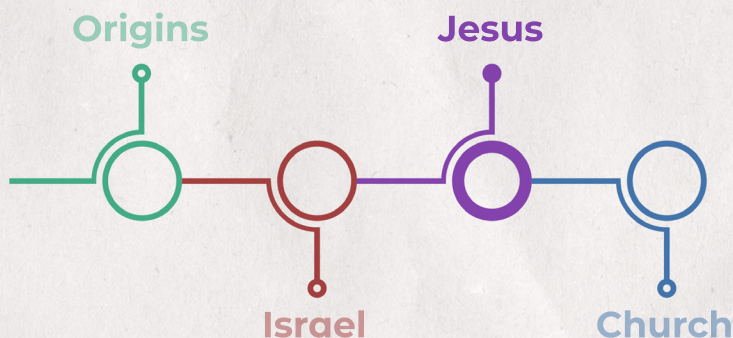


meeting God

UNFOLDING

on the pages of His story



Part One

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This is the true story of the three-in-one God.

ORIGINS

God is love and has always existed. He created all things. And made US to enjoy His love and serve His mission in the world. But we wanted to do our own thing instead. So, God rightly sent humanity away, and the whole world fell into sin and death.

**But He was still
unfolding His purposes.**

He chose one couple, Abraham and Sara, and delivered the nation that came from them—Israel. Gave them life with Him, and the mission—to bring His blessing to the nations. But Israel wanted to do its own thing instead. So, God sent them away.

ISRAEL

**But He was still
unfolding His purposes.**

JESUS

Having preserved a faithful few in Israel, God came into His world as a human. Jesus loved God and people, and embraced God's mission in the world. Yet the world wanted to do its own thing instead. So, they sent Jesus away. Though He had done nothing wrong, Jesus gave Himself to be killed on a cross, where He absorbed all of humanity's sin against God.

**Even in this,
God was unfolding His purposes.**

He raised Jesus from the dead and made Him King over all creation. And King Jesus IS saving people from every nation to enjoy God's love and join His mission in the world.

Which CAN include you! Grace received. Sins forgiven. Adopted into God's forever family. His Spirit empowering your love and your hope. King Jesus will return, set everything right, and we will enjoy God's presence in His new creation forever.

CHURCH

**This is the true story of the
three-in-one God -
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.**

And we find it in the Bible.

HOW TO USE YOUR JOURNAL

- **Accessing Digital Journal & Resources:** The Unfolding Jesus journal questions, group discussion questions, and video links are available via Church Center.
 1. Search ‘Church Center App’ in the App Store (Apple devices) or Google Play Store (Android devices) to download on your phone.
 2. Open the app and select your church by searching ‘Hope Church.’ Look for our logo!
 3. When prompted, enter your mobile phone number or email address. Check your texts or emails for a six-digit code. If you already have a Church Center account, you’ll be prompted to input the code and log in. If you don’t have a Church Center account, follow the prompts to create an account.
 4. Click the Unfolding button right under our logo, then click the button for the current week. You’ll see the journal questions and video links. The button taking you to the group discussion questions is at the bottom of the page.
 5. Don’t have or want the app?
Scan the QR code or visit
hopechurchmasonoh.churchcenter.com
- **Weekly Format:** Mondays are generally “Overview” days and Fridays are “Wrap-Up” days. Only have time for the journal once a week? Do Monday’s questions. Time for two days? Do Monday’s and Friday’s questions to get the big picture for the week.



