

GATHER

Following Jesus was never meant to be a solo journey. From the very beginning, God has gathered His people into a community where they can worship Him, encourage one another, learn His Word, and grow together. While our faith is personal, it was never intended to be private. God designed us to flourish in relationship with Him and with His family.

Throughout the Gospels, we see that gathering was a regular rhythm in the life of Jesus. He gathered with others in the synagogue to worship. He gathered with His disciples to teach, pray, and share life together. He gathered around tables, in homes, on hillsides, and by the sea. Again and again, Jesus demonstrated that spiritual growth happens as we intentionally place ourselves among God's people and in God's presence.

Gather

centering your life around God's presence and His people

Gathering is much more than attending a church service. It is making the decision that worship, Scripture, prayer, and Christian community will become the regular rhythm of your life. It is choosing to orient your week around God instead of trying to fit Him into the empty spaces that remain.

Over the next five days, you'll discover why gathering matters, what it produces in your life, and how God uses His people to shape your faith. As you read, ask God to deepen your desire not only to know Him personally but also to faithfully gather with His church. As you make gathering a priority, you'll find that God doesn't simply ask you to show up. He meets you there, transforms you there, and sends you out to live for Him.

Remember...

The goal isn't simply to attend church more often. The goal is to become more like Jesus.

Day 1

We Gather to Worship

Scripture: Psalm 95:1–7

Psalm 95 is an invitation for God's people to gather together in worship. Notice the repeated words: *come, sing, shout, give thanks, and bow down*. Worship is not presented as something we do in isolation but as something God's people experience together. The psalm begins by celebrating who God is - our Rock, our salvation, and the great King over all creation. It then shifts from joyful celebration to humble surrender, reminding us that we are His people and He is our Shepherd. Genuine worship always moves us from simply praising God for what He has done to submitting ourselves to His loving leadership.

Application

One of the most important ways we follow Jesus is to intentionally **Gather** with His people. Throughout Scripture, God's people regularly gathered to remember God's faithfulness and celebrate His greatness. When we **Gather**, our attention shifts away from our busy schedules, our worries, and ourselves, and back to the God who is worthy of all praise. Corporate worship reminds us that following Jesus is not just a private belief. It is a shared response to God's goodness. The **Gather** Checkpoint isn't about fulfilling an obligation. It's about intentionally placing yourself in God's presence alongside His people so your heart can be re-centered on Him.

Every time you intentionally Gather, you are taking another intentional step in following Jesus.

Reflection

- What competes with your desire to **Gather** each week?
- How does worship help redirect your attention back to God?

Prayer

Lord, thank You for inviting me into Your presence. Help me make it a priority to **Gather** with Your people, not because it's on my schedule, but because You alone are worthy of my worship. As I **Gather** with Your church this week, draw my heart closer to You and help me become more like Jesus. Amen.

Day 2

We Gather Because We Need Each Other

Scripture: Hebrews 10:23–25

The book of Hebrews was written to believers who were facing hardship and were tempted to drift away from their faith. Rather than withdrawing from one another, the writer urges them to “hold tightly” to their hope and to “think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works.” One of the primary ways this happens is when believers gather together. Notice the emphasis isn’t simply on attending a meeting - it is on encouraging one another. God designed the church to be a community where faith is strengthened through relationships, encouragement, and shared hope.

Application

One of the most important ways we follow Jesus is to intentionally **Gather** with His people. God never intended the Christian life to be lived alone. There will be weeks when you **Gather** because you need encouragement, and there will be weeks when God uses you to encourage someone else. Your smile, your conversation, your prayers, or simply your faithful presence may be exactly what another believer needs. The **Gather** Checkpoint reminds us that church is not just somewhere we go - it is a family where we grow together. As we **Gather** consistently, God strengthens our faith through the people He has placed around us.

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Reflection

- Who encourages your faith when you **Gather**?
- How could God use your presence to encourage someone this week?

Prayer

Father, thank You for placing me in a church family. Help me faithfully **Gather** with Your people, not only to receive encouragement but also to become an encouragement to others. Amen.

