

Believers World Outreach Church

Vision Weekend: Night of Vision (January 5, 2024)

We're making time this weekend to remember: Our vision is Jesus!

Before we begin, take time to prepare yourself personally with these reflection prompts.

- 1. Write a simple prayer to God about this year.**
- 2. Write a personal declaration for your year from God's Word.**
- 3. Write an action plan to make the most of Vision Weekend.**

Tonight, we're remembering WHY we follow Jesus as a way of life, and HOW we're following Jesus together as a community of believers.

Here's a prayer for 2024 from Psalm 24.

1 The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell therein. 2 For He has founded it upon the seas, And established it upon the waters. 3 Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who may stand in His holy place? 4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, Nor sworn deceitfully. 5 He shall receive blessing from the Lord, And righteousness from the God of his salvation. 6 This is Jacob, the generation of those who seek Him, Who seek Your face. Selah

7 Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. 8 Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle. 9 Lift up your heads, O you gates! Lift up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. 10 Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory.

This weekend, we're making time to remember: Our vision is Jesus.
Here's an Irish hymn written by a believer over 1200 years ago...

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
naught be all else to me, save that thou art—
thou my best thought by day or by night,
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord;
thou my great Father, I thy true son;
thou in me dwelling, and I with thee one.

Be thou my battle shield, sword for my fight;
be thou my dignity, thou my delight,
thou my soul's shelter, thou my high tow'r:
raise thou me heav'n-ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise,
thou mine inheritance, now and always:

thou and thou only, first in my heart,
High King of heaven, my treasure thou art.
High King of heaven, my victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heav'n's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

Christ be with you, Christ within you
Christ Christ before you,
Christ beside you, Christ to win you,
Christ to comfort and restore you,
Christ beneath you, Christ above you,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love you,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger
Amen Amen

VISION WEEKEND | Night of Vision (Guide)
Believers World Outreach Church | BWOC.online

To start 2024, we'll be asking two questions: WHY is Jesus worth following as a way of life, and HOW can we follow Jesus together this year?

The first question is:

Why is Jesus worth following as a way of life?

Here are three reasons, among many more, why we're convinced that following Jesus as a way of life is worth it...

Reason Number 1: Jesus is our foundation.

Here is an example of what we mean. Look at the **Apostles' Creed**, which is a historically resilient summary of what Christians have believed for generations.

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic (universal) Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Amen.

See, **Jesus is the foundation that His Church is built on.** That's why we follow the life pattern of **gathering** for Christ in communities that He defines as Church.

Ephesians 2:19-21

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

If you're considering following Jesus as a way of life, it looks like **gathering** with other believers as a foundational part of your life.

Throughout history, Jesus followers have gathered despite hardships. Gathering takes on many forms, but the foundation is always the same — Jesus is the Christ.

Matthew 16:15-19

He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.

And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Take Time For Reflection:

Reason Number 2: Jesus is our focus.

Life itself gives witness to the reality and reign of Jesus, and so does every believer's life as well.

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Romans 1:20

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse...

Colossians 1:15-20

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.

For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

The phrase Christ-centered is a helpful way to describe the believers perspective and priority in life. Jesus is not just the center of attention; He holds everything together!

Believers have witnessed Jesus as the focus of life and therefore their life focus for centuries. This messaging is summed up as the Gospel (Good News) about God's Kingdom.

The idea of witness can get lost on us, even long-time believers. However, it (witnessing) is good news and good works combined. **Both** communicate the powerful reality of Jesus' leadership in our lives and world.

Take Time For Reflection:

Reason Number 3: Jesus is our future.

Throughout History, believers have lived and died with their confidence in Jesus' resurrection.

John 20:19-20

Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

1 Peter 1:3

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead...

At the core, Jesus followers believe that His resurrection from death is not just a past-tense event but a future-tense reality. The same Jesus who lived and died over 2,000 years ago will return to our modern world in His resurrected form.

That's why believers **work** harder and happier with this ultimate hope.

Titus 2:11-14

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

If you're considering how to really follow Jesus as a way of life, it involves hopeful and urgent work. We are partners with Christ now. We have been saved from sin and death's claim, and in turn we are saved for a grand purpose, Jesus' new creation!

Take Time For Reflection:

In review, yes, Jesus is worth following as a way of life. **He is our foundation, our focus, and our future.** That's why we see believers in every generation and many nations continue to **worship, witness and work** in His Name.

Following Jesus is worth it. It's a way of life, and it's also a life-changing movement. That's because Jesus calls us to Himself and leads us as a spiritual family on mission.

