

BECOMING DREAM DISCIPLES

READ Plans

Use the links below to access all of these reading plans on the YouVersion Bible app. Search “whoisgrace” to find more plans, and set Grace Church as “my church” so you never miss a featured plan!

[Becoming a Compassionate Storyteller](#)

[Becoming a Savvy Follower](#)

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Becoming a Compassionate Storyteller

DAY 1 THE STORY

Scripture: [Luke 24:13-27](#); [John 3:16](#)

Reflection:

How well does this statement describe you?

“As a compassionate storyteller, I know God’s story, my place in it, and I am motivated to tell the people in my life.”

One of the ways that we become like Jesus is to become compassionate storytellers like He was. There are three components to this: the story, telling the story, and telling the story with compassion. Today, let’s start with THE STORY.

Following His resurrection, Jesus met two men on the road to Emmaus, and in order to explain why He had to die, He told them the story of Scripture. In other words, God’s story in the Old Testament is just as much the story of Jesus as Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and all the New Testament books. It is the story of the God who loves his creation so much that when they rebelled against Him, He set out on a rescue mission to bring them back. Every word written from Genesis to Revelation tells this story.

But that isn’t the only story. It is THE STORY, but there is also *your* story. And your story finds a place in THE STORY. Just like Abraham and Ruth and Elijah and Peter and Mary and Paul are part of God’s story. Just like Saint Augustine and Martin Luther and John Wesley and Corrie Ten Boom and your pastor are part of His story. Your life intersects with the rescue story of love, grace, hope, and joy that God has written. Seeing your story in God’s story is the first step in becoming a compassionate storyteller.

Ask Yourself:

-How well do I know God’s story, Genesis to Revelation? Could I share an overview with someone? Have I ever shared God’s story with someone?

-What is my story? How has God rescued me? What has Jesus done in my life? When was the last time I shared my story with someone?

Pause to Pray: Praise God for pulling you into His rescue story. Ask Him to stir up excitement and longing for you to become a compassionate storyteller.

Take a Next Step: Commit to learning God's story. How can you do that?

-If you have never read the whole Bible, consider starting one of the many reading plans in YouVersion.

-Or take a first step by reading one book of the Bible.

-Look for additional resources to help you learn and understand. The BibleProject is an excellent place to start.

DAY 2 TELLING THE STORY

Scripture: [John 9:25](#); [2 Corinthians 5:17-21](#)

Reflection:

God's Story can be broadly described in five movements: creation, fall, redemption, mission, and restoration.

Creation: God made all things good and gave Adam and Eve a mission to multiply His goodness throughout the earth.

Fall: But Adam and Eve rebelled, doubting God's goodness and mission, and sin entered the world, breaking the perfect relationships they had with God, with one another, and with creation.

Redemption: Genesis 3:15 through the Old Testament is God's rescue plan in action. He chose a people (Israel) to be His blessing in the world, giving them a mission to multiply and fill the earth with His goodness. Though they failed over and over and over again, God faithfully moved forward with His plan, and at just the right time, He sent His Son, Jesus, to die on our behalf and conquer death through His resurrection so that we might be forgiven and restored to a right relationship with God.

Mission: "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you" (John 20:21). Now the Church, all who follow Christ in all of time, are sent into the earth to share the good news of Jesus so that we will multiply God's goodness one day and one life at a time.

Restoration: Our risen Savior, Jesus Christ, will return again to fully restore creation and humanity. We will live in perfect peace with God, with one another, and with His good creation for all eternity.

You can trace your own story in those five movements- you are created by God, but you are broken by sin. Your redemption is found in Jesus Christ, who has commissioned you to take His good news into the world around you. And one day, you will be restored- perfectly embodying the life meant for you forever.

The blind man in John 9 had an even simpler way to share his story- "I was blind, but now I see!" Understanding how your story reflects His Story is the next step to becoming a compassionate storyteller.

Ask Yourself:

-Who were you before you met Jesus? ("I was...")

-How did you encounter Jesus? ("...but...")

-What has Jesus done for you? ("...now I...")

