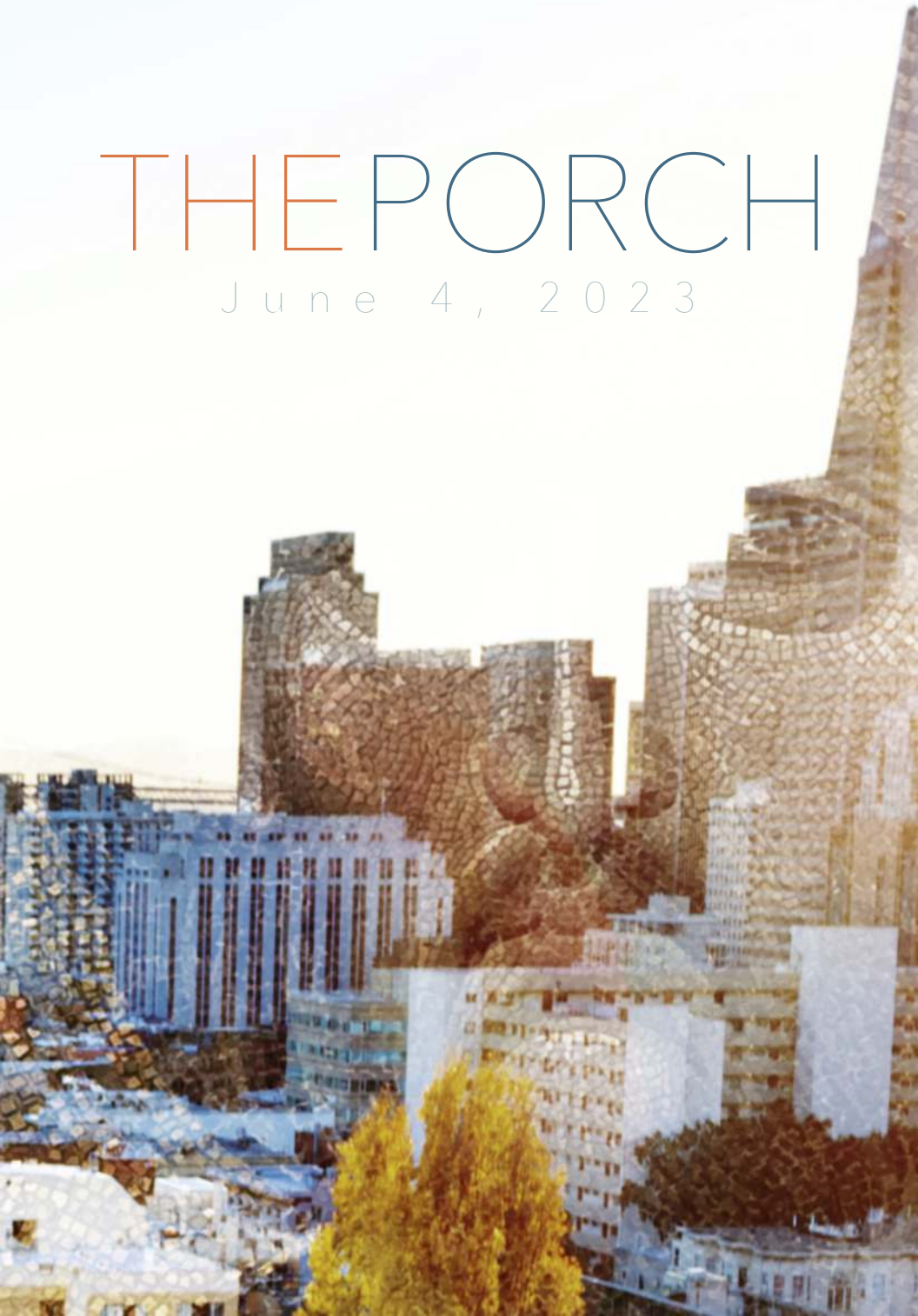


THE PORCH

June 4, 2023



About Our Liturgy

We are all creatures of habit. Habits and rhythms shape who we are. Our Sunday gatherings are designed to help us press the story of Jesus into our souls and change who we are by repeating that same story over and over again.

