

# MESSAGE TRANSCRIPT //

TRAVEL TOGETHER | SUMMER ROAD TRIP

BART SHAW | JULY 16, 2023

Alright, Traders Point. How are we doing today? For those who don't know me, my name is Bart. I get to serve as our Carmel campus pastor. And I'm so grateful to be sharing with our church here today. I'm so honored.

I'd like to welcome everyone here, watching online, and at all of our campuses around the city. I'm excited to road trip with you today. You guys ready for our road trip? Let's go.

If you are new here, Pastor Ryan, kicked off this series for us last week. We're calling it *Summer Road Trip*. In this series, we're looking at Paul's missionary journeys. He forged new ground building the early church. And Paul was the OG church planter and missionary. Much of his story is covered in the Biblical book of Acts. And that's where we're going to set sail from today. We're going to travel through these incredible stories and accounts together.

Back a couple of weeks ago, on July 4<sup>th</sup>, it was reported that we set an all-time record; 50 million Americans traveled more than 50 miles outside of their home base. It felt like about 48 million went to the exact same place as I did. I don't know, if you traveled you might have felt the same way.

At all of our campuses, how many of you traveled over that weekend—more than 50 miles? Let's see the hands going up. They are all over the place. At all campuses, I'm sure we all contributed to that statistic.

That's the great thing about road trips. We can all identify. We all have stories. I remember heading down to Florida on I 65 making record time. Hit Nashville, and bam, two hours of gridlock traffic. Can anybody identify with that one? Oh, yeah. We've got a few.

I remember the first time we saw mountains. Amazing. Or the first time we saw the beach. Or the first time we saw Buc-ees. Oh my goodness. All amazing just for very different reasons.



One time I was coming back from Atlanta and I remember we were sitting there in the car and an ice storm came upon us. We ended up counting more than 30 cars that slid off the road. One of them was doing 60 backwards. It was crazy, crazy.

You guys all have road trips of your own that you have experienced. And I want us to think about it this way. What is common in those road trip stories that we share? What makes for a great road trip?

I just got back from a 12 hour road trip a couple of weeks ago like I just mentioned. And you always see two things. The first one is this:

There is a destination

There is a destination. There is a purpose. There is somewhere that you are going. And whether that's to see the mountains or the beach or Disney or grandma's house or the world's largest ball of twine (I don't know, if that was your vacation I'm so, so sorry, terrible). You're going somewhere. You're going somewhere. That's our first point. There is a destination.

The second one is this. Every road trip is better when: It's shared with others  
Every road trip is better when it is shared with someone else. It is shared with others. Road trips are great because we share them. There are courses to destination, but great memories often happen along the way. Let's face it. Sometimes you just need people to commiserate with, you need people to share in the madness, share in the pain. There was a survey conducted just a couple of years ago that said 87 percent of people surveyed said that a road trip was one of the very best ways for families and friends to bond together. And we know why. We all know why. We're literally traveling inside a vehicle for hours with people: friends, family, maybe strangers. I don't know your road trip. Proximity is a powerful tool.

It can also be a powerful smell, if you know what I'm talking about. I'm the oldest of four boys. Many road trips. I've got a couple of my own. There is no cabin filter equipped to handle beef jerky and body odor. There's just not. Technology has come a long way; we just haven't gotten that far yet.

As we look at Paul in Acts today. We're going to see both. Not the body odor and the beef jerky, but we're going to see that the destination is going to be important and also traveling together. We're going to look at incredible and memorable stories: people, places, destinations, and the journey to get there. They are all accounts of the origins of this new, early movement that followed Jesus called the church.

So, I want you to grab your Bibles and I want you to tap or turn to Acts, chapter 17. That's where we're going to be today. Let's load up the van. Let's bust out the Combos and the Hot Tamales—yes, those are the best treats for the road. Let's road trip together. You guys ready for the road trip? Let's go.

As we jump in I want to briefly set the stage for you. Paul is the primary leader of the early church. He is a brilliant theologian. He was a former religious elite known as a Pharisee. Jesus got a hold of his life and it fundamentally changes. He went from murdering disciples to making disciples.

It was a remarkable change. He becomes the definition of all men. He begins to share the Good News of Jesus boldly—that He was indeed the promised Messiah, God in the flesh. And He completed that long awaited plan to offer freedom and forgiveness to all people. It is an unbelievable account.