Pause to Pray: Praise God that your life collided with His story!

Take a Next Step:

-Practice sharing your version of “I was blind, but now I see!” Invite a good friend or small group to help you.

-Curious how the early church told God’s story? Start with one of the sermons in Acts (2:14-36; 3:11-26; 10:34-43; 7:1-53; 13:16-47; 17:22-31; 20:18-35; 22:1-21; 24:10-21; 26:1-29).

DAY 3 TELLING THE STORY WITH COMPASSION

Scripture: [Matthew 11:28-29](#); [1 Peter 3:15](#); [2 Peter 3:9](#)

Reflection:

When you realize that God’s story meets your story, your life is filled with purpose, meaning, hope, and promise. And every time you interact with someone, you bring a collision of God’s story and your story with their story. Three stories collide. And this is your opportunity to be a compassionate storyteller! The key is remembering that God’s rescue story is just as much for them as it is for you. Generally, the best approach is to genuinely live out your faith, letting your words and actions reflect the love and light of Jesus. Then, take the time to discover their story. Be a good listener. Where have they been hurt? How has life been hard for them? In what ways has their search for love and meaning led them to living a lesser story? From there, prayerfully ask for God’s wisdom to share how the story of Jesus is what they’ve really been searching for.

The key posture in this process is compassion, for our attitude toward someone is every bit as important as our words. Just as God has compassion for us. Just as Jesus, who came in the flesh, has compassion for us. So we, too, have compassion for one another. After all, we are all sinners in need of a Savior. Therefore, with gentleness and respect, we refrain from pointing fingers, being condescending, or getting defensive.

3-3-3 Challenge: Make a list of 3 people in your life who are not yet following Jesus. Commit to praying for each of them for 3 minutes every day at 3:00. Set an alarm on your phone or add an “appointment” to your calendar.

What should you pray for?

- 1- Ask God to open their hearts and minds to His truth, love, and story.
- 2- Ask God for boldness and opportunities to become a compassionate storyteller.

Becoming a Savvy Follower

DAY 1 SAVVY

Scripture: [Matthew 10:16](#); [John 15:10](#)

Reflection:

How well does this statement describe you? “As a savvy follower of Jesus, I discern God’s voice and follow His lead at the right time and in the right way.”

The word savvy may not be used very often, but its meaning makes it the perfect word to describe how followers of Jesus live Spirit-led lives. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines savvy as “having or

showing perception, comprehension, or shrewdness, especially in practical matters.” In other words, wise, thoughtful, and sensible in everyday moments.

Jesus prepared his followers to go into a world that would reject them, hate them, and persecute them. In every circumstance, Christians must live righteous and wise lives. We are neither doormats to be walked on nor bulldozers who run over opponents. We neither force our own way nor shy from His ways. The goal is not self-preservation. The goal is to bring God’s Kingdom of light and love to a dark world. How do we do that? Jesus shows us the way. To be spiritually savvy comes from having the perspective of God on the inside– and then allowing Him to shape what happens through us on the outside. Jesus led a savvy life, and He invites us to do likewise.

Ask Yourself:

- How often do you pause to pray or even consider God’s purpose and leading in your daily living?
- What might change in your life if you were to become a savvy follower of Jesus?
- What decision am I facing right now that requires God’s unique perspective, and how will I seek Him?

Pause to Pray: Ask the Spirit to open your mind, heart, and eyes to His work and His ways in your life today.

Take a Next Step: Do you know a savvy follower of Jesus? Invite them to share a cup of coffee and ask them what role prayer, Bible reading, fasting, and other spiritual disciplines play in their day-to-day life. If you can’t think of someone, ask a pastor at your local church.

DAY 2 THE HOLY SPIRIT

Scripture: [John 16:12-14](#); [John 20:21](#); [Acts 1:8](#); [Romans 8:5](#); [Romans 8:26](#)

Reflection: In the Old Testament, individuals were filled with God’s Spirit at specific times for very specific purposes. But now, through His death and resurrection, all who follow Jesus as their Lord and Savior are given the Holy Spirit to dwell with them. He is called the Helper, Counselor, Advocate, Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of Life, Teacher, Intercessor, Guide, and more. If you are in Christ, there is no distance between you and God, for the Spirit of God is in you. Isn’t that amazing?!