Every week we gather to remember and celebrate these same old gospel truths: that we are sinners but we have a great savior. That the death and resurrection of Jesus brought his kingdom here. That we have been adopted into the family of God. That he has called us to love each other and our city. That we were created for a perfect world, and that this world is not all there is.

So we invite you to participate with us as a group of imperfect people who tell the same story over and over again, the story of King Jesus.





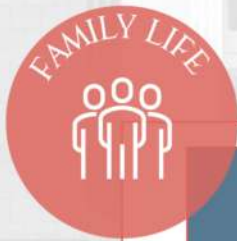
Call To Worship

Singing

* The American author David Foster Wallace wrote, "In the day-to-day trenches of adult life, there is actually no such thing as atheism. There is no such thing as not worshipping. Everybody worships. The only choice we get is what to worship." This is a powerful statement from a man who was not a follower of Jesus. He was 100% correct. We all have something at the center of our lives. Something that we believe will make us happy. Something that will fulfill us. Even those who follow Jesus often find that we are serving idols, something that ultimately won't fulfill us.

The gospel story tells us what will: Jesus Christ. Only he can fulfill us. Only he can redeem us. Only he can heal our deep spiritual wounds. Only he can give hope. Serving him as king is why we were created. This is why we open our gatherings with worship. Music touches our souls in a way that nothing else can. And so we use music as the people of God have done for thousands of years to remind ourselves that we serve an amazing King and that only he should be at the center of our lives.





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* One of the beautiful facets of the gospel is how it brings all kinds of people together (Galatians 3:28). We are God's people. We are called to live our lives together and to love one another. In this part of our gathering, we celebrate this truth. We pray for each other. We chat while getting coffee and tea. We talk about what's going on in the life of the family.

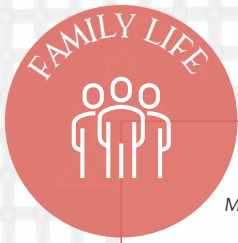


Chapter 6 & 7 on Wednesday, June 7



Ezekiel JOURNALS

NEW TEACHING SERIES STARTS FEBRUARY 5
GRAB YOUR JOURNAL ON THE BACK TABLE



Prayer

Monthly Schedule

Week 1: We read a prayer from church history.

Week 2: We take requests and pray for each other.

Week 3: Congregational Prayer.

Week 4: Praying the Psalms.

Week 5: We take requests and pray for each other.

Coffee

This quick time of greeting isn't a break in the worship but rather a continuation of our worship. Take five minutes to grab a cup of coffee and say hello to someone you haven't met yet.





New City Catechism

Question 25: Does Christ's death mean all our sins can be forgiven?

Answer: Yes, because Christ's death on the cross fully paid the penalty for our sin, God graciously imputes Christ's righteousness to us as if it were our own and will remember our sins no more.

Scripture Reading *II Corinthians 13:11,14 (NLT)*

Dear brothers and sisters, I close my letter with these last words: **Be joyful.** Grow to maturity. **Encourage each other.** Live in harmony and peace. **Then the God of love and peace will be with you.**

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

* 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, "All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." God's word is precious. This time is less about the words of the preacher and more about the words of God. So here at The Porch we usually go through an entire book of the Bible verse by verse. We want to soak up the truth. We want to see Jesus on every page. We want to know the gospel better than we did yesterday. When that happens, we will be more loving, more humble, more hopeful, more joyful, and more blown away by what we learn about our King.



Ezekiel 20-22 | Past & Present Rebellion, Consequences

Ezekiel 20:1–32 In the seventh year, in the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month, some of Israel's elders came to inquire of the Lord, and they sat down in front of me. 2 Then the word of the Lord came to me: 3 "Son of man, speak with the elders of Israel and tell them, 'This is what the Lord God says: Are you coming to inquire of me? As I live, I will not let you inquire of me. This is the declaration of the Lord God.'