The same way God led His covenant community through the wilderness like a Shepherd guiding his flock of sheep (Psalm 78:52-53), God leads us to mature spiritually in Christ (Hebrews 6:1) as Church.

Our journey with Jesus is personal, and as we grow, we move on towards maturity until we get out of the way so others can follow Jesus, too.

If following Jesus together is the vision (Mark 1:17), then helping other people follow Him is the mission (1 Corinthians 11:1).

The second question is:

How are we following Jesus together this year?

Believers World Outreach Church | Vision, Mission, and Values

- We live+give because of Jesus.
- Because of Jesus, we can belong in family, believe with community, and become ambassadors for the city.
- To learn more, go to **BWOC.Online**.

1 - We Live+Give Because Of Jesus

Vision is where we're going (and who we're becoming).

Our vision is Jesus, who is building up His Church to live and give the Gospel of the Kingdom in His Name. The Gospel of the Kingdom is the reality of Jesus' resurrection, reign in every generation and every nation, which leads us to renewed life and the realized promise of Heaven on earth.

Like Revelation 7:9-11, our hope is to see a vibrant, strong church community of believers, multigenerational and multiethnic, following Jesus Christ into Kingdom-minded maturity with victorious faith and generous love.

As a family church with a heart for the world, we get to share Jesus' heartbeat...

- Sharing Jesus' Heart for His House (revived families and generations).
- Sharing Jesus' Heart for His Harvest (transformed cities and nations).

We are a Great Commandment community (loving God, loving people) with a Great Commission culture (making disciples, discipling nations).

To learn more, you can find our BWOC creed and beliefs.

2 - Because of Jesus, we can Belong, Believe, Become...

Mission is how we get there (personally and practically)!

Our mission is from Jesus, who is expanding His Kingdom through forgiven/grateful people who believe in Him and obey His leadership. Our mission is made of the values and spiritual habits that we practice to "live+give because of Jesus."

1) Because of Jesus, we can all 2) belong in family, 3) believe with community, and 4) become ambassadors for the city.

1. **Because of Jesus** - We gather as a Christ-centered community in a way that models the Gospel.

- a. **Sunday Celebrations** - plan to worship with us on Sundays at 10:30am
- b. **Special Events** - register for any of our upcoming special events
- c. **The Journey** - explore the Bible, experience the Gospel
- d. **Believers On-Board** - learn more about Jesus and how to follow Him with a church community
- e. **Serve Team** - use your gifts to serve and build up others

2. **Belong in family** – We grow in the Gospel and relationships by making disciples family-style.

- a. **Water Baptism** - follow Jesus in water baptism
- b. **Mid-Week Connection** - stay connected online with short conversations on Wednesdays
- c. **Faith Families** - experience an evening with a faith family near you
 - i. **Gospel growth** - the real, lasting life-change that happens when we follow Jesus as a way of life.
 - ii. **Generation growth** - the maturity and multiplication that happens when the Gospel is growing from one faith family to many others.
- d. **Faith Family Nights** - register for these special events made with your faith and family in mind
 - i. **Forge Men** - forging men in the character of Christ to be strong in their faith, family, fitness and finances
 - ii. **Sparkle Ladies** - inspiring women to set a shining example of faith, hope, and love
 - iii. **NextGen (Next Generation)** - following Jesus whole-heartedly and influencing the future

3. **Believe with community** – We give our time to pray and worship the LORD, ministering to Him and others.

- a. **Encountering Holy Spirit** - experience lasting freedom and empowerment to live+give for Jesus
 - b. **House of Prayer** - join church-wide commitments to worship the LORD and pray together
 - c. **House of Prayer Nights** - encounter the LORD during extended times of church-wide worship and prayer
 - d. **Prayer Streams** - grow in intercession with prayer coaches
 - e. **Ministry Teams** - get trained and serve with a ministry team
4. **Become ambassadors for the city – We go out as servant leaders who seek transformation in our workplaces and cities.**
- a. Transformational Leadership - become transformed as a leader to serve and seek transformation in your sphere of influence
 - b. Transformation Nights - meet with Kingdom-minded believers in marketplace ministry that care about growing in transformational leadership
 - c. Biblical Studies for Life & Leadership - get equipped in a fully-developed training program from Texas Bible Institute

Make sure you're a member of **BWOC.online**.

1. Grow in faith with Bible-based tools and teachings.
2. Find access to meaningful opportunities to ministry and community.
3. Stay active with Believers World Outreach Church.
4. Give one-time or consistently to partner with this ministry.