



pathways



### **What is “Pathways?”**

The paths we take in life have everything to do with whether we will end up at our desired destination. We shouldn't expect to end up at the desired destination if we aren't taking the right paths to get us there. That's why when we are navigating in the physical world, the pathways we take are so important. Pathways are the paths traveled that lead us to our desired destinations.

It's no different when it comes to faith. Every one of us is on a faith journey. The question we all have to ask ourselves is what is my destination? If we know our destination, we can map out the paths we need to take to get there.

### **Isn't a Christ follower's destination Heaven?**

As Christ followers, we might think that the destination of our faith journey is Heaven, but there are two reasons why we shouldn't think that way.

First, spending eternity in Heaven has very little (if anything) to do with our journey, but has everything to do with Jesus's journey - what He has done for us. The moment we repent of our sins (Acts 2:38) and confess that Jesus is our Savior and Lord (Romans 10:9), we are Heaven bound. Our heavenly destination is secure. No sin can disqualify us from our salvation. Furthermore, Scripture teaches us that Jesus sustains us, and He will not lose any one of His children (John 6:39).

Secondly, if Heaven was truly the destination, then we would have “arrived” at the moment of our salvation. But we also know that that is not the case at all! In fact, in many ways and for many people, salvation is the beginning of our faith journey, not the end! Heaven can't be the destination because after salvation we are still on the journey! That raises the question....what is the destination of a Christ follower's faith journey?



## If Heaven is not a Christ follower's destination, what is?

As Christ followers, our destination is more of a state of being than it is a location. Our ticket to Heaven has been purchased by the perfect life and sacrificial atoning death of Christ. We've already established that. We know where we are going to spend eternity. However, as we get to know God personally (through reading His word and hearing it preached, etc), we learn that God wants to transform us (Romans 12:2). He wants us to become more like Jesus (God in human skin). He wants to teach us how to imitate Jesus in our thoughts, in our hearts, in our words, in our actions, and in our reactions. Learning and practicing how to become more like Jesus is called discipleship - and becoming more like Jesus is our destination.

The destination of a Christ follower's faith journey is NOT A PLACE, BUT A STATE OF BEING...  
...becoming more like **JESUS!**

When Jesus started His ministry, He invited 12 men to be connected to Him in an extremely unique and intimate way. These 12 men were Jesus' disciples. The word disciple is another word for "student," so discipleship is the "state of being a student." Jesus taught His students that the summation of the 10 Commandments is found in these two commands: Love God and Love others (Matthew 22:36-40). He spent 3 1/2 years teaching His students how to love God and love others like He did. That invitation was only given to 12 men at the start of Jesus' ministry. Now, that invitation is offered to everyone who wants to experience the abundant life that Christ offers. After His death, resurrection, and ascension, Jesus sent the promised Holy Spirit to continue the work of helping His followers to love God, love others, and become more like Him.

When we properly love God and love others as we are being led by the Holy Spirit, we will demonstrate godly virtues. In Pathways, virtues are "the result of intentional traveling along a particular pathway." Let's take a look at a general example of a virtue and then an example of a virtue within the context of Pathways.

Virtues are the result of intentionally traveling along a particular Pathway.

Consider intelligence as a general virtue. Someone may observe how another responds to questions, their ability to solve problems, the way they articulate thoughts and concepts, and their general knowledge of a subject and say that the person they observed has the virtue of intelligence. In this example, intelligence is the end, but what are the means to that end?

In a particular field of study, the means to an intelligent end is vigorous reading, studying, listening to lectures, practicing the subject matter, taking quizzes and tests, asking questions, doing homework, writing papers, etc. These are the "means" that are required to get to the intelligent "end." Here's the thing - generally no one sees an intelligent person accomplishing the means. The means are disciplines that must be practiced behind the scenes in order for one to achieve the desired end. What the vast majority of the world gets to see are the results of those means, which is the appearance or the achievement of intelligence - the virtue.

### **An example of a biblical Virtue by way of Pathways**

Now, let's talk Virtues in the context of Pathways. In Pathways, we have identified 24 Virtues - 24 qualities that are the result of our active pursuit to be more like Jesus. One of the virtues in Pathways is contentment, which is the state of being satisfied with what we have and at peace with where God has us. From a biblical perspective, how might Jesus teach his disciples how to be content? We believe Jesus would encourage them to study Scripture, pray regularly, rest, engage in worship, consider fasting, serve others, practice generosity, and be a good steward of the things God has blessed them with. That list consists of 8 disciplines, or "pathways," that a disciple should travel in hopes to reach the destination of "being content." That's how Pathways works! Identify the destination, and then map out the pathways that will get you there. Another way to put it - identify the "end," and then begin practicing the "means" that will result in the desired "end."