So he sets out with his travel companions to share this message and to plant churches in places they had never been planted. Chapter 16 kicks off the second missionary journey of Paul. And he moves from modern day Turkey into Greece following a vision that he received from God to go there. And chapter 16 ends with Paul being in jail, released, and essentially booted out of Philippi. This is pretty commonplace for Paul and his companions.

So, let's continue that road trip together. Chapter 17 let's read and follow along together.

Verse 1:

*"Paul and Silas then traveled through the towns of Amphipolis and Apollonia and came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue."*

Now let's just stop there for just a moment. I want you guys to see this. Sometimes it's helpful. I love maps. I'm a map nerd. Are there any other map nerds in here? Oh, there are nine of us. I thought there would be a few more than that. I know the Carmel campus has my back on that one.

Here's the map. So Paul started out in Jerusalem and he made his way up into modern day Turkey, which was Galatia at the time, through the cities of the known world that he was traveling through, jumping up to Philippi at the top of the map.

Now he's in Greece. This is where chapter 16 takes place. Paul goes to jail; he gets booted and he and his companions travel a three-day journey to Thessalonica. He then will go to Berea, which we will touch on in a little bit. Next week down to Athens, Corinth,

and then eventually Ephesus and then on his way back to Jerusalem. So you get a chance to see where Paul was going. This is a big trip. I mean this is on foot, largely. So Thessalonica is a major city. It is the second most populated city in Greece. Today it's still a rising city. It's the regional capital of Macedonia. It's got 3,000 years of consecutive history. This is where Paul will plant a church. He's going to write his letters to the Thessalonian church, eventually. We'll come back to that in a little bit. So, let's look at verse 2 together:

*"As was Paul's custom, he went to the synagogue service, and for three Sabbaths in a row," say it with me, "he used the Scriptures to reason with the people."*

*He used the Scriptures. What a powerful statement. It wasn't just popular opinion. It wasn't majority voices. It wasn't wise and persuasive words that he would sometimes say. These are the kinds of disciples that we are called to be and aim to be here at Traders Point. I'm entering my 20<sup>th</sup> year of ministry—my seventh year here on the team at Traders Point and it's one of the things that love so much about our church, about our leadership, about our lead pastor, Aaron. We don't change our views based on culture or the majority, we change them and follow God's Word. Aren't you so glad to be part of a church like that? Amen.*

*Now, are we always right? Unlikely. But we do our best and that is our aim. We use God's Word, not our own, to filter those things that we decide and follow after.*

So verse 3:

*"He explained the prophecies and proved that the Messiah must suffer and rise from the dead. He said, 'This Jesus I'm telling you about is the Messiah.'"*

*He uses God's Word, rational, logic, facts to make a case for Jesus. He's telling them, "Guys, you know the Scriptures. You've studied them your whole life. These are prophecies that were written hundreds of years before Jesus was ever born and He fulfilled them all. Look. Believe the truth." And many of them did. They began to put their hope and faith in Jesus as God softened their hearts. We see that here in verse 4:*

*"Some of the Jews who listened were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with many God-fearing Greek men and quite a few prominent women."*

*How cool. However we're told now in verse 5:*

*"But some of the Jews were jealous," Uh oh. They did what jealous people do. "...so they gathered some troublemakers from the marketplace to form a mob and start a riot." Just imagine. Put yourself in the shoes of those early believers and Paul and Silas. And some things don't change. We don't live in the same marketplace, culture, that they did in that day. At least not most of us. But we still see this happening in some of our city*

centers today. And we certainly see it happening in the digital marketplace. We will often hear jealousy, misinformation, mudslinging attacks and even worse. And that's kind of what is happening here.

Continue on in verse 5:

*"They attacked the home of Jason," Guys, this was a new believer. "...searching for Paul and Silas so they could drag them out to the crowd. Not finding them there, they dragged out Jason and some of the other believers instead and took them before the city council."*

Now I want us to stop here for just a moment because I don't want you to miss something that is really significant that can be found here in the text and some extra things that go with it. Especially for those of you who may be a little bit like me. Maybe you're more analytical, more critical.

If that's your default, I want you to hear this. The word that we just read that is translated city council is the Greek word *politarch*. It's used in verse 6. It's also used in verse 8. And it's translated city officials or city council. For years, many biblical critics pointed to this as a reason as to why Acts was unreliable. It was mythological. It couldn't be trusted because the dates were way off.

