

# GRACE BOMB

RELOADED ACTION GUIDE

# WELCOME TO THE GRACE BOMB RELOADED ACTION GUIDE!

Over the next six weeks you'll learn how a Grace Bombing habit can grow from anonymous or random, to more routine and relational. These faith muscles can get stronger as we practice becoming more aware of our neighbors, prayerfully discern the Holy Spirit's promptings, become better stewards of our resources, and get better prepared to articulate the gospel. These are all areas of our walks with Jesus that help us truly live out the great commission in everyday life. This book will help you dig in and explore these biblical truths throughout your sermon series.



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WEEK 1

# THE BAD SAMARITANS

How difficult is it to follow in the footsteps of the famous fictional “Good Samaritan” from Jesus’ parable in Luke 10? Pretty much impossible! That’s how difficult.

Recall the parable itself. A man is going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and is jumped, beaten, and left for dead in the streets. We may safely presume that this poor guy was Jewish, per the context in which this story is told. Then thankfully, a prominent Jewish priest comes along to save the day. Not so much. The priest avoided his kinsmen in the streets. Enter a Levite, another godly person to step in. But to no avail. The Levite had places to go and people to see. No grace. No mercy. Just a hurried pace walking around what appeared to them to be an inconvenience.

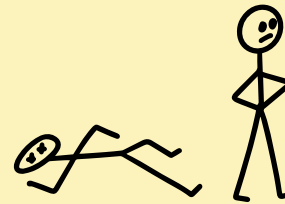
Then comes the shocker. Down walks a Samaritan. What makes this a sensational plot twist is that at that time, and for many years before, Jews and Samaritans were pretty much sworn enemies. These two tribes had bad blood so thick you could wring it out of the pages of their intertwined history. So the thought of this man as the one who not only stops and helps, but also goes above and beyond in caring, is captivating enough to win this story a Pulitzer prize.



Now let’s translate this to our neighborhoods. Out of all the people you actually like, how often do you

AND BEHOLD, A LAWYER STOOD UP TO PUT HIM TO THE TEST, SAYING, “TEACHER, WHAT SHALL I DO TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE?”  
LUKE 10:25

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find yourself pouring out mercy and love on them? How often have you cared so deeply, you’d be willing to leave a blank check behind? If I am honest, my own family hardly gets such selfless attention. Now if being this kind of neighbor is hard for the people we like, how about those we have bad blood with? A sworn enemy? Can you see now how measuring up to the standard of the “Good Samaritan” is nearly a perfect standard? This makes us look more like “Bad Samaritans.”

But take heart, because if that story convicts you at all, then I think it is serving its purpose for Jesus telling it. The context of this parable holds the key to its ultimate meaning. While many find in this parable the answer to “who is my neighbor,” we also come to grips with our inability to “go and do likewise.”

Recall that Jesus told this story to a self-righteous lawyer who felt he was justified and keeping the “great commandments” of loving God and loving people. Jesus exposes how the lawyer falls short of perfectly keeping that royal law of love, and therefore stands in need of a savior. Jesus is that savior, and His amazing grace becomes the basis and starting point of loving those people that God may drop right in the paths of our busy lives.

WHO HAS GOD PUT IN YOUR PATH RECENTLY WHO MIGHT NEED A TOUCH OF GRACE?

LET’S TAKE A DEEPER LOOK AT LUKE 10:25-37. WHEN IT IS HARD TO LOVE SOMEONE, REMEMBER WHILE WE WERE STILL GOD’S ENEMIES, HE LOVED US!



## READ THE NARRATIVE IN LUKE 10.

And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live."

But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise."

**LUKE 10:25-37**

## LAWYERS

THE LAWYER APPROACHED JESUS ALREADY KNOWING THE ANSWER TO HIS QUESTION BECAUSE HE WANTED TO JUSTIFY THE WAY HE LIVED. WHAT EXCUSES OR JUSTIFICATIONS DO WE USE NOT TO LIVE BY THE TWO GREATEST COMMANDS OF LOVING GOD AND LOVING OTHERS?

## PRIESTS AND LEVITES

THINK OF A TIME YOU HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW LOVE TO A NEIGHBOR BUT PASSED IT UP. WHAT STOPPED YOU FROM TAKING THAT STEP OF FAITH?





THE OPPOSITE OF SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS IS HUMILITY. BECAUSE OF GOD'S GREAT LOVE FOR US IN SENDING JESUS, WE LEARN TO PUT THE NEEDS OF OUR NEIGHBORS AHEAD OF OUR OWN. WHO IS GOD PROMPTING YOU TO LOVE LIKE JESUS?

## GOOD SAMARITANS

BEING A GOOD SAMARITAN MEANS SHOWING MERCY TO OTHERS. SHARE A STORY OF WHEN YOU WERE A GOOD SAMARITAN TO A NEIGHBOR, OR PERHAPS YOU RECEIVED MERCY FROM A GOOD SAMARITAN.

## GO AND DO LIKEWISE

WHEN IT COMES TO SLOWING DOWN IN LIFE, WHICH OF THESE DO YOU THINK WOULD MOST HELP YOU BECOME MORE AWARE OF YOUR NEIGHBOR? BECOMING MORE OBSERVANT, MORE PRESENT, LESS DISTRACTED, OR MORE CREATIVE? WHAT CHANGES CAN YOU MAKE TODAY?

THIS WEEK I WILL...

WEEK 2

# POWER PRAYER

## COMPASSION

I'm not sure that I wake up in the morning ready to love my neighbor. If I'm keeping it real, I'm not even sure that I even like people all that much. I'm much more comfortable keeping my head down and doing my own thing. Plus, living with a big family tends to zap a lot of my love reserves, so by the time I even get out and about, I'm often catching my breath and restocking up on love, peace, and patience. If I do have anything left in the tank, I'm not sure I want to share it with the people I see in my everyday walk of life.