### **Why these particular virtues?**

The Bible has several passages that list virtuous qualities. A strong starting point is Galatians 5:22-23 which mentions the fruit of the Spirit. In this Scripture, the word "fruit" means "the evidence of, the result of, or what is produced because of" the Holy Spirit being active in our lives. When we are engaging regularly with Jesus by way of His Holy Spirit, the fruit or "evidence" of that regular engagement should be transformation from the inside out. As we practice spiritual disciplines, our heart should change, and as our heart changes, so should our actions. People can't see our heart, but they can see our actions and those actions reveal virtues in our lives.

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*"But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control."*

-Galatians 5:22-23

## What are the virtues?

Here are 24 virtues that we have identified in Scripture:

**Holy** - living set apart with an awareness of God's righteousness

**1 Peter 1:15** - *"But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy."*

**Content** - satisfied with what I have, and at peace with where God has me

**Philippians 4:11** - *"I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances."*

**Hospitable** - friendly and welcoming to others in word and deed

**1 Peter 4:9** - *"Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling."*

**Truthful** - being honest and forthcoming

**Proverbs 12:22** - *"The Lord detest lying lips, but he delights in those who tell the truth."*

**Persevering** - endurance to continue despite difficulty

**James 1:2-4** - *"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."*

**Wise** - having discernment and sound decision-making

**Ephesians 5:15-16** - *"Be very careful, then, how do you live - not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity..."*

**Hopeful** - being encouraged and confident because of my future with Christ

**Romans 15:13** - *"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."*

**Loving** - choosing to show care for those around me

**Romans 12:9** - *"Don't just pretend to love others. Really love him. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good."*

**Joyful** - expressing an overflow of gratitude regardless of circumstances

**Habakkuk 3:18** - *"Yet I will rejoice in the lord, I will be joyful in God my savior."*

**Peaceful** - living in harmony with others

**Romans 12:18** - *"If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."*

**Kind** - showing consideration for others

**Ephesians 4:32** - *"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as Christ God forgave you."*

**Gentle** - having a calm and tender presence

**Ephesians 4:2** - *"Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love..."*

**Faithful** - being loyal and trustworthy

**Psalms 101:6** - *"I will search for faithful people to be my companions. Only those who are above reproach will be allowed to serve me."*

**Humble** - choosing the appropriate position before God and others

**Philippians 2:8** - *"And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death - even death on a cross!"*

**Grateful** - having thankfulness motivated by God's grace

**2 Corinthians 4:15** - *"The grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God."*

**Merciful** - living with compassion and tenderness

**Zechariah 7:9** - *"This is what the Lord Almighty said: 'Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another.'"*

**Honorable** - having integrity in all things

**1 Peter 2:12** - *"Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world."*

**Principled** - finding the basis for my morals and ethics in Scripture

**Romans 12:2** - *"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect."*

**Selfless** - elevating others above myself

**Philippians 2:3-4** - *"Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble. Thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too."*

**Fervent** - having a passion and zeal for God's calling in my life

**Colossians 3:23** - *"Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people."*

**Forgiving** - being willing to pardon others when hurt or offended

**Colossians 3:13** - *"Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you."*

**Believing** - placing confidence in God

**John 20:29** - *"Then Jesus told him, 'Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.'"*

**Self controlled** - showing composure and restraint

**Titus 2:11-12** - *"For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say 'no' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age..."*

**Knowledgeable** - having an ever expanding grasp of biblical truth

**Ephesians 4:13** - *"... Until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full a complete standard of Christ."*

This is not meant to be an exhaustive list. However this list does include virtues that we believe are exemplified in Scripture, and if we are traveling the Pathways, we believe these virtues will be evident in our lives.

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### **What are the Pathways?**

The following list is the Pathways - the spiritual disciplines that we should walk in if we want to exemplify the virtues.

**Scripture** - reading, studying, memorizing and meditating on the Bible

**2 Timothy 3:16** - *"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness."*

**Prayer** - regularly talking with God and interceding for ourselves and others

**Philippians 4:6,7** - *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*

**Rest** - honoring the Sabbath and practicing healthy life rhythms.

**Hebrews 4:9,10** - *"There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his."*

**Accountability** - having someone that helps us reach our God-given potential

**James 5:16** - *"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective."*

**Generosity** - having a heart to give freely and offer help to others

**2 Corinthians 9:7** - *"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."*

**Stewardship** - being a good manager of all that God has entrusted us

**Matthew 25:21** - *"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things: I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your masters happiness!'"*

**Reaching** - sharing the hope of Christ's love through evangelism and outreach

**Philemon 6** - *"I pray that your partnership with us in the faith may be effective in deepening your understanding of every good thing we share for the sake of Christ."*