- **Questions:** Each day, read the assigned passage slowly, then reflect on the questions. You'll also see these additional ways to interact sprinkled throughout:
 - **Dig Deeper** questions point you to a related passage somewhere else in Scripture. For the Unfolding series, we are tracing Scriptural themes through the whole Bible so we can see how it all ties together.
 - **Reflect** questions ask you to think about how the passage applies to your life - past, present, and future.
 - **Psalm of the Week** questions will feature one Psalm every Friday that reinforces that week's theme.
 - **Listen** to the "Song of the Week" included in Tuesday's *Life at Hope* email. These songs relate to the week's theme and are part of Wednesday's questions.
 - **Challenge** questions offer resources each week for additional context and different ways to engage in the scriptures.
- **Group Discussion Questions:** Many Communities use these questions to guide their group discussions. Reach out to Pastor Bill Craig (bcraig@hopemason.org) if you are not plugged into a Community. Or grab a couple of people and meet on your own time for these weeks to discuss them.

LUKE 1:25-38

OVERVIEW

What do we learn about God the Father from this passage? The Holy Spirit?

List the statements made about Jesus in this passage. Put a “D” by the ones that show Jesus’ divinity, and an “H” by those that show His humanity.

REFLECT

Which of these statements about Jesus most evokes worship in you? Write it out below, then write a brief prayer of praise.

CHALLENGE

Today or sometime this week, watch the Bible Project video titled *The Birth of Jesus: Luke 1-2* by scanning the QR code on page 4.

LUKE 2:1-21

List the challenging and humble circumstances of Jesus' birth in these verses. What do we learn from this?

Write out verse 11 two times. The first time, imagine the shepherds hearing these words for the first time. What thoughts come? The second time, imagine those words being spoken to you. What thoughts come?

REFLECT

What was the shepherds' response to Jesus' birth? Picture someone you know who is outside the faith but inside your reach. Imagine them responding this way, then write a brief prayer that God would do that work in them.

LUKE 2:22-38

What do these verses say about Simeon's relationship with God? About Anna's? What desires and questions are stirred in you by this?

List all the things these verses say about Jesus. Which is most striking to you today, and why?

DIG DEEPER

For background on verses 22-24, read Leviticus 12:1-8. What does this teach us about Mary and Joseph's offering of a pair of turtledoves (or two young pigeons)? What strikes you about this?

LISTEN

Listen to the "Song of the Week" from yesterday's *Life at Hope* email.

LUKE 2:39-52

What do we learn about Jesus' parents, Mary and Joseph, in these verses? What do you imagine it must have been like to be Jesus' parents?

Which words in these verses show Jesus' humanity? What glimpses do we get of His divinity? What thoughts come?

REFLECT

Luke 2:40 is short but covers a lot. List some "milestones" Jesus would have achieved in the first twelve years of His life (e.g. taking His first step). What strikes you about this?

LUKE 2

WRAP-UP

Look back at your notes over the week. What is one thing you sense the Lord most wants to tell you? Ask Him and write any thoughts that come.

Think of someone who is outside the faith but inside your reach. What from this chapter do you most wish they could know and experience? Write a brief prayer for them below.

PSALM OF THE WEEK

Psalm 8:1-9 (Matthew 21:16) - For the next six weeks, we're studying the life of Jesus, and most of the 'Psalm of the Week' passages will be those about or quoted by Jesus, listing the place it was quoted. What do you imagine Jesus thought as He read this Psalm? What questions come?

MESSAGE NOTES

JESUS: FULLY GOD

JOHN 5:18-47

OVERVIEW

Read the whole passage. Write some of the key themes and insights below.

What questions come as you read this passage? Put a star by the most important ones.

REFLECT

What feelings arise as you read this passage? Write a brief prayer of response.

JOHN 5:18-24

What does Jesus say in this passage that points to His divinity?

What strikes you about the relationship between Jesus and the Father in these verses, and what questions do you have?

PRACTICE

Write out verse 24. Underline 4-6 key words or phrases and think about each for a moment. What thoughts come?

JOHN 5:25-29

What claims is Jesus making about Himself in these verses? What strikes you, and what questions do you have?

Write a brief response to the person who might read verse 29 and say, “See?! We do go to heaven or hell based on our behavior!” What other words of Jesus in verses 19-29 add to our understanding of how someone is saved?