This is where a dangerous prayer is needed. Prayer, in general, that personal and intimate ongoing conversation with God, is essential in the life of a follower of Jesus. When we look at His life, He was regularly pulling away to pray, healing by prayer, teaching about prayer, and gaining strength by it. So into that assumption that you have a lively and regular prayer life, we are also told to make our requests known to God. What are helpful prayer requests to fuel your Grace Bombing adventures? They are dangerous ones, because if God answers



AND JESUS WENT THROUGHOUT ALL THE CITIES AND VILLAGES, TEACHING IN THEIR SYNAGOGUES AND PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM AND HEALING EVERY DISEASE AND EVERY AFFLICTION. WHEN HE SAW THE CROWDS, HE HAD COMPASSION FOR THEM, BECAUSE THEY WERE HARASSED AND HELPLESS, LIKE SHEEP WITHOUT A SHEPHERD. THEN HE SAID TO HIS DISCIPLES, "THE HARVEST IS PLENTIFUL, BUT THE LABORERS ARE FEW; THEREFORE PRAY EARNESTLY TO THE LORD OF THE HARVEST TO SEND OUT LABORERS INTO HIS HARVEST." MATTHEW 9:35-38



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them, we stand to walk in good works that will push us out of our comfort zones and push against the natural aversion of our neighbors.

So we pray for an unnatural, or supernatural, compassion. This is the first request to bring practical power to loving people - to simply like them. To feel for them. In Matthew 9, Jesus is out and about doing His thing, and we catch a glimpse of how He felt about the crowds. He felt for them, was concerned for them, cared. He didn't look out at the landscape of a messed-up world, pointing fingers at all the people breaking God's laws while looking for love in all the wrong places. He cared about them instead, because they were lost like sheep, trying to figure out survival while getting beat down by the deceptive forces of the world.

The crowds today are sitting right across from you, behind you in line, next to you on the sidelines. Our neighbors are as lost and helpless as were Jesus'. In that same passage, Jesus looked to His disciples and told them to pray for laborers in the harvest. Perhaps you will be the answer to those prayers, a person who can reap spiritual fruit? But first, you may need to pray for the true desire to do so.

DO YOU HAVE A NATURAL COMPASSION, OR AVERSION, TO THE CROWDS?

CONSIDER THIS FIRST DANGEROUS PRAYER REQUEST: "JESUS HELP ME TO HAVE COMPASSION LIKE YOU - FORGE IT IN MY HEART, AND BRING IT TO LIFE."

# POWER PRAYER

## COURAGE

My problem most of the time is not understanding the "right thing," it's doing the "right thing." If you sat me down with a quiz on basic morals or being good with true or false, or even multiple choice, I'd probably pass. My guess is that you would too.

Let's test out my theory for fun real quick. Circle the correct answer in your mind.

- 1 You are given a quiz from a teacher, and you should try to cheat. True or False
- 2 You were given 5 cookies as a gift from your friend Sally. Sally chose to give your other friend Tim 7 cookies. When Tim is not looking you should steal one from him to make it fair so you both have 6. (Tim is also kind of a jerk so...) True or False.
- 3 You are handy and you have an opportunity to serve your friend whose garbage disposal



THEN JESUS WENT WITH THEM TO A PLACE CALLED GETHSEMANE, AND HE SAID TO HIS DISCIPLES, "SIT HERE, WHILE I GO OVER THERE AND PRAY." AND TAKING WITH HIM PETER AND THE TWO SONS OF ZEBEDEE, HE BEGAN TO BE SORROWFUL AND TROUBLED. THEN HE SAID TO THEM, "MY SOUL IS VERY SORROWFUL, EVEN TO DEATH; REMAIN HERE, AND WATCH WITH ME." AND GOING A LITTLE FARTHER HE FELL ON HIS FACE AND PRAYED, SAYING, "MY FATHER, IF IT BE POSSIBLE, LET THIS CUP PASS FROM ME; NEVERTHELESS, NOT AS I WILL, BUT AS YOU WILL." AND HE CAME TO THE DISCIPLES AND FOUND THEM SLEEPING. AND HE SAID TO PETER, "SO, COULD YOU NOT WATCH WITH ME ONE HOUR? WATCH AND PRAY THAT YOU MAY NOT ENTER INTO TEMPTATION. THE SPIRIT INDEED IS WILLING, BUT THE FLESH IS WEAK." MATTHEW 26:36-41



THERE  
IS A GAP  
BETWEEN  
KNOWING THE  
RIGHT THING  
AND DOING  
THE RIGHT  
THING.

is broken. You think it would be a great way to love your neighbor, but it will cost you a Saturday morning of relaxing. You should:

- A-Tell them you are busy on Saturday and recommend a plumber
- B-Make some calls to see if someone else can help out
- C-Drive over with your tools and help them make the repair

Ok, so question 3 might be a toss-up between b and c - but overall you get my point. Have you ever cheated, stolen, not helped when you could? What gives? Jesus tells us. There is a gap between knowing the right thing and doing the right thing - that gap is human weakness. He says, "the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak."

In the passage from Matthew 26, Jesus was on the final leg of His journey to the cross - this was a path He knew was the right thing to do - it was clearly God's will for Him. He knew it, but in that moment He also felt the natural desire to stay alive. So into that gap we find Jesus praying for strength and courage to carry out the mission. This is something well all need regularly. Take the time to pray for strength and courage to walk in those good works that God has prepared for us. Jesus demonstrated this for us, and taught us to do the same.

WHAT GOOD THING HAS GOD PUT ON YOUR HEART RECENTLY THAT YOU SHOULD DO?

PRAY SPECIFICALLY FOR STRENGTH AND COURAGE TO CARRY OUT THAT SIMPLE MISSION OF OBEDIENCE.