**Gathering** - engaging in community within the body of Christ

**Acts 2:46** - *"Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts."*

**Service** - meeting the needs of others with our gifts, talents, and time

**Ephesians 2:10** - *"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."*

**Fasting** - sacrificing food (primarily) or common things (secondarily) to focus on God

**Matthew 4:4** - *"Jesus answered, 'It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"*

**Relationship** - being authentic with and encouraging to others

**Hebrews 10:24-25** - *"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another - and all the more as you see the Day approaching."*

**Worship** - expressing adoration for the Almighty God

**Psalms 150:2** - *"Praise Him for His mighty works, praise His unequal greatness."*

If we walk the **Pathways**...  
We'll become the **Virtues**...  
And when we do that with others...  
We **make better followers of Christ!**

## **What is the Pathways Process?**

Now that you understand what Pathways is, what the virtues are, and how they relate to each other, now let's get into how we actually walk through Pathways with someone. Here are the steps of Pathways followed by how we will actually accomplish each step.

1. Establish a Pathways partnership.
2. Complete the Self Assessment and determine your Virtue and Pathway(s).
3. Walk the Pathway(s).
4. Measure your Progress and continue in that Pathway or make necessary changes.

### **STEP ONE: Establish a Pathways partnership.**

There are several ways two Christ followers might find themselves in a Pathways partnership. One way is if an experienced Christ follower simply invites someone else to enter into a Pathways partnership with them. Another way is to flip that around; if an inexperienced Christ follower asks an experienced Christ follower to engage in a Pathways partnership with them. Another way is when someone reaches out to Coastal requesting to be connected with a Pathways Coach for discipleship. Also, keep in mind that Pathways doesn't have to be vertical - "coach to person being coached," Pathways can work horizontally as well, as in two peers providing accountability for each other. Step One is identifying an individual to walk the Pathways with and establish that partnership.

### **STEP TWO: Complete the Self-Assessment and determine your Virtue and Pathway(s).**

Once you've established the Pathways friendship, it's time to self assess. Complete the Pathways self-assessment to determine which Value you'd like to focus on. That decision will inform which Pathway(s) you will begin to travel. There may be many Values that you'd like to see growth in, but the goal is to pick one Value and be deliberate in walking the related Pathways that would promote growth in that Value.

Once you've identified the Value you will focus on, use the "input / output" tool to determine which Pathway(s) you'll begin traveling. You may choose multiple Pathways here. It's recommended that you challenge yourself while maintaining realistic, achievable goals. Your Pathways Coach or your peer can help you determine what would be both practical and challenging at the same time. Step Two is completing the self evaluation and determine the Value and Pathways you'll focus on.

### **Step THREE: Walk the Pathway(s).**

At this point you have a friend or coach who will provide accountability and you've completed a self evaluation that helped you determine which Value you'd like to focus on, which informed which Pathway(s) you'll be traveling. Now it's time to walk the Pathway(s). Your Coach or peer can help you determine which Pathway(s) you should begin in and what frequency you'll aim to walk that Pathway. For example, if your Value is Knowledge, you may determine that the Pathways of Scripture and Prayer are the two key Pathways you'll begin to travel. With the help of your peer or Coach, you can set reading and prayer goals that are both challenging but also achievable and sustainable. Everyone's journey is different, so this too will be different for everyone. For some, reading one chapter of a book of the Bible a day and committing to pray twice a day for 5 minutes each is feasible. For others, reading one chapter a week and praying once a day is a more appropriate goal. Invite your Coach or peer to help challenge you in this area.

#### **Expectations of a Pathways Coach:**

1. 3 Month Commitment
2. 2 Connections a week (text, call, email)
3. One face to face connection a month
4. Ask probing questions for accountability; recommend actions steps for Pathways

As you walk down the Pathway(s), your Coach or peer will contact you no less than twice a week to check in and see how you are doing. This contact could be via text, email, phone call, or any other means of communication that you and your Pathways Coach or peer agree upon. Honesty during these check-ins is of absolute importance. There is no hope for accurately measured progress if you are not being honest in these check-ins.

Once a month, one of these check-ins should be in person. This is where you can connect with your Coach or peer over coffee or a meal and discuss how things are going.

#### **Questions to ask during accountability connections:**

- Have you been faithfully walking the current Pathway(s)? Give examples.
- What have you found to be challenging during the past few weeks?
- Do you feel the Pathway(s) have brought you closer to God? Explain why or why not.
- Have you felt improvement in the Virtue as a result of the Pathway(s)? Explain why or why not.
- Would you like to change anything as we move onto another week?
- What have you learned while traveling this particular Pathway?

Keep in mind, Coaches or peers aren't necessarily supposed to have all the answers. Their role is to provide accountability, encouragement, and motivation. They also should help you hear the voice of God as you endeavor to be led by the Holy Spirit. Step Three is walking the Pathway(s).