DIG DEEPER

Jesus calls Himself the “Son of Man.” For background on this title, read Daniel 7:13-14. What thoughts and questions come? Write a brief prayer of response.

LISTEN

Listen to the “Song of the Week” from yesterday’s *Life at Hope* email.

JOHN 5:30-47

Jesus references the law in Deuteronomy 19:15 that “everything must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.” Who are the two witnesses that Jesus says testify to Him? What strikes you about this, and what questions do you have?

Who is Jesus talking to in these verses? According to verse 34, why is Jesus telling them these things? What strikes you about this?

REFLECT

Reread verse 30. How have you been seeking to do God’s will lately? How have you been seeking to do your own will? Ask God to show you and write any thoughts that come.

JOHN 5:30-47

WRAP-UP

Summarize the things Jesus says in verses 37-47 about the Jews He is speaking to. What strikes you about this, and what questions do you have?

Look back over your notes from the week. What is one thing you sense God wanting to say to you through this passage? Is there a step He's calling you to take here?

PSALM OF THE WEEK

Psalm 110:1-7 (Matthew 22:44) – What do you imagine Jesus thought as He read this Psalm? What questions come?

MESSAGE NOTES

MATTHEW 3:1-4:11

OVERVIEW

Read the whole passage. Write some of the key themes and insights below.

What questions come as you read this passage? Put a star by the most important ones.

REFLECT

What feelings arise as you read this passage? Write a brief prayer of response.

MATTHEW 3:1-10

What stands out to you about John's appearance, message, and actions? What do these details show you about his role?

Why does John rebuke the religious leaders? What do you learn about their approach to repentance and holiness?

DIG DEEPER

Read Isaiah 40:1-5. How does the larger context of the quotation found in Matthew 3:3 add to our understanding of what John's ministry is preparing for? What do we learn about God's character and action through this prophecy and its fulfillment?

MATTHEW 3:11-17

Why is John reluctant to baptize Jesus? What does this show you about how John sees Jesus? How does Jesus respond?

What happens after Jesus is baptized? What do you notice about the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in this moment? What does this show you about who Jesus is?

How does John relentlessly honor Jesus and turn the glory to Him? Where do you have opportunities to honor Jesus as King today? What might make that difficult?

LISTEN

Listen to the “Song of the Week” from yesterday’s *Life at Hope* email.

MATTHEW 4:1-11

Rewrite each of the devil's temptations in your own words. What do you notice about his goal and his strategy?

How does Jesus respond to each temptation? What do you notice about how He uses scripture? What is the result?

REFLECT

How do you typically respond to the devil's temptations and lies? Where might God be inviting you to rely on His strength in your weakness? How can His truth help you resist deception?

MATTHEW 3:1-4:11

WRAP-UP

What is one thing you sense God wanting to say to you through this passage? Is there a step He's calling you to take here?

What is one thing about Jesus in this passage you are amazed by? Consider sharing that with someone in a conversation or text.

PSALM OF THE WEEK

Psalm 91:1-16 (Matthew 4:6) - This Psalm was quoted by Satan. What do you imagine Jesus thought as He heard this Psalm? What questions come?

MESSAGE NOTES

MARK 1:14-2:12

OVERVIEW

Read the whole passage. Write some of the key themes and insights below.

Imagine joining Jesus as a disciple and seeing these works. How would you see Jesus? How would you see His message?

REFLECT

What feelings arise as you read this passage? Write a brief prayer of response.

MARK 1:14-28

What do you notice about Jesus' call of His disciples? What does this call ask of them? What might His call ask of you?

What do people notice about Jesus' teaching? How do people respond? How does the evil spirit's response deepen your understanding of Jesus' authority?

Where is it easy for you to believe that Jesus has authority behind His words? Where is it harder to trust that?

MARK 1:29-45

What do you notice about Jesus' works of healing?
What do you notice about His heart for the people He heals?

What do Jesus' works of healing tell you about His message? What does it tell you about who He is?