# POWER PRAYER

## CURIOSITY

When it comes to praying about Grace Bombing, there are some classic go-tos such as “Lord, guide me today to a neighbor who needs a touch of your grace,” or “Jesus, help me to be more generous like you with my time and treasure, so that I can be a big blessing today.” But there is another request we can make, focused on what happens after we Load, Listen, and Let ‘er go: a prayer that God would bring about a spiritual curiosity among the non-believers that we Grace Bomb.

Unlike a random act of kindness, a Grace Bomb is an intentional act of love motivated by Jesus, intended to leave a no-pressure pointer to Him – a Grace Bomb card. Your neighbor needs to do nothing with this little piece of plastic and ink. But, if interested or intrigued, they may be curious enough to ask or seek what it means. They may do this on their own using their phone, or they may ask you directly. This is curiosity, and we can be praying for it – praying that this spiritual curiosity would only build more and more, toward the hidden desire of the soul to unearth the greater giver.



NOW THERE WAS A MAN OF THE PHARISEES NAMED NICODEMUS, A RULER OF THE JEWS. THIS MAN CAME TO JESUS BY NIGHT AND SAID TO HIM, “RABBI, WE KNOW THAT YOU ARE A TEACHER COME FROM GOD, FOR NO ONE CAN DO THESE SIGNS THAT YOU DO UNLESS GOD IS WITH HIM.” JESUS ANSWERED HIM, “TRULY, TRULY, I SAY TO YOU, UNLESS ONE IS BORN AGAIN HE CANNOT SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD.” JOHN 3:1-3



UNLIKE A  
RANDOM ACT  
OF KINDNESS,  
A GRACE  
BOMB IS AN  
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BY JESUS.

Nicodemus was a guy with curiosity. He had been seeing the signs of Jesus and was prompted to inquire about their source. This led to their now famous nighttime meeting, where Jesus told him how to inherit eternal life. Unlike his peers who had already made up their minds about Jesus, Nicodemus wanted to know more. These are heavy spiritual matters requiring God to do the lifting. Jesus Himself said that no one can come to Him unless the Father draws them (John 6:44).

Grace Bombing our neighbor is step one. Praying for them is step two. Who knows how they will respond when you unexpectedly cut their grass, paint their fence, pay for their meal, pay off their layaway, or drop them flowers with an encouraging card? But you are creating an opportunity for curiosity, so let's ask for that specifically.

HAVE YOU EVER PRAYED INTENTIONALLY BEFORE AND AFTER GRACE BOMBING A NEIGHBOR?

PRAY EARNESTLY AFTER YOUR NEXT GRACE BOMB, THAT YOUR BLESSED NEIGHBOR WOULD WELL UP WITH AN UN-NATURAL DESIRE TO KNOW WHY.



# POWER PRAYER

## CONVERSATIONS

Grace Bombing is loving your neighbor with no strings attached in surprising and generous ways. This is the nature of grace itself, it is a free gift for the taking. It is “unmerited favor.” Grace feels good for both the giver and the receiver. And although there are no expectations of returning the favor, there is a burden behind every intentional act of love, that it would reveal more – that indeed, your timely taste of grace would be the tip of the iceberg to something greater.

That something greater is someone greater: Jesus. He is not just an option for a nice religion, but we have every reason to believe that He is actually God incarnate, the Son of God, who is of one substance with the Father. Jesus is not a way to God among many peaceful options; He says He is the way, because He is divine. In other words, the only way to God is through God.



NOW AN ANGEL OF THE LORD SAID TO PHILIP, “RISE AND GO TOWARD THE SOUTH TO THE ROAD THAT GOES DOWN FROM JERUSALEM TO GAZA.” THIS IS A DESERT PLACE. AND HE ROSE AND WENT. AND THERE WAS AN ETHIOPIAN, A EUNUCH, A COURT OFFICIAL OF CANDACE, QUEEN OF THE ETHIOPIANS, WHO WAS IN CHARGE OF ALL HER TREASURE. HE HAD COME TO JERUSALEM TO WORSHIP AND WAS RETURNING, SEATED IN HIS CHARIOT, AND HE WAS READING THE PROPHET ISAIAH. AND THE SPIRIT SAID TO PHILIP, “GO OVER AND JOIN THIS CHARIOT.” SO PHILIP RAN TO HIM AND HEARD HIM READING ISAIAH THE PROPHET AND ASKED, “DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU ARE READING?” AND HE SAID, “HOW CAN I, UNLESS SOMEONE GUIDES ME?” AND HE INVITED PHILIP TO COME UP AND SIT WITH HIM. ACTS 8:26-31



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WAYS.

If this is true – literally, historically – then that means Jesus is a real person, who offers real help in giving us the greatest healing our souls need to truly live. Is this what our neighbors think when they hear the name Jesus? Is this where their minds go when they think about “church”? With so many questions, misconceptions, misunderstandings, and deceitful schemes that work against a clear understanding of the gospel, our neighbors will need timely and thoughtful conversations – with you.

The Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8 had in his hands a part of the story, but he needed a timely conversation to hear how it was Jesus who was promised in the Old Testament. Philip was there to lead him to the Lord. What a great conversation this must have been. We are called to these conversations. Enter the final power prayer of the Grace Bomber. As you have been praying for compassion, courage, and a natural curiosity to come directly from the recipients of your Grace Bombs, now pray for supernatural conversations to result. Let’s trust the Lord more and more, and ask more and more for conversations to spring up today with the neighbors we Grace Bombed yesterday.

WHEN IS THE LAST TIME YOU GRACE BOMBED SOMEONE? WILL YOU PERHAPS SEE THEM AGAIN? PRAY NOW THAT IF AND WHEN YOU DO, THEY WOULD APPROACH YOU TO TALK ABOUT IT.

DOES THAT SCENARIO SOUND SCARY OR EXCITING? IF SCARY, IT MIGHT BE TIME TO THINK ABOUT YOUR STORY WITH JESUS, AND HOW TO EXPLAIN THE GOOD NEWS TO YOUR NEIGHBOR.

## WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR REGULAR RHYTHMS OR HABITS OF PRAYER THAT HAVE HELPED YOU GROW CLOSER TO THE LORD?



And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

**MATTHEW 9:35-38**



Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here, while I go over there and pray." And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me." And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will." And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, "So, could you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

**MATTHEW 26:36-41**



## COMPASSION

READ MATTHEW 9:35-38 AGAIN: HERE WE SEE JESUS VERY BUSY, TRAVELLING, TEACHING AND HEALING - YET HE STILL HAD COMPASSION FOR THE CROWDS. TYPICALLY, WHEN WE ARE BUSY, IT'S EASY TO BECOME SELF-ABSORBED RATHER THAN COMPASSIONATE TOWARD OTHERS. IS GOD BRINGING ANYONE TO MIND FROM WHOM YOU NEED TO BE PRAYING TO HAVE COMPASSION?

## COURAGE

READ MATTHEW 26:36-41: EVEN JESUS NEEDED TO BE STRENGTHENED IN PRAYER TO CARRY OUT THE FATHER'S WILL. HOW CAN PRAYER HELP US CLOSE THE GAP BETWEEN KNOWING WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS PROMPTING US TO DO AND ACTUALLY CARRYING IT OUT?



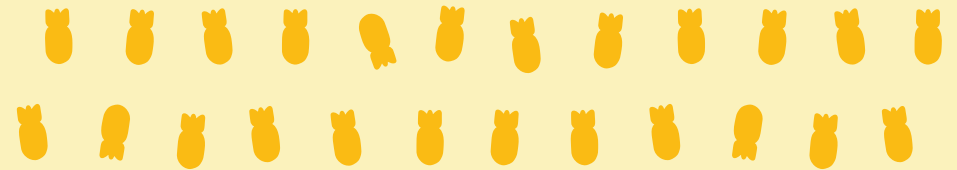
Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him." Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

**JOHN 3:1-3**



Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is a desert place. And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and join this chariot." So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

**ACTS 8:26-31**



## CURIOSITY

READ JOHN 3:1-3: WHO IS THE LORD BRINGING TO MIND THAT MIGHT BE CURIOUS OR INTERESTED ABOUT FAITH WHOM YOU COULD BE PRAYING FOR? WHAT MIGHT BE YOUR NEXT STEP IN THAT RELATIONSHIP?

## CONVERSATION

READ ACTS 8:26-31: HAVE YOU BEEN PRAYING FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE JESUS WITH SOMEONE? HOW WOULD YOU BEGIN A CONVERSATION WITH THAT PERSON?





THIS PAST WEEK I...

THIS WEEK I WILL...



**EVEN JESUS  
NEEDED TO BE  
STRENGTHENED  
IN PRAYER TO  
CARRY OUT THE  
FATHER'S WILL.**

WEEK 3

# THE INFLUENCER

The formula for dropping a Grace Bomb is simple: Load, Listen, and Let 'er go! Loading means being prepared by having Grace Bomb cards readily available. Letting 'er go is the simple act of actually dropping a surprising gift on a neighbor. Listening is the act of being sensitive to the Holy Spirit's nudge and direction, but what does that really mean?

When we become followers of Jesus, Ephesians 1:13-14 tells us we are sealed with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the third person of our triune God who comes to indwell and regenerate our souls. He is a real person who has real power and helps lead us to become more like Jesus. He is described as a helper, comforter, and guide. Jesus even goes so far as to say that it is better for Him to leave earth so that the Holy Spirit can come (John 16:7)! One Grace Bomb story that exemplifies listening to the Holy Spirit came from Savannah:

"I am still amazed how good God is and how He works! I was coming home from grocery shopping with my cold items in a little cloth cooler in the backseat and had every intention of going straight home. God had other plans. I had only been in the car about a minute when God said, 'Offer that woman walking alongside the road a ride.' I pulled into the gas station just in time to intercept her. I called after her, but she kept walking. I pulled back out into the street with my hazards on and tried again. It wasn't until I got her attention and her acceptance of my offer that I realized she was deaf. As rudimentary as my signing skills are, I told her I knew my ABC's. We found a way to communicate all of the drive to her destination! The most moving part was when I pointed to my cross necklace and told her, 'I listened.' She was overwhelmed



AND I WILL ASK THE FATHER, AND HE WILL GIVE YOU ANOTHER HELPER, TO BE WITH YOU FOREVER, EVEN THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH, WHOM THE WORLD CANNOT RECEIVE, BECAUSE IT NEITHER SEES HIM NOR KNOWS HIM, YOU KNOW HIM, FOR HE DWELLS WITH YOU AND WILL BE IN YOU. - JOHN 14:16-17



with thanks to Jesus and told me she had prayed for help! The excitement in that car was nothing like I had experienced! When I dropped her off I gave her the Grace Bomb. I explained these cards are a good reminder of showing God's love to others and I told her how much she is loved. We hugged and parted with uplifted spirits. God is SO GOOD!"

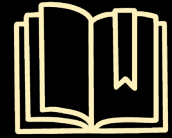
When we are yielded to the Spirit's leading, we are likely taking steps of faith. Many Grace Bomb stories that have been shared include language like God "pulled my heart," "placed on my heart," "nudged," "burdened," "tugged," "heard," or even "said." These are all descriptions of a shared spiritual experience of being Spirit-led. But how can we know if it's really God, prompting us through the Holy Spirit, or something else?

The process of discerning God's still, small voice, or being Spirit-led, does not have to be shrouded in mystery, and we can become more attentive to His prompting. This is especially important as we are prayerfully among our neighbors, looking and listening for opportunities to love people in the moment.

