

a 52 week Bible study.



written by skaters. for skaters.



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every park.
everywhere.**

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recognize the mission field that exists right in their backyard.**

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why were we created?

BY GEOFF REIMER

 @g_rhymes



“All things were created through Him and for Him.”

COLOSSIANS 1:16

lesson **1**

I was street skating in China and we came upon a spot that had perfect quarter pipe shaped structures. They were so perfect that we started asking the locals whether they were intentionally made to skate or if it was just a coincidence. Like, how could something so perfect for skating have just been made accidentally? It seemed too good to be true. That kind of stuff just doesn't happen.

For many of us here on earth, just like I was questioning why that skate spot had been made, we will at some point ask the same question but about ourselves. “Why am I here and what is my purpose?”

The purpose or meaning of life is often perceived as a great mystery, pondered by people across the globe for thousands of years. Our current culture believes we will find meaning within ourselves, by pursuing our own self interests. Things like money, fame, and possessions are seen as the ultimate goal. The message we find in the Bible, however, is completely counter-cultural to this idea. Scripture tells us in Matthew 16:25 that, “If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for Christ's sake, you will save it.” Sounds about opposite from what the world is telling us, right? This scripture is telling us that the key to the good life is realizing that it's not actually about us but all about something much bigger!

Rick Warren writes in his book *The Purpose Driven Life*, “You were made by God and for God and until you understand that, life will never make sense.” Because you didn't create yourself you won't

understand your purpose, only our Creator has that answer. God invites us to draw near to Him to find out what our purpose is. Like this passage in Colossians says, we were created through God and for Him. As we read the Bible we discover God's plan for our life and how to actually live life to the fullest. God has created each and every one of us for Himself and for His glory. When asked by one of the religious leaders at the time, "What is the greatest command?" Jesus responded with, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" Luke 10:27. So I supposed to answer the question, "Why were we created?" the best answer I can think of would be this: to know God, to love Him, and to make Him known.

Back to that China story that I started with...crazy enough, it turned out that those quarter pipe shaped structures of art that I rolled up on while street skating, actually were in fact made to skate. It wasn't just a random accident, but the creator of that spot actually did have a purpose and plan in mind when he created that space. In the same way, you and I were also created for a reason and a purpose. My hope is that you don't miss it.

discussion questions

Do you feel like your life has purpose and meaning? If so, how has knowing that affected the way you live? Do you feel like it's difficult to remind yourself that true joy comes from selflessness, not selfishness?



why search for truth?

BY ZACH CREIGHTON
 @creightthegreat



“Work hard so you can present yourself to God and receive His approval. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth.”

2 TIMOTHY 2:15

lesson **2**

“Clips or it didn’t happen.” I’d be surprised if you haven’t heard that saying? Anyone can be quick to say that they kickflipped a 28 stair, bombed a massive hill without powersliding, dropped in switch on the over-vert section blindfolded with no clothes on, or wrestled that security guard to the ground who was bigger than two of your homies sandwiched together. The reality is, if nobody got a clip of it, or if no one was there to witness it or testify that it truly happened, than most likely it will probably be thought of as just a tall tale.

One thing this tells us is that skateboarders are big on authenticity—the real, genuine, and raw truth of what actually happened. Taking this thought one step further beyond just landing a trick or getting a clip is the thought of us being authentic as individuals. Is someone actually who they say they are, and does what they do actually back up what they say? You know that gut feeling you get when something doesn’t feel right, seems too good to be true, or sounds like just a downright lie? I’d venture to say that we all have a desire to know what’s true and that we’re all naturally drawn to the Truth. The reason why I give Truth a capital “T” is because I believe that Truth is actually a THING rather than just a nice character attribute. To know the Truth isn’t just a quest to gain more head-knowledge, but as Christians it’s actually the process of the pursuit of Jesus. Jesus tells His disciples in John 14:6 that “He is the way, the TRUTH, and the life.” To know Truth and to search for Truth is to pursue a relationship with God and the desire to know Him more.

The incredible thing about God is how He is unchanging! Hebrews 13:8 says "He is the same yesterday, tomorrow and tomorrow". Someone with that type of consistency is someone who I can trust. We further know we can rely on God because Psalm 145:13 tells us "God is trustworthy in all He promises and faithful in all He does." If we are going to search for truth, God is the most perfect place to begin and end that search.

So now we know WHO to search for when looking for truth, but WHY should we want to find that truth? Have you ever posted a sick clip on Instagram, expecting to hear positive facts on how clean or difficult it was but instead you get some comments of people criticizing you or mocking your style? It's discouraging when we'd like the facts (the truth) but instead we get defeated by opinions. God is in the department of speaking truth over you, not opinions!

In 2 Timothy 2:15 we learn a couple things about Truth. First, when Truth is present, there's no need to be ashamed. The second thing is we're accountable to God only. It's His approval that should matter to us, not others. If we know the Truth and truly have a relationship with Christ, the amazing and freeing thing about that is if other people lie or say something untruthful about you, it doesn't have the chance to stick; you're connected to the Truth, and He knows you by name.

Finally, the most important thing to do is to focus on rightly handling the word of Truth. Stay close to God, keep pressing into the words He says in scripture, and keep connected with the family of God. These are the things He's provided to us to keep us on the right track and to keep us healthy and thriving. If truth exists—if you knew someone got the clip and it was out there—would you keep looking for it?

discussion questions

Have you ever had someone tell you they got a clip of a trick but you know they really didn't? Is truth important to you? Do you feel like you have pursued truth in your life? What is a lie that you might believe about yourself but God says something different?



the meaning of life.



BY INGMAR THOMAS

 @iggyloco

**“No one has ever seen God.
But if we love each other, God lives in us,
and His love is brought to full expression in us.”**

1 JOHN 4:12

lesson **3**

We all have the desire to live out our calling, but figuring out what that calling is seems to be the question most people ask in life. What is it that I want to do with my life? What was I created to do? What brings me the most fulfillment? Everyone is searching for something that makes their life feel like it's worth living. For most it ends up being the pursuit of money, fame, or recognition. But I feel like even in those pursuits there is something deeper that most are seeking. Ecclesiastes 3:11 says that "God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end."

In skateboarding, skaters are almost always given value or worth, or for sure popularity through their ability to skate. Think about it...the skaters with the largest following, the most board sales, shoe endorsements, or biggest pay checks, generally are rooted in their ability to skate; how well they compete in contests, how often they put out a video part, if they've won trick of the year or been crowned SOTY. We're pulled into this trap as well with the desire to continue to push ourselves to progress and learn new tricks, hit bigger sets or longer hand rails. The desire to push ourselves and pursue excellence is actually a Biblical challenge but have you ever stopped to ask yourself, is there more to life than just skateboarding? My whole life, I have tried to define myself through my performance and to gain recognition through skateboarding. To be honest, I am still doing it a lot of the time.

But here's the thing: the Bible talks about one thing that is not temporary, one thing that is worth living for, worth pursuing, and worth putting above everything else. This is love. 1 John 4:10 tells us that "This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins." In Romans 5:8 Paul writes, "But God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners." The thought that God's love for us was completely and entirely unconditional and not based on our performance, contradicts almost everything that we know as people. It would be like a kid that just started skating, not even knowing how to do a single trick yet, getting sponsored by a bunch of companies, getting a shoe deal, and receiving a salary for just pushing around!

Our response to this love that we've been shown is to love God and to love others. We get this great blessing of sharing with others the same love that we've experienced and like this passage in 1 John shares, in doing so we get to have God's love live in us and to be visible to those around us. This is the simple Gospel. He loved us first and because of this love, we get the opportunity to love others. We love skateboarding, learning new tricks, and getting stoked for your friends when they land something new. And just like from our love of skateboarding we get to share it with others, the same is true with our love of God.

discussion questions

Do you feel like your life has meaning? Are you living for what's next? Always pursuing something else? What would it look like to stop and think about what your end goal is? What are you truly hoping to achieve or accomplish? Do you really think it will satisfy you when you get it?



what is the bible?

BY RYLEY HEPPNER



**“Your word is a lamp to guide my feet
and a light for my path.”**

PSALM 119:105

lesson **4**

My local park growing up never had lights. The city thought that the skaters would cause more trouble at night than during the day, so they refused to put lights up at our park. Unbeknownst to them, there were a few spots where you could drive your car right onto the park itself and growing up I would always go to the park after dark, drive my car literally onto the skatepark, and point my headlights at this perfect little ledge. Surprisingly, the cops never seemed to care and that allowed endless sessions under the moonlight with my high beams on the ol' Chevy.

I love night sessions; there is something amazing and unexplainable about skating at night. But when skating in the dark, having light is key. Just imagine rolling up to a ten stair when you can't even see where the stairs start or where they end. You would get destroyed! Even pro skaters make sure they have floodlights and a generator before they skate a big rail at night, because they understand the destruction that they are in for if they can't see where they are going.

Life isn't so different than skateboarding in the dark. It can feel pretty chaotic sometimes, like we don't know where we are going or how to get there. Almost like we're skating in the dark or rolling around with our eyes closed. Just when we feel like we have it all together, we hit a pebble and get tossed flat on our face. The Bible has multiple purposes, all of which are incredible, but one of those purposes is to be for the Christian what lights are for a skater trying to skate in the dark. In Psalm 119:105 the author writes, “Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.”

This picture is of a man walking down a trail in the dark, and it is so dark that he can't see his feet or the path, but God's Word is like a lantern that lights up the whole trail and leads him home. Without the word of God, we would be lost in how to navigate our lives. This is why we as Christians read, study, and obey God's Word, because it leads us to an abundant life.

God, who created life, knows how we should live and rather than keep it a secret from us, has laid it out for us in His word. He has lit up the path of life for us! God never intended for you to go through life blind and stumbling. His desire isn't for us to go through life in the dark or to skate without lights. God created you to have life and have it to the fullest. The Bible is the lamp that leads you there. If you're reading this today but have never really given the Bible a chance, my hope is that you'll give it a shot. I want to challenge you to pick up the word of God and just like flipping on the light switch, my hope and prayer is that it will illuminate the path of your life. It is much easier when you have light to guide your way both in skating and in life.

discussion questions

Have you ever tried to skate in the dark? What happened? Do you feel like sometimes you're living in the dark? Do you feel like the Bible is a light for you, helping to guide you through our dark world? What are some things that try to suppress the light in your life? How can you keep the light on?



can the Bible be trusted?



BY TJ HARRIS

 @teejharris

**“Trust in the Lord with all your heart;
do not depend on your own understanding.
Seek His will in all you do,
and He will show you which path to take.”**

PROVERBS 3:5-6

lesson **5**

For those of us that have been skating for a long time, we definitely have our “go-to trick.” It’s one of the first tricks we do when we get to the skatepark. It’s one of the first tricks we do when we play someone in a game of S.K.A.T.E. Or maybe it’s the trick we throw down when we want to show off a little bit. If you haven’t been skating long enough to have dialed in a go-to trick, this thought really carries over into any sport or activity. In basketball, maybe you have your go-to spot where you feel like you make the most shots, or maybe the spot in the field where you always try to kick a goal in soccer. Do you ever wonder why that spot or that trick is your go-to? What makes it so trustworthy to you? The answer is simple. It is because you have seen that trick work for you time and time again, usually without fail. My personal go-to trick is a nollie 360 flip. I know exactly where to put both feet and I can trust that almost every time it’s going to do exactly the same rotation and flick that I need to land it. The track record of my nollie 360 flip shows such consistency, it’s impossible for me not to trust that I will land it.

But the question is, can the Bible be trusted? I think for most people, they have never given the Bible a chance so there is a fear that exists with the uncertainty or the lack of confidence that they can put all of their faith in it. But the answer to that question is just like the examples above but God's

track record is amazing! Unlike my nollie 360 flips or your go to spot you try to shoot from, God is 10/10 every time! Even though I feel confident that I can land almost every nollie tre, there is no chance I could land 100 in a row. I would definitely fall on at least one of those.

This passage in Proverbs tells us to "Trust in the Lord with all our heart; and not to depend on our own understanding. But rather, seek His will in all that we do, and He will show us which path to take." The scriptures repeat a similar phrase time and time again: "Trust in the Lord." The reason we see this so often in the Bible is that the Lord truly can be trusted! 2 Timothy 3:16-17 tells us that, "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work."

My challenge to you is this: trust in the Lord God with all of your heart, read His Word (the Bible) daily, acknowledge Him in all ways, and watch His track record prove itself! It might take time, just like learning nollie 360 flips, but as you build that trust I am confident that it will just continue to grow stronger and stronger and you'll watch the Lord do amazing things in your life. And if you can grow to trust a skate trick, how much more can you trust the Living God?

discussion questions

Do you fully trust the Bible? If not, how come? How can you work on growing your trust in God and His word? What are some ways you can help others trust in God and the Bible?



is Scripture still relevant?

BY KAILEIGH WELLS

 @kaimyshelves



**“In the beginning the Word already existed.
The Word was with God,
and the Word was God.”**

JOHN 1:1

lesson **6**

In 1982, Rodney Mullen debut a trick in a skateboard contest that would transform the world of skateboarding forever. That trick was the flat ground ollie. The technique that Mullen found in 1982 actually won him the contest that day and now has made a massive difference in the history of skateboarding. The ollie is now known as the entry level, basic, foundation of skateboarding 101. One might say that this is the oldest trick in the book but it's definitely still relevant. Actually, it's so relevant that most tricks that are done today involve an ollie. In the same way that an ollie is old but relevant, so is the Bible.

While there was literally nothing, before the creation of the world, the heavens, stars, or our universe, God existed. This was the beginning of the world that we're apart of and where our story began. John 1:1 reminds us just how important the beginning is and gives a description, “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.”

This "Word" that is being talked about in this passage is actually referring to Jesus Himself. Jesus was God in the beginning before the creation of the earth. The Bible is the narrative of God redeeming the human race through His Son Jesus. It's so cool to know that God had a plan of redemption for humanity, even before creating humans.

2 Timothy 3:16 says that the Bible is "God breathed." This is what sets the Bible apart from all other books. It holds authority because it was written by God himself. Now to answer the question, "is scripture still relevant?" In order to answer this question, we can look at Jesus himself since He is God. Hebrews 13:8 says, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." If Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever, then His words will never become irrelevant! What an encouraging thing it is to know that the words that God gave us thousands of years ago are still relevant and useful for us today.

Hebrews 4:12 says, "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart." When I read that the word of God is "living and active," I can't help but notice how the Bible has been influential in my life. The word of God actually brings life and it is active in molding my life to look more like Jesus. So I will encourage you to drop in one more time and allow the authority of the Bible to challenge you today. You got this!

discussion questions

Have you given the Bible a fair chance? What are some ways you can make reading the Bible more practical in your own life?



how do we study the Bible?

BY FRENCHIE GAMERO

 @rez3wrecked



“But don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.”

JAMES 1:22

lesson **7**

Maybe you've picked up a new skate magazine and flipped through it to an ad or picture of a trick you've never done before. I always was a big fan of the sequences in magazines. I would look at how they rolled up, their foot placement, what they were doing during the trick, and how they rolled away. You can study a picture over and over but if you are like me, pictures alone probably haven't helped you actually learn any new tricks.

