

August 9, 2026



CHECKPOINTS



Following Jesus: More Than A Checklist

"Gather"

Luke 4:14-30 [14-16 listed] (NLT)

Then Jesus returned to Galilee, filled with the Holy Spirit's power. Reports about him spread quickly through the whole region. ¹⁵ He taught regularly in their synagogues and was praised by everyone. ¹⁶ When he came to the village of Nazareth, his boyhood home, he went as usual to the synagogue on the Sabbath and stood up to read the Scriptures.

Sermon Summary:

Some of us grew up with a version of faith that looked a lot like a checklist. Go to church—check. Try to be a good person—check. Pray when life gets hard—check. Over time, without even realizing it, following Jesus can begin to feel like just another box to check in an already busy life. But Jesus never invited anyone into that kind of relationship. He didn't say, "Fit Me in when it's convenient." He didn't say, "Add Me to your list." In Luke 9:23, Jesus said, "If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow Me." Following Jesus isn't about completing a religious checklist; it's about walking with Him every day.

Checkpoints aren't boxes to earn God's approval—they're markers that help us evaluate whether we're actually growing as followers of Jesus. They remind us to keep moving in the right direction, taking intentional steps toward becoming more like Christ.

Ice Breaker Questions:

1. What is one weekly routine or habit that has been part of your life for years?
2. Growing up, what was your family's Sunday routine like?
3. What's one habit you've developed that has made a positive difference in your life?
4. Have you ever returned to a place where everyone thought they knew you? What was that experience like?
5. If someone observed your weekly schedule, what would they say are your biggest priorities?

Scripture Study Questions:

1. According to verse 14, what was happening as Jesus returned to Galilee?
2. What did Jesus do on the Sabbath "as usual" (v.16)?
3. What Scripture passage did Jesus read in the synagogue?
4. According to Isaiah's prophecy, what mission had the Spirit anointed Jesus to accomplish?
5. What declaration did Jesus make after reading the Scripture?
6. How did the people initially respond to Jesus?



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7. Why did the people begin questioning Jesus?
8. What two Old Testament examples did Jesus use to illustrate God's work among outsiders?
9. How did the people react after hearing Jesus' examples?
10. How did Jesus leave the crowd after they attempted to kill Him?

Scripture Questions:

1. Why do you think Luke specifically tells us that attending the synagogue was Jesus' custom?
2. What does Jesus' regular participation in synagogue worship teach us about the importance of gathering with God's people?
3. Why did the people admire Jesus at first but reject Him only moments later?
4. What was Jesus revealing about God's heart by mentioning the widow of Zarephath and Naaman?
5. How does this passage challenge the difference between simply attending worship and truly receiving God's Word?

Application Questions:

1. Jesus made gathering with God's people a regular part of His life. What does your current pattern of gathering say about your priorities?
2. What obstacles most often keep you from consistently gathering with God's people?
3. How can gathering with the church become more than simply attending a service?
4. In what ways can you prepare your heart before coming to worship so you're ready to hear and respond to God's Word?
5. This week's checkpoint is **Gather: Centering your life around God's presence and God's people**. What's one practical step you can take this week to make gathering with God's people a more intentional priority?