4 "Will you pass judgment against them, will you pass judgment, son of man? Explain the detestable practices of their ancestors to them. 5 Say to them, 'This is what the Lord God says: On the day I chose Israel, I swore an oath to the descendants of Jacob's house and made myself known to them in the land of Egypt. I swore to them, saying, "I am the Lord your God." 6 On that day I swore to them that I would bring them out of the land of Egypt into a land I had searched out for them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the most beautiful of all lands. 7 I also said to them, "Throw away, each of you, the abhorrent things that you prize, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt. I am the Lord your God."

8 " 'But they rebelled against me and were unwilling to listen to me. None of them threw away the abhorrent things that they prized, and they did not abandon the idols of Egypt. So I considered pouring out my wrath on them, exhausting my anger against them within the land of Egypt. 9 But I acted for the sake of my name, so that it would not be profaned in the eyes of the nations they were living among, in whose sight I had made myself known to Israel by bringing them out of Egypt.



10 " "So I brought them out of the land of Egypt and led them into the wilderness. 11 Then I gave them my statutes and explained my ordinances to them—the person who does them will live by them. 12 I also gave them my Sabbaths to serve as a sign between me and them, so that they would know that I am the Lord who consecrates them.

13 " "But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness. They did not follow my statutes and they rejected my ordinances—the person who does them will live by them. They also completely profaned my Sabbaths. So I considered pouring out my wrath on them in the wilderness to put an end to them. 14 But I acted for the sake of my name, so that it would not be profaned in the eyes of the nations in whose sight I had brought them out. 15 However, I swore to them in the wilderness that I would not bring them into the land I had given them—the most beautiful of all lands, flowing with milk and honey—16 because they rejected my ordinances, profaned my Sabbaths, and did not follow my statutes. For their hearts went after their idols. 17 Yet I spared them from destruction and did not bring them to an end in the wilderness.

18 " "Then I said to their children in the wilderness, "Don't follow the statutes of your fathers, defile yourselves with their idols, or keep their ordinances. 19 I am the Lord your God. Follow my statutes, keep my ordinances, and practice them. 20 Keep my Sabbaths holy, and they will be a sign between me and you, so you may know that I am the Lord your God."

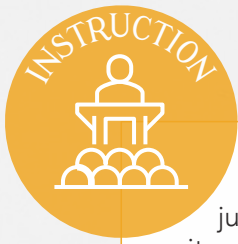
21 " "But the children rebelled against me. They did not follow my statutes or carefully keep my ordinances—the person who does them will live by them. They also profaned my Sabbaths. So I considered pouring out my wrath on them and exhausting my anger against them in the wilderness.



22 But I withheld my hand and acted for the sake of my name, so that it would not be profaned in the eyes of the nations in whose sight I brought them out. 23 However, I swore to them in the wilderness that I would disperse them among the nations and scatter them among the countries. 24 For they did not practice my ordinances but rejected my statutes and profaned my Sabbaths, and their eyes were fixed on their fathers' idols. 25 I also gave them statutes that were not good and ordinances they could not live by. 26 When they sacrificed every firstborn in the fire, I defiled them through their gifts in order to devastate them so they would know that I am the Lord.'

27 "Therefore, son of man, speak to the house of Israel, and tell them, 'This is what the Lord God says: In this way also your ancestors blasphemed me by committing treachery against me: 28 When I brought them into the land that I swore to give them and they saw any high hill or leafy tree, they offered their sacrifices and presented their offensive offerings there. They also sent up their pleasing aromas and poured out their drink offerings there. 29 So I asked them, "What is this high place you are going to?" And it is still called Bamah today.' 30 "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'This is what the Lord God says: Are you defiling yourselves the way your ancestors did, and prostituting yourselves with their abhorrent things? 31 When you offer your gifts, sacrificing your children in the fire, you still continue to defile yourselves with all your idols today. So should I let you inquire of me, house of Israel? As I live—this is the declaration of the Lord God—I will not let you inquire of me!