REFLECT

How might the heart of Jesus be on display in your wounds and brokenness? Write a prayer bringing your areas of need before Him.

LISTEN

Listen to the "Song of the Week" from yesterday's *Life at Hope* email.

MARK 2:1-12

What does Jesus address first for the paralyzed man?
How might that man feel upon hearing those words?
What does this tell you about the importance of forgiveness?

Why does it say the religious leaders are offended by the words of Jesus? How does Jesus address them?

How does the boldness of the man's friends challenge you or encourage you? What holds you back from boldly bringing your requests to Jesus?

MARK 1:14-2:12

WRAP-UP

What is one thing you sense God wanting to say to you through this passage? Is there a step He's calling you to take here?

Think of someone who is outside the faith but inside your reach. What from this chapter do you most wish they could know and experience? Write a brief prayer for them below.

PSALM OF THE WEEK

Psalm 32:1-11 - This Psalm is not quoted by Jesus, but the theme matches Mark 2:5. What do you imagine Jesus thought as He read this Psalm? What questions come?

MESSAGE NOTES

MATTHEW 5:1-16

OVERVIEW

What kinds of people or conditions does Jesus call “blessed” in this passage? List them. How are these different from what your culture would call the “good life” or “blessed”?

When Jesus calls these people “blessed,” where is that blessing coming from? What does this show you about a lasting source of blessing? How does this encourage or challenge you? Write a prayer to God in response.

DIG DEEPER

Read Exodus 19:20 and 20:1–18. What similarities do you notice between this moment and Matthew 5? What do these similarities show you about the role Jesus is stepping into?

CHALLENGE

Today or sometime this week, watch the Bible Project videos from the *Sermon on the Mount* series by scanning the QR code on page 4.

MATTHEW 5:17-48

Which Old Testament commandments does Jesus address in this passage? List them. What pattern do you notice in how Jesus fulfills or reinterprets these commandments?

Which of these teachings stands out to you? What does it show you about God's heart? How is this shaping the direction of your heart?

Where does this teaching feel difficult or out of reach for you? When you fall short, how do you respond to God's grace?

MATTHEW 6:1-18

In your own words, summarize what Jesus teaches about practicing righteousness for others to see. What contrast does He make between outward performance and a life lived before God?

What practices does Jesus highlight in this passage? List them. Which of these are a regular part of your response to God's grace? Which feel unfamiliar or difficult for you?

Is there a way God is inviting you to draw near to Him? How does this passage guide you to respond?

LISTEN

Listen to the "Song of the Week" from yesterday's *Life at Hope* email.

MATTHEW 6:19-34

Jesus uses analogies in this passage to describe our relationship to things. List each here. What do you understand the meaning of each to be?

What is one thing Jesus teaches about the place of money and possessions that is challenging? Encouraging? How might God be inviting you to respond?

REFLECT

Can you think of a time when you trusted God and you found Him faithful? Write a prayer thanking Him for His faithfulness.

MATTHEW 7:1-29

WRAP-UP

What characteristics of genuinely following Jesus do you see in this passage? List them here. How do these reflect a response to God's grace?

What is a word or teaching of Jesus you are holding onto today? How have you seen Him remain faithful through the storms of life? Write a prayer thanking Him for that.

PSALM OF THE WEEK

Psalm 118:14-29 (Matthew 21:9, 42) - What do you imagine Jesus thought as He read this Psalm? What questions come?

MESSAGE NOTES

LUKE 5:1-11

OVERVIEW

What does this passage teach us about Jesus? What does it teach us about obedience to Jesus?

Why do you think Simon Peter responded the way he did to the miraculous catch? Have you ever felt the same way? Explain.

REFLECT

What was Jesus saying He would do in Simon's life in verse 10? Do you believe Jesus intends the same for us? If not, why not? If so, how are you responding to this call? Write a brief prayer about that.