Some indicators that your actions are Spirit-led include that they would elevate Jesus, require some self-denial or risk, may be countercultural, and are always biblical. The Holy Spirit's role to illuminate biblical opportunities flows from the combination of His presence in you, and His inspiration of the Scriptures that you have taken the time to learn. To be Spirit-led, or even Spirit filled, is to be surrendered and yielded to the steps of faith He puts before you.

(CAN YOU THINK OF A TIME THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS CLEARLY LEADING YOU TO BLESS SOMEONE ELSE?)

WHAT DOES LISTENING TO FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT'S VOICE LOOK LIKE IN YOUR LIFE?



LOOK CAREFULLY THEN HOW YOU WALK, NOT AS UNWISE BUT AS WISE, MAKING THE BEST USE OF THE TIME, BECAUSE THE DAYS ARE EVIL. THEREFORE DO NOT BE FOOLISH, BUT UNDERSTAND WHAT THE WILL OF THE LORD IS. AND DO NOT GET DRUNK WITH WINE, FOR THAT IS DEBAUCHERY, BUT BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT...

**EPHESIANS 5:15-18**



SHARE A TIME OR STORY WHEN YOU FELT LIKE YOU WERE BEING SPIRIT-LED. WHAT DID THAT LOOK LIKE, AND HOW DID IT GO?

REFLECTING ON THAT TIME WHEN YOU ACTED ON THE SPIRIT'S PROMPTING, WHICH OF THESE HELPED YOU DISCERN THAT IT WAS FROM THE LORD AND NOT SOMETHING ELSE? KNOWING THAT YOUR ACTION WOULD ELEVATE JESUS, BE COUNTER-CULTURAL, REQUIRE SELF-DENIAL AND RISK, OR WAS BIBLICAL?

WHAT DOES IT PRACTICALLY MEAN TO BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT?

**DO NOT BE FOOLISH...  
AND DO NOT GET  
DRUNK WITH WINE...**



WHAT SPIRIT-INSPIRED SCRIPTURES HAVE BEEN ON YOUR MIND LATELY?

WHERE IS THE SPIRIT LEADING YOU TODAY? HOW HAS HE BEEN PROMPTING YOU TO LOVE A NEIGHBOR?

THIS PAST WEEK I...

THIS WEEK I WILL...

**...BUT BE FILLED  
WITH THE SPIRIT.**

# DEMO DAY

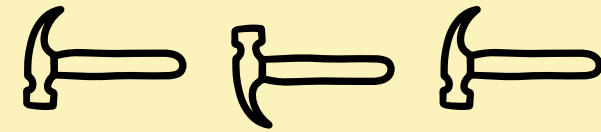
It is hard to truly listen to the Holy Spirit on one hand while knowingly quenching Him with the other. To grow in our sensitivity of His presence and promptings, we may have to own up and turn from some things we'd rather not share. This was the case with me not too long ago, when my wife and I took on a "fixer upper." Along the way God gently opened my eyes to the need of taking down the walls that can so easily come between us.

We put a lot of sweat equity into fixing it up, and after renting it for 18 months the time came to put it on the market. We got two great offers the first day. We had done everything to the best of our ability to sure up any possible issues the buyers might inherit. Everything but this one little thing that made me nervous - there was a slight bowing in one of the basement foundation walls.

I lost sleep over this, because I didn't know if it was bad, or just normal settling, and was playing the "ignorance is bliss" card. The buyers sought to have a structural engineer come out and inspect the foundation. Two days before the inspection I wondered if that wall would be a deal breaker, and in fear, thought maybe I should make it look a little better... by covering it up - at least partially, to take the edge off. Fear can make you do stupid things.

I wrestled about "taking the edge off," rationalizing that this wasn't a safety issue, and "the house was not going to fall down." So I booked it over to Home Depot to put some framing and insulation up. On the way there I prayed about it - already feeling conflicted. Mid-prayer a small white car with a loud exhaust passed me on the left. It had a single bumper sticker that read "666." Now,

*NOW IN A GREAT HOUSE THERE ARE NOT ONLY VESSELS OF GOLD AND SILVER BUT ALSO OF WOOD AND CLAY, SOME FOR HONORABLE USE, SOME FOR DISHONORABLE. THEREFORE, IF ANYONE CLEANSSES HIMSELF FROM WHAT IS DISHONORABLE, HE WILL BE A VESSEL FOR HONORABLE USE, SET APART AS HOLY, USEFUL TO THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE, READY FOR EVERY GOOD WORK. 2 TIMOTHY 2: 20-21*



you don't need to be a Bible nerd to know that's not a great sign. But I straight up ignored it, although that was a pretty clear nudge.

After framing out a small portion I noticed that you could still see most of the wall, and because of that I figured I wasn't hiding much... just the worst part. I rationalized again, the inspector can still see behind my wall since it wasn't totally enclosed - so I'm good. That feeling was fleeting as I tossed and turned all night under the conviction that I shouldn't be hiding anything, period.

So the next day I woke up early and started to work at Starbucks. Before getting into my day, I was praying about the wall. I was literally writing down the question "Jesus should I take this wall down?" when, I kid you not, at that very moment, the structural engineer who was going to inspect the house 24 hours later walked right through the Starbucks doors. This is nuts, because I had never seen him there before, or anywhere else for that matter. This was the second Grace Bomb - another immediate answer to prayer. So I resolved at the end of the day I would go do what I should have done earlier, remove the wall I put up.

The end of that day came and I drove back to the house, resolved to do the right thing. But when I got to the basement and looked at my handiwork, I thought "well, the inspector can see behind the wall, and the buyers might want to put a corner shelf up in that spot thanks to my craftsmanship." So I left it up.