Their reasoning was because this word *politarch* was not found until much later. You couldn't find it in Greek manuscripts, in the literature of that time. You couldn't find it in inscriptions. So they concluded that this was just not true. That is until they found it. *I've got a picture here for you. This is an inscription that was taken from Thessalonica at the same time Acts claims to have taken place. In this inscription it uses the word politarchs. You probably can't read it. I can't either. It's kind of hard to see and I can't read Greek all that well. So politarch is in there. And that is a word that was found at that time. They have since found multiple of these.*

*This is on display at the British Museum in London. It's a huge find. And there are tons of other archeological finds that have proven again and again the reliability and the credibility of God's Word. It's another example as to why, we too, can use the Scriptures to reason with people. Pretty cool, huh?*

So let's continue on:

*"Paul and Silas have caused trouble all over the world,' they shouted, 'and now they are here disturbing our city, too. And Jason has welcomed them into his home. They are all guilty of treason against Caesar,'" that's the highest charge they could lay on someone, "...for they profess allegiance to another king, named Jesus."*

At least they got that part right. Verse 8:

*“The people of the city, as well as the,” politarch, “city council, were thrown into turmoil by these reports. So the officials forced Jason and the other believers to post bond, and then they released them.”*

*Now, that’s probably a bit more intense than most of the road trips you and I have been on. But I remember one time, my first roundabout experience (not here, surprisingly) in Hilton Head many years ago, I think I probably did a full three laps around that bad boy before someone laid on their horn and let me have it. They were at least gracious enough to gesture to me that I was number one. So that was pretty nice. Pretty heavy persecution going on for me.*

*Paul was probably in Thessalonica for several months, making disciples, teaching them doctrine. Of course he spent the first couple of weeks telling these new believers that Jesus was the fulfilled Messiah. He would have taught them much more as he made disciples. We get deeper into that in 1 and 2 Thessalonians. And we’ll take a peek at that here in a little bit.*

*Now we established earlier today that every road trip has a destination, a purpose. So we have to ask the question: what was Paul’s? What was Paul’s purpose? What was the destination that he was shooting for? Paul was on a road trip and the purpose that he was very clearly to fulfill is the Great Commission.*

*The last words that Jesus gave us while on earth was the commission to go and make disciples. If you have been a part of Traders Point any length of time, you’ve heard of this many times. Aaron has shared it with us multiple times. It is the core mission of every church that truly believes God’s Word. You can’t get away from that. So I want us to review it again today. It’s here on the screen.*

*“...Go and make disciples of all the nations,”*

*Now be careful to notice a few things. It doesn’t say go and make converts. It says go and make disciples of all nations:*

*“...baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”*

*So, how do we make those disciples? I’m glad you asked. It’s right here in the Great Commission:*

*“Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you.”*

*That’s the Great Commission. Go and make disciples of all nations, baptize them, and then teach them to obey all of the commands Jesus gave us. This is the mission of the church. The mission of the church is a disciple making mission. This is a road trip that is still in progress. We are all part of this road trip, fulfilling it together.*



So what I want to do today is I want to unpack a few more things. I want to describe a few definitions for you so you can better understand disciple and disciple making because they sometimes can be confusing if you're not in church very often. Maybe those are unfamiliar words to you. I want to define them for you. So here's the first one. Disciple. And you guys can write this down. There are a lot of definitions. I tried to make as easy as I possibly could:

**Disciple: someone following Jesus by obeying Him**

Do you see how that is pulled right from the text? What's a disciple? Someone who is following Jesus by obeying. You'll notice this distinction in there. Not just following Jesus. Not just believing in Jesus. The demons believe in Jesus but they are not following Jesus. So someone who is following Him, trusting Him, and obeying the things that He says, becoming like Him, that's a disciple.

So what is a disciple maker?

**Disciple-making: entering into relationships to help others follow Jesus**

Disciple-making is this. Entering into relationships to help others follow Jesus. Entering into relationships to help others follow Jesus. There is intentionality, There is purpose behind the reason why we engage in certain relationships. Even intentionality in the ones we already have: family, and friends, and children and things like that. Entering into relationship to help others follow Jesus.

I don't want you to miss this today. You can't be a disciple without being a disciple maker. It's actually illogical. It doesn't make any sense, because Jesus' words were, "Go and make disciples." So if you're not obeying those words, then you're not a disciple. You need to make disciples.

You guys see where I'm going? Paul knew this and he gave it everything he had to follow after that mission. So much of our world is overly self-centered when it comes to a lot of things. And discipleship is the same. We make it about me, my needs, my growth, my development.