**STEP FOUR: Measure your Progress and continue in that Pathway or add on another.**

At least once a month, you should reassess where you are within the Pathway that you are walking. Use your Coach as a reference and refer to the weekly accountability conversations that took place throughout the month. Assess where you currently are and compare it to where you were when you first started walking along the current Pathway.

If it is determined that sufficient progress was made and you would like to move on to another/additional Virtue, you may do so at this time. If not, determine whether more work along the same Pathway is required or if adding an additional Pathway or changing your current Pathway is the best next step. Ultimately, the goal is to find success in the Pathways so that a self assessment will show improvement in a particular Virtue.

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Discipleship takes time. It's a lifelong process. No one should expect to see drastic results over night, but expect growth and progress to be something that happens over time. Eugene Peterson has been credited for saying that discipleship is "a long obedience in the same direction." It's important to acknowledge the words long (it's going to take time), obedience (it's going to require discipline), and same direction (simple, consistent disciplines over time).

After 3 months, you may decide to continue walking the Pathways with your current Coach, or you may be challenged by your Coach (or by God) to attempt to be a Coach for someone else. Coaching the Pathways does not require for you to be a perfect Coach. If it did, no one but Jesus could Coach! Coaching the Pathways simply requires a determined Christ follower who is willing to use the resources given to them and seek out their own to help someone else become a better follower of Jesus.

Discipleship - a long obedience  
in the same direction.  
-Eugene Peterson

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So are you wanting to become more like Jesus? Do you want the fruit of the Spirit to be evident in your life? Would you like to be part of Christ's call to make disciples of all nations? If you said yes to any of those questions, you are a perfect candidate to begin walking or coaching the Pathways.



## Practical Actions for Pathways

The following list consists of practical ideas that you can implement yourself or recommend to someone else who is walking the respective Pathway(s).

*NOTE: For each Pathway, praying daily for God to help you in the specific pathway you are on is critical and can't be overemphasized.*

### **1. Scripture** - reading, studying, memorizing and meditation on the Bible

- Read and meditate on one verse a day (perhaps the verse of the day from the YouVersion Bible app)
- Pick a book from the Bible and read one section or chapter a day.
- Start a “read the Bible in a year” plan.
- Get into a bible study LIFEgroup where you will be challenged and held accountable in reading the scriptures daily.
- Begin to read the Bible daily and attempt to identify at least one meaningful verse and write it down in your own personal journal with a short explanation of what it means to you and why it is meaningful.
- Find a partner to focus on Scripture together.
- Memorize a verse that has meant a lot to you.
- Target Scriptures that reflect where you are spiritually, read them and meditate on them.
- Daily - read Scripture and ask: What is God saying to me and what am I going to do about it?
- If you are just starting out, start with the book of James.
- RightNow Media - Read Scripture by Tim Mackie
- Bible Project Website (tons of resources)

### **2. Prayer** - regularly talking with God and interceding for ourselves and others

- Devote no less than 3 minutes in prayer a day (the amount of time isn't as important as the set goal and commitment).
- Make a point to pray with your family (spouse, children) every day (or at least with planned consistency).
- Plan a time daily (create a reoccurring event in your calendar) where you will spend a certain amount of time in prayer and guard that time.

- Start a prayer journal - spend time in prayer and journal about what you prayed for and what you may have heard God speak to you. Be sure to include answers to prayer as well.
- Join a prayer group where you have opportunity to pray corporately and in intercession for/with others
- Send a note/text to those you are praying for
- Go on a prayer walk (Consider a prayer walk with your LIFEgroup)
- Write out your prayers to God in a journal for review and to help focus your mind while praying
- Join the iPray team
- Establish a prepared place for prayer (prayer closet, "War Room")
- YouVersion prayer list (invite your friends to the group)
- Echo Prayer App
- YouVersion "How to Pray" 7 day devotion
- Practice "ACTS" (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication) during prayer
- Pray for others throughout the day
- Pray out loud for others (start by praying out loud alone)

### **3. Rest** - honoring the Sabbath and practicing healthy life rhythms

- Identify/Claim your sabbath and guard it.
- Carve out moments in your day for short periods of sabbath (ex. Schedule a mid day prayer, listen to worship, and put it on your calendar).
- Identify times during your day that you can leverage for sabbath, (driving to/from work, lunch break) and use that time to rest in God.
- Identify things you can remove from a "too busy" schedule and come up with a plan to begin removing them so you can walk in more and have more opportunities for rest.
- Disconnect from electronics
- Decrease screen time
- Decide to go to bed earlier...and then do it.
- If you are doing things that others can do, consider delegating (Only do the things that only YOU can do)
- Take a vacation
- Find a hobby that helps you relax and do that.
- Think of your day in 3 day segments and only work 2 of the 3 segments (ex. Work morning and afternoon, rest in evening).