For me, if I'm trying to learn something new, it's always been most effective and faster if I have someone that can help teach me. Studying the Bible is no different. One of the most important things we do as Christians is to read, study, and learn from the Bible. Hebrews 4:12 says, "the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires."

The Bible is truly unlike any other book. It's actually a living and active book that can speak to us each in completely unique ways. There are tons of resources and tools that are out there to help you learn how to study the Bible but below are a few tips and suggestions that I have found super helpful when trying to learn more about what the Bible says and how to understand it.

1. The first is pretty simple, find someone who has been reading the Bible longer than you have that you can go to with questions, concerns, thoughts, or just to learn more. Just like getting advice from someone that is a better skater than you, this is a great place to start.

2. Second, read it consistently. Reading the Bible once a month and expecting to learn a lot from it would be like trying to learn a new trick at the park for like 5 minutes and then not trying it again for another 30 days. Start small, maybe just a few verses and build from there.

3. Don't be afraid to ask questions as you read. These questions have been super helpful for me as I read the word...What does it say about God? Jesus? The Holy Spirit? His character? What does it say about humanity? About me? Is there a sin to avoid? Is there a promise to hold onto? Is there an example to follow? Is there a command to obey? Lastly, can I summarize what I just read in my own words? If not, maybe I should read it again until I fully understand what I just read. The hope is that as you're studying the word and God is teaching you and speaking to you, that He'll begin to put others on your heart that you can share with what you've been learning as well.

4. Put what you read into practice. As James 1:22 says, "Don't just listen to God's word. But actually do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves." Just like learning a new trick, keep trying it. If you're able to find a friend that is wanting to learn the same trick with you, most likely you'll learn faster. The same is true with studying the Bible. Read together. Discuss it together. And challenge each other to live it out.

These are just some suggestions and tips on where to start but I'm confident that if you commit to this, you will learn one of the most valuable lessons any Christian can learn: that God speaks directly to His people through the Bible! Just like a pro could probably teach you any trick, the Holy Spirit can lead you into all understanding while reading the Word!

discussion questions

Have you tried studying the Bible? If not, how come? Do you have someone in your life that you can go to and ask for questions and advice with the Bible? Are you at the point where you can begin helping others study the Bible?



who is God?

JOSH NEREZ

 @jshnrz



**“Have you not known? Have you not heard?
The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of
the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow
weary; His understanding is unsearchable.”**

ISAIAH 40:28

lesson **8**

There are so many incredible skateboarders out there who constantly amaze me along with the rest of the general skate community. They put out video clips of themselves doing things that most of us would imagine to be impossible. When we think of these skaters, we think of how great they are, but are any of them perfect? Of course not. Every pro skater has their fair share of falls and bails. Even though we know these pro skaters take hard falls, we celebrate them when they succeed, and we put a lot of faith in their ability.

It's a wild thought to try to imagine anything or anyone being literally perfect, but that is exactly what God is; He is perfect in every way. Perfection is something that we as humans can not even begin to understand. Isaiah 55:8 says, "My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts," says the Lord. "And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine." We are so imperfect that we simply can't even comprehend the perfection of God, why He would do the things He does or rather not do the things we think He should. But this infinite God has allowed us (with our finite minds) to get small glimpses into His character and who He really is. Isaiah 40:28 does a great job of answering this question, "who is God?" Throughout scripture and with this verse specifically, God reveals who He is. This passage tells us that He is EVERLASTING. To be everlasting literally means to last forever or to be eternal.

This describes God as a being who is before and after, not confined to a timeframe. He always has been and always will be. And He is also everywhere. Second, it tells us He is the CREATOR of the ends of the earth. Everything that we can see has been created by Him. God is all powerful and able to do anything. Lastly, in this passage we see that God is set apart and different from us as humans. He is all knowing. And to be honest, I find comfort in knowing that the God that I worship and serve is a God that is beyond my understanding. If I could understand everything about God, then He wouldn't be God or even a god worth worshipping.

God is all powerful, all knowing, and everywhere and what an amazing blessing to know that we can rest in this and trust that He knows what is best for us. Deuteronomy 7:9 says, "Understand, therefore, that the Lord your God is indeed God. He is the faithful God who keeps His covenant for a thousand generations and lavishes His unfailing love on those who love Him and obey His commands." The God of the universe loves you. He is for you. He is perfect and our proper response in this is nothing but to love Him in return and obey His commands. Far greater than anyone or anything we will ever find on earth is a God that is worthy of all of our love, honor, and praise.

discussion questions

Is it hard for you to answer the question "who is God"? Do you feel like you have ever really taken the time to sit and think about that question?



the character of God.

BY TYLER DAM

 @tydam_



**"The Lord is compassionate and merciful,
slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love."**

PSALM 103:8

lesson **9**

Do you remember the first time you rolled up to a real skate park? I certainly do. It was finally time to move past the waxed curbs and tabletops screwed together from scraps in my dad's garage. I was filled with a mixture of anticipation, excitement, and nervousness. I stood on the edge of the park, watching the older skaters push around so quickly. I recall thinking to myself, "Will I be accepted by these guys? Or am I literally going to slam and be seen as a poser for life? What if I get in the way?" This may seem pretty lame, but hey, I was eleven years old, so cut me some slack. Ironically, as I've gotten older though, I realize this same scenario sums up a very common aspect of humanity and a thought pattern I often struggle with in my own life: the fear of not being accepted.

For most people they will avoid ever approaching God or pursuing Him because they feel like they're inadequate. They'll stand on the sidelines of "Christianity" afraid to step in because they're worried they're not good enough to do so or that they'll be made fun of because of their failures or past mistakes. Here's the true news about the character of God though, God created you in your mother's womb. He knew you before you were even born. He knows the number of hairs on your head and how many days you will live. He created you with a plan and a purpose. Despite our sins, our mistakes, our fear of fitting in, God continues to pursue us with a desire that each of us come to know Him. He is calling us off the edge of the park, to step in and push alongside Him.

Psalm 46:1 says, "God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble." Later in Psalm 103:8, it says "The Lord is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love." Hebrews 13:8 tells us "He is the same yesterday and today and forever."

There is nothing we can do to make God love us more and there is nothing we can do to make Him love us less. His love for each and every one of us is perfect and complete. His character is full of acceptance and filled with a desire that all of us would come to the full understanding that He is God. I have to be clear though, God doesn't approve of our sins, in fact scripture is clear that God hates sin, yet loves the sinner. This is the very reason why He sent Jesus, His own son to earth, to die for our sins and take on the punishment that we all deserved. When we come to a full and complete understanding of who He is, and put our faith in Him, we become His. We have no fear in stepping of the sidelines at that point because we know we are fully accepted and welcomed with open arms.

? discussion questions

Have you ever thought about the character of God and who He really is? How do you imagine God reacting when you sin? Do you feel like the image you have of God aligns with what the Bible says?



what is the Trinity?

BY JONATHAN WILSON

 @jonnydelgado



**“But when the Father sends the Advocate
as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit,
He will teach you everything
and will remind you of everything
I have told you.”**

JOHN 14:26

lesson **10**

The word trinity literally means “three in one.” You won’t find that word anywhere in the Bible but the concept and the idea behind it is all throughout scripture. This term has been used by Christians for hundreds of years to help explain and understand the nature of God.

When I first heard the phrase “three in one,” I immediately thought of a tre flip. While this is just kind of a silly analogy, it has helped me to wrap my mind around the idea of God being “three in one”. When you think about a tre flip, there are really three tricks that all come together to create one trick. First you have the ollie. I don’t think I’ve ever seen someone land a tre without getting their board off the ground, even a little bit. This is the foundation. Next you have the 360 shuv, and then last a kickflip. When you put them all together you have a tre. If you remove the kickflip than you no longer have a tre but rather just a 360 shuv and the same goes for the rest. Imagine someone doing a kickflip and then claiming it was a 360 flip. Did they really do a tre flip? Of course not. They did a kickflip. Maybe their understanding of a tre was wrong or they were taught by someone who didn’t know anything about skateboarding, but nonetheless, they didn’t do a tre flip.

The Bible speaks of the Father as God (Philippians 1:2), Jesus as God (Titus 2:13), and the Holy Spirit as God (Acts 5:3-4). The Bible is clear that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct Persons even though they are all God. For example, since the Father sent the Son into the world (John 3:16), He cannot be the same person as the Son. Likewise, after the Son returned to the Father (John 16:10), the Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit into the world (John 14:26; Acts 2:33), therefore, the Holy Spirit must be distinct from the Father and the Son.

In the same way that if you take away one part of the tre flip it is no longer a tre flip, if you deny one Person of the trinity then as a result you deny the full nature of God. This passage in John 14:26: tells us that "when the Father sends the Advocate as His representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—He will teach us everything and will remind us of everything He has told us." In this verse Jesus is speaking to His disciples and telling them about the Holy Spirit who would help teach them and guide them. Jesus says that God the "Father" will send God the "Holy Spirit" in the name of "Jesus" to be our helper. This verse paints a clear - yet still a bit hard to understand picture of 3 different Persons yet coequally one God. In the same way that a tre flip is one trick, it has three separate parts (Ollie, 360 shuv, and a kickflip) so the Trinity is one God in three Persons.

discussion questions

Do you find it hard to wrap your mind around one God but in three persons? Do you feel like it's necessary to fully understand this? What does it look like for you to practically acknowledge all three Persons of the trinity in your everyday life?



comparing God to us.

BY JALEN OLIVER
 @jalenoliver11



“And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart. And I will put my Spirit in you so that you will follow my decrees and be careful to obey my regulations.”

EZEKIEL 36:26-27

lesson **11**

One of my favorite things about skateboarding is how different each skater is from one another. We all have been able to craft our own ways of doing the same thing. Each skateboarder has their own look, their own style, their own interpretation of skateboarding, but there is one thing we all have in common: we love to skateboard. But when you compare the best skater in the world with someone who just bought their first Walmart board, the difference is exponential. Now times that by a million!

In comparison to us, God is far greater than we are. He is the one person who is perfect and holy. We as humans were made in the image of God, but this does not put us on the same level as God. He desires to have a very personal relationship with each of His followers. He is very different from us, but He desires for us to love and follow Him. When we receive Christ, we are able to get a better glimpse of His holiness and perfection. Ezekiel 36: 26-27 says, "And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart. And I will put my Spirit in you so that you will follow my decrees and be careful to

obey my regulations.” While God is perfect and his ways are higher than our ways, He desires for us to have His heart. God knows that His followers are not perfect, but He allows us to be able to ask for forgiveness. And even then, He still invites us to be holy as He is holy. God sent Jesus to earth so that we could get a better glimpse of Him and understand His holiness and perfection as a man here on earth. One big takeaway from Jesus coming to earth was that God wants us to have a close relationship with Him. God knows you. He knows your struggles; He understands them and He wants you to speak to Him frequently just like you would with a friend. For me, that is very comforting knowing that the one, true righteous and perfect being desires to know me.

God also loves and desires a relationship with non-believers. The Bible says in 1 John 4:10, “This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.” Humans instinctively desire relationships, and so does God. Although we are not perfect and never will be, God loves us. He desires for us to have a heart like His, and to have a close, personal relationship with Him. There are many ways to look at God in comparison to us, but the main thing to understand is that we are very different; He is perfect and we are very imperfect. We must see that God is Holy and worthy of all praise, and we are yet sinners who have been given grace by a Holy God. He loves us and He wants us to love Him in return and enter into His kingdom. I encourage everyone who reads this to look into their relationship with God and find things to improve on, such as praying, reading your bible, and to have full faith that God is always with us.

discussion questions

Have you ever thought about how perfect God is in comparison to your sinful nature?
How can we strive to be holy as God is holy?



what is sin?

BY JOE O'NEAL

 @josephkoneal



“All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God’s paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all.”

ISAIAH 53:6

lesson **12**

The theological definition many scholars give to sin is that it is “any transgression of the law of God,” but that’s a little difficult to understand so let’s look at it in a different way. Think back to when you were learning to ollie for the first time. You watched your friends or a trick tip video and practiced over and over. Now imagine, instead of popping the tail, sliding your front foot up the board, and jumping up in the air, you decided to practice by slamming your back foot down in the middle of your board and pushing down with your front foot. What is going to happen? Are you going to ollie? Something’s going to happen, maybe, but it isn’t going to look like an ollie. Why? You tried to do it your own way but failed because you didn’t follow the basic laws of physics; the basic movements of the ollie. If you keep choosing to do it your own way you will actually find that you won’t be able to use the skateboard in the way that it was intended; you might even end up with a broken board.

In a similar, but much more serious way, all of us often choose to live life on our own terms and in our own ways. In fact, the definition the prophet Isaiah gives to sin in the Bible is “going our own way” or “following our own path.” Isaiah 53:6 says, “All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God’s paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all.”

Sin is choosing ourselves and our ways over God’s perfect, loving, and right ways. It’s saying, “I think that I know better than You” to the God who created us, instead of saying, “I need You, trust You,

and love You. Your ways are better." Sin separates us from God, and separation from God means death. Romans 7:11 describes that the result of sin in a man is death.

The Bible also says that all of us live this way; all of us fall short of the perfect standard of God. That's why we needed God to place our sins on His own perfect Son, Jesus; because we could never bear the punishment that our sins deserve. Luckily for us, Jesus took the punishment of sin for us on the cross. Not only that, but when we put our trust in Jesus, God credits us with His perfect life and now sees us as forgiven and perfectly good. Like we stepped on the board and snapped a perfect, effortless ollie. That's incredible news.

discussion questions

Do you think that it is hard to forgive yourself for sinning? How does it make you feel when you know you have sinned?



how did sin originate?

BY JOSH ROBERTS

 @joshroberts_1



**"These desires give birth to sinful actions.
And when sin is allowed to grow,
it gives birth to death."**

JAMES 1:15

lesson **13**

Recently, I was filming my friend who was trying to noseslide a 10 stair hubba. Things seemed to be progressing fine, and it felt like he would get the clip within the next few tries. Out of nowhere Jon doesn't pop his board correctly; he makes it on top of the hubba, but his board gets tangled up in his feet. He got tripped up at the top of the ledge and was tossed to the bottom with a breathtaking thud. There is no way to count the number of times I've slammed. Some slams have definitely hurt worse than others, but I think we can all agree that falling is not fun.

As skaters, we fall. But as people, we have also fallen. Romans 3:23 says that, "For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard." Each time we sin, we fall short of God's glory because He is Holy and set apart from all sin; but where did sin originate? And why do we continue to sin even as believers?

To better understand, we have to know where sin began. We know that the first sin took place in the garden of Eden with Adam and Eve who were tempted by Satan; but why did they listen to the enemy? James 1:15 explains it best by saying, "after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is fully grown, gives birth to death." We can see in Genesis 3:6 that the first sin did in fact start in the human heart: "the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom."

Satan saw their desire, used it to tempt them, and their desire led to sin. This same pattern has continued throughout all of human history. Satan sees our sinful desires and he uses our own desires to lead us into temptation, and this often leads to us giving in to sin.