LUKE 5:27-32

What do you know about tax collectors in Jesus' time? If it's not much, take a few minutes to look it up. What do you learn?

How do you imagine Levi (also called Matthew) felt about being called by Jesus to follow Him? How would the other disciples have felt about Jesus calling Levi, and why? What does this teach us about Jesus?

REFLECT

Have you ever been questioned, criticized, or misunderstood because of the company you kept? Why or why not? What step might God be calling you to take here? Ask Him and write any thoughts that come.

LUKE 6:12-19

Reflect on verse 12 for a moment. What do we learn about Jesus here? What thoughts and desires does this stir in you? Write a brief prayer about that.

What do you notice about Jesus' choice of the apostles? Why might He include someone who would later betray Him? What does this reveal about God's heart of redemption?

REFLECT

God knows your weaknesses, failures, and sin. What stands out to you about His heart of redemption for you? How is His grace meeting you today?

LISTEN

Listen to the "Song of the Week" from yesterday's *Life at Hope* email.

LUKE 6:20-26

Who does your culture say is “blessed”? How would they describe “the good life”? Which of these cultural values are most tempting for you to embrace and pursue in ways that are not honoring to Jesus?

List below the types of people Jesus says are blessed. What strikes you, and what questions do you have?

DIG DEEPER

Read Luke 1:39-55. How are Jesus’ themes today reflected in Mary’s prayer? What thoughts and questions come?

LUKE 5 AND 6

WRAP-UP

Based on this week's passages, how would you define what a disciple of Jesus is? Is there a step Jesus is calling you to take here? Ask Him and write any thoughts that come.

What do we learn about God from this week's passages? Which is most meaningful to you? Write a brief prayer of response.

PSALM OF THE WEEK

Psalm 41:1-13 (John 13:18) - What do you imagine Jesus thought as He read this Psalm? What questions come?

MESSAGE NOTES

MARK 4:1-34

OVERVIEW

Read the whole passage. Write some of the key themes and insights below.

What questions come as you read this passage? Put a star by the most important ones.

REFLECT

What feelings arise as you read this passage? Write a brief prayer of response.

CHALLENGE

Today or sometime this week, watch the Bible Project video titled *The Parables of Jesus* by scanning the QR code on page 4.

MARK 4:1-20

What would you say is the main point of Jesus' teaching here? Try to summarize it in 10 words or less.

What do you think Jesus means by "having ears to hear"? What else does He say about how people respond to His teaching?

REFLECT

How might God be inviting you to understand His Word more fully? What would it look like for you to respond more fully to His Word?

MARK 4:1-20

What do the different soils represent? Describe each one in your own words. Is one of the “soils” a more significant challenge for you?

What is different about the response of the “good soil?” What might be shaping your response to what Jesus is saying in this passage?

REFLECT

Where have you seen “fruit” in your life? How would you like to see God’s Word grow in you and produce more fruit? Take a moment to write a prayer about this.

LISTEN

Listen to the “Song of the Week” from yesterday’s *Life at Hope* email.

MARK 4:21-34

What does the parable of the lamp show about the message of the kingdom of God? What does it show about the response to that message?

What do you notice about how the kingdom of God grows in the parables of the seed and the mustard seed? What do these images reveal about God's role and our role in that growth?

What is a way you have seen God's kingdom start small and grow in your life?

MARK 4:1-34

WRAP-UP

What is one thing you sense God wanting to say to you through this passage? Is there a step He's calling you to take here?

What do we learn about God's kingdom from this week's passages? What is most meaningful to you? Write a brief prayer of response.

PSALM OF THE WEEK

Psalm 78:1-8 (Matthew 13:35) - What do you imagine Jesus thought as He read this Psalm? What questions come?