But when we look at a biblical worldview, it says that we need to be others focused, not self-focused. Here's the crazy thing that happens when you do that. You grow. You grow like you never would if you focused only on yourself. It requires you to focus on others. We want to be a disciple making church here at Traders Point. I have the privilege of getting to lead our discipleship and group teams here at Traders Point. Our mission, the purpose for our team is to develop and deploy disciple makers. That's it. We want to develop and deploy disciple makers. So disciple-making, friends, is the destination. So



what's the destination? [congregation: disciple-making] You guys have got it. You're following the leader so, so well.

You guys remember that game? Follow the leader. Or, Simon says? Right? I don't know who that guy Simon was. He got his name attached to that. But Simon says and you do the thing. If he doesn't say it you don't do it. You guys know. Let's play this together. All campuses.

Simon says, "Touch your nose." You guys are really quick. Alright. Wiggle your ears and stick out tongue. Oh, Simon didn't say. I saw some of you do it. Okay. Simon says, "Wiggle your ears and stick out your tongue." Don't move. Hang on. I've got to tell Aaron how you treated me when he was out. Oh my goodness.

Disciple making is the most important game of follow the leader that you will ever play. Now, there are countless tools and systems and studies and books on discipleship making. They are all great. I advocate for them. But, I'm going to make it really simple for you:

Discipleship is not a program, but a person!

Discipleship is not a program, it's a person. You are following a person, namely, Jesus. But the reality is that Jesus designed, specifically, the church to work in a follow the leader kind of way. Jesus is our primary aim. If you're a follower of Jesus, you should be following another follower of Jesus and have another one following you. That's the way that it works.

Whenever I have the opportunity to talk about disciple making, it always brings me back to an example that happened in my life many years ago. My youngest son, Camden, decided he wanted to do Martial Arts. And he was fulfilling my childhood dream of becoming Karate Kid—wax on wax off.

I'm the oldest of four boys. I spent about half of my childhood in the crane pose. So kicking my brothers in the face. If you don't know what I'm talking about, watch the movie, google it.

I began to watch him and I was just astounded at what I saw because I began to see so many correlations and parallels between the church and disciple making.

These are a few observations I noticed along the way. The first one was all were welcome. It was 100 percent okay to know nothing, to start as a white belt. Come as you are. And I think that is one of the things that we get right as a church.

Traders Point does a great job of saying come as you are. You don't have to know anything. You don't have to believe what we believe. You are welcome here. Come. Come. And we do that great.



That's something I noticed in these Taekwondo classes. It was their call to decide if they wanted to move forward. But it was a great environment to say, "Come as you are." The second thing I noticed was this. While it was okay to start as a white belt, it wasn't okay to stay a white belt. You didn't see anybody there three months later saying, "Hey, I'm glad I'm a white belt. I'm proud of my white belt." No, no, no, no, no. There was an expectation that they were working and taking steps toward growth to level up. I think that is one of the things we sometimes miss in the church, our teams and us collectively.

One other thing that I noticed, and this is probably the most significant one to me. A month or so into this training and learning, Camden leveled up. He became a yellow belt. I've actually got a picture of him here for you. Look at that cutie pie, five years old. He gave me permission to share that with you today. Thanks buddy. Yellow belt. He went from a white belt to a yellow belt. And here's the thing that blew me away. It wasn't the black belts and the upper level belts who were teaching the white belts what to do next. It was him. All of the yellow belts were now teaching the white belts what they had just learned.

They were so far from being masters. They got questions. They didn't know the answers. Just like you and just like me. But they took what they'd been given and they gave it away. They followed the one in front of them, and the one behind them followed them. Church, this is disciple making at its best. It's our destination.

Paul talked about this a lot throughout Scripture. He talked about imitation and he talked about replication. We see this in his letters that he wrote to the church we're looking at today, Thessalonica. He said in 1 Thessalonians:

*"We lived among you for your sake and you became imitators of us."*

Imitation was inherent to what he was trying to do. That was his destination. And in chapter 2 he said:

*You became imitators of God's churches in Judea."*

Our road trip is about making disciples period. Now, a lot of things can go into that bucket. It can look a lot of different ways. But ultimately it's about imitating Him and imitating those who follow Him.

As you read God's Word, you'll notice that Paul never really traveled alone. He always had companions. He always had people he was investing in, discipling, pouring into. You see that as well in 1 Thessalonians. He says:

*"We shared our lives with you. We shared the gospel with you and we loved you so much."*

We know the definition of disciple making. It is designed to be shared together. Shared with others.