Thankfully God had a plan! He dealt with our sinful nature once and for all when He sent His Son Jesus to take our place. God not only saved us, but also left us tools to fight sin while we're here on earth. Ephesians 6:14-17 says, "Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God's righteousness. For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared. In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." If you have accepted His sacrifice as your own, then you are set free from sin and the death sentence we all deserve and you're ready to take on the slams that life throws at you.

discussion questions

What are you desiring today? Is your deepest desire to know and please God? If not, have you put on the full armor God to help you fight sin and your enemy?



how does God feel about sin?

BY DONNIE DELECRUZ

 @donnie_delacruz



**“For the wages of sin is death,
but the free gift of God is eternal life
through Christ Jesus our Lord.”**

ROMANS 6:23

lesson **14**

Have you ever had a homie tell you about a skate spot they found and tried to get you to go skate it? They were hyping this place up like it was a film-worthy spot. Let's say you actually believed the hype and you start heading towards the spot. You are thinking about everything your homie has promised you about it: the perfect ground, the buttery ledge that doesn't need any wax, no one to kick you out; it's perfect! The closer you get to the spot the more excited you are, and then when you actually get to the spot...it's the crustiest skate spot you have ever seen in your life! Rocks everywhere, trash all over the spot, the ledge is all busted up and way too tall, and as soon as you get there a security guard shows up and tells you to leave. This is a lot like sin.

Sin always over promises and always under delivers. Sin makes all kinds of promises to us that it cannot keep, like the promises of happiness, fulfillment, identity, purpose, and satisfaction. Why not? Any time we take the bait that sin is offering, we might have moments of "fun" or "happiness," but sin leads to all kinds of shame, guilt, and leaves us unsatisfied. God hates that satan is deceiving His beloved children into sinning. God hates that we have been tricked into believing that sinning will give us more fulfillment than following God's will. The Bible doesn't say that sin "sometimes" leads to death, but that sin ALWAYS leads to death (Romans 6:23). This verse isn't just talking about a physical death, but it is talking about a spiritual death. The Bible teaches that sin separates us from God. That means if you were to die without accepting Jesus as the payment for your sin, you will be


separated from God. That is what Hell is. Hell is a place eternally separated from God and is a place of eternal suffering.

The good news about God is that He hates sin because it separates you from Him. Romans 5:8 says that "God demonstrates his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us!" Know that God loves you, He created you, and He has a purpose for your life! God loves you so much that He was willing to send His perfect Son Jesus to die for your sin debt (a price that you couldn't pay) so that you could know His love, His grace, and be forgiven of your sins. All you have to do is turn from your sins and selfish ways and surrender to Jesus as the Lord of your life! When Jesus promises you love, forgiveness, and new life, He always comes through!

? discussion questions

In what ways has sin or things in this world let you down? Do you feel guilt and/or shame when you sin?





consequences of sin?

BY EMMA ENGERER

 @emm_aww

**“Not at all! And you will perish, too,
unless you repent of your sins and turn to God.”**

LUKE 13:3

lesson **15**

All skateboarders, no matter how young or old, have a goal they want to reach. They dream of grinding their first handrail or taking a new flip trick down a big set of stairs. They know there is some risk to it, but all of that is worth it if they overcome their fear and pull it off. However, if they are not confident and have not practiced getting the basics down on a flat bar in their driveway, the chances of grinding a 15 rail first try without taking a serious slam is slim to none. As skateboarders, we have to know that there is a risk when attempting the bigger tricks. There is a consequence if we make a mistake, whether that be physically or mentally. We must prepare ourselves in every way before attempting something if we hope to escape the risk of injury. In the same way, as Christians we must know that there are consequences of sin for both ourselves as followers of Jesus, and for non-believers.

Jesus had compassion on sinners, and He never dulled-down the seriousness of sin. He made sure that His hatred of sin—along with the Fathers hatred of sin was made known to everybody. In Luke 13:3, Jesus said, “Not at all! And you will perish, too, unless you repent of your sins and turn to God.” Jesus is saying here that the consequence of sin is death. Jesus also said in Mark 9:43, “If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It’s better to enter eternal life with only one hand than to go into the unquenchable fires of Hell with two hands.” Jesus is speaking pretty seriously here (yet metaphorically), stating that the consequence of sin is nothing to take lightly.

What Jesus is saying is that we should take serious and drastic measures against our sin. Why? Because sin will severely harm us, as well as others around us, spiritually. The Bible says that "a little leaven, leavens the whole lump." In other words, even the tiniest, small sins that we don't think matter truly do, and they all have consequences both in this life and in eternity.

As Christians, we who have truly put our full faith and trust in Jesus Christ have the promise that Jesus Himself bore our sins and took the punishment we deserve on the Cross. (2 Corinthians 5:12, Romans 8:1) This means that while it is true that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, those who do not know Jesus Christ—those who reject God's pardon of Sin through Jesus—will indeed be condemned. This is the consequence of sin, death and eternal separation from God. It is our mission as Christians to go and share the good news that Jesus has made a way for us to avoid the consequence of sin because he bore our sins on the cross.

I want to encourage everybody with this verse from James 2:13: "Mercy Triumphs over Judgment." Our Lord is so loving, that He says Himself that His mercy is greater than judgment, and although the consequence of sin is great, His forgiveness is greater, and He is willing to forgive and embrace all of those who turn to Jesus Christ in faith.

discussion questions

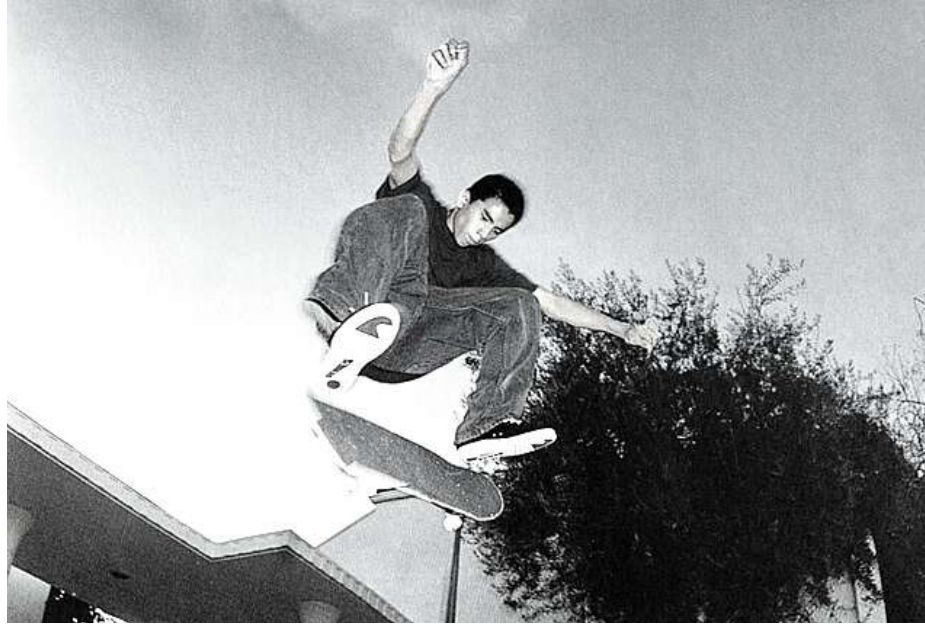
Do you believe you've sinned against God? How do you feel when people sin against you? Why do you think God made a way to save us in spite of our sin?



who is Jesus?

BY RICHARD MULDER

 @richmulder



“The Son radiates God’s own glory and expresses the very character of God, and he sustains everything by the mighty power of his command. When he had cleansed us from our sins, he sat down in the place of honor at the right hand of the majestic God in heaven.”

HEBREWS 1:3

lesson **16**

It feels like a glorious firework show exploding in my head when I think about the reality of who Jesus is; He’s simply too wonderful for my mind to react any other way. First off, He is God’s Son who stepped out of Heaven and onto earth, became a human like us, and showed us what life looks like to live in harmony with God. Then He dies for our sins—the innocent for the guilty—so we can also have a relationship with God. This stuff is foundational about who Jesus is—kind of like an ollie on a skateboard. Almost every trick on a skateboard, whether on a ledge, handrail, or over a gap, will require an ollie. As you grow and progress in your level of skateboarding, no matter how basic or complex your tricks are, the ollie will always be the foundation.

1 Corinthians 3:11 says, “For no one can lay any foundation other than the one we already have—Jesus Christ.” As I grow and mature in this foundation of faith in Jesus, one of the most exciting things about Jesus is how the Bible says that He is like God in every way. Not just in some ways, but in every way. Even Jesus Himself said, “If you have seen Me, you have seen the Father” (John 14:9).

Jesus is God’s perfect human expression of God’s will, mind, and thoughts towards His creation. If you ever want to know God’s opinion or thoughts about a subject, look at the life and words of Jesus. We can trust that it is exactly what God Himself feels about the subject.

When you look at the life of Jesus, you see Him constantly getting into situations of brokenness, sickness, anxiety, depression, hunger, loneliness, unforgiveness, and suffering. Jesus steps into those broken places and brings healing to hearts, minds, and bodies—because that is what God does, and Jesus is like Him in every way. And because Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever, we can have the same faith and trust in God.

If you are finding yourself in a situation with any of life’s challenges, I would like to encourage you to look at the words and life of Jesus, to receive God’s perspective on your situation, and find strength for the journey. Again, Jesus is like God is every way! “I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)

? discussion questions

Do you look to the life of Jesus as an example of how to live your own life?
How can you personally change to look more like Jesus?



the birth and life of Jesus.



BY BRANDON BAKER

 @brandamusprime

**“Go and search carefully for the child.
As soon as you find him, report to me,
so that I too may go and worship him.”**

MATTHEW 2:8

lesson **17**

Picture yourself at the skatepark with some homies when someone you haven't met rolls up. They seem to be cool until you notice they have the same trick selection you have, but their style is better and they can do it bigger. Has this happened to anyone else? You want to be stoked on their tricks, yet at the same time it's almost as if you resent them for being like you, but obviously better. They may even seem like a nice guy, yet their skills irk you for no good reason! It's common to feel challenged when we are faced with anything that poses a threat, but how do you respond?

Herod, this governor who was considered “King of the Jews” was known for how great he was because he was willing to showcase his power at every turn and would do anything to maintain that power. One day some well off travelers stopped at his place for directions to find the one to be “born King of the Jews.” This threw him off because he had no clue who they were talking about because he technically was the king of the Jews. Just like our jealousy went up at the sight of the better skater, Herod's defenses went up immediately. Herod sought his chief priests to see if they knew anything about this. They told him that there were prophecies that a ruler, the Messiah, would come out of Bethlehem. Herod took this information to the travelers, trying to appear helpful, asking for them to return when they found this child “so that he may too worship him.” What they didn't know was that he actually planned to murder this child. Thankfully, God came to the travelers in a dream telling them NOT to go back to him.

Herod, furious at the realization they weren't coming back, gave orders to kill every boy that was 2 years old or younger that lived within the vicinity of Bethlehem. So who was this child rumored to become king that the current "king" would be willing to ruthlessly murder every young boy just to keep his title?

Jesus was the baby that was on death's row for being prophesied as King of the Jews. We know what Herod did with this title, but what did Jesus do? It's hard to tell you everything he did because of how much he did. One very important thing he did with his God given power was live in utter humility. Jesus found 12 guys to teach them everything he knew and showed love to each and every one of them. He brought them alongside him as He spoke the truth of God and performed unbelievable acts like healing the sick, miraculously feeding the hungry, and driving out demons. Jesus even sends these 12 to do the same thing he did. He put all of this time, effort, and love into these guys even though He knew one of them was going to be the reason He dies. His disciple Judas Iscariot, learned under Jesus, ate with Jesus, performed miracles because of Jesus, then betrayed Jesus. "Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him. Jesus replied, "Do what you came for, friend." (Matthew 26:49-50)

Herod could not live with the fact that someone else would have his own title, believing that they would replace and possibly kill him, so he did everything in his power to kill them first. When Jesus met the person he knew would kill him, he said follow me so that the Father may speak through you. Jesus led him down a path to truth, and when Judas betrayed him, Jesus still accepted his kiss. I'm not telling you to go kiss your enemies or that guy at the park who's insanely good. But are you able to live in complete humility? Are you going to wait for that skater to fall so you can try to surpass them, or are you willing to ask them to show you how you can improve?

discussion questions

What is humility? How would your life look if it was lived humbly? Are there areas that you struggle with being humble?



Jesus' death and resurrection.

BY DEREK SHATTO

 @dshat813



**“They told him, “We have seen the Lord!”
But he replied, “I won’t believe it unless I see the
nail wounds in his hands, put my fingers into them,
and place my hand into the wound in his side.”**

JOHN 20:25

lesson **18**

In the skateboarding world there are certain skate spots that have elevated themselves to legendary status. If I mention places like Hollywood High, Love Park, Wallenberg, El Toro, immediately you can recall specific tricks that have been thrown down and even who did each trick. We know of all these tricks because we have either seen the clips in videos or we have seen the iconic photos in skate mags. These skaters were pioneers for a lot of us, showing us the impossible was actually possible! But what if we didn’t have the photos or any clips? What if all we had was someone’s word of the crazy tricks going down at these spots? Would you believe them?

A common saying I’ve heard in the skate community is, “without footage, it’s fiction.” And a common thing I hear about faith and the life of Jesus is, “I need to see it to believe it.” It’s easy to ask the question, “Was Jesus really who He said He was or was He just an ordinary guy?” For our answers to all those questions, we need only to check out the stories of Jesus’ death and resurrection in the Bible.

Jesus lived a perfect life, preached about the Kingdom of God, healed the sick, cast out demons, raised the dead, loved the unlovable...the list goes on. He even predicted His death, claiming that He will rise from the dead three days later. That’s a pretty bold claim for someone who was already

claiming to be the Son of God! Eventually, the time came where Jesus was nailed to a cross, died, and was buried in a tomb. When this happened, all Jesus' disciples went back to their normal lives, discouraged that the man they've been following for three years was no longer with them. Then, three days later, the unthinkable happened. Some people went to the tomb where Jesus was buried and discovered the tomb was empty! Jesus literally rose from the dead! But again, was there evidence? Was there proof? Yes!

After this happens, Jesus physically shows up to his disciples while one of His disciple's (Thomas) wasn't around. When Thomas returns to his friends, they tell him, "We've seen Jesus!" But just like we are skeptical when we hear our buddies tell us about tricks they've done, Thomas doubts their claims and ignores them; then Jesus shows up again. This time, Jesus invites Thomas to see for himself that He is alive and well. Jesus met Thomas in his doubting, showing him the holes in His hands and side, and finally Thomas believes.

It doesn't stop at Thomas and the disciples either. 1 Corinthians 15:6-7 says that after Jesus appeared to the 12, "He appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living." What Paul is saying here is if you don't believe that Jesus rose from the dead, there were plenty of witnesses who could testify to this claim. It wasn't only for one day either. Acts 1:3 tells us Jesus "appeared to them over a period of forty days." So crazy!

Think about it: If Jesus never rose from the dead, He would have just been a nice guy who did some crazy miracles and that was it. If He never came back, these disciples would have never died for their faith and we would have no reason to believe in Jesus! There would be no Christianity if He didn't live out His wildest of claims: raising Himself from the dead...which He did.

discussion questions

Have you seen enough to fully believe? If not, what will it take to make you believe?



what is Christ's call to us?