Day 3

We Gather to Meet with Jesus

Scripture: Matthew 18:20

Jesus spoke these words while teaching His disciples about relationships within the church. Although the immediate context involves prayer and seeking God’s will together, His promise is clear: when believers

gather in His name, He is present with them. Of course, Jesus is always with His followers, but there is something uniquely powerful about His people gathering together in worship, prayer, and fellowship. Throughout the New Testament, God regularly works through the gathered church to teach, encourage, convict, and strengthen His people. Gathering creates space for us to experience His presence together.

Application

One of the most important ways we follow Jesus is to intentionally **Gather** with His people. Every time we **Gather**, we have an opportunity to experience Jesus in fresh ways. Sometimes He speaks through His Word. Sometimes through worship. Sometimes through a prayer, a conversation, or the encouragement of another believer. We never know exactly how God will work, but we can come expecting Him to meet us. The **Gather** Checkpoint reminds us that church is far more than another event on our calendar. It is a place where we intentionally seek the presence of Christ together.

Every time you intentionally Gather, you are taking another intentional step in following Jesus.

Reflection

- When has God met you in a meaningful way while gathering with His people?
- What would change if you came expecting Jesus to work in your life?

Prayer

Jesus, thank You for Your promise to be present whenever Your people **Gather**. Help me come each week with an open heart, expecting You to speak, encourage, and transform me. Amen.

Day 4

We Gather to Grow

Scripture: Acts 2:42–47

After the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the early believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking bread together, and prayer. Their spiritual growth wasn't accidental. It was intentional. As they gathered consistently, they learned God's Word, cared for one another, worshiped together, and experienced God's power in remarkable ways. Their commitment to **Gather** not only strengthened their own faith but also became a powerful witness to those around them. Healthy churches have always been places where disciples grow together.

Application

One of the most important ways we follow Jesus is to intentionally **Gather** with His people. Spiritual growth rarely happens by accident. As we **Gather** week after week, God uses His Word to teach us, His people to encourage us, and His Spirit to transform us. What may seem like ordinary Sundays become extraordinary opportunities for God to shape us into the likeness of Christ. The **Gather** Checkpoint is one of God's primary tools for helping us become more like Jesus. Coming together consistently with other followers of Jesus positions us where God delights to do His work.

Every time you intentionally Gather, you are taking another intentional step in following Jesus.

Reflection

- When you **Gather**, what - worship, teaching, prayer, or fellowship - has helped you grow the most?
- How can you become more engaged the next time you **Gather**?

Prayer

Lord, thank You for using Your church to help me grow. As I **Gather** with other believers, teach me, challenge me, and continue shaping me into the person You want me to become. Amen.

Day 5

We Gather to Build Up Others

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 14:26

The church in Corinth had many spiritual gifts, but they often used those gifts for personal recognition rather than serving others. Paul reminds them that whenever believers gather, everything should be done “to strengthen all.” Whether someone brings a song, a lesson, a word of encouragement, or a prayer, the purpose is the same—to build up the body of Christ. Gathering isn’t about being entertained or consuming a service; it’s about every believer contributing to the spiritual health of the church. God has given each follower of Jesus something to offer.

Application

One of the most important ways we follow Jesus is to intentionally **Gather** with His people. When we **Gather**, we come not only to receive but also to give. God can use a kind word, a warm smile, a sincere prayer, or your faithful presence to encourage someone who is struggling. Never underestimate how God can use you simply because you chose to **Gather**. The **Gather** Checkpoint reminds us that every believer has a role in strengthening God’s family. We all have something to contribute as we follow Christ together.

Every time you intentionally Gather, you are taking another intentional step in following Jesus.

Reflection

- Who might need encouragement the next time you **Gather**?
- How has someone else’s faithfulness encouraged you in the past?

Prayer

Father, help me **Gather** with a servant’s heart. Open my eyes to the people around me and use my words, my actions, and my presence to encourage others and glorify You. Amen.