Alright. Everybody back in the van. We have one more destination we're going to go to together today. Paul and Silas are now traveling together. They get booted out of Thessalonica. They get sent to the next city, which on our map was Berea, which is about a two-day journey down the road.

He meets different people who are much more favorable toward him and Silas and the message. They were open to hearing what they had to say, but they weren't gullible. I want you to hear what they said in verse 11. Let's look at that verse together:

*"And the people of Berea were more open-minded than those in Thessalonica, and they listened eagerly to Paul's message." Look at this. "They searched the Scriptures day after day to see if Paul and Silas were teaching the truth."*

They searched the Scriptures day after day to see if Paul and Silas were teaching the truth. So how can we know what is true? Isn't this the question of our day? Your truth. My truth. What's true? Know God's Word. Know the Scriptures if you want to know truth. You can't just simply take someone's word for it. Not even mine. I would never knowingly lead any one of you astray. But I'm imperfect. And I have to do the same thing. I have to study God's Word to know if something is true.

If you don't know God's Word and what He says, how can you obey? How can you know what's true? If we don't know what is true then we allow truth to be created and agreed upon by culture, the majority with the loudest voice. This is largely where our world is. Amen?

Our road trip is meant to be shared with others. You guys see this? They examined the Scriptures every day together. Have you guys ever had an insatiable desire to hear from God? To read His Word? Maybe when you first believed. Maybe when someone poured into you, or you came alive in your faith. Maybe you went through *Rooted* here and you just came alive. It sparked your faith and you couldn't get enough of God's Word. I remember several points along my own journey where that was true and has been true. And it almost always involved other people. So let's get that back. Let's know the truth so that we can teach others to follow.

Church, we have baptized over 400 people this year alone. Amen. And so I say to you, get with others. Know the truth. Read His Word. Obey it. It's a far better way to live. You were not meant to go at this alone. Just like every good road trip, there is power in proximity. You need people around you.



Consistency, proximity—they are so critical. Why do you think we say, “Serve regularly, get in your group, and stay committed to your group. Show up here on Sunday. It’s because it’s for your good. It helps you to grow, to stay protected, to be sharpened. Travel together.

This weekend my family and I watched one of those nature documentaries. You guys know the kind. Right? The guy with the incredible voice in all of them, maybe. We watched and there was a migration and there were wildebeests. And there was a wildebeest that got off the pack, started wandering on its own and headed off on its own. Guess what happened to the wildebeest? Spoiler alert. He didn’t make it. He didn’t make it.

I told you guys about how 87 percent of people said that road trips are one of the best ways to bond. Well I also conducted another poll of myself. And 100 percent of me said that getting into a group here is one of the best ways you can get involved and plugged in spiritually. Yeah. I’m going to publish that finding one day. At Traders Point we have several environments where you can connect, grow with other people, obey God’s Word, be developed, and deployed as a disciple maker on this journey.

Our small groups. We have thousands of people in small groups all around our city trying to do that very thing. Youth Group. If you’re a student, get involved in Youth. It is incredible. They are going to be moving to Wednesdays here in just a few weeks. Get involved in the Youth Group.

Maybe *Rooted* is a step for you. *Rooted* is unbelievable. We’re going to have it again; we have it several times a year. We’re actually going to pause this fall. It will happen again in January.

And that’s for a reason. We’re doing something incredibly unique and special this fall as a church. We’re going to do something that is going to operate very similarly to *Rooted*. It’s going to have some short term groups available for people who are not yet connected to get involved and to roll with our entire church through something together. And I want to strongly encourage you and invite you to be a part of it.

In fact, what I want you to do right now is, if you are not connected in a group, I want you to grab your phone and I want to invite you to text the word *group* to 87221. At all of our campuses go ahead and text in church. It’s totally fine. Text the word *group* to 87221. This does not sign you up for a group, just so you know. It just puts you on an interest list. You’re just taking a step today so that in a little over a month we can get you a registration and say, “Now is the time. Get involved. Get in community. Get out of



isolation.” If you’re already in a group you don’t need to text this. You’ll be given that information as well.

Don’t miss the opportunity to travel together. In life so many of us wander aimlessly through it. Or we just simply do the things that we feel like others really expect of us, fulfilling what they want for us. Friends, there is a better way.

Paul found his destination with meaning and purpose that was so deep that he committed his life to it and he risked his life for it. Paul would go on to say, “Imitate me as I imitate Christ.” Paul wasn’t perfect but he lived a life that was worth imitating. Do you? Do we? Can we say the same thing?