32 " 'When you say, "Let's be like the nations, like the clans of other countries, serving wood and stone," what you have in mind will never happen.



Ezekiel 22:1–31 The word of the Lord came to me: 2 “As for you, son of man, will you pass judgment? Will you pass judgment against the city of blood? Then explain all her detestable practices to her. 3 You are to say, ‘This is what the Lord God says: A city that sheds blood within her walls so that her time of judgment has come and who makes idols for herself so that she is defiled! 4 You are guilty of the blood you have shed, and you are defiled from the idols you have made. You have brought your judgment days near and have come to your years of punishment. Therefore, I have made you a disgrace to the nations and a mockery to all the lands. 5 Those who are near and those far away from you will mock you, you infamous one full of turmoil.

6 “ ‘Look, every prince of Israel within you has used his strength to shed blood. 7 Father and mother are treated with contempt, and the resident alien is exploited within you. The fatherless and widow are oppressed in you. 8 You despise my holy things and profane my Sabbaths. 9 There are men within you who slander in order to shed blood. People who live in you eat at the mountain shrines; they commit depraved acts within you. 10 Men within you have sexual intercourse with their father’s wife and violate women during their menstrual impurity. 11 One man within you commits a detestable act with his neighbor’s wife; another defiles his daughter-in-law with depravity; and yet another violates his sister, his father’s daughter. 12 People who live in you accept bribes in order to shed blood. You take interest and profit on a loan and brutally extort your neighbors. You have forgotten me. This is the declaration of the Lord God.

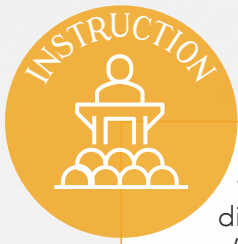
13 “ ‘Now look, I clap my hands together against the dishonest profit you have made and against the blood shed among you.



14 Will your courage endure or your hands be strong in the days when I deal with you? I, the Lord, have spoken, and I will act. 15 I will disperse you among the nations and scatter you among the countries; I will purge your uncleanness. 16 You will be profaned in the sight of the nations. Then you will know that I am the Lord.' "

17 The word of the Lord came to me: 18 "Son of man, the house of Israel has become merely dross to me. All of them are copper, tin, iron, and lead inside the furnace; they are just dross from silver. 19 Therefore, this is what the Lord God says: Because all of you have become dross, I am about to gather you into Jerusalem. 20 Just as one gathers silver, copper, iron, lead, and tin into the furnace to blow fire on them and melt them, so I will gather you in my anger and wrath, put you inside, and melt you. 21 Yes, I will gather you together and blow on you with the fire of my fury, and you will be melted within the city. 22 As silver is melted inside a furnace, so you will be melted inside the city. Then you will know that I, the Lord, have poured out my wrath on you."

23 The word of the Lord came to me: 24 "Son of man, say to her, 'You are a land that has not been cleansed, that has not received rain in the day of indignation.' 25 The conspiracy of her prophets within her is like a roaring lion tearing its prey: they devour people, seize wealth and valuables, and multiply the widows within her. 26 Her priests do violence to my instruction and profane my holy things. They make no distinction between the holy and the common, and they do not explain the difference between the clean and the unclean. They close their eyes to my Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. 27 "Her officials within her are like wolves tearing their prey, shedding blood, and destroying lives in order to make profit dishonestly.



28 Her prophets plaster for them with whitewash by seeing false visions and lying divinations, saying, 'This is what the Lord God says,' when the Lord has not spoken. 29 The people of the land have practiced extortion and committed robbery. They have oppressed the poor and needy and unlawfully exploited the resident alien.