### **4. Accountability** - having someone that helps us reach our God-given potential

- Write down specific areas in your life that you'd like to improve and keep yourself accountable in your progress in those areas.
- Have a regular, healthy habit of confessing and repenting in prayer to God.
- Discern a wise choice for an accountability partner and have a conversation with that person about being your accountability partner.
- Meet with an accountability partner weekly to discuss areas where you are specifically focusing on trying to walk in obedience.

- At the end of the day, reflect on successes and make a plan for tomorrow to improve/maintain
- Reflect on God's goodness (the more you reflect, the more you will be drawn to it)
- Evaluate your life alongside Scripture and talk with someone about the results.
- Add accountability filters to your devices (ex. Covenant Eyes)

**5. Relationship** - being authentic with others to know and and be known

- Everyday, talk to your loved ones about 1 thing that happened during your day AND how it made you feel (ask your spouse/kids/family members to do the same).
- Join a LIFEgroup
- Begin to date your spouse regularly
- Take your kids out for a treat and conversation regularly
- Do something interactive with someone else or a group at least once a month
- Form a text group with close friends and send out a verse at the beginning of the week
- Share coffee/meal with a spiritual mentor or friend once a week
- Look people in the eyes and smile as you go about your day.
- Think about what you can do this week fo focus on others and then do it.
- Listen to people and ask questions (strengthen your listening muscle).
- Establish your North, South, East, and West relationships (one person who pours into you, one person you pour into, and two people whom you consider peers)

**6. Generosity** - having a heart to give freely and offer help to others

- Create blessing bags to give to people on the street (small bags with a few items such as a pair of socks, granola bars, bottled water, hand sanitizer, tissues, etc.)
- Create a "blessing account" and put money in it with the intention of using it to give away to someone in need.
- Go through your closet (or your entire house) and select some of the things that you don't need and give them away.
- If you've never given to church, consider giving a one-time gift or consistent gift (no matter the amount).
- If you don't tithe, begin tithing (a tithe is a 10th, but if that won't work in your current budget, look for other areas to decrease while picking a percentage that will be challenging but doable and be faithful in giving that amount).
- Be aware of those around you (grocery store, convenient story, etc.) - pick up the tab if you see a need/anxiety rising over a cost
- Send a student to camp (when you have an opportunity)

**7. Stewardship** - being a good manager of all that God has entrusted to us

- Set financial goals (saving, spending limits)
- Create and maintain a budget
- Begin to take care of the items you have (clean your house, car, etc).
- Take preventative maintenance more seriously - make a commitment to stay on top of things like oil changes and changing filters, etc.

- Consider ways that you can be a better steward of the environment (recycling, limiting water usage, purchase/use more reusable products instead of disposable)
- If you don't tithe, begin tithing (a tithe is a 10th, but if that won't work in your current budget, look for other areas to decrease while picking a percentage that will be challenging but doable and be faithful in giving that amount until you can give at least a 10th).
- Live with financial margin so when God asks you to provide for someone you're ready and you can.
- Reprioritize so you can better steward your time and your talents (do something new with your time and/or your talents)
- Do you have any untapped resources that can be used for God (Pool for fellowship event, extra car, truck to help move, etc.)
- Increase exercise (stewarding your body).
- Watch/modify your diet (what you are eating).

**8. Gathering** - engaging in community within the body of Christ

- Commit to attending church regularly
- Join a LIFEgroup
- Connect with Coastal Adult Ministry events/studies (Starting Point, Growth Track, Men/Women's Ministry)
- Look for hospitality opportunities in your community
- Share a meal with someone

**9. Reaching** - sharing the hope of Christ's love through evangelism and outreach

- Consider taking the "Share the Gospel" class (Dates TBD)
- Prepare "Your Story" to be shared within 4 minutes or less.
- Read and Review the "Roman's Road" and try to commit it to memory.
- Look for ways to serve the community and start serving (volunteering)
- Consider a missions trip
- Prayer walk your neighborhood, praying for your neighbors
- View a RightNow Media study on Evangelism/Sharing the Gospel
- Be intentional about getting to know your neighbors

**10. Service** - meeting the needs of others with our time, talents, and treasures

- Join a Serve Team at Coastal
- Look for ways to serve the community and start serving (volunteering)
- Create a "blessing account" and put money in it with the intention of using it to bless those in need monetarily, leveraging the blessing as a way to share the gospel (not bait and switch, but be intentional about why you are doing what you are doing and Who is behind it - Jesus).
- Use the Spiritual Gift Assessment of the Growth Track to find a place to serve
- Lean into what God has equipped you to do.
- Make it a habit to be proactive and look for needs (big or small) and meet them.