On the one hand, we have 24/7 access to the Creator of the whole world. On the other hand, we somehow manage to ignore Him and live like we know what we’re doing and where we’re going.

Repeatedly in Scripture, God invites His people to follow Him. Sometimes He gives a visible sign like fire that is easy to follow. Most often, though, the invitation is to lay down pride, ego, self-sufficiency, and distractions so that we can spend time in His presence.

Ask Yourself:

- What have I learned about the Holy Spirit?
- How will I pause to remember the presence of God’s Spirit in me as I go about my day?
- What decision am I facing right now that requires God’s unique perspective, and how will I seek it?

Pause to Pray: Use this old gospel song to lead you into prayer.

Come, Holy Spirit, I need you. Come, sweet Spirit, I pray.

Come in your strength and your power. Come in your own gentle way.

DAY 3 SAVVY FOLLOWERS

Scripture: [Acts 16:6-10](#); [Proverbs 3:5-7](#); [Psalm 119:105](#)

Reflection: During Paul's second missionary journey, he planned to preach the good news of Jesus in Asia and Bithynia (both are part of what is today western Turkey), but he didn't go to cities in either region. Why? Because Paul was a savvy follower, accustomed to seeking the Lord's guidance and following the Holy Spirit. In both attempts, the Spirit turned Paul and his companions away, instead leading them to Macedonia (Greece).

Would sharing the gospel in those places have been a bad thing? Is there a city in the world that doesn't need to hear the good news of Jesus? Why was it not the right time for Paul to travel there? We can ask so many questions and not understand the answers. The question you should ask is, am I willing to follow the Lord anywhere, anytime? Even when it doesn't make sense, will I trust God?

You cannot trust someone you don't know. You cannot follow someone you're not close to. Like Paul, savvy followers of Jesus immerse themselves in the words, teachings, and ways of Jesus in order to learn to hear God's voice and follow the Spirit. The primary way to do this is through reading the Bible and prayer. For all of us who have free and unrestricted access to God's Word, there is no substitute and no excuse.

Ask Yourself:

- What has God spoken to me through His word this week, and what am I doing about it?
- What decision am I facing right now that requires God's unique perspective, and how will I seek Him?

Pause to Pray: Praise God that He has given us His Word and His Spirit. Ask Him to give you a heart and mind ready to receive and follow Him in all His ways.

Challenge: Read and meditate on [Psalm 19](#) for several days in a row. Invite God to fill you with renewed love and hunger for His Word.

Becoming an Intentional Friend

DAY 1 MADE for FRIENDSHIP

Scripture: [Genesis 2:18](#); [John 15:9-17](#)

Reflection:

How well does this statement describe you? As an intentional friend, I partner with God to build healthy relationships and restore broken ones.

According to the American Sociological Review, the average American has two close friends. That may seem totally normal to you, but consider that just a few decades ago, the average was six close friends. Our close friends have been cut down to a third. Not only is that a steep decline, but a whole bunch of people report that they don't have a single close and trusted friend.

When God created Adam, He said, "*It is not good that man should be alone.*" This isn't just a statement about marriage; it's a statement about friendship. Why would God look at something He has just made, that sin has not messed up yet, and declare it to be '*not good*'? Because Adam was alone... and Adam was created to be like God. And God was not alone. Not ever. For all eternity, the Trinity has existed in

relationship. And since we have been made in the image of God, that means we, too, are made for friendship.

Ask Yourself:

- Who are your closest friends? What are the qualities that make your friendships so close?
- What do you value most in your friends?
- In John 15:9-17, what is Jesus teaching his disciples about friendship with Himself and with one another?

Pause to Pray: Praise the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit for the love they share and extend. Thank God for your friendships, and ask Him to help you restore broken ones.