30 I searched for a man among them who would repair the wall and stand in the gap before me on behalf of the land so that I might not destroy it, but I found no one. 31 So I have poured out my indignation on them and consumed them with the fire of my fury. I have brought their conduct down on their own heads." This is the declaration of the Lord God.

Ezekiel 20:33-49, 21:1-32 As I live—the declaration of the Lord God—I will reign over you with a strong hand, an outstretched arm, and outpoured wrath. 34 I will bring you from the peoples and gather you from the countries where you were scattered, with a strong hand, an outstretched arm, and outpoured wrath. 35 I will lead you into the wilderness of the peoples and enter into judgment with you there face to face. 36 Just as I entered into judgment with your ancestors in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you. This is the declaration of the Lord God. 37 I will make you pass under the rod and will bring you into the bond of the covenant. 38 I will purge you of those who rebel and transgress against me. I will bring them out of the land where they live as foreign residents, but they will not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

39 " 'As for you, house of Israel, this is what the Lord God says: Go and serve your idols, each of you. But afterward you will surely listen to me, and you will no longer defile my holy name with your gifts and idols.



40 For on my holy mountain, Israel's high mountain—the declaration of the Lord God—there the entire house of Israel, all of them, will serve me in the land. There I will accept them and will require your contributions and choicest gifts, all your holy offerings. 41 When I bring you from the peoples and gather you from the countries where you have been scattered, I will accept you as a pleasing aroma. And I will demonstrate my holiness through you in the sight of the nations. 42 When I lead you into the land of Israel, the land I swore to give your ancestors, you will know that I am the Lord. 43 There you will remember your ways and all your deeds by which you have defiled yourself, and you will loathe yourselves for all the evil things you have done. 44 You will know that I am the Lord, house of Israel, when I have dealt with you for the sake of my name rather than according to your evil ways and corrupt acts. This is the declaration of the Lord God.' "

45 The word of the Lord came to me: 46 "Son of man, face the south and preach against it. Prophecy against the forest land in the Negev, 47 and say to the forest there, 'Hear the word of the Lord! This is what the Lord God says: I am about to ignite a fire in you, and it will devour every green tree and every dry tree in you. The blazing flame will not be extinguished, and every face from the south to the north will be scorched by it. 48 Then all humanity will see that I, the Lord, have kindled it. It will not be extinguished.' "

49 Then I said, "Oh, Lord God, they are saying of me, 'Isn't he just composing parables?' "

1 The word of the Lord came to me again: 2 "Son of man, face Jerusalem and preach against the sanctuaries. Prophecy against the land of Israel, 3 and say to it, 'This is what the Lord says:



I am against you. I will draw my sword from its sheath and cut off from you both the righteous and the wicked. 4 Since I will cut off both the righteous and the wicked, my sword will therefore come out of its sheath against all humanity from the south to the north. 5 So all humanity will know that I, the Lord, have taken my sword from its sheath—it will not be sheathed again.'

6 "But you, son of man, groan! Groan bitterly with a broken heart right before their eyes. 7 And when they ask you, 'Why are you groaning?' then say, 'Because of the news that is coming. Every heart will melt, and every hand will become weak. Every spirit will be discouraged, and all knees will run with urine. Yes, it is coming and it will happen. This is the declaration of the Lord God.' "

8 The word of the Lord came to me: 9 "Son of man, prophesy, 'This is what the Lord says!' You are to proclaim, 'A sword! A sword is sharpened and also polished. 10 It is sharpened for slaughter, polished to flash like lightning! Should we rejoice? The scepter of my son, the sword despises every tree. 11 The sword is given to be polished, to be grasped in the hand. It is sharpened, and it is polished, to be put in the hand of the slayer.' 12 "Cry out and wail, son of man, for it is against my people. It is against all the princes of Israel! They are given over to the sword with my people. Therefore strike your thigh in grief. 13 Surely it will be a trial! And what if the sword despises even the scepter? The scepter will not continue." This is the declaration of the Lord God. 14 "So you, son of man, prophesy and clap your hands together: Let the sword strike two times, even three. It is a sword for massacre, a sword for great massacre— it surrounds them! 15 I have appointed a sword for slaughter at all their gates, so that their hearts may melt and many may stumble. Yes!