BY BEN WENRICH

“Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

JOHN 20:25

lesson **19**

I've been a skater for over 30 years and skateboarding has been good to me. Over all those years, I have skated some awesome spots, competed in a bunch of contests, met some amazing people, and even owned a skateboard company called Freedom Skateboards. Back in the day, one thing I always loved was getting a new skate magazine. Transworld Magazine was always my favorite. Turning through the pages, seeing ad after ad of skaters doing the gnarliest tricks and the companies they repped, it's hard not to dream of yourself in a magazine someday.

When I was younger, there were many times that I dreamt about being sponsored and turning pro. Be honest, everyone at one point or another has day dreamed about being sponsored. I couldn't imagine getting all the free product, meeting all the skaters from the videos, competing in contests, and representing a company like Powell Peralta, Zero, or Vans. Being sponsored and representing a legit company would have been amazing. For many of us skaters, being sponsored and turning pro will probably never happen.

Even though we may never get sponsored and represent a major company, as believers in Jesus Christ we are called to “rep” something greater than a skateboard sponsorship; we get to represent the God of the universe to a lost and hurting world.

So, what does it look like to represent Jesus? It doesn’t mean wearing Christian apparel and walking around like a billboard for Jesus. It looks as simple as living the way He called us to live. This means showing love not only to the skaters at the park you get along with, but also to the ones who may throw shade at you. We are called not only to be nice to them, but actually go out of our way to serve them. When we rep Jesus, we carry with us the fruit of the spirit to a hurting world in desperate need of the Lord. When we live out these traits in our daily lives, the light of Jesus will shine in the darkness.

In John 20:25, Jesus gives a call to action before ascending into heaven, He told His disciples to go and teach others the good news of Jesus; and what is amazing is that Jesus is also giving us the same command. His instructions for us have nothing to do with our talents, our looks, or where we live. God wants us to go to our skate parks, to our schools, to our families, and to our world and share Jesus with everyone He brings our way. We don’t have to be scared because Jesus promised us that He will be with us always...to the end of the age. We are never alone and He will give us the strength through His Holy Spirit to change the world. Now if we would represent a board company who sponsors us, how much more should we go and represent our Savior Jesus?

discussion questions

Do you believe that Jesus wants to use you to impact your community? If you do, are you willing to go? Who is someone that you can share your faith with this upcoming week?



why do I need salvation?

BY BROOKS DRIVER

 @brooksdriver



“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.”

ROMANS 6:23

lesson **20**

Imagine you are skating at the park, you go for a trick down a small set and you snap your board. That feeling you get when you just start skating and break a board without a back up is nothing more than a feeling of despair. If you've never snapped a deck, I'm sure you can imagine that feeling of having to just sit on the side of the park and watch your friends skate. Just when you're at the point of being completely bummed, another skater rolls up to the park with a brand new deck. It's the exact same board that you have been skating, but it is brand new. Same size. Same shape. He offers it to you 100% FREE. In exchange for the board he just wants to be your friend and have a relationship with you. There is nothing you did to earn or deserve that board, but really all you have to do is accept this gift and thank him for his generosity.

From the beginning of creation God created us with the intention that we would live lives that would glorify Him. Unfortunately, we have all chosen to sin and to go against God's will. Sin is the act of directly opposing what God has commanded. In archery, when someone shoots an arrow and misses the bullseye it is called "sinning." This is us. None of us are perfect. We've all missed the "bullseye" in some way or another. Each and every one of us at some point have lied, cheated, stolen, lusted, or done something that God has asked us not to do. If you're agreeing with this and for the first time coming to the understanding that you are a sinner, don't worry—you're not alone.

Romans 3:23 says, "For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard." We have all messed up. There isn't a single person who has lived a perfect life. The problem with this is that

we don't have a way to fix our brokenness. It's as if we were all at a skatepark on a deserted island and we all have broken boards with no access to a skate shop or ability to skate. As much as we would like to get a new board or fix our "brokenness," it's completely impossible on our own.

Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death..." God, being an infinite and perfect God cannot allow imperfection into His presence. This means each of us, because of our sin, are facing the penalty of death. Sin is the crime and the judgement given to us is the death penalty. But lucky for us, God is the judge and His desire from the very beginning was to show us grace, mercy, and forgiveness for the mistakes we have made. In this love, He willingly gave up His son Jesus to take on the punishment we deserved and die in our place. Jesus took our place by dying on the cross for our sins! As a result, God has made a way for us to be pardoned for our sins—and just like accepting that new skate deck after you snapped yours, all we have to do is accept it. Romans 5:8 tells us that "God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners."

Our lives are no different from a broken deck. Without Christ we have lost sight of the purpose for why we were created. I will end with a great quote from the apostle Paul from Romans 7:24-25: "Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. So you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God's law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin." I pray that you realize your need for a Savior as quickly and easy as we realize we need a new deck when we break ours.

discussion questions

Do you feel like you have a need for a Savior? Have you felt the weight of your sins? Have you put your faith in Jesus as your Lord and Savior? If not, what is holding you back?



how do I receive salvation?

BY EVAN KUZAVA

 @evankuzava



“If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”

ROMANS 10:9

lesson **21**

If you've ever skated in a skate contest you know that there are rules to the contest that you have to follow. If you show up late, skate the wrong section of the course, or break rules (like not paying the entry fee or skating out of turn), you won't make the cut. I've never seen a skater win a contest when he just goes rogue and ignores all of the rules and the structure of the event. Much like a contest, if we're not intentional to plan our final "exit" like a pro ends his run, we might miss out on the end goal and the reason we were even created. One thing I've come to realize about skaters is that they never want to miss out. From skating with friends, watching the latest video part, or evening events like Go Skate Day, doubtful you'll find many skaters just sitting at home or sleeping in. My hope is that each of us have this same fear of missing out, but with salvation in Christ. It's easy to get distracted in life or to make decisions that lead us away from God, but if we're not careful we can end up "sleeping in" and miss out on the life that God created for us.

Have you ever heard statements like, "Just be a good person," or "Just believe in God," or even, "Just ask Jesus into your heart"? I've heard many people say, "just repeat this prayer after me and you'll be saved..." or worst of all, many are only told that "God loves them" but are never told the entirety of what that statement really means. You see, each of these statements have some validity, but in and of ourselves, we will never be righteous enough to save ourselves. No act of good deeds, good works, or individual attempt in our own power to save ourselves will ever be successful.

But because of God's mercy, He has made salvation available for each of us. In Acts chapter 16 after sharing the Good News of God's mercy, those listening responded with this question, "What must we do to be saved?" The disciples replied with, "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved." Jesus tells us in John 5:24 that "those who listen to His message and believe in God who sent Him have eternal life. We will never be condemned for our sins, but we have already passed from death into life."

Ephesians 2:8-9 tells us that "God saved us by His grace when we believed. And we can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it." God has called us to put our faith, trust, and hope in Him alone. When we fully surrender our lives to Him and let go of the things of this world, it is in that action that we receive salvation. James 2:14 tells us "if we say we have faith but don't show it by our actions? Can that kind of faith save us?" You see, true faith in Christ, a fully surrendered life truly leads to action. Just like the passage in Romans 10:9, when we believe in our heart that Jesus is Lord, we can't help but to openly declare this faith.

The day you decided that you wanted to learn to skate was as simple as picking up the board. You could have talked about wanting to skate forever, but it wasn't until you actually picked up the board that this desire was put into action. The same is true with our trust in Christ. Just like a pro plans out his most dialed contest line, my hope is that you will also be thinking about what is to come. The only way to have a perfect "line" in this life, as well as the life after we die, is to put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

discussion questions

Like a pro skater knows how to win a contest, what do you think it looks like to win the contest of life? What keeps you from winning the contest of life? Have you made the decision to put your faith in Christ? If not, what is holding you back?



grace and mercy.

BY DAVID CAMDEN

 @david_camden



**“The Lord is merciful and compassionate,
slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love.
The Lord is good to everyone. He showers
compassion on all His creation.”**

PSALM 145:8-9

lesson **22**

Life is full of ups and downs. We all fall and make mistakes along the way. One of the most common tools of the enemy is to use shame to keep us from believing that we are worthy of God, His promises, or His blessings. What is so crazy about this thought and this lie, is that God is actually all knowing. He has existed from the beginning of time and He already knows everything we have ever done or will do, yet He still loves us the same. There is nothing we can do to make God love us less and there is nothing we can do to make God love us more. His love for us is perfect.

As skaters, the passion and desire to land a trick can be so strong that it will override fear or the pain that comes from the act of repeatedly falling. But we continue to push ourselves because the feeling we get when we roll away from that trick is worth every hour practicing, every slam taken, or every injury incurred. It might be hard to believe, but God loves you exponentially more than that! But just like with skateboarding though, God knew when He created mankind that we would fall. The Bible tells us in Romans 3:23 that ALL have sinned and fallen short of God's glory and in Romans chapter 1, Paul also writes that, "we are backstabbers, haters of God, insolent, proud, and boastful. We invent new ways of sinning, and we disobey our parents. We refuse to understand, break our promises, are heartless, and have no mercy. We know God's justice requires that those who do

these things deserve to die, yet we do them anyway. Worse yet, we encourage others to do them, too." Heavy right!? This is each and every one of us in some way. Yet, this is the very reason why God sent His son Jesus to die on the cross for us. This is where grace and mercy come into the picture.

Ephesians 2:4-5 tells us, "God is so rich in mercy, and He loved us so much, that even though we were dead because of our sins, He gave us life when He raised Christ from the dead. It is only by God's grace that we have been saved!" MERCY is the act of God NOT giving us what we deserve; DEATH. GRACE is the act of God giving us something we DON'T deserve; LIFE.

I have been skateboarding for almost 20 years now and have ridden for some really cool brands and shops along the way. But when I started into my late twenties, I faced the harsh realization that I had grown to know OF God, but I didn't really know Him personally. Because I went to church I thought that made me right with God but I didn't have the relationship with Him that I would have liked. It wasn't long until I came to the understanding that God wanted me to come as I was and that I didn't have to get myself together to have a relationship with Him. This is the good news for each of us. That God continues to show us mercy and grace while He gives us second, third, and even fourth chances! Just like when we fall skating and get back up, each time rising a bit stronger, this is what God is inviting each of us to do after the mistakes that we might make. Just like the progression of skateboarding never ends, the same is true with the grace and mercy from God.

discussion questions

Do you feel like you have experienced God's grace and mercy in your own life?





justification and sanctification.

BY GARRETT BOCKSTANZ

 @garrettbockstanz



“Therefore, since we have been made right in God’s sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us.”

ROMANS 5:1

lesson **23**

One thing I really love about skateboarding is that the simple act of consistently riding a skateboard makes you a skater. It doesn’t matter how long you have been skating, how many tricks you can do, or how many stairs you can jump down. The title of being a skater is not earned by how talented you are, but by the simple act of just riding a skateboard. It starts with the decision to pick up the board and to start skating. The same is true in how God sees us as being justified.

Justification is God seeing us in right standing with Him even though we have all sinned and are deserving of death (Romans 5:1). The way we are justified is by placing our faith in the fact that Jesus is Lord and that He died on the cross for our sins. It is not based on anything we have done, the things that we are going to do, or our attempts to try to earn this justification and "rightness" with Him. So often people focus so much on trying to be a good person with the hope that it will get them into Heaven. But what we see throughout scripture is that this couldn't be further from the truth. Our own efforts to be righteous apart from Jesus will always fail. But by putting our faith in Jesus, God sees the perfect, sinless life that He lived as a substitute for our own.

Even though the simple act of riding a skateboard makes you a skater, if you really commit yourself to skating—even though you will never be perfect—you will naturally get better at it. Sanctification is act of becoming more like Christ over time. Becoming more like Jesus isn't accomplished through

our attempt to achieve "holiness" but it is the result of the Holy Spirit coming into our lives and changing our hearts. If you have put your faith in Jesus, we are reminded in Galatians 2:20 that "our old self has been crucified with Christ and it is no longer we who live, but Christ who lives in us." As a result, the way we think and act starts to bear the "fruit" of the Spirit. Galatians 5:22 describes this fruit as "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control."

There will never be a perfect skateboarder but I'm confident that the more you or I skate, the better we will continue to get. We might not recognize this progression, but everything from the way we push, how we flip a trick, or even how we ollie, all continues to become easier and easier and more natural. This is the same as our walk with the Lord. We will never be SINLESS but every day we surrender our lives to the Lord and put our trust in Him I believe will naturally lead to us SINNING LESS.

discussion questions

Do you feel like each time you skate you get a little better? Do you feel like your walk with the Lord is similar? Do you ever find yourself trying to earn God's love?



a new creation.



BY MIKE STEINKAMP

 @mike_steinkamp

**"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ,
the new creation has come:
the old has gone, the new is here!"**

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

lesson **24**

When I got my first skateboard at 12 years old, I didn't just casually pick up a new hobby or find a new toy to play with; I completely transformed into a skateboarder. It was a new lifestyle that radically changed every aspect of my life—from the way I dressed, to how I talked, the people I surrounded myself with, and even how I saw the world, suddenly revolve around the fact that I was a skateboarder. I loved skating so much and found so much joy in this new person I had become, so the fact that it now completely defined my existence was okay with me. I was completely willing to give up my old life, old friends, and old hobbies because of how much I loved skateboarding

This is the type of surrender that Christ calls us to when we start following Him. In 2 Corinthians 5:17, the apostle Paul writes: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here!" When he wrote that, he wasn't equating a life in Christ to a new hobby that we just pick up for a little bit in our free time. Following Jesus is an all-encompassing, all-surrendering lifestyle that radically demands the putting off of our old self, our old habits, and our old way of thinking in order to live the life Christ has called us into. The beauty of our transformation into new creations for Christ is the fact that none of this happens out of obligation. When you fully experience Christ, feel His presence, and truly know His love for you, it becomes nearly impossible to hold onto your old life because the joy and satisfaction of intimately knowing Christ as your Savior far outweighs anything that a world apart from Him could ever offer.

Becoming a skateboarder was such a fun time in my life because I had never experienced anything greater than landing my first kickflip. But 15 years ago, I joyfully surrendered my life to Christ and allowed Him to make me into a new creation. Once I experienced this love of God, I knew that nothing else would ever satisfy. Jesus is calling us to be new creations in Him. When we focus on God and put Him first, we will see our old self begin to waste away. It won't even matter to us, because who we are becoming is more beautiful than we ever could have imagined.

I still continue to skate and love the community that I am a part of. I still dress, talk, and love skateboarding and hope that this will always be the case. I have no intentions of leaving this community. Galatians 4:9 says, "now that you know God (or should I say, now that God knows you), why do you want to go back again and become slaves once more to the weak and useless spiritual principles of this world?" Once our eyes have been opened, our lives become changed forever, and there is no going back. For me it was first with skateboarding but then even greater it was through developing a relationship with the Lord. My hope is that the same is true for you.

discussion questions

Did your life change once you discovered skateboarding? Can you identify a difference between who you used to be and who you are after knowing Christ? Is there anything in your life today that you have yet to surrender over to God?



who is the Holy Spirit?