The next morning I had one hour before the inspector's visit. You guessed it, I was again feeling conviction that I was hiding something, so I prayed once more. I think I was really praying for strength over fear in doing the right thing. So in the driveway on a cloudy day, I closed my eyes to talk to Jesus one more time about this. I said something like, "Can you show me for real if this is a big deal?" as if He hadn't already. And in a third and final immediate answer to prayer, when I opened my eyes, directly in my line of sight was a bright red cardinal in the middle of a grey vine in the backyard. Now this might not mean much to you, but at home whenever my wife or I see a cardinal we say "Jesus" because for some reason that bird is a reminder of Him for us.

I stopped thinking and rationalizing at that moment, jumped out of the car, and in five minutes I had undone what I knew shouldn't have been done in the first place; I took the wall down. I was overwhelmed not only that God answered one prayer, but three prayers - immediately. I realized that this wall had little to do with selling a house and much to do with me and Jesus. I was thankful that He was patient with me, even in my failure to be obedient to Him.

When the wall came down I was at peace. Whether or not the house sold, or if I had to spend more money, wasn't even a thing. My heart was filled with joy because Jesus helped me to follow Him, and there is true joy that follows obedience.



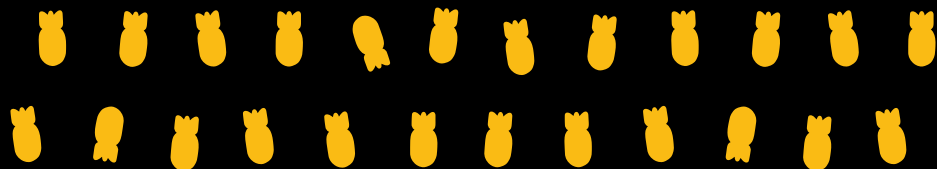
## READ THE NARRATIVE IN 2 SAMUEL 12.



And the Lord sent Nathan to David. He came to him and said to him, "There were two men in a certain city, the one rich and the other poor. The rich man had very many flocks and herds, but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. And he brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children. It used to eat of his morsel and drink from his cup and lie in his arms, and it was like a daughter to him. Now there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was unwilling to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the guest who had come to him, but he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him." Then David's anger was greatly kindled against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the Lord lives, the man who has done this deserves to die, and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity."

David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." And Nathan said to David, "The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die."

**2 SAMUEL 12:1-6, 13**



## YOU ARE THAT MAN

HOW DOES OUR SIN HINDER OUR ABILITY TO DISCERN THE PROMPTING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

DAVID'S STORY SHOWS US THAT GOD USES BROKEN PEOPLE DESPITE THEIR SINS AND FAILURES. HOW HAVE YOU ALLOWED PAST OR CURRENT MISTAKES TO QUENCH THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN YOUR LIFE?

## TEARING DOWN WALLS

HAVE YOU PUT UP ANY WALLS OF SIN BETWEEN YOU AND THE LORD THAT NEED TO BE TAKEN DOWN IN YOUR LIFE?

## READ PSALM 51.



Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your steadfast love;  
according to your abundant mercy  
blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,  
and cleanse me from my sin!

For I know my transgressions,  
and my sin is ever before me.

Against you, you only, have I sinned  
and done what is evil in your sight,

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;  
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Let me hear joy and gladness;  
let the bones that you have broken rejoice.

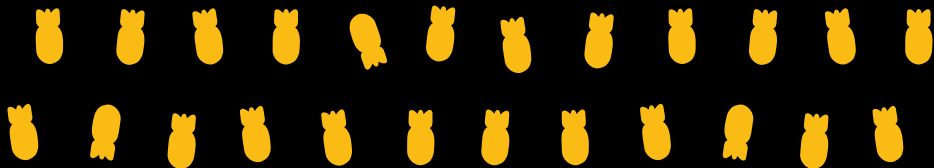
Hide your face from my sins,  
and blot out all my iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and renew a right spirit within me.

Then I will teach transgressors your ways,  
and sinners will return to you.

Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God,  
O God of my salvation,  
and my tongue will sing aloud of your  
righteousness.

**PSALM 51:1-4a, 7-10, 13-14**



REPENTANCE REPAIRS A GRACE-BUILT PERSON'S  
RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD. READ PSALM 51 AND SPEND  
SOME TIME ALONE IN PRAYER TO OWN YOUR MISTAKES  
AND TURN FROM THEM, BACK TO GOD. REST IN JOY  
KNOWING THAT YOU ARE FORGIVEN.

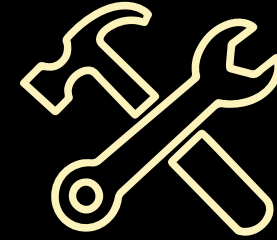
### NEW CREATION

GRACE-BUILT PEOPLE CAN WALK UNHINDERED IN THE  
NEWNESS OF LIFE. HOW MIGHT THIS TRUTH LEAD US INTO A  
HABIT OF LOVING OUR NEIGHBORS?



THIS PAST WEEK I...

THIS WEEK I WILL...



**REPENTANCE  
REPAIRS A  
GRACE-BUILT  
PERSON'S  
RELATIONSHIP  
WITH GOD.**

WEEK 5

# KINGDOM RETURNS

Most of us admire generous people. Many of us aspire to be generous toward others. It's fun, rewarding, and reflects the heart of God! But there is something that can hold us back from lavishly giving of our resources, and that is how we manage our resources. Simply put, we can't be generous givers without being good stewards.

What's a steward? Someone who manages the possessions of another - in our case, we manage what belongs to God. The Bible tells us that the cattle on a thousand hills are His, the gold and silver are His - everything in all creation belongs to God. What you and I have has been entrusted to us for a specific time and purpose, and we are responsible for managing our resources wisely in a way that honors God.

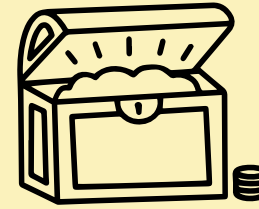
How do we do that? By putting Him first in our finances. Colossians 1:18 says that Christ is to be preeminent in everything. Said another way, He is to have first place in everything. This means we should put Jesus first in our relationships, how we spend our time, our families, our decision making - even our finances.