Take a Next Step: How will you express love and gratitude toward your close friends this week? Consider how words and actions work together.

DAY 2 MADE for MISSION

Scripture: John 15:1-17; 2 Corinthians 5:16-20; [Galatians 5:22-23](#)

Reflection:

“Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit... You didn’t choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit...”
-Jesus (John 15:5, 16 NLT).

If you have already completed the “Becoming a Compassionate Storyteller” reading plan, then you know that God is on a mission. He is writing a better story for the world. A story that tells us that He loves his creation so much that when they rebelled against Him, He set out on a rescue mission to bring them back. The fancy word for this rescue mission is reconciliation. God wants to reconcile the relationships that have been broken by sin. First, His relationship with us, and second, our relationships with one another.

When you abide with Jesus, you receive the glory and goodness of a relationship reconciled to God—forgiveness, mercy, grace, love, and so much more. And Jesus tells His followers in John 15 that when you are filled up with Him, you are then able to bear fruit. One of the fruits we bear is the ministry of reconciliation. In other words, we are drawn into God’s mission as active participants. We have the tools, given by God, to invite others into a relationship with Jesus, yes. But we also have the tools to repair broken relationships.

Ask Yourself:

- How does it change your perspective on the many relationships that you have when you consider that God has appointed you an ambassador of reconciliation?
- Name the fractured relationships in your life. Start by thinking of your closest, most intimate circle (immediate family, close friends), then expand outward (extended family, colleagues, classmates, neighbors, etc).
- Galatians 5 lists the kind of “fruit” that the Spirit produces in us when we abide in Christ. In what ways can you share that fruit with others in your life? Consider how words and actions work together.

Pause to Pray: Use the ACTS prayer method.

Adoration- Praise God that He has reconciled you to Himself

Confession- Confess your part in fractured relationships.

Thanksgiving- Thank Jesus that He has chosen you to be part of His family, part of God's mission.

Supplication- Ask God for eyes to see others as He sees them, for a heart that feels their hurts, and for courage to take hard steps toward reconciliation.

DAY 3 INTENTIONAL FRIEND

Scripture: [Ruth 1:16-17](#); [1 Samuel 18:1](#); [John 15:15](#); [John 17:23](#); [Romans 12:10, 12:18](#); [1 Peter 1:22](#); [1 John 3:1-18](#)

Reflection:

There are examples of intentional friendships in the Bible. There are also many stories of fractured relationships. From the prayer of Jesus in John 17 through the letters of the New Testament, there are countless "one another" verses highlighting how very important relationships are. Jesus' desire is for our unity- that we would be bound together in the way that Ruth was loyal to Naomi, Jonathan committed to love David, and Jesus loved his disciples. The greatest way to express that unity is by loving one another, having compassion for one another, being patient with one another...

You cannot force someone else to extend lovingkindness toward you. But you can do everything you can not to stir up more harm in the relationship. A Spirit-led and intentional heart is the first step toward reconciliation.

Ask Yourself:

-Who in your life needs you to be an intentional friend, and how will you love and serve them? Consider how words and actions work together.

-As an intentional friend, how can you partner with God to build a healthy relationship and restore a broken one?

Pause to Pray: Let 1 Peter 3:16-18 (NLT) lead you into a time of silence and prayer. Ask God to speak to your heart.

We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God's love be in that person? Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions.

Becoming an Embedded Influencer

DAY 1 MISSION vs SHADOW MISSION

Scripture: [Deuteronomy 10:12-22](#); [Matthew 22:37](#); [Romans 1:20-23](#)

Reflection:

Idolatry can be defined as the worship of anything other than God. Pastors and theologians often refer to "near" and "far" idols. Far idols are deeply rooted. They are where we try to find security, identity,

and joy. These far idols consist of control, power, approval, and comfort. “Near” idols may be more recognizable in your life, but they are merely surface reflections of these four:

If Power is your idol, you long for influence or recognition and go to great lengths to avoid humiliation.

If Control is your idol, you long for everything to go according to your plan and avoid uncertainty at all costs.