BY MICHAEL MAIOCCO

 @michaelmaiocco



“But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!”

GALATIANS 5:22-23

lesson **25**

Skate culture is like a giant family that goes far beyond age, gender, or ethnicity. It's a beautiful culture where people can be themselves, conquer fear, be creative, and enjoy a common love for skating alongside their friends. Despite all of the beauty found within the culture, it doesn't take long to discover some of the negative things associated with it. The thrill of going bigger and getting better every day causes many skateboarders to search for that same adrenaline and rush but when they are not skating. I have seen lots of friends try to fill themselves with other types of highs to cope, and the skate culture at large has embraced the use of drugs and alcohol to meet those needs; sometimes to a damaging or even deadly extent.

Human beings crave to fill themselves, whether it's skateboarding, affirmation from others, or whatever makes us feel good. These things aren't bad, but when they become the very fuel we operate off of, it can be very dangerous. Within everyone, there is a space that cannot be satisfied by any created thing but only by God made known through Jesus. Did you know that God has promised to fill people with His personal presence? This is the Holy Spirit; God. I know that may sound kind of trippy, but the word "Spirit" in the Bible means wind or breath; the actual presence of God Himself. The Bible talks about the Holy Spirit empowering people for specific tasks as the power of God working in and through them.

Before Jesus came to earth or died on the cross, the Spirit would come and go; however, after Jesus was raised from the dead and before you left to return to heaven, one of His final promises was that He would send a Helper (the Holy Spirit). Jesus then breathed on His disciples and they were filled with God's Spirit and carried the Good News of God's great love to the world. We're told in Romans 8 that this same Holy Spirit now lives in all people who follow the Lord, and just as Jesus was raised from the dead, God will resurrect and transform us by this same Spirit because it will live in us at all times! Acts 2:38 tells us that when we "repent of our sins and turn to God and are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of our sins. Then we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

As you read the verse in Galatians, is there anything better that you can imagine filling yourself with other than the Holy Spirit? Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control are the fruits that come from having the Holy Spirit living inside of us and characteristics I would only imagine that we all desire.

One of the last things that Jesus told the disciples before He left them is found in Acts 1:8 and this is what He says, "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Because of what Christ accomplished on the cross, we are now saved by grace, filled with God's Spirit at all times, and are being transformed daily as He is working in and through us to make us more like Him!

discussion questions

Are you filling yourself with other things with the hope of feeling satisfied? Have you put your faith in Christ and allowed Him to take that place in your life?



can we have the Holy Spirit?

BY JOE GRUBER

 @joegruber



“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

ACTS 1:8

lesson **26**

We have all been exposed to the good, bad, and ugly of what is happening around us. Does the darkness dim your hope or do you look at these times as an opportunity to shine as a world changer? Jesus was a great light in a time of tremendous darkness. He told us—His followers—that we would be the light of the world. He passed the baton onto us but we can only shine light into this world because He is the one actually living in us (Galatians 2:20).

The same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead lives in us (Romans 8:11). He gave us the opportunity to be one with him (John 17:6-11). Think about how awesome that is! I get excited knowing God is for me, around me, upon me, near me, and with me— and knowing He is IN me is even more exciting! God of the universe, the One who hung the stars and fearfully and wonderfully made us, created a way through Jesus to live IN us.

When I was a pro skater, I traveled to Europe every summer to compete in several contests. The first couple times I made the trip I was far from a relationship with Jesus. By the third trip, something had changed within who I was and my actions reflected that change. I had a transforming encounter

with Jesus two months prior. Because of Him, I was now free from sin and living a life of purpose. I had new paradigms of thinking, new desires, and a new mission; I was a new person! I wasn't flawless, but with the Holy Spirit now living in me and working through me, life was significantly different, not only for me, but those around me as well. I had a "Helper" who went with me everywhere. Every second of every day He was in me—on the plane, in the streets when we were skating, at the contests, and during the times I was sharing the Good News to skaters. The Holy Spirit empowered me to be bold. He fueled me to love. He protected me. He revealed things about situations and people. He taught me the truth and guided the things I said and where I went.

I spent two months in Europe skateboarding, doing what I loved to do in some of the most beautiful cities of the world. In addition to that, the more I worked with the Holy Spirit, the more I learned about what He loves—people. He loves to help people encounter Jesus! He loves restoring people to a right relationship with the Father. He loves to smile, encourage, hug and serve. He loves leading people to Jesus. He loves to shine! He does this through us—His sons and daughters!

Every day is a gift from God and to the people you encounter, who God wants to love through you. Jesus invites us to partner with Him in going into all the world; making disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything He commanded (Matthew 28:19-20). What a privilege!

discussion questions

Are you shining a light into the world around you? How would your life look different to others if you had the Holy Spirit guiding your life?



counting the cost.

BY DAN GRAY

 @akadangray



**“If you refuse to take up your cross and follow me,
you are not worthy of being mine.
If you cling to your life, you will lose it;
but if you give up your life for me, you will find it.”**

MATTHEW 10:38-39

lesson **27**

Have you ever thought about what it means to count the cost of the things that are important in your life? As skateboarders we pour a ton of money into skating; new boards, shoes, our bodies. Not to mention the time that goes into skating with practicing and traveling to different parks or street spots. Some of us have even gone as far as to build our own ramps so that we can skate at home. All this time and money is being spent to pursue something we love! And if we truly love something, we will justify any expense that it takes. Even if we have given up the hope of going pro or getting a sponsor, within each of us is the desire to continue improving and learning new tricks. And in that desire of progression there is a cost that must be calculated.

In the same way as Christians, or even really anyone before making the decision to put their faith in Christ, there is a point where we need to pause and count the cost of what that decision really means. Jesus tells His followers in John 16:33 that "here on earth we will have many trials and sorrows. But to take heart, because He has overcome the world." Jesus never promised any of His followers that it would be an easy decision to follow Him. In fact nearly all of His closest followers were martyred for their faith in Christ. Following Christ may not be easy but we know that it is worth it. Much like skateboarding, we know we're going to take slams, we're going to break boards, or tear up shoes, but is it worth it to still skate? Of course!

Below is a little acronym for counting the C.O.S.T. that I hope will help you process what the decision to follow Christ looks like.

C. Choose To Invest. This looks like letting go of the things of this world and giving those over to serve God and others. All of our time, money, resources, etc all become Christ's. (1 Peter 4:10)

O. Open Your Mind: As humans we have to understand that we aren't God. The way that He works might look different than we think it should but if we allow God to renew our mind we begin to see the world through His lens and not our own. (Romans 12:2)

S. Surrender: This is really the first step in receiving salvation. It's the act of giving up on our lives and surrendering our will to Christ. (Matthew 10:38-39)

T. Transformation: When we make the decision to give our lives to Christ we are transformed. We look different and that transformation is easily visible to those around us. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

If you broke your board skating, would you try to save money and go to Walmart to buy a new deck or would you spend what you needed to in order to buy a real board? Sure, a cheap deck might last for a day or two, but it'll never replace a real deck. The same is true for the things of this world. Don't try to "save money" and substitute the things for this world over Christ. It's not worth it!

discussion questions

Have you counted the cost of following Jesus? Does the thought of giving everything up scare you? Are there things that God is calling you to give up in order to follow Him?



how to live as Christ.

BY TIANA MILES

 @tianaonwheelsandwaves



“Try to please them all the time, not just when they are watching you. As slaves of Christ, do the will of God with all your heart. Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.”

EPHESIANS 6:6-7

lesson **28**

In skating, it's not always about what you do, but many times rather how you look while doing it. Different people might all do the same trick, but why is it that there is usually one stands out from the rest? Skating is about style as much as it is about the technicality of the trick itself. In other words, it's not always about what you do, but how you do it.

The things we do in our lives; our acts of service, our obedience, the way we treat others, all need to be built upon a correct motivation and attitude. As Christians, everything we do should be done with an attitude of “I am blessed to get to do this for the Lord.” Working retail, an office job, washing dishes, building ramps, pouring concreting, skating, or hanging with a mate—whatever your day involves, your life and the things you do are all for the Lord.

Our life and everything we have is a gift from Him. We live and breathe only because He first breathed life into us. When we show generosity only because we are seeking something in return, or we perform in a way only to gain attention or praise, or when we're obedient simply to avoid punishment, it is just like doing a decent trick while skating but having whack style. Sure, you may have landed the trick, but it was pretty ugly to watch.

In the beginning of Matthew 23, Jesus warned the Pharisees and used them as an example of how not to act. Whatever "good deeds" the Pharisees were doing were not truly good because the state of their hearts were deceitful and full of pride. He calls them out by telling them, "what sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs—beautiful on the outside but filled on the inside with dead people's bones and all sorts of impurity. Outwardly you look like righteous people, but inwardly your hearts are filled with hypocrisy and lawlessness."

Thankfully for all of us, the Lord looks at people deeper than we do. People look at the the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." - 1 Samuel 16:7. In the same way we point out a skater with great style, the hope is that others recognize us as Christians because of the way we treat others and how we love those around us. Your style and attitude should not only stand out but should actually validate the Good News that we share with others. Because as Luke 6:45 says, "What you say flows from what is in your heart." "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters." (Colossians 3:23)

discussion questions

Do you find it difficult to love the people around you? Are you striving to be a good person but only doing so out of obligation?



not of the world.



BY JOSH JEFFERS

 @joshuaJeffersfl

"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."

ROMANS 12:2

lesson **29**

What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you think about skateboarding? I think most would say good sessions, friendship, fun, etc. But being skateboarders, we know the culture of our "world" can also be a little rough around the edges. It's hard to pick up a skateboard magazine, watch a new video part, or even go to a local spot or park without feeling the pressure of being influenced by the industry. Drinking, drugs, partying, rebelling against authority; it's the culture that skateboarding breeds. However, the Bible shows us a different way to live.

In Romans, Paul writes, "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." (Romans 12:2) The "world" that Paul is referring to is the default way the world works. This ingrained and instinctual thought process is saturated in sin. But the renewing of our mind happens when we begin to walk in relationship with Jesus.

Think about the skateboard industry and the culture that we're a part of. What is the default way skateboarders live? What does it look like? Our culture as a whole is very rebellious, and a lot of

the behaviors and rebellion are pointed toward God. Just watch the intro to the majority of the Thrasher videos and it's pretty easy to recognize.

In Romans, Paul is being very direct in telling us how the things of this world are not the things we should be living for. There is nothing God glorifying about living for the world rather than for the Lord. James 1:14-15 tells us that "temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death." Living for the world will no doubt bring fun at times and maybe even temporary satisfaction but we know that through scripture this ultimately leads to death.

I love skateboarding. I love the culture and the industry and to be honest I love Thrasher. But there is a big difference between being in the culture and being "of" the culture. My identity is not in skateboarding. My identity is in Christ. While I love and hope to be inspired by skateboarding, skateboarding doesn't control my life. Paul encourages us in these verses to not live like the rest of the world, but rather be transformed from the inside out, changing the way we think and ultimately aligning our thoughts and mind with that of God's.

discussion questions

Do you think it's hard to be a skateboarder and a follower of Christ? Why? What does it look like to be a skater but not live for the world, yet rather live for the Lord?



love God. love people.

BY TRAVIS CURIE

 @traviscurie



"Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?" Jesus replied, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments."

MATTHEW 22:36-40

lesson **30**

Have you ever found it difficult to show love at the skatepark? Have you ever snaked someone, or gone a whole session without saying a single word to someone? Maybe you put in headphones because you would rather just do your own thing instead of talking to others or saying hi to a kid that doesn't have any friends at the park? I'm sure we've all done something similar at some point in our lives. The truth is, God calls us to do quite the opposite.

In Matthew 22 Jesus is confronted with the question, "What is the greatest commandment?" and His response was to encourage others to love God with all of their heart, soul, and mind. Many of us ask, "how do I really love God?" Well, it can honestly look like simply talking to Him, reading the Bible, obeying Him, asking what His direction for your life looks like, and being thankful for everything

He's done in your life. As we read further in this passage though, Jesus follows up with the second and equally important commandment: to "love your neighbor as yourself."

Those asking the question were quick to respond with another question, "who then is my neighbor?" I think if we were all honest, we might ask this question more than we think. Is this literally my neighbors living next door? Is this the kids that we see at the skatepark? The Greek word for neighbor is "Plesion." In context to this passage, it means "those nearby." You see, God has called us to love those around us and those we have the ability to love; close friends, family, co-workers, random people you meet, and definitely everyone at the skatepark.

Jesus ends His response to this question really by describing the simplicity of what it looks like to love Him and love others. From an overflow of our love for God we should naturally love those around us. It isn't until we love God with all of our heart, soul, and mind that we're able to truly love our neighbors as ourselves. Our capacity to love God and others is only because of the love we have received from Him first and foremost (1 John 4:19). Whether it's at work, in the mall, at a restaurant, or at the skatepark, my challenge for you is to step out of your comfort zone; be the person who lets someone drop in first, introduces themselves to someone new, and gets psyched for others when they land a trick! Get out there and love God, love others, and love skateboarding!

discussion questions

What makes it difficult to love someone you don't know or don't get along with? How can you go out of your way this week to show love to someone else?



you are a new creation.



BY KYLE BRUSH

 @anunlikelyservant

**“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ
has become a new person.
The old life is gone; a new life has begun!”**

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

lesson **31**

I remember when I started skateboarding 20 years ago, how everything felt new to me. I began seeing skate spots and visualizing tricks being done on them. Stairs, ledges, rails, banks, and curbs all started to catch my attention even though those things were simple everyday things to encounter. Now that I was a skater, these mundane objects brought me a sort of excitement whenever I would come across them. You can't tell me that whenever you come across a stair set that you don't count each step. Or when you see a handrail that you thought was meant for old people, you don't check out the run up and how much pop it would take to get onto it.

When I was 23, something happened causing me to see the world differently. I surrendered my life to Jesus. My life before that point was full of bad decisions, pain, disappointment, anger, and I lacked purpose. I gave my life to Jesus and everything started to change and become new! The old way of life was tossed to the side and my mindset became fresh. As bad as it may seem, I used to not really care that much about people, even those I considered close to me; it was like I had barriers up for no reason. But then I began to genuinely love people and I desired to understand the wellbeing of everyone I knew. I went from avoiding new relationships to searching for opportunities to serve in my community. I spoke boldly about Jesus; I began to use skateboarding as a tool to reach people for Christ. I finally cared. It was as if I had finally been given a purpose, and I was now a full blown new creation.

Believe it or not, you can be a new creation too! 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, "anyone who belongs to Christ..." The reason Scripture uses the word "anyone," is because anyone and everyone, no matter what, is being offered to become this new creation I have been talking about. It doesn't matter where you've been or what you've done. The gift of salvation and an entirely new life is for every woman and man, no exceptions! Any person who has sinned in their lifetime is qualified! Like Jesus says in Luke 5:32, "I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners and need to repent." All it takes is for you to grab hold of this new life in Christ and find out what His purpose is for you!

Just like seeing the new world around you when you picked up a skateboard for the first time, when you invite Jesus into your life to transform you, you will see so much more to life that you have been missing out on. He will shape you into a new creation, built to love, serve, and further the Kingdom.

discussion questions

Do you believe that God has a purpose specifically for you? What "old parts" of your life need to be tossed out to allow God to make you a new creation?



don't be a poser.