I want to challenge you with this question today. I really want you to think about it. If someone far from God was tasked with observing you this past week and you were the only point of reference that they had for what a Christian is, what would they conclude that a Christian is? Think about it. What would they say was important to you. What priorities do you have? What characteristics would they see on display in your life? If someone watched you this past week, what would they say a Christian is? Today we see that they knew the destination of the journey was to make disciples. And we also saw that they traveled together, orienting their life around the truth of God’s Word.

When I was 18 years old, I was a freshman at Purdue. And I had a man come to me and began to disciple me. He came to me and he called things out in me and he called me up toward disciple making in ways that I didn’t even know I could do. I didn’t know it was possible. No one ever told me.

He also called me FAT. And that’s the only time in my life that I’ve ever been called FAT, meaning: faithful, available, and teachable.

He taught me basic things about my life and he encouraged me to teach others. And you know what? I did it. Not perfectly. Oh, no. I had a lot of questions. I had my yellow belt on. But I gave away what had been given to me. And you know what? I still do that today. I purposely enter into relationships to help others follow and obey Jesus. At all of our campuses I want to invite those of you who have been following Jesus for three years or more to stand up. So, if you’ve been following Jesus for more than three years, right where you’re at just go ahead and stand—at all of our campuses. And if you haven’t or you’re not following Jesus just yet, don’t worry. It’s okay. Stay seated. We want that.



If you've been following Jesus for more than three years stand up. I want to talk to you for a moment. There is a pretty good chance that most of you don't consider yourself a black belt. And that's okay. You know who else didn't consider himself a black belt? Every single one of Jesus' disciples, every pastor I know, every believer I know and yours truly.

But I also know something else about you. You're also not a white belt anymore. You've been here too long. God's done too much in your life to not give it away. Yellow belts, teach the white belts what you have learned. What has God said to you? What has He taught you in your time here? What have others poured into your life. And who can you teach?

Well, look around. We have 400 new white belts who just joined the club in the last few months. And there are people all around all of our rooms who have yet to take that step at all. There are a lot of people who we can invest our lives into.

I want to invite all of you to stand if you are not standing. At all of our campuses go ahead and stand to your feet. For some of you maybe you would say your life is not worth replicating. You've been traveling alone spiritually. You're not searching the Scriptures for truth. You're accidentally or even purposely not obeying Jesus' Word. That's the beautiful thing about it being a new day today. That's the beautiful thing about God's grace. You can start fresh today.

Church, we have one life. One. And we're all going to give account for it one day. Do you think the Lord will say to you, "Well done. You've fulfilled the American dream. You accomplished great amounts of success and accumulated wonderful mounds of stuff. Now go into your rest."? Or will He say, "Well, done good and faithful servant. You followed Me. You obeyed My Word. You invested your life into the kingdom and into other people. Now go and enter your rest."

The answer to that is largely based on our choice. And a step you can take today. So take it. Jump in when you have the opportunity here in a month or so to join community and some of those groups. Get on a team today. Give away what you have been given. Find some others and share hope and the Good News with them. Yellow belts, teach white belts.

And there is one last group of you I haven't addressed yet. Those of you who have yet to put your faith in this risen Messiah we call Jesus. I just want you to know this today. He loves you. He really does. He died for you. He gave His life for you to set you free, pay the debt you couldn't pay and offer you the forgiveness that you couldn't earn. And He offers you a better way of living.



So, maybe you, today, are ready to take that step, to join the countless others who profess their faith in another King. A King named Jesus. And if that's you today, wherever you're watching or wherever you are listening I want to lead you to that place. So we're going to pray specifically for you.

So at all of our campuses, let's bow our heads, close our eyes and let's pray. If you're ready to make that decision to follow the risen Lord Jesus, I want to lead you in this prayer. So just pray this with me.

God, I am sorry. I'm sorry for sinning against You and not following Your way. I ask for Your forgiveness. And I want to turn my life around to follow You. I receive what You have done for me and I ask You, Lord, to be the center of my life. Lord, will You help me on this journey? In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Amen. Could we celebrate those who prayed that prayer today? If that's you, I want to encourage you to tell somebody. Don't be the wildebeest on your own. Don't go away in isolation. Talk to our response team. Talk to me. Some of our staff. Someone at Info Central before you leave today and let them know that you are ready to follow Jesus. There is a better way for all of us. Church, let's travel together making disciples. Amen? Amen.