If Comfort is your idol, you long for pleasure and try to avoid risk and stress.

If Approval is your idol, you long to be accepted or desired, and you fear rejection.

What do idols have to do with influence? Everything. Where we place our security, where we look for identity, and where we find joy determines our mission, our goals, and our choices. If God is not the center of our lives, we live a lesser story. If God’s mission is not our mission, then we live in the grip of a shadow mission. Rather than finding purpose and meaning in His story and His mission, we revert to living in the grip of our idols.

Ask Yourself:

-Which of these far idols is most tempting to you? (power, control, comfort, approval)

-In Deuteronomy 10:12-22, God is speaking to the nation of Israel. In Matthew 22:37, Jesus responds to a question about the greatest commandment. And in Romans 1, Paul is writing to the church in Rome. What do you learn about idolatry from these passages?

-How does your idol contribute to a “shadow mission” and keep you from living for God’s mission?

Pause to Pray: Not one of us is immune to the temptation of one of these idols. Pause to praise God for his great love for you. Thank Jesus that He has made a way for you to draw near to God and turn from idols. Confess the sin of idolatry. Ask God to deepen His love in your heart so that you will grow in your love for Him.

Take a Next Step: What single action will you take today that reflects your love for God above your idol(s)?

DAY 2 EMBEDDED

Scripture: John 20:19-22

Reflection:

In the reading plan, “Becoming a Compassionate Storyteller,” we learned that God’s story is a rescue mission. Sin has turned us away from God, and He has gone to great lengths to get us back. In John 20, before He dies for the sins of the world, Jesus reminds his followers that He is on mission. He is living a “sent” life. The word sent is from the word *missio*. God’s mission- the *missio dei*- was to send His Son. Here, Jesus says that his followers will also live sent lives, seeking to restore and reconcile the world to God through the good news of Jesus Christ.

For some of us, living sent will literally mean that God sends us out from our homes to new places, new cities, new regions, or new countries. For most of us, it will mean that we remain where we are, living as sent ones wherever we live, work, or play. Just as Jesus declared “peace” over his disciples, He invites us to live in his peace and to extend his peace into the world around us.

Ask Yourself:

- Where has God embedded you as His “sent one”? Where do you live, work, learn, or play?
- How do you experience God’s peace in your life? How can you share that peace with others?
- How well does this statement describe you? I understand how God has purposefully gifted and placed me to multiply His work in the world.

Pause to Pray: Praise Jesus that He embedded himself in the world for the sake of the world. Express your willingness and confess your fears about living as a sent one.

Take a Next Step: Identify one person in your life with whom you can share God’s peace. Consider both your words and your actions.

DAY 3 EMBEDDED INFLUENCER

Scripture: [Esther 4:1-17](#); [Ephesians 2:1-10](#)

Reflection:

Esther was an unlikely candidate to save the nation of Israel from genocide. Yes, she was a queen. But she was also just a woman in a highly patriarchal culture. Just one of many women in King Xerxes court. She lacked the influence required to impact a kingdom or a king. Or did she? Mordecai saw her situation through an entirely different lens. From his perspective, she was the exact right woman, in the exact right place, at the exact right time. Her faith and courage earned her a place in the biblical canon.

Remarkable.

Some of our lives may have a seemingly greater influence than others. We may long to be an Esther- doing great things. We may be the Mordecai- encouraging, challenging, and praying for someone else who does great things. We may not live to see the impact of our influence.

The important thing is to know that your life is not insignificant in God’s story. He uniquely made you, mercifully rescued you, graciously called you, and purposefully embedded you as an influencer right where you are.

Ask Yourself:

- How did Esther respond to Mordecai’s challenge?
- According to Ephesians 2, what has God done for you?
- How have you leveraged your unique skills or position for God’s mission recently?
- What is one situation or person in your life right now that you are uniquely equipped to influence?

Take a Next Step: Like Esther, commit a period of time to fasting and prayer, seeking God’s wisdom and courage as you consider how God has purposefully gifted and placed you to multiply His work in the world.