MESSAGE NOTES

JUNE 15-21

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Share something you waited a long time for. How did the waiting shape your appreciation of it?
- What are the challenging and humble circumstances of Jesus' birth in these verses? What do we learn from this?
- What stands out to you about Simeon's relationship with God? About Anna's? What desires and questions are stirred in you by this?
- What do we learn about Jesus' parents, Mary and Joseph? What do you imagine it must have been like to be Jesus' parents?
- What shows Jesus' humanity? What glimpses do we get of His divinity?

JUNE 22-28

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Share about a moment where something you thought you understood turned out to be much bigger or different than you expected.
- What strikes you about the relationship between Jesus and the Father? What questions do you have?
- What claims is Jesus making about Himself in this passage? What does this reveal to you about Him?
- What is your response to the person who might read verse 29 and say, “See?! We do go to heaven or hell based on our behavior!” What other words of Jesus in verses 19-29 add to our understanding of how someone is saved?
- Read verse 30. How have you been seeking to do God’s will lately? How have you been seeking to do your own will?

JUNE 29-JULY 5

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What's one habit or mindset you've had to unlearn or rethink?
- Why does John rebuke the religious leaders? What do you learn about their approach to repentance and holiness?
- Read Isaiah 40:1-5. How does the larger context of the quote found in Matthew 3:3 add to our understanding of what John's ministry is preparing for? What do we learn about God's character and action through this prophecy's fulfillment?
- What do you notice about how Satan tries to twist scripture? How does the strategy of twisting truth play out in how the devil tempts us?
- Why might it have been significant for Jesus, the Messiah, to be tempted by Satan? What does His triumph over temptation mean for you today?

JULY 6-12

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Share about a time you or someone close to you had to take a bold step. What made it hard or worth it?
- What do people notice about Jesus' teaching? How do people respond? How does the evil spirit's response deepen your understanding of Jesus' authority?
- Where is it easy for you to believe that Jesus has authority behind His words? Where is it harder to trust that?
- What does Jesus address first for the paralyzed man? How might that man feel on hearing those words? What does this tell you about the importance of forgiveness?
- How does the boldness of the man's friends challenge you or encourage you? What holds you back from boldly bringing your requests to Jesus?

JULY 13-19

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- When you hear the phrase “the good life,” what immediately comes to mind? Has that changed over time?
- What kinds of people or conditions does Jesus call “blessed” in this passage? List them. How are these different from what your culture would call the “good life” or “blessed”?
- When Jesus calls these people “blessed,” where is that blessing coming from? What does this show you about a lasting source of blessing?
- What contrast does He make between outward performance and a life lived before God?
- What practices does Jesus highlight in this passage? List them. Which of these are a regular part of your response to God’s grace? Which feel unfamiliar or difficult for you?
- What is one thing Jesus teaches about the place of money and possessions that is challenging? Encouraging?

JULY 20-26

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Have you ever been surprised by an opportunity or invitation that changed your direction?
- Why do you think Simon Peter responded the way he did to the miraculous catch? Have you ever felt the same way?
- What was Jesus saying He would do in Simon's life in verse 10? Do you believe Jesus intends the same for us? If not, why not? If so, how are you responding to this call?
- Have you ever been questioned, criticized, or misunderstood because of the company you kept? Why or why not? What step might God be calling you to take here?
- Who does your culture say is "blessed"? How would they describe "the good life"? Which of these cultural values are most tempting for you to embrace and pursue in ways that are not honoring to Jesus?

JULY 27-AUGUST 2

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What's something in your life that started small but grew into something meaningful?
- What do you think Jesus means by “having ears to hear”? What else does He say about how people respond to His teaching?
- What do the different soils represent? Describe each one in your own words. Is one of the “soils” a more significant challenge for you?
- Where have you seen “fruit” in your life? How would you like to see the God’s Word grow in you and produce more fruit?
- What does the parable of the lamp show about the message of the kingdom of God? What does it show about the response to that message?
- What do you notice about how the kingdom of God grows in the parables of the seed and the mustard seed? What do these images reveal about God’s role and our role in that growth?
- What is a way you have seen God’s kingdom start small and grow in your life?

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