- Discuss with a friend/mentor/coach areas where you are gifted and discover how those skills can be leveraged in church

**11. Fasting** - sacrificing common things to focus on God

- Pick a time to fast, potentially easing into it by fasting one meal a day at first.
- Consider what is called a “Daniel Fast”
  - It’s a biblically based partial fast based on two accounts of the Prophet Daniel’s fasting experiences (see Daniel 1 and 10) and typical Jewish fasting principles. The Daniel Fast eating plan is similar to a vegan diet with additional restrictions.
- Consider fasting from social media/entertainment
- Be sure to spend extra concentrated time with God in prayer, and let hunger pangs remind you to spend a short moment in prayer.
- Consider fasting with a partner or group for accountability

**12. Worship** - outwardly expressing the joy that comes from knowing God

- Attend Worship Service regularly, and worship God in ways that He enjoys to be worshipped.
- Increase your intake of worship music
- Understanding that worship is not only about singing or music, but about a posture of the heart, evaluate your own heart and ask God to help you with your posture if you need an adjustment.
- Schedule a time(s) of the day where you worship God with all of your heart. This looks like spending time meditating about all that you have or all that He’s done in your life and thanking Him for it, singing to Him, singing along with worship music, etc.
- Seek out non-musical ways to worship (social media post about the goodness of God, be intentional about being more vocal about your faith)
- Use an activity/place, gardening/fishing to posture your heart to connect with God
- Create a gratitude list (things that you are grateful for) and pray thanksgiving over them.

*NOTE: When it comes to the Pathways, walking them is not the end, walking them is the means to the virtuous end. We’ll never be perfectly virtuous, and although measuring how consistent we are in taking action steps in our Pathways is extremely important, it’s not the ultimate measurable. How our hearts change to be more like Jesus and we change to begin to live out the virtues or live them out more consistently is the ultimate measurable.*



## Metrics for Pathways

The following is a list of things that can be used to measure progress along a particular pathway.

1. **Scripture** - reading, studying, memorizing and meditation on the Bible
  - How many minutes a day are you spending in Scripture?
  - How many verses/chapters/books of the Bible have you read?
  - How many times a week?
  - Rate your engagement 1-5 (1 - read but don't think much about it, 5 - I read and I'm thinking and applying it to my life)
  - Do you have a goal (chapter a day, etc)? Have you met that goal?
  - Are you memorizing any verses? How many have you memorized?
  - Exegesis - what did it mean then, what does it mean now, what am I going to do about it?
2. **Prayer** - regularly talking with God and interceding for ourselves and others
  - How many minutes a day?
  - How many times a week?
  - Rate your closeness with God.
  - Have you been accountable with others?
  - Are you spending time in A.C.T.S. (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication) daily?
  - Are you writing in your journal (requests and answers)
  - Are you hearing from God?
  - Do you establish a prepared place of prayer (if that was one of your goals)?
  - Are you regularly going to God first (or at least, more often)?
  - Are you stopping to pray for people throughout the day?
  - Are you praying out loud for others (start by praying out loud alone)?
  - Are you infusing God in your day?
3. **Rest** - honoring the sabbath and practicing healthy life rhythms
  - Do you have a consistent routine?
  - What are your daily/weekly/monthly amounts of rest?
  - How much more sleep are you getting? Are you sleeping well? Better?
  - How rested do you feel?
  - Have you set boundaries around work hours?

- Do you have regular rhythms of rest?
  - Have you created margin in your life?
  - Have you decreased screen time?
4. **Accountability** - having someone that helps us reach our God-given potential
- Have you established a daily routine of coming before God (personal confession)?
  - Are you meeting with someone regularly to discuss your walk?
  - Have you thought of someone to meet regularly with?
  - Do you have a weekly/monthly routine for accountability?
  - Are you having regular conversations with someone (Pathways Coach included)?
  - Have you joined a LIFEgroup?
  - Have you been spending time in reflection at the end of the day?
  - Have you been evaluating your life alongside Scripture?
  - Have you added accountability filters on your devices?
5. **Relationship** - being authentic with others to know and and be known
- How many friends/friendly relationships do you have?
  - Do you have a rhythm for meeting and listening with friends?
  - Are you instilling/showing good relationship habits inside your own home?
  - Are you in a LIFEgroup?
  - Jesus had 12, and then 3 - have you identified your 3?
  - Have you established your North, South, East, and West relationships?
  - Have you created a rhythm for taking your children out for treats?
  - How many times a week have you talked to your loved ones about "one thing" (one thing about your/their day and how it made you/them feel)?
6. **Generosity** - having a heart to give freely and offer help to others
- Have you created a plan or goal(s)?
  - What is your daily or weekly routine (giving of time, talents, or treasures)?
  - Do you give regularly?
  - Do you serve regularly?
  - Are you becoming more aware of the needs around you?
  - Have you created any blessing bags?
  - Have you created and invested in a "blessing account"?
7. **Stewardship** - being a good manager of all that God has entrusted to us
- How much time are you spending serving?
  - Have you increased or improved in stewarding time, talents, or treasures?
  - Are you experiencing less busyness, the same amount, or more busyness? (TIME)
  - Do you feel good physically? (BODY)
  - Are you exercising more? (BODY)
  - Are you feeling more free financially?
  - Have you adjusted your diet? (BODY)