BY JEFF KOZAK

 @testimonyskateboards



"So we are lying if we say we have fellowship with God but go on living in spiritual darkness; we are not practicing the truth."

1 JOHN 1:6

lesson **32**

Two groms show up at the skatepark both carrying brand new boards, rocking brand new shoes, and wearing the same clothes. One of them spends an hour trying with all of his might to learn how to ollie. When he finally gets it, he starts working on 180's, and then pop shuvs, and so on. He's determined to progress. Even if it's a slow process, he's still learning. The other kid spends his time cruising around the park, filming his feet, and posting selfies while he sits on the ramps, bragging about being a skater and hanging out at the skatepark. Which one of these kids would you say is really a skater? Which one would you say is a poser?

Isn't it interesting that so many people want to look like skaters, dress like skaters, and mall grab their boards as they carry them around trying to portray this image of being "cool." In the skateboarding community, these kids are roasted and ridiculed because they've never really counted the cost of skateboarding or made the commitment to skate.

I'd be lying if I said there wasn't a stigma with being labeled as a poser—especially in skateboarding. You definitely don't want that title because it means you're a false representation of something that you're not. The funny thing is, we've all probably been considered a poser at some point in our life. Whether it was when we first started skating, listening to a new band, or maybe even in our faith. You see, being a poser within skateboarding has nothing to do with your level of skill, but rather the fact of wanting to look like something that you're not. The same is so true within religion.

It seems like almost everyone in America will claim the title of "Christian" and most would even tell you they believe in Jesus, but do they actually have fellowship with Him? Jesus gave us a heads up on how to identify a true follower of Jesus. He said in John 13:35, "Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples." It's not going to be about simply "looking the part." Being a true follower of Christ is identified through your actions with one another. It's easy to say the right things when the right people are looking, but what you do when no one is looking—that is integrity. Integrity shows where your motivations are and clearly shows who you really are.

1 John 1:5 says, "This is the message we heard from Jesus and now declare to you: God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all." Just like wanting to look and act like a skateboarder doesn't make you a skater, the same is true with our faith. God is light and in Him there is no darkness. This doesn't mean we won't make mistakes or have to be perfect to claim to be a Christian, but it does mean that we have to choose whether we're all in or not in at all. 2 Corinthians 5:17 tells us that "This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!"

There is a big difference between professing Christianity and possessing Christ in your heart. The world is enticing but, in the end, the temporary pleasures it brings will all pass away. The validation you may seek from trying to be something you're not, will eventually leave you dissatisfied. But one thing remains: Jesus. And in Jesus, you will always find your true identity. If you're on the fence and not sure what side you're on, I want to challenge you to do what every skateboarder has done and will continue to do: fully commit and drop in.

discussion questions

What side of the fence are you on? Do you feel like you struggle with being a poser with your faith? What's keeping you from being all in?



what is prayer?

BY DEAN DAHL

 @deandahldeandahl



**“Rejoice always, pray continually,
give thanks in all circumstances,
for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”**

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-18

lesson **33**

My friend Andrew showed up at my door. We hadn’t seen each other for over a year and we had only texted or talked a handful of times since then. Andrew and I go way back. We both helped start up a grassroot skate scene in Vancouver, Canada, and we have lots of good times between us! I made some food for us and then we went outside and started walking together. Andrew and I have a friendship that feels like we are always in touch, even when we aren’t. When we meet up, we don’t even end up talking tons; we just hang out because our connection is so strong.

If you have a close friendship like this, you get it. If you don’t, I have good news for you: there is a friend who is closer than a brother or sister. (Proverbs 18:24) This friend is Jesus, and He wants you and Him to connect; it can even be as simple as breathing.

There are a lot of ways to pray, and I still have so much to learn about it. One way I’ve come to understand prayer is that it’s just like the regular act of breathing. The Bible says in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 to, “Never stop praying.” A good guide to this could be a breathe-in/breathe-out motion. My friend James says that when he speaks in prayer, he really only speaks in the last half of his prayer. Speaking to God is a response to what God is already bringing to us. For example, saying, “Thank you for this awesome sunny day!” is actually my response to a great gift already given by God.

If I sense concern for someone and I pray for them, I'm actually responding to a conviction God's Spirit has already provided me. Sometimes I'll find myself in unexpected trouble where all I can shout is "Jesus help me!" At this point, I gasp in a breath of faith that God is in control and will see this trouble through. If you're trying to skate a rail but you can't commit, that is a perfect time to go to God and ask for Him to calm your nerves. No matter the situation, you are always welcome to pray—whether it's five seconds or 15 minutes!

If your prayers feel like you are talking and talking, but you and God aren't connecting, why not try a couple prayer 'breathing exercises' I've tried? Not only have these been great for me, but these exercises are also great traditions of the Church that have blessed Christians for centuries. Look them up for more details and try praying them into a regular routine.

- Consider a prayer of contemplation, like we see in Proverbs 46:10: "Be still and know I am God." Take time to rest and ask Him to speak to you in your quietness.
- Or try the "Jesus Prayer." Early Christians would repeat to the rhythm of their breath the phrase, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner."

My prayer for you right now is that you would grow to know Jesus in new ways as you let him breathe new life into your prayers. Just like my friend Andrew and I have grown to be so close, my hope is that you and the Lord will be the same.

discussion questions

Do you set aside time in your day to pray? Have you tried to slow down and just listen to/for God? What are your thoughts about trying to pray like suggested in this devotion?



why do we pray?

BY MATTHEW AULAKH

 @mattaulakh



**"In those days, when you pray, I will listen.
If you look for me wholeheartedly,
you will find me."**

JEREMIAH 29:12-13

lesson **34**

I started skateboarding at thirteen years old. Obsessed with the sport, I spent years watching endless videos, researching each trick's name, and studying professional skaters. I knew their board sizes, the trucks they preferred, and even most of their shoe sizes. I felt like I knew each skater's trick style so well that I could tell you who was skating without even seeing their face. Without ever having a conversation with these professional skaters, I knew a lot about them; but I didn't actually know them.

Similarly, this may often be the case when learning about God. Wanting to understand everything about Him, we may fill our heads with knowledge, but lack the personal experience of getting to know him. Personally knowing God begins when we invite Him into our lives through prayer, asking Jesus for forgiveness of our sins. In doing so, we have a renewed life spent in a relationship with the Creator of the universe.

However, as believers in a busy world, it's easy to deprioritize prayer. Jesus led by example, showing us the importance of setting aside time to connect with God. Luke 5:16 tells us that Jesus often withdrew to the wilderness for prayer. The Son of the living God wanted to be in communication with His Father in Heaven. To do what He did on earth, Jesus Christ would not move forward unless connected to His father in prayer. In the book of Jeremiah, God says He'll meet us when we pray.

Jeremiah 29:12-13 says, "In those days, when you pray, I will listen. If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me." God promises that when we pray, He will listen. That's not all! When we ask Jesus to come into our hearts and begin a relationship with Him, we are not alone! Check out what Romans 8:15-17 says, "So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when He adopted you as His children. Now we call him, 'Abba, Father.' For His Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children." You are not alone; God loves you and He wants to have a rich and life-giving relationship with you. He gives you access to the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead—that same Spirit lives in you when you surrender your life to the Lord!

This week, I encourage you to take time to be still before God. Read Matthew 26:36-46. Ask Him to reveal Himself to you. Don't just talk, but listen; listen to what the God of the universe has to say to you.

discussion questions

What are the things you pray for? What are the things you may be too afraid to pray for? What do you find keeping you from being still before the Lord?



how should we pray?

BY CORY ROMESIER

 @coryromesier



**“I cried out to the Lord,
and He answered me
from His holy mountain.”**

PSALM 3:4

lesson **35**

Remember when you were trying to figure out how to kickflip? You tried going with your instincts on where to put your feet then push down and kick out hoping for the best. More likely than not, you didn't land it, and you probably weren't even that close. Now wondering if you're doing this right at all, you either go to someone you know who can kickflip or watch a how to video online to better understand what you're trying to do. We go through a similar process trying to figure out prayer. We try to get past the awkwardness of feeling like we are talking to ourselves, debate if we are allowed to have our eyes open or closed, or hands together or apart. We get caught up wondering if we are even praying the right way, and that often leads us to just not pray at all.

If you look in the Bible though you will see all kinds of people praying to God in all kinds of ways. Some of them seem to be doing really official prayers, some are shouting, and some are whispering. My favorite way you see someone praying in the Bible is the way David prays in Psalm. You can read Psalm 3 and see a pretty standard way that David prays. I feel the best way to describe how David prays is to say that he is "real" when he prays. Have you ever sat down with a homie and just been real with them about what's going on in your life? That is exactly how God wants us to pray to Him. To just talk to Him and tell Him what you are going through. You see in Psalm 3 that when David does this, God hears him and protects him.

God wants to be involved in your life, so talk to Him and be real with Him. It's really just that simple. Like learning a kickflip, it's going to be a little uncomfortable and foreign at first. Like learning a kickflip from several different people, you're going to be shown so many different ways on how to do it. What really matters whether it is kickflips or praying is that you do it consistently. The more you spend time in prayer, the closer you will become to God. The closer you become with God, the more you begin to understand His heart for not only you, but for others around you as well.

If you are ever unsure of how to pray or where to begin, a solid place to always go back to is the "Lord's Prayer" in Matthew 6:9-13. When Jesus' disciples asked Him how to pray, this was the prayer He invited them to pray. Again, this is just one of many other examples of prayer in the Bible. You will find what works best for you personally as long as you keep at it. How you do it is between you and God; just be real with Him and remember: He wants to hear your voice.

? discussion questions

Is there something in your life that you worry about and haven't taken to prayer? Is there anything in your life that you are hiding from God or are afraid to pray about?



does God listen?

BY DERRICK UNREIN

 @dwreck719



**“I prayed to the Lord,
and He answered me.
He freed me from all my fears.”**

PSALMS 34:4

lesson **36**

If you've been immersed in the skate scene for a while, I'm sure you're familiar with the term "Baker Maker." Baker Makers are those tricks where you land but maybe you had a hand or toe drag. Maybe you snapped your tail as you landed but you still rolled away. Either way, technically speaking, you still landed your trick even though it may have been sloppy. In a similar way to how friends can convince us we didn't really "land" a trick because it wasn't super clean, sometimes we can be worried or concerned that God doesn't hear or listen to our prayers, especially if we aren't used to praying or don't know how to pray the best.

Do you ever wonder if God is really listening? Do you ever ask God, "can you even hear me?" There is a promise in the Bible that when we seek God with all of our heart, we will find him. We can be confident that He hears us, He listens, and He responds like a good father. Over and over in Psalms we are reminded of this promise. "O Lord, hear me as I pray; pay attention to my groaning. Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for I pray to no one but you. Listen to my voice in the morning, Lord. Each morning I bring my requests to you and wait expectantly." (Psalms 5:1-3)

We can go to God with our requests and ask Him for help. Then we need to just wait patiently for an answer. We shouldn't doubt or question if He listens. We need to trust and expect that He will answer. Like a kid that goes to bed on Christmas Eve knowing his parents are loving and will have a gift waiting for him in the morning; not because he has earned it, but because he knows he is loved.

It is comforting to know that God hears our cry for help. When we struggle or when we are going through hard times, we can cry out to God for help and comfort because He is a good father. No father wants to see their kids struggle and be in pain. Cry out to God and be confident He will be there for you.

Check out what David says in Psalm 34:15, "The eyes of the Lord watch over those who do right; his ears are open to their cries for help." That means God pays attention to our prayers. If we go back a few more verses, we see that David sought after the Lord. "Sought" means to seek or to go after something in order to find it. David went to God and God answered his prayer.

So next time you're struggling and are in need of God's help, don't be hesitant to go to Him with your prayers and know that He loves you and hears you. Even if you fumble in your words or take forever to get your words out, God knows exactly what it is you're trying to say. At the end of the day, when our prayers are said and done, our hearts speak louder than our words. So be brave and share your heart with your Creator knowing He loves you and hears you always even if some of your prayers might feel like "Baker Makers."

discussion questions

What issue or circumstance in your life do you need to ask God to help you with? Are there ways that God has already been helping you or working in your life?



what is the church?

BY TOBY DEDDEN
 @toby_dedden



**“And He, Jesus, is the head of the body,
the Church.”**

COLOSSIANS 1:8

lesson **37**

I grew up skating the rough concrete in a coastal town in the South West of England. It was cold, often wet, and it definitely hurt a lot when slamming. There wasn't a local skatepark until about five years into skateboarding for me. This helped me understand that skateboarding is not the skatepark.

It didn't take long to grasp that skateboarding is the people; the skaters, the artists, the creatives, the stokers, the slammers, the filmers, and the committed. Yeah, it was cool when they built a local skatepark, but in my first years of skating, not having one didn't stop me from skating regardless. In fact, it gave me more space to skate creatively instead of restricting myself to a park, and it taught me what the real foundation of skateboarding is: the people.

Paul, the apostle of Jesus who wrote a lot of letters in the New Testament, never describes the Church as a building. Paul tells us that the Church is the people of God—the followers, the determined, the saved, the made-new, the chosen, and the sinners redeemed and forgiven by Jesus. If this is true, then it means that the Church is nowhere near perfect because the church is precisely this: a group of sinners who recognize Jesus' death in their place. Because of this, we don't have to confine our faith to a certain schedule or specific place. Just like we can skate without a skatepark, we can worship God and share the Good News wherever and whenever! Radical!

Imagine seeing your favorite board company put out a full-length film, and by the end of the video you realize that all of it—every trick, every clip—was filmed in a skatepark. You’d be disappointed right? We want to see skateboarding! We want to see stair sets, handrails, grass gaps, and natural quarters. In the same way, imagine the Church, the people of God, doing everything—mission, outreach, serving, fellowship, music, and sermons—in a physical Church building. We are called as the Church to get out there and live for Him in everything—and we can!

Just like skateboarding is more than the physical park, the church is more than the building. The whole community of skateboarding is founded on its people; it's the same for the Church. We have Him with us wherever we go. God is not confined to a building made by human hands, but He is the head of the body of Christ, the Church.

? discussion questions

Do you currently go to church? If not, how come? What is your perception of church? What would it look like for you to be involved in the church like you're active at the skatepark?



the body of Christ.



BY MARK KOCH

 @thekookfamily

“Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ’s body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.”

ROMANS 12:4-5

lesson **38**

One of the things I love most about skateboarding is the diversity it brings—from age, gender, ethnicity, styles, and skill levels...when you go to the skatepark there is so much diversity. When you look around at the park, you’ll never find two skaters that look exactly alike, skate the exact same way, or even have the same style. The reason is this: God has made each and every one of us to be completely unique.

The Church is not just the building, but actually the body of believers all coming together to form “the body of Christ.” It sounds kind of weird, but just like the skatepark isn’t skateboarding, nor is skateboarding just a board itself, skateboarding is defined as the community as a whole; same goes for the church.