Practically, this looks like giving to God first. A good way to approach our money is through the lens of GIVE-SAVE-LIVE. Give to God first every time you are paid, wisely set aside savings for future goals, and then live contentedly on what remains. When we



AND HE IS THE HEAD OF THE BODY, THE CHURCH. HE IS THE BEGINNING, THE FIRSTBORN FROM THE DEAD, THAT IN EVERYTHING HE MIGHT BE PREEMINENT. - COLOSSIANS 1:18

flip it by paying our bills first and giving God the leftovers, we're hindering our own opportunity to have our finances blessed by God. He wants us to demonstrate our trust in Him by putting Him first in our finances.



When we manage our money in a way that honors God, it always goes further. He gives us greater blessing, and we have enough resources to bless others. We can even take it so far as to budget for Grace Bombing, setting aside a specific amount each month to be used when the Spirit prompts us to bless others. How much fun would Grace Bombing be if you had a designated fund just to point people to Jesus in surprising ways? When we create margin in our finances, we have the freedom to give cheerfully and with a willing spirit.

## GIVE-SAVE-LIVE

DOES JESUS HAVE FIRST PLACE IN YOUR FINANCES? WHAT WOULD IT LOOK LIKE IF HE DID?

WHAT IS YOUR PLAN FOR AFFORDING A LIFESTYLE OF GENEROSITY? WHAT CAN YOU DO DIFFERENTLY TODAY IN ORDER TO HAVE MORE AVAILABLE RESOURCES FOR BLESSING OTHERS TOMORROW?



THE POINT IS THIS: WHOEVER SOWS SPARINGLY WILL ALSO REAP SPARINGLY, AND WHOEVER SOWS BOUNTIFULLY WILL ALSO REAP BOUNTIFULLY. EACH ONE MUST GIVE AS HE HAS DECIDED IN HIS HEART, NOT RELUCTANTLY OR UNDER COMPULSION, FOR GOD LOVES A CHEERFUL GIVER. AND GOD IS ABLE TO MAKE ALL GRACE ABOUND TO YOU, SO THAT HAVING ALL SUFFICIENCY IN ALL THINGS AT ALL TIMES, YOU MAY ABOUND IN EVERY GOOD WORK.

**2 CORINTHIANS 9:6-8**

HOW DOES HEARING WHY WE GIVE AND HOW WE CAN BECOME GOOD STEWARDS IMPACT YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF YOUR PERSONAL GENEROSITY?

HOW DOES UNDERSTANDING THAT GOD'S WORK DONE GOD'S WAY NEVER LACKS GOD'S PROVISION FREE YOU UP TO BE GENEROUS?

HOW CAN WE APPROACH HANDLING OUR FINANCES IN A WAY THAT HONORS GOD?



HOW DOES GIVING TO GOD FIRST, RATHER THAN GIVING LAST OR RANDOMLY, HELP STRENGTHEN YOUR FAITH?

**GOD'S WORK DONE  
GOD'S WAY NEVER  
LACKS GOD'S  
PROVISION.**

THINKING ABOUT ORIENTING YOUR FINANCES AROUND GIVE-SAVE-LIVE, WHAT CHANGE DO YOU SENSE THE LORD PROMPTING YOU TO MAKE IN YOUR BUDGETING? (CHANGING SPENDING HABITS, GETTING OUT OF DEBT, INCREASING GIVING, ETC.)

HOW DOES HAVING YOUR FINANCES IN ORDER IMPACT YOUR ABILITY TO LIVE A LIFESTYLE OF GRACE BOMBING?

**THIS PAST WEEK I...**

**THIS WEEK I WILL...**

WEEK 6

# THE MUST-TELL STORY

Last words are lasting words. As the curtain closes on Matthew's gospel we are left with a portrait of comfort and of challenge from Jesus Himself. These three sentences have been known in shorthand as "the Great Commission," a shared mission for all of those who would follow Jesus. There is depth and weightiness to these sentences, being some of the last words of the resurrected Jesus spoken on earth.

Interestingly, findings from a recent survey\* report that most churchgoers are largely unfamiliar with the "Great Commission." Here are the shocking stats: 51% report of never hearing of the Great Commission. 25% recall it but can't recall the exact meaning. 17% have heard and can recall what it means. And the remaining 6% are unsure altogether. These are eye-opening findings, and if they do represent an accurate picture of the American church, that means the majority of churchgoers may be missing out on the very mission of the Lord they love and desire to follow – to personally make disciples.

To think about this reality in a more positive light, picture the church as the greatest living organization on the planet, with the one message that can truly change the world, that also happens to be sitting on the most untapped potential ever. It's like the church is a packed powder-keg of grace and truth just waiting to be ignited by simply starting to take Jesus' commission seriously in everyday life. Can you imagine if all the sleepers wake up, and explode on the scene? I can, but it's not going to happen magically, it's going to happen one intentional step at a time.

AND JESUS CAME AND SAID TO THEM, "ALL AUTHORITY IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH HAS BEEN GIVEN TO ME. GO THEREFORE AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND OF THE SON AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THAT I HAVE COMMANDED YOU. AND BEHOLD, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, TO THE END OF THE AGE." MATTHEW 28:18-20

Our first step just might be to understand the Great Commission. What is it that Jesus is asking us to do exactly? First, trust Him. He begins with the attention-grabbing fact that He is ultimately in control of everything (v.18). Our Commander-in-Chief lacks no resource – and we can therefore depend on Him. Then He tells us to go make disciples of all nations (v.19a). No one is to be left out based on geography or ethnicity, and our ongoing lives should be oriented around helping others learn to follow Jesus.