It is ready to flash like lightning; it is drawn for slaughter. 16 Slash to the right; turn to the left— wherever your blade is directed. 17 I also will clap my hands together, and I will satisfy my wrath. I, the Lord, have spoken.”

18 The word of the Lord came to me: 19 “Now you, son of man, mark out two roads that the sword of Babylon’s king can take. Both of them should originate from the same land. And make a signpost at the fork in the road to each city. 20 Mark out a road that the sword can take to Rabbah of the Ammonites and to Judah into fortified Jerusalem. 21 For the king of Babylon stands at the split in the road, at the fork of the two roads, to practice divination: he shakes the arrows, consults the idols, and observes the liver. 22 The answer marked Jerusalem appears in his right hand, indicating that he should set up battering rams, give the order to slaughter, raise a battle cry, set battering rams against the gates, build a ramp, and construct a siege wall. 23 It will seem like false divination to those who have sworn an oath to the Babylonians, but it will draw attention to their guilt so that they will be captured.

24 “Therefore, this is what the Lord God says: Because you have drawn attention to your guilt, exposing your transgressions, so that your sins are revealed in all your actions—since you have done this, you will be captured by them.

25 And you, profane and wicked prince of Israel, the day has come for your punishment. 26 “This is what the Lord God says: Remove the turban, and take off the crown. Things will not remain as they are; exalt the lowly and bring down the exalted. 27 A ruin, a ruin, I will make it a ruin! Yet this will not happen until he comes; I have given the judgment to him.



28 "Now you, son of man, prophesy, and say, 'This is what the Lord God says concerning the Ammonites and their contempt.' You are to proclaim, 'A sword! A sword is drawn for slaughter, polished to consume, to flash like lightning. 29 While they offer false visions and lying divinations about you, the time has come to put you to the necks of the profane wicked ones; the day has come for final punishment. 30 " 'Return it to its sheath! " 'I will judge you in the place where you were created, in the land of your origin. 31 I will pour out my indignation on you; I will blow the fire of my fury on you. I will hand you over to brutal men, skilled at destruction. 32 You will be fuel for the fire. Your blood will be spilled within the land. You will not be remembered, for I, the Lord, have spoken.' "

Charles Spurgeon "As the salt flavors every drop in the Atlantic, so does sin affect every atom of our nature. It is so sadly there, so abundantly there, that if you cannot detect it, you are deceived."

Charles Spurgeon "The power that is to fight and overcome sin is never described in the Word of God as the natural goodness of human nature."

New City Catechism Question 19

Q: Is there any way to escape punishment and be brought back into God's favor?

A: Yes, to satisfy his justice, God himself, out of mere mercy, reconciles us to himself and delivers us from sin and from the punishment for sin, by a Redeemer.

Iain Murray "God never forgives sin without at the same time changing the nature of the sinner."





Singing

* In the sermon we listened to the gospel preached. Here, we respond with worship. We sing the praises of the God who has saved us and given us hope.

Confession & Lament Communion Singing

*The gospel is not the story of what we do to earn God's love. The gospel is the story of what God has done to bring us back to life. The problem is that we are forgetful and we all constantly slip into moralism where we think that we need to live a certain way to earn God's love. This is the time in our gathering where we intentionally confess our sin and take communion to remind us of the grace of God. We remember that we are not redeemed by doing anything. We are redeemed by the death of Jesus in our place.



Benediction

Col 3:15-17

¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

*We are not just followers of King Jesus for a few hours on Sunday morning. We are ambassadors of his kingdom everywhere we go. With our families. At work. With our friends and neighbors. So every week, we finish our gatherings by remembering that we represent him everywhere we go and that we are called to radically love people so that they see him in our lives.





THE PORCH

FOLLOWERS OF JESUS

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