If you look at your skateboard you’ll find somewhere around 50 individual pieces that all come together to make a “complete.” But a skateboard wouldn’t be complete if it was lacking the deck, grip tape, bearings, wheels, bolts, trucks, or even the smallest part of your board like the kingpin or pivot cup. Each individual piece is so important to the function of a skateboard. Ephesians 4:16 tells us that “Christ made the whole body to fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.”

In the body of Christ, no one is exactly the same! It may be easy to fall into comparison, however, wishing what you have to bring to the table was as important as someone else's gift. But 1 Corinthians 12:21-22 gives us so much encouragement saying, "The eye can never say to the hand, "I don't need you." The head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you." In fact, some parts of the body that seem weakest and least important are actually the most necessary." Think back to the illustration of the skateboard; the deck can't say to the hardware, "I don't need you!" otherwise the trucks couldn't be attached to the deck! Same with the grip tape. Without it, your deck would be useless while learning flip tricks or while trying to ollie onto a tall rail or hubba. We all have a part to play. Even if you're contribution seems little, I assure you it is vital!

If you have put your faith in Christ and surrendered your life to Him, you are a part of the body of Christ and He has given you unique gifts, talents, and abilities that He calls us to use to serve one another. Can you imagine trying to skate with only seven bearings? Good luck! Just like with a skateboard, your role within the body the Christ is so important. We don't all look alike or have the same function, but the challenge and prayer for you today is to not be the one bearing that is missing in the complete.

discussion questions

Do you feel like you're a part of the Body of Christ? What do you think the body of Christ has to benefit from having you in it? How can you serve the rest of the body in a way that supports it?



why go to church?

BY GAVIN DUERSON

 @gavinduerson



"All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals, including the Lord's Supper, and to prayer."

ACTS 2:42

lesson **39**

There is nothing worse than being at the skatepark and not being able to skate. Whether it be because of an injury or something as simple as forgetting your board, to be at the park and not be able to shred is terrible! An interesting thing about Christianity is how often people "go to church" to spectate, while others actually do things together as a church.

Several years ago, I (along with some other skaters) decided to start a "skate church" at our skate park. At this skate church, we were not about spectating, but participating! Each week we would skate as a way to worship God (the bible says to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, and this doesn't just mean singing) and we would have time to fellowship and do the things that Christians did together in the New Testament.

In the book of Acts, Chapter 2 we read about a thriving church family: "All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer. A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need.

They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.” (Acts 2:42-47)

These are the reasons why we go to church! We go to church in order to be a thriving community in all aspects of our faith, continuously growing closer to God along with one another. Just like at an actual church building, at our skate church we seek to be a group of people who love skating, but more importantly are devoted to:

- 1) Apostles Teachings (reading and understanding the Bible together).
- 2) Fellowship (hanging out regularly and skating throughout the week).
- 3) Breaking bread (we would share and eat lunch together at our skate church every week).
- 4) Prayer. Sometimes your average skateboarder won’t step foot into a physical church building.

For that reason, we decided to bring the church to our skatepark! The setting may look unconventional, but the heart remains the same. We are still devoted to the same things as the early believers were. This skate church is still going to this day and God has done many wonders and signs as a result, and many new skaters at the park have been saved! If you're seeking to know more about God, have fellowship with other believers, or are searching for a place to turn to in times of need: look no further than the church!

discussion questions

How does this verse and story differ from how you have pictured “church”?
Could you see yourself being a part of a church like this at your skatepark?
Who do you know who might also like to be a part of a church like this?





the mission of the church.

BY DAN KLEBES



**“Therefore, go and make disciples of
all the nations, baptizing them in the name
of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”**

MATTHEW 28:19

lesson **40**

Just before Jesus’ ascension to Heaven, He tasked His followers with the mission to make even more followers until His return someday. The only tips given were to teach the new followers just like He had taught them, and He promised they would be filled by the Holy Spirit to do so with power. That word power in the original language of the New Testament is the Greek word “dunami,” from which we get our English words dynamic and dynamite. Indeed, if the disciples went forth in divine spirit and supernatural enthusiasm, they would have dynamic, explosive results. The opposite is true too! If they went out without conviction and drive, there would be little if any results.

I once heard a professional skateboarder say that if someone wants to become pro, they have to go through a period where they totally nerd out on skateboarding; eating, breathing, and living skateboarding. Skating for eight hours a day is what that pro said it takes to get good enough to skateboard professionally.

So, what did the disciples do? Acts 2:42 says that the believers in Jerusalem devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, fellowship, sharing meals together, and to prayer. That’s standard good church activities, but their devotion was far more than just meeting the standards. That Greek word for devotion has as its root in the word “kratos.” You may already be familiar with this word because of the Playstation game, “God of War,” in which the main characters name is also Kratos.

His name was carefully chosen because he is supposed to be the personification of what the word means: power, might, strength, and domination. And that is exactly the kind of devotion the followers of Jesus in Jerusalem were putting forth toward their mission—powerful devotion! Had they slacked in their enthusiasm for their mission, it would have failed!

If you could commit the same time, energy, and devotion to better yet God's mission, as others have made in climbing the ranks in skateboarding, lives would be changed. Even if you put the same amount of devotion in His mission as you did in learning your first kickflip, lives would still be changed. All it takes is for you to be powerfully committed to learning more from God's word, to fellowshiping with other believers, to sharing God's love with any and everyone, and to praying with and without others. Now do what God has called each of us to do and make disciples!

discussion questions

In Acts 2:43-46, how did the followers of Jesus continue carrying out their mission devotion?

In Acts 2:47, what were the results of the powerful devotion of the disciples to their mission?



what is evangelism?

BY TIM STORCK

 @timstorck



"In that wonderful day you will sing, "Thank the Lord! Praise His name! Tell the nations what He has done. Let them know how mighty He is!"

ISAIAH 12:4

lesson **41**

How many times have you landed a new trick and the first thing you do is either tell someone or post it on Instagram? This is normal for us all to do because we love skateboarding and we want to tell people about the thing we love. We want to share where this thing has taken us, and what it has done for us.

Telling people about something you love is what evangelism is all about. In Isaiah 12:4, it says, "In that wonderful day you will sing: "Thank the Lord! Praise his name! Tell the nations what he has done. Let them know how mighty he is!" When we have a relationship with God, turned our life over to Him, and personally witnessed what He can do, we can't help but want to share it with everyone. Just like sharing that new trick you just learned, you should want to share about God's love to everyone. You should be so excited about it that you are yelling it from the rooftops, or maybe do today's equivalent instead and post it on Instagram!

Take a moment and ask yourself if you've ever shared your faith with any of your friends or family. Remember, there was a time when someone shared the good news of Jesus with you, and that is why you believe today! It can be scary or uncomfortable to share your faith in Jesus with others, but isn't it worth it?

Romans 1:16 says "For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes." How encouraging is it to know that salvation is a gift for everyone who believes!

Let us live lives that are unashamed of the good news of Jesus saving us from our sins. If we are bold and unashamed, then we can share the good news of Jesus with others. The next time you land something new and get all excited about it, ask yourself this: do I have that same excitement about sharing God's love to all those you come in contact with? Then get out there and boldly proclaim His name to all!

discussion questions

Have you ever found an awesome street spot and couldn't help but to tell your buddies about it? Could you imagine keeping a secret street spot a secret? Of course not! How does this same thought process roll over into your faith? How can you be more excited about evangelism?



do we need to evangelize?

BY MATT RAMILLER

 @radmiller



“Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”

MATTHEW 28:19

lesson **42**

Can you think of a time when you found a new skate spot or skated an amazing park and couldn't wait to tell your friends about it? Maybe you watched a gnarly skate video, and afterwards sent the link to a homie or two so they could watch it? It's easy to talk about our passions and things we enjoy! In the same way we talk about skate spots, good food, and our accomplishments, we can talk about Jesus and the amazing things he's done for us. How could we not?

If you are a Christian, are you called to evangelize? My quick answer would be yes—at least if we want to obey our Savior. As a follower of Christ, my desire is to fulfill His calling on my life; I'm sure you feel the same way if you're a believer as well. With that said, I don't think that it would be good for us to go about evangelizing just because "we have to" or even worse, doing it out of guilt. We should do it because we genuinely love Jesus and those we're telling about Him.

What if we looked at evangelism this way: The Bible says in Ephesians 2:10, "For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago." He has already prepared the evangelism He wants you to do in advance! The question is this: will we take the opportunities He gives and do it? What helps us recognize and seize these opportunities is to talk to God in prayer. The more time we spend in prayer, the more our hearts become aligned with His; as a result the more we simply begin to share the Good News because it's naturally flowing from us!

Think back to the time when you first began to believe in Jesus. What was going on in your life at that time? How different is your life now compared to before accepting Jesus as your Lord and Savior? A lot of us can agree, Jesus changed our lives in the best way possible. If you have experienced the life-changing love of Jesus—just like you may have encountered the most surreal skate spot—why on earth would we not spread the word?

discussion questions

What part of your faith are you most excited about sharing? What is the hardest part about sharing your faith?



how do we evangelize?



BY JUD HEALD

 @judheald

“Then he asked them, “But who do you say I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

MATTHEW 16:15-16

lesson **43**

Have you ever been the first one within your skate crew to land a new trick? Your friends get hyped for you and quickly begin asking you how to do it themselves. Wanting them to experience the same stoke you just discovered, you begin showing them the proper foot placement and motions to execute the trick. In a similar way, the same hype we have over landing skate tricks and sharing our knowledge with our friends is how we can go about sharing our faith.

I grew up in the church but didn't fully give my life to the Lord until I was around Junior High age. I turned pro in 1998 but was given the chance to skate in the Tampa Am contest in 1996. Just like Luke 6:45 says, "What you say flows from what is in your heart." After giving my life to Christ, I couldn't help but talk about my love for Him. I was especially stoked to share my faith through the opportunities Tampa Pro brought me. When I think about the question, "How should we evangelize?" I always come back to the thought that we naturally share the things we enjoy. When you watch an awesome movie, or eat at a restaurant that has amazing food, you naturally invite and share that experience with those closest to you.

Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 9:16, "Yet preaching the Good News is not something I can boast about. I am compelled by God to do it. How terrible for me if I didn't preach the Good News!" Paul is saying that if we truly love Christ with our whole heart—then we become compelled to talk about Him. It becomes something we're excited about and love doing instead of feeling obligated.

We will never talk about the things we've never experienced, but the deeper our relationship with God grows and the more we experience Him, the more we will want to share the Good News of the hope found in Him with others. Romans 1:16 says, "For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes—the Jew first and also the Gentile." Just like sharing a skate spot or a clip after you get a new trick, we're called to share what God has done in our life with those around us. Remember, sharing those things is always done naturally and out of excitement. Sharing your faith is no different at all!

? discussion questions

Do you find it difficult to share your faith? Do you feel like you're obligated to talk about God or are you excited to talk to others about your faith and/or share the Gospel?



why do we evangelize?

BY LYLE WALL

 @iballeph6



“So we are Christ’s ambassadors; God is making His appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, “Come back to God!”

2 CORINTHIANS 5:20

lesson **44**

Imagine you are at a skate spot that has nice stairs, a ledge, and a perfect size rail, but the rail is jacked up and the bolts are barely holding the rail to the ground making it super wobbly. You know the rail is unsafe because you’ve been here before. Some dudes roll up hoping to film and get clips on this rail, but they’ve never been there and don’t know the rail is unsafe. No doubt you would tell these guys, “Bro, don’t try to hit that rail it’s jacked up and you will get wrecked on it.”

It’s the same as if you were at the bottom of a hill someone was bombing. From your position you can see there is a car heading towards the same intersection. Now, of course you would be screaming and yelling for them to stop because you see the danger up ahead of them; you would do everything in your power to keep them from getting plowed over by the car. In both situations, neither one of these people can see the danger that lies ahead of them, but you know of the danger. You can warn them and keep them from extreme harm, or even death.

2 Corinthians 5:20 states that we are ambassadors for Christ. What does that mean? It means we are his spokesmen and his representatives, almost like He is our sponsor and we represent him by being His ambassadors. We know the danger that lies ahead for all mankind who is outside of Christ. Just as in these examples we know the danger that is ahead of both skaters. Romans 3:23 states, “For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard.” Romans 6:23 says, “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.”

As His ambassadors, we don't only know the danger ahead, but we also know the solution! Think about it if you had the cure for Covid19 during the pandemic—wouldn't you want to share it? We would want everyone to know the cure, the antidote, and the solution to the problem.

We must remember there is a world of people out there that are already condemned—people that don't even know they are in danger. There is a world in desperate need to know the solution to the danger that awaits them. We are not talking about a simple danger of a wobbly rail, a deadly intersection, or even a virus that shuts down the entire world. We are talking about the danger of an eternity separated from God.

Here is something crazy to think about: God doesn't need us. The beautiful thing is He chooses to use us. Throughout the Bible, we see God using His people to do amazing things to display His love and share His beautiful message. One of the most miraculous things to see is God glorifying Himself and changing people's lives; what's even more mind blowing is being used by Him as He does so. It's a great feeling to teach someone a new trick or to take them to a new spot and encourage them on as they progress to their next level of skating, but even better than that, we are tools in the hands of our beautiful Creator. We are placed in a world of hurting and dying people, headed towards an eternity apart from God.

But we know the answer; we hold the cure, the vaccine, the solution. Let us be armed with love and led by His spirit and the truth of His word. Take His good news to the streets, the skateparks, the schools, our workplaces, neighborhoods, our communities, cities, across the country, and around the world for His glory, for their Salvation, and for our joy in Jesus' name!

discussion questions

Are you willing to share the love of Christ with someone you know or don't know? What would make you more comfortable with sharing the good news of Jesus?



doing life together.



BY JAKE RENY
@jakereny

“Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of His return is drawing near.”

HEBREWS 10:24-25

lesson 45

The statement “doing life together” is such a skater’s way of living. We can all remember in our younger years how skateboarding consumed all of us. We only wanted to hang out at our local park, and we looked up to the older skaters learning from their style and finesse. You could even say we were getting disciplined in the skate world. In the skate community, it doesn’t matter your age, gender, or skill level. It doesn’t matter what you look like or how you dress. It doesn’t matter where you’re from or if you speak the same language. The culture speaks volumes of encouragement.

With that being said, how are we, as Christians, called to do life alongside the community and represent Jesus? If we look at Jesus and the disciples, they were out in the streets for most of their ministry, and the religious leaders at the time weren’t too stoked on it. Jesus spoke with the prostitutes, ate with the tax collectors, told radical parables to unbelievers, and healed the sick. He was with the people doing life, yet He was continually questioned by the Pharisees about if what He was doing was right.

As Christian skaters we are called to go out into the culture of skating and preach the Gospel, building up disciples in the skate communities around us. What if it looks a little different than your

typical church outreach? The Church's outreach methods are a bit different than how Christian skateboarders do outreach and ministry, but both methods are being used with the same drive and purpose: to display Jesus' love for sinners. We obviously can't sugar coat the Gospel, but we can be real and intentional with other skaters when it comes to walking it out in life. We need to be out in the streets beside them and bring the encouragement that can only come from the Holy Spirit. By doing so it creates such a solid foundation to represent Jesus in the way that is unique to you as an individual, and others will see and notice it just like it says in Matthew 5:14,16. If skaters aren't willing to go to Church, we should be bringing the church to them! Remember: Jesus didn't gather around people and say, "I'M GOD, REPENT NOW!" He told parables to those who needed to hear it and were willing to listen. He spoke with love, compassion, and told stories that resonated to sinners.