In the next two verses, Jesus puts some details into what goes into the recipe of disciple making. There is baptizing with the understanding of God's Trinitarian nature (v.19b). That means we help people understand who God really is, as revealed in the Bible, and invite them to place their full trust and confidence in God, and what God has done for us in Christ. A baptism is an outward marking of the moment to publicly declare the inward spiritual changes that are taking place.

And then the commission continues. Jesus goes on to give us the life-giving charge of sharing His commands and helping others to obey them (v.20a), just as we seek to obey them in our own lives. Obedience is a good thing when it comes to God. And don't be intimidated by this, as Jesus' commands are not complicated, and mostly revolve around loving God back and loving our neighbors. His laws are laws of love; that is also the context in which we are able to carry out this commission – all of this driven by a supernatural love for others, based from the supernatural love we have been given.

And in the end, we are reminded of that love. Practically speaking, Jesus is with us now and always (v.20b). Sure, we can't reach out and touch Him today, but by faith, we trust this promise is true, and move out into the adventures that only faith can bring about.

This in a nutshell is what we do with the love that we have been given. We don't keep it all for ourselves, but we share it with others. For those in the 51% camp who might be hearing this for the first time, give yourself some time to grow into the Great Commission. Perhaps now armed with an understanding, you can start small. Look for a neighbor today. Get out of your comfort zone, and do something awesome and unexpected for them. Drop a Grace Bomb and be encouraged... you have put yourself on the road to the Great Commission.

PRIOR TO THIS DEVOTIONAL, WHERE WOULD YOU FALL IN THE SURVEY OF CHURCHGOERS CONCERNING THE GREAT COMMISSION? ASK THE LORD RIGHT NOW TO BRING TO MIND SOMEONE IN YOUR LIFE THAT YOU SHOULD BREAK THE ICE WITH TODAY.



WHAT MAKES THE STORY OF JESUS A MUST-TELL STORY FOR EACH OF US IS ULTIMATELY OUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY - AN EXPLANATION WHAT JESUS HAS DONE FOR US. PRACTICE BY WRITING OUT AND SHARING YOUR PERSONAL STORY WITH YOUR GROUP.

MY LIFE BEFORE JESUS...

WHAT MY RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS LOOKS LIKE NOW...

HOW I CAME TO TRUST IN HIM...

WRITE DOWN A NAME OF SOMEONE WITH WHOM YOU KNOW GOD IS ASKING YOU TO SHARE YOUR STORY, FOR THEM TO HOLD YOU ACCOUNTABLE.

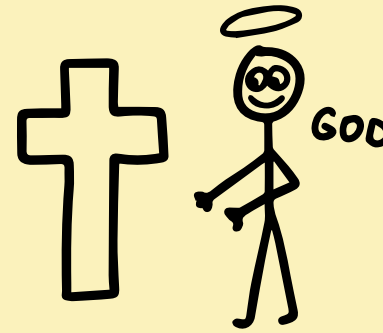


PRACTICE SHARING THE MUST-TELL STORY BY PUTTING THIS SIMPLE GOSPEL ILLUSTRATION IN YOUR OWN WORDS:



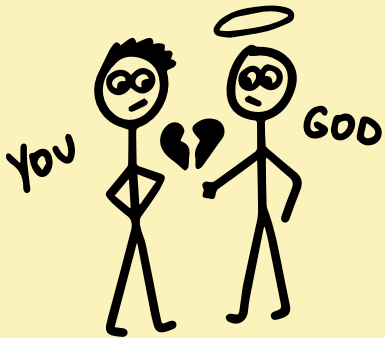
So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

**Genesis 1:27**



But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

**Ephesians 2:4-7**



And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

**Ephesians 2:1-3**



For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

**Ephesians 2:8-9**



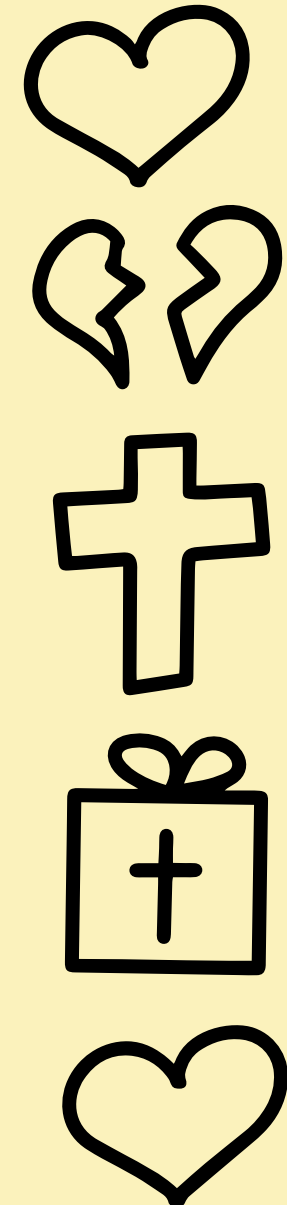
For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

**Ephesians 2:10**

TO HELP YOU REMEMBER THESE FIVE ICONS WHEN YOU GO TO SHARE THE GOSPEL, SAVE A PHOTO OF THIS PAGE ON YOUR PHONE.

THIS PAST WEEK I...

THIS WEEK I WILL...





THROUGH THIS GRACE BOMB RELOADED ACTION GUIDE, READERS WILL GIVE FEET TO THEIR FAITH IN AREAS LIKE BECOMING AWARE OF THEIR NEIGHBORS, THEIR PRAYER LIFE, LISTENING TO THE HOLY SPIRIT, GENEROSITY, AND SHARING THE GOOD NEWS.



Explore more resources and share your Grace Bomb stories at [gracebomb.org](http://gracebomb.org). Stay inspired by fresh stories of faith steps by following us on Facebook ([facebook.com/gracebombco](https://www.facebook.com/gracebombco)) and Instagram ([@grace.bomb](https://www.instagram.com/grace.bomb)).