

BEYOND SUNDAY GUIDE | “In the Habit” | Jan. 9 - Feb. 6, 2022

Worship Series Synopsis

Have you ever made a successful change in your life? Perhaps you wanted to exercise more, eat less, or change jobs? Think about the time and attention you dedicated to the process.

A lot, right? Change is hard. Creating effective life habits, particularly those dealing with issues of faith is like any lifestyle change. Setting our intentions and adjusting what we spend our time doing is essential. It's all about building new habits. Sometimes the hardest part is just getting started. The good news is, there's an abundance of resources just waiting to empower each of us towards being the bridge of healing and wholeness that the world needs. Our greatest resource is our relationship with Jesus Christ. God has graced us with an abundance of gifts to transform our lives as we transform the world into the Kingdom of God. 2022 is the year to Build Bridges towards wholeness.



Resources:

For starters, the idea of “Habits” reminds me several books about Habits, which might offer themselves as potential resources for us.

- *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen Covey – This book has sold more than 25 million copies since its original publication in 1989.
- *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*, by Robert Bellah, et al. 1985 – A sociological look on what will/could happen if our US cultural habits swing too far toward individualism and consumerism.
- *Healing the Heart of Democracy: The Courage to Create a Policies Worthy of the Human Spirit* by Parker J. Palmer – By one of my favorite theological thinkers of our time, this resource has two sections of habit exploration in both our individual life and our public life
- *Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones* by James Clear – A short and accessible book, this #1 New York Times best seller offers practical ways to make micro-changes to impact the systems where our habits are formed.

A Note from Your Pastor:



The GPS (*Grow – Pray - Serve/Show Up*) is designed to be for you to use on your own, in your small group, and/or with your family. It is a practical tool for you to engage more deeply with your faith journey in addition to our weekly worship. Put the guide somewhere that you know you will physically encounter it each day – the bathroom mirror, the fridge, your workspace, etc. Make it a daily habit to look at the guide during the week and prayerfully see what God is waiting to show you. This is how we Build Bridges toward wholeness – by collectively taking time each day to be with God united in shared prayer and action. We'd love to hear and see how this guide is impacting your life. Share pictures and testimony on our social media (or if social media isn't your thing, write a note and drop it by the church office!).

Date	Theme	Scripture	Notes	GPS
Jan 9	In the Habit Mindful Setting Intention	Phil 4:8-9 (whatever is true, whatever is honorable ...) Pop Verse: Phil 4:13	Who we hang out with matters a lot. It's been said that we are the average of the five people we hang out with most! This week we're going to begin a conversation about why it is important that at least one of those people we hang out with is Jesus.	<p>Reflection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your current spiritual habits? • Are those habits meeting your needs? • What do you notice in this passage from the Philippians? <p>Pray & Apply</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set aside time to reflect on your habits. In prayer, ask God to strengthen the habits of your heart, and join you in ditching what doesn't serve you.
Jan 16	Dwelling	Psalm 1:1-3 (Happy are those whose ... delight is in the law of the LORD)	<p>You're an apprentice of Jesus. That raises an important question. As an apprentice of Jesus, how will you dwell in God's Word in ways that help that Word dwell in you? What does it look like to make dwelling in God's Word a habit in your life?</p> <p>Wondering how our dwelling with God also speaks to the dwelling that others don't physically have. This year's MLK observance let us work to ensure that others have safe dwellings too.</p>	<p>The more we pray, the more we make prayer into a daily habit. Praying often brings to mind an image of God. Our image of God and our image of prayer are intimately linked. We are going to look at different avenues of prayer, new opportunities to form new habits of prayer.</p> <p>Reflection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who taught you to pray? • When do you pray? • Think of a time someone prayed for you <p>Pray & Apply</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set a daily reminder to pray for 1 min at the same time everyday. See how many days in a row you can meet God in a moment.

Jan 23	Worship	Psalm 34 (I will bless the LORD at all times)	<p>Buffeted by the waves of uncertainty all around us, blown about by one crisis or another, worship anchors us to God, the unchanging One, the One we trust is at work beneath our ability to see, the One in whom we hope. How's your worship life?</p>	<p>Buffeted by the waves of uncertainty all around us, blown about by one crisis or another, worship anchors us to God, the unchanging One, the One we trust is at work beneath our ability to see, the One in whom we hope. How's your worship life?</p> <p>Reflection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were you taught to do in times of crisis? • Who are people you look to when you are blown about? • What ways has God been an anchor for you? <p>Pray & Apply</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Psalm 34 every day. Notice what stands out to you throughout the week as you spend time with the same Psalm. Commit to memorizing the Psalm this week to be a source of comfort in the next storm.
Jan 30	Sharing Your Story (Evangelism)	Mark 1:40-45 (Jesus heals leper who went out and began to proclaim)	<p>You've got a story to tell. It's a story of good news, not unlike the announcement of an engagement or the birth of a child. It's a story that only you can tell, and it might just change someone's life.</p>	<p>You've got a story to tell. It's a story of good news, not unlike the announcement of an engagement or the birth of a child. It's a story that only you can tell, and it might just change someone's life.</p> <p>Reflection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was your favorite story book when you were younger? • What would be the title if your life story were a movie? • What spaces do you have to share your story of Good News? Are you showing up to those spaces? <p>Pray & Apply</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask a friend to join you for a time of prayer. Ask them the story of their faith. Close the time praying for your beloved.

Feb 6	Connecting	John 15:1-8 (I am the vine)	With all the distractions of daily life, being conscious of God's love and presence in every moment of every day may seem like an unrealistic goal. But with practice, it's possible!	<p>Auto-pilot makes a plane easier to fly, but a life much less enjoyable. We all get distracted from the goodness of God by simply not paying attention to the present moment.</p> <p>Reflection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a time you lost something, only to realize it wasn't really lost? • What does it look like/sound like/feel like to raise our awareness of Jesus in our daily lives? • What is one manageable and sustainable step you can take to be more aware of <p>Pray & Apply</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go somewhere you frequent on auto-pilot (the grocery store, your kitchen, etc.) Invite God in for a moment of prayer and notice where He is in the space and what you can do to create more space for Him.
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- Think about practices which would lead us to bring order out of chaos.
- Reflexology / Muscle memory / Incarnation (as in the values, emotions, experiences that we have stored "in our flesh.")
- Habits are the things we do reflexively / automatically.
- Habits are what we do "on auto-pilot."
- Habits can be either constructive and destructive. We may have to develop constructive habits / practices to replace the ones that are not serving God well.
- What past experiences are we still living out / playing out in our lives in the present?
- What past experiences are we will living out / playing out in our congregations?
- The problem of Anxiety – we get triggered, we awful-ize, we communicate inappropriately (triangulating, leap-frogging accountability, etc), we splatter our anxiety all over the rest of the system.
- What habits / practices can help us (individually or corporately) to identify and manage our anxiety more appropriately?