Represent Jesus in the skate community, and know you don't have to force Jesus into the skate community. If you are following in His footsteps His light will clearly shine threw you and all will notice. It's okay that it takes time and trust to be able to have deep, genuine conversations. Once you are able to build relationships and trust with skateboarders to have those conversations about Jesus and God, it's no longer in your hands. When you're able to speak truth into their lives, you need to leave space for God to enter in.

Remember, you're a pioneer. You're a seed planter. You can't force a tree to sprout up and be healthy. It takes time, effort, and life. So does sharing the Gospel. You show them who Jesus is, and they have the choice to seek him. You're bringing spiritual safety to skateboarders by simply doing life together.

discussion questions

Do you believe that God is living beside you offering you love and grace? Are you willing to share that with someone?



teaching others.

BY JOHN HOCUTT

 @truthrider



**“Dear brothers and sisters,
pattern your lives after mine, and
learn from those who follow our example.”**

PHILIPPIANS 3:17

lesson **46**

Over ten years ago my friend Michael asked me to check out a Wednesday night student service to consider possibly serving and teaching with him. I was already working with younger kids, including three of my own. Because I respected Michael, I reluctantly agreed to come by. I found myself gravitating to the skaters because I grew up skateboarding and had an idea of how to connect with them. Little did I know what that would lead me to do for the next decade and more.

The next few weeks, months, and years passed by as I continued to hang out with the crowd at the skate park and started skating more myself. I learned the current lingo, culture, and even a few tricks. The kids—along with some younger adults—became my friends and they showed me what skating was all about. I got to know them and learned from them. I showed them I cared and stood up for them when very few others would over the years. What I also did was point them to Jesus and the Word of God. I showed them love first, then I told them where my love came from. It was like a family of misfits caring for each other.

I didn't really fit in their mold because I was much older than them and they didn't really fit in with the regular crowd that was their age. So we were a lot alike, but also very different. This is what it looked like for Jesus and His disciples too! They each had different backgrounds and professions, and a lot of them were on the younger side. They may have been seen as uneducated misfits, but

they devoted themselves to one another and to following Jesus' model for them daily. Doing life together daily is how they managed to grow continuously in their faith.

As we lived together each week, I kept seizing opportunities to teach them and point them to Jesus. One of the best ways to teach them was by leading not just with words but through actions. We took trips to contests, local and far away parks, ate lots of pizza, spent time together reading the Word, doing God's will. That is what discipleship really is: spending time first with God by reading His word, listening, and praying, then spending time and sharing with your neighbor. Teaching is best done when you can lead by example.

Since those early days, many skaters have passed through that park. The park itself has gone through many changes but one thing that hasn't changed is the discipleship. Even after all of these years, teaching those skaters is still my passion. Teaching others is only limited by your willingness to meet others where they are at.

? discussion questions

What does discipleship look like for you at your local skatepark? Do you have someone pouring into you? Is there someone that you could be pouring into?



setting an example.



BY DANNY GLUSKIE

 @dannygluskie

“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.”

ROMANS 12:2

lesson **47**

When you make the decision to follow Christ, your life will naturally start to change in a good way. Just like when you decided to skateboard, you spent time taking in what skateboarding is all about. You do this so you can understand it for yourself and transform into a skateboarder.

For someone who has made the choice to be a follower of Christ, the transformation often starts with the words we speak. Our new guide—the Holy Spirit living inside of us—will begin to challenge us about what we say and when we should say it. It might be foul language, lying, or words spoken out of anger. When we speak or act in a way that might be against what God would want for His children, He challenges us to live how He would want. Romans 12:2 says it perfectly: “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.”

When I was 12, I made the choice to start skateboarding. When I finally got a skateboard, the desire in my heart to skate grew. I ended up changing the way I talked as I began to learn what different tricks were called. My desire to progress led to staying up late every night to skateboard. My actions

made each of these choices a reality because of who I wanted to become. If I didn't make these steps there is no way I could've become a true skateboarder.

It takes time to figure out what God would want and how to love others the way He would. It starts with a daily decision to turn our focus to God who will start to transform us into that good, pleasing, and perfect person in His eyes. Day by day, as we allow God to transform our minds towards what He wants, our hearts' desires will naturally change.

Now as a follower of Jesus, you will start to walk and talk differently and people will see that change occur in your life. As you live in God's leading each day, you will naturally start to set a better example to others because you will look more like Christ.

Paul, a devoted follower of Christ, challenges the Philippians to put everything into practice that he has shown them because of his confidence in his relationship with the Lord. He took everything Jesus said and did, and applied it to his own life. He showed us it was possible to live our life completely for Christ and how good it is to do so. The only way to make it happen means that you need to open your Bible and follow those leading you closer to Christ, so that you may lead others to Him with you.

discussion questions

Who is someone you look up to as a good example of a Christ follower and what makes them a good example? If people followed the example you set at the skatepark, what would they look like?



the great commission.

BY DAVE ENGERER

 @david_ryan_engerer



“Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

MATTHEW 28:18-20

lesson **48**

All skateboarders—whether you are a professional or a younger guy skating in the driveway with your friends—have been told a command at one point or another; typically, “do a kickflip!” or “grind that rail!” I remember when I was in sixth grade all of my friends were shouting for me to FS boardslide the biggest rail at the skatepark right before it was closing time. I was so nervous, but the more I delayed, the shouts got louder: “do it!” They were not suggesting that I go for it, they were commanding! If you are a follower of Jesus, we too as Christians have been given not only a suggestion, but a command by the Lord Jesus Himself!

In Mark 16:15, Jesus leaves His disciples with this challenge, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.”

Today more than ever, it has become popular for Christians to keep to themselves and to avoid sharing the Gospel because it could offend others. Yes, it can be uncomfortable at times to share with people, but we must remember that not only is Jesus commanding us to share (yes, a command—not merely a recommendation), but also remember that if we truly care for the loved ones in our lives, we should be eager to share the Good News of the Gospel, so that they can have the hope of Heaven and be saved.

As Christians, we must recall when Jesus said that we are the light of the world, and we are to let our light shine before men, not to let our light be hidden under a basket out of sight. (Matthew 5:15-16) Evangelizing—or sharing the Gospel with everybody we can—is what the Great Commission is, along with helping new believers grow in their walk with the Lord (making disciples).

If we all look back on when we first got saved, there is somebody who once stepped out of their comfort zone to share the Gospel with us. Jesus commands us to do the same and the Lord will honor us for responding. So, let's choose to take a moment and think of those friends around us who still need to hear the Good News! The Good News that despite our sinfulness and separation from God, the Lord still is willing to forgive and save. He sent his Son to take our place on the cross, so that we may be dead to sin, and alive to God.

discussion questions

Where would you be if no one had ever shared the Gospel with you? What intimidates you about being commanded to go into the world to share the Gospel?



the cost of discipleship.

BY NATHANIEL MUENCH

 @nmuench



“If you refuse to take up your cross and follow me, you are not worthy of being mine. If you cling to your life, you will lose it; but if you give up your life for me, you will find it.”

MATTHEW 10:38-39

lesson **49**

One of the things Jesus talked about in His time on earth was what it meant to be a true follower of Him. Many people today think that if they become a Christian then they will have an easy, stress-free life. Sadly, that's just not the truth. Even Jesus said in John 16:33, “I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.”

I'll be honest in saying that life won't be easy at times; it will have its challenges, but one thing remains: God's faithfulness. He promises never to leave us or forsake us. Because of this promise, we can rest secure. So what does this cost? We were not meant to simply cruise through life, but we were meant to live in relationship with God and others. As we grow deeper with the Lord and others, God, through the Holy Spirit, will begin to lead us more and more into His heart. He will bring things to mind that need to be dealt with or lead us into other places. There is a quote by a guy named Keith Green that says, “To obey is better than sacrifice.” We can give up our skateboarding, our camera, or our art, but this is meaningless unless we are in relationship with the Lord. To obey is the key. Sometimes it's hard. Sometimes He does ask us to give up stuff, but He loves us and obedience will simply bring us closer to His heart and a deeper relationship with Him.

So what is the cost of discipleship? Obedience. Listening to the Lord and following Him. It's not always going to be easy, but if anyone knows about challenges, skaters definitely do. As skateboarders, we can understand these challenges in a different way. We see the world in a different light than everyone else; we may fall 1,000 times on a trick but we're still gonna get up and try it again until we stick it. When we cruise through the streets, jump up curbs, bomb hills, avoid cracks, and hit ledges, we know how to get up. We will also have slams while following Jesus—sometimes it's going to hurt, but God is still active and He cares for us.

Discipleship is a lifelong journey with God. It will be gnarly, it will be costly, but it's totally worth it! When things don't go according to plan, we need to trust that He is still in control. Don't get me wrong, it's not all tough suffering, but it's a beautiful journey with God. When you look back from where you started, you will see the most amazing journey. When you film a part, it's filled with ups and downs, joys and bummers, and you wonder if it's worth it; but when you see the finished video, you finally look back and realize it was.

discussion questions

Have you counted the cost to follow Jesus? Are you willing to pay the price of discipleship?





applying the truth.

BY NOAH ARNOLD

 @noahgarnold



**“Anyone who listens to my teaching
and follows it is wise, like a person
who builds a house on solid rock.”**

MATTHEW 7:24

lesson **50**

We all love the feeling of landing a trick on smooth ground, right? The feeling when you land bolts and the board is dialed under your feet? It's definitely like a solid rock and a strong foundation to roll away clean and feel the stoke of landing a trick.

As we grow in our faith, it's important to remember that we need to build that solid foundation. We need to build our house on the rock. We live in a crazy world and as we grow older and in our faith, it is not surprising when the storm comes. When those storms come in life, will your house be built on a solid rock or on the sand? Will you listen to God's teaching and follow Him?

It is easy to get knocked down if your life is not built on a solid foundation. Always put yourself in a healthy atmosphere and around healthy people who love you, love God, and are making choices that will build that foundation brick by brick. The Bible makes this clear in Matthew 7:24-27 your house (your life) won't collapse because it was built on a solid foundation. But be careful, because it also warns that your life will collapse when the rains and floods come if you build your house on sand. The only way you can guarantee that you're building upon a rock and not sand is if you live purposefully. Don't live idly, following the flow of society, but rather challenge what is normal. Converse with God daily about every aspect of your life expecting an answer. Read the Bible, so that you may continue to know who He was and remains to be.

Find others who will keep you accountable to following truth. When I say truth I mean that "God sent His Son, Jesus, into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through Him." John 3:17, and it continues to say in verse 21, "Those who do what is right come to the light so others can see that they are doing what God wants." What God wants is for us to experience His love, and for us to show it to those who don't know it yet.

I pray that you may keep your eyes on God, gain wisdom through Jesus Christ, and invest in a healthy church where you have solid people around you lifting you up. Everyday you learn something new about God or how He instructs us to live with others; look for opportunities to put what you're reading and learning about into practice! Then you will see the Kingdom of God invade your daily life.

discussion questions

What are your priorities as you navigate through this crazy life? What kind of house do you think you're building now? What choices can you make to start building your life on a solid foundation?



entering the mission.

BY ERWIN JADRAQUE

 @erwinstaholic



"Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

MATTHEW 28:19-20

lesson **51**

As skaters, there's often a mission when we go out to skate. Maybe our mission for the day is to land a new trick. The mission could be to film some clips for a video. The mission could even be just to hang out with friends and have fun skating together. In the same way that we have a mission for skating, we have a mission as Christians.

We have a mission and our mission is known as the "Great Commission." The Great Commission is one of the last things that Jesus said to the church. Jesus commissioned us to make disciples, baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and to teach them to faithfully follow all that Jesus has commanded us. So many people want to know what their purpose in life is, and I believe that our purpose is to fulfill the Great Commission—to know God and to make Him known.

This is the mission of a Christian: to fulfill this command that Jesus gave us. In order to do this, we must be willing to share the Gospel with boldness. We need to be willing to challenge new believers

to get baptized. Lastly, and probably most difficult, we must commit ourselves to training and equipping new believers into disciple makers. It takes a great deal of time to teach someone all that Jesus has taught you, but that is what Jesus calls us to do. Imagine trying to teach another skater every trick you've ever learned. It would take time but eventually they would get it.

Wherever we are and whatever we do, we must always have the Great Commission on the forefront of our minds. Our purpose isn't only to know Jesus' love, but to share it with others and to teach them; to invite others into a relationship with Jesus. The best part about this commission is how it's a co-mission, meaning it is a mission we do WITH Jesus. We don't go at it alone!

A challenge I'd like to extend, is to think about someone that you can reach out to and invite them to follow Jesus. This can start simply by just inviting them to hang out with you. Maybe invite them to go skate with you at the park. Maybe go grab lunch. I've heard it said that true discipleship is spelled, T.I.M.E. At the end of the day, find someone who you can spend quality time with and I'm confident that your faith in Christ and love for Him will overflow into their life as well.

discussion questions

Who is someone that you can intentionally pursue spending time with? Where do you feel like God is calling you to help fulfill the great commission?



keeping the faith.



BY TRISTAN STRANGE

 @tristanthechristianskater

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**“I have fought the good fight,
I have finished the race,
and I have remained faithful.”**

2 TIMOTHY 4:7

lesson **52**

There are many different types of skating. From street to vert, freestyle to slalom, and even downhill. But one type of skating people sometimes forget about is long distance skating. Some guys train for months on end to enter a competition that even the best pro skaters would never dare to enter. These guys skate hundreds of miles on their skateboards. Some would call that insanity but the ones who do it, love it.

The Guinness world record for the longest journey by skateboard is 12,159 km (7,555 miles) and was completed by Rob Thomson in 2007. He rode from Switzerland to China. When interviewed on the radio by an NPR reporter, Rob said, "You really have to pay attention to what you're doing, one push at a time." It's with that same principle that we can answer the question, "How can we as Christian have any hope of "finishing the race" as Timothy puts it?" Simply put: one day at a time.

We are not promised tomorrow, so live like you are at the finish line, trusting that the Lord is with you at every moment. Picture this, Jesus Christ is with you in every moment of every day, when you get up, at work, at the skatepark, wherever you are His presence is there too. Would you worry about the same things? Of course not, because the King of Kings is there with you. The key to fighting the good fight and finishing the race is understanding what Jesus said in John 16:7: "But in fact, it is best for you that I go away, because if I don't, the Advocate won't come. If I do go away, then I will send

Him to you." What Jesus is saying is that we need to trust the Holy Spirit in that same way. The Holy Spirit of God is the only reason we can fight at all; without Christ's spirit we're not even in the race. (John 6:44)

He is our strength, so learn to lean on Him and Him alone. He is the one sustaining us and championing us forward! In Hebrews 12:1 it says, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us." So keep pushing, keep praying, and keep seeking, because Christ is the only way to the Father. Keep your eyes on Jesus and you'll be just fine, no matter what the situation is.

? discussion questions

What weight or sin is holding you back from running the race with everything you have? Do you think that you have the endurance it takes to keep the faith?





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