- Have you limited unnecessary purchases?
8. **Gathering** - engaging in community within the body of Christ
- Have you been attending church regularly? How often?
  - Do you have a weekly routine beyond Sunday morning?
  - Are you in or leading a LIFEgroup?
  - How often have you connected with Christian friends?
  - When's the last time you shared a meal with someone?
  - Have you made plans to connect with others?
9. **Reaching** - sharing the hope of Christ's love through evangelism and outreach
- How often have you interacted with the unchurched?
  - Have you shared your story when the opportunity presented itself (lately)?
  - Have you prepared your 2-3 minute testimony?
  - When was the last time you shared your story?
  - Have you been intentional about getting to know your neighbors?
  - Have you considered a mission trip?
  - Have you viewed any RightNow Media videos on evangelism?
10. **Service** - meeting the needs of others with our time, talents, and treasures
- Have you started serving if you weren't already?
  - Are you consistent in serving?
  - Have you taken a Spiritual Gift Assessment?
  - Are you serving within your God given gifts/skill set?
  - Have you allowed yourself to be interrupted to be in service to someone else lately?
  - Have you been more outward focused of the needs around you?
  - Are you seeing more serving opportunities?
11. **Fasting** - sacrificing common things to focus on God
- Have you started fasting (food, social media, electronics, etc)?
  - Are you feeling closer to God (during the fast)?
  - When is the last time you fasted?
  - Are you spending more time with God (during the fast)?
  - Have you started the Daniel fast?
12. **Worship** - outwardly expressing the joy that comes from knowing God
- Have you started a daily/weekly routine?
  - Are you feeling more connected with God during worship?
  - Are you worshiping consistently?
  - Are you taking risks during worship (doing things that are outside your comfort zone such as raising hands, singing, kneeling, etc)?
  - Are you worshiping God outside of music or song?
  - Have you created a gratitude list?



# pathways

Virtue (Output Goal)	Pathway (Input Action)
<b>Holy</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Worship, Fasting, Service, Generosity, Stewardship, Accountability
<b>Content</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Worship, Fasting, Service, Generosity, Stewardship
<b>Hospitable</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Relationship, Service, Generosity, Reaching
<b>Truthful</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Relationship, Accountability
<b>Persevering</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Worship, Fasting, Accountability
<b>Wise</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Fasting, Accountability
<b>Hopeful</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Worship,
<b>Loving</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Worship, Relationship, Service, Generosity, Gathering, Stewardship
<b>Joyful</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Worship, Fasting
<b>Peaceful</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Worship, Fasting,
<b>Kind</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Relationship, Service, Generosity, Reaching
<b>Gentle</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Worship, Fasting, Relationship,
<b>Faithful</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Worship, Fasting, Stewardship, Accountability
<b>Humble</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Worship, Fasting, Service, Generosity, Reaching, Stewardship, Accountability
<b>Grateful</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Worship, Fasting, Service, Generosity
<b>Merciful</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Worship, Relationship, Service, Generosity, Gathering, Reaching
<b>Honorable</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Worship, Service, Generosity, Reaching, Stewardship, Accountability
<b>Principled</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Worship, Service, Stewardship, Accountability
<b>Selfless</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Worship, Relationship, Service, Generosity, Gathering, Reaching, Stewardship, Accountability
<b>Fervent</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Fasting, Service, Accountability
<b>Forgiving</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Worship, Relationship, Accountability
<b>Believing</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Worship, Accountability
<b>Self-controlled</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Generosity, Stewardship, Accountability
<b>Knowledgeable</b>	Scripture, Prayer, Rest, Fasting, Stewardship, Accountability



### My Pathway Plan

Fill in the blanks below and place this somewhere that will help you remember to engage in the Pathways everyday!

1. I'm walking the Pathways with \_\_\_\_\_.

2. We will check in on \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ weekly.

3. The Virtue that I wish to improve / obtain is \_\_\_\_\_.

4. The current Pathway(s) I'm walking on:

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5. These are the action steps I will take along the Pathway

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## **How to Write Your Testimony**

**By Mary Fairchild**

Skeptics may debate the validity of Scripture or argue the existence of God, but no one can deny your personal experiences with God. If you tell someone how God worked a miracle in your life, how he blessed you, transformed you, lifted and encouraged you, or perhaps even broke and then healed you, no one can argue or debate it. When you share your Christian testimony, you go beyond the field of knowledge into the realm of relationship with God.

