an altar,” we’re not stacking stones; we’re setting our lives before God again, offering all we are for His purposes.

Prayer is where surrender takes shape. As Pete Greig writes in *How to Pray*, prayer begins not with words but with stillness, the simple act of yielding to God. That posture of yielding is the heartbeat of discipleship. To follow Jesus is to live continually on the altar: to bring our will, desires, and loves into His hands again and again.

Jesus doesn’t want half-built towers or part-time followers. He wants lives that stay open before Him. Hearts that whisper each day, “All I am is Yours.”

The Practice: Building Altars
This week, practice building small altars of surrender throughout your day, moments to pause, yield, and remember that discipleship is life lived in God's presence.

Step One: Morning Altar
At the start of the day, find a quiet moment, before work, with coffee, on a short walk, even in the car before your commute.

Open your hands and breathe slowly. Picture your life as an altar before God: your time, your energy, your relationships, your plans.

Pray:
"Jesus, all I am is Yours.
I place my day on the altar, my thoughts, my work, my desires.
Use me, guide me, and keep my heart aligned with Yours."

Pause in stillness and let this offering become your posture for the day.

Step Two: Midday Altar
As the pace picks up, return to the altar through a simple breath prayer:
Inhale: "All I am…"
Exhale: "…is Yours."
You might pray it between meetings, in traffic, or while washing dishes — each repetition another stone placed on the altar.
These small pauses turn ordinary moments into holy ground.

Step Three: Evening Altar
Before bed, take a few quiet minutes to look back over the day.
Ask yourself:

- Where did I yield?
- Where did I resist?
- How did God meet me in my surrender?

Rest, knowing that surrender ends not in striving but in peace.

Next Steps
While our study in Luke will continue, let's pause and look at some resources for what's next in our journey. What's your next step:

Seek First
Seek First is a space to return to the altar: to pause, yield, and realign our hearts with the presence of Jesus. In the middle of busy weeks and crowded priorities, we come not to perform but to offer ourselves again. Join us in the Upper Room for a time of worship and prayer - November 3rd and 17th. Together we seek first His Kingdom, trusting that when our lives are on the altar, His fire still falls.

Want more information about a House Church?
A fresh season of House Church is coming this fall. House Churches are located all around our valley and are designed to help us practice the way of Jesus: being with Jesus; becoming like Jesus; doing what Jesus did. House Church is a safe place to go deeper with Jesus and in community:
www.findcommunity.com/housechurch

Grief at the Holidays (Nov 19-Dec 17)
The Christmas season can stir deep emotions, especially for those walking through loss. If this time of year feels heavy, we invite you to a safe and Christ-centered space for comfort and hope. Grief at the Holidays is a five-week Zoom gathering designed to help you process, pray, and find peace in God's presence. Come to one session or all five—whatever you need this season. More info: www.findcommunity.com/events

Become a Partner
Partnership is how we move from attending a church to owning its mission together. It's a commitment to follow Jesus in community, to grow in spiritual maturity, and to serve our city with the love of Christ. Partners share in the vision to see the Inland Valley saturated with the Good News. If you're ready to take that next step or simply want to learn more, email info@findcommunity.com to receive an application or set up a conversation with one of our pastors.

NOTES:

COMMUNITY
CHURCH RANCHO