### **Tips to Remember as You Write Your Testimony**

- Stick to the point. Your conversion and new life in Christ should be the main points.
- Be specific. Include events, genuine feelings, and personal insights that clarify your main point. Make your testimony tangible and relevant so others can relate to it.
- Be current. Tell what's happening in your life with God right now, today.
- Be honest. Don't exaggerate or dramatize your story. The simple, straightforward truth of what God has done in your life is all the Holy Spirit needs to convict others and convince them of God's love and grace.

### **5 Steps to Writing Your Testimony**

These steps explain how to write your testimony. They apply to both long and short, written and spoken testimonies. Whether you're planning to write down your full, detailed testimony or prepare a quick 2-minute version for a short-term mission trip, these steps will help you tell others with sincerity, impact, and clarity, what God has done in your life.

#### **1 - Realize Your Testimony Is Powerful**

First and foremost, remember, there is power in your testimony. The Bible says we overcome our enemy by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony:

*"Then I heard a loud voice shouting across the heavens, "It has come at last— salvation and power and the Kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers and sisters has been thrown down to earth— the one who accuses them before our God day and night. And they have defeated him by the blood of the Lamb and by their testimony. And they did not love their lives so much that they were afraid to die." (Revelation 12:10-11, (NLT)*

Many other Bible verses reveal the power of sharing your testimony. Spend a few minutes looking them up: Acts 4:33; Romans 10:17; John 4:39.

## **2 - Study an Example in the Bible**

Read [Acts 26](#). Here the Apostle Paul gives his personal testimony before King Agrippa. He tells about his life before his conversion on the road to Damascus when he persecuted the followers of the Way. Next, Paul describes in detail his miraculous encounter with Jesus and his calling to serve Christ as an apostle. Then he goes on to tell of his new life after turning to God.

## **3 - Spend Time in Preparation and Prayer**

Here are a few things to consider before you start writing your testimony: Think about your life before you met the Lord. What was going on in your life leading up to your conversion? What problems or needs were you facing at the time? How did your life change after knowing Jesus Christ? Pray and ask God to help you share what he wants you to include.

## **4 - Use a 3-Point Outline**

A three-point approach is very effective in communicating your personal testimony. This outline focuses on before you trusted Christ, how you surrendered to him, and the changes in your life since you began walking with him.

- **Before:** Simply tell what your life was like before you surrendered to Christ. What were you searching for before coming to know Christ? What was the chief problem, emotion, situation, or attitude you were dealing with? What motivated you to seek a change? What were your actions and thoughts at the time? How did you try to satisfy your inner needs? (Examples of inner needs are loneliness, fear of death, insecurity, etc. Possible ways to fill those needs include work, money, drugs, relationships, sports, sex.) Remember to use concrete, relatable examples.
- **How:** How did you come to salvation in Jesus? Simply tell the events and circumstances that caused you to consider Christ as the solution to your searching. Take time to identify the steps that brought you to the point of trusting Christ. Where were you? What was happening at the time? What people or problems influenced your decision?
- **Since:** How has your life in Christ made a difference? How has his forgiveness impacted you? How have your thoughts, attitudes, and emotions changed? Share how Christ is meeting your needs and what your relationship with him means to you now.

## 5 - Words to Avoid

Stay away from "Christianese" phrases. "Churchy" words can alienate listeners/readers and keep them from identifying with your life. People who are unfamiliar or even uncomfortable with church and Christianity might not understand what you are saying. They may mistake your meaning or even be turned off by your "foreign language." Here are some examples:

Avoid using the term "born again." Instead, use these words:

- spiritual birth
- spiritual renewal
- spiritual awakening
- come alive spiritually
- given a new life
- my eyes opened

Avoid using "saved." Instead, use terms like:

- rescued
- delivered from despair
- found hope for life

Avoid using "lost." Instead, say:

- heading in the wrong direction
- separated from God
- had no hope
- had no purpose

Avoid using "gospel." Instead, consider saying:

- God's message to man
- the good news about Christ's purpose on earth
- God's message of hope for the world

Avoid using "sin." Instead, try one of these expressions:

- rejecting God
- missing the mark
- falling away from the right path
- a crime against God's law
- disobedience to God
- going my own way with no thought of God

Avoid using "repent." Instead, say things like:

- admit I was wrong
- change one's mind, heart, or attitude
- decide to turn away
- turn around
- make a 180 degree turn from what you were doing
- obey God
- follow God's Word



# pathways

## "Tell Your Story" Worksheet

Using the lines below, write out the story of your faith journey. Be concise, but make sure you include elements that are factual and relatable.

Before I became a Christ follower... (describe what your life was like before you started living for Jesus)

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I became a Christ follower...(describe how you came to Jesus - What led you to trust in Jesus? What was said? Where were you? What was the experience like? How did the experience make you feel?)

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Since becoming a Christ follower...(describe what life has been like since you've become a Christ follower. Be factual. No one's life with Christ is perfect. How has your life changed? Have you been freed from anything? How do you feel now?)

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