

DREAM

A Call for a Generation to

NOW

Pursue God-Sized Dreams

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*A Call for a Generation to
Pursue God-Sized Dreams*

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HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM YOUR DREAM NOW SMALL GROUP EXPERIENCE

Here is a brief explanation of the features of this book:

INTRODUCTORY LETTER FROM PASTOR ANDY: Please ask a volunteer to read aloud the opening letter from Pastor Andy. It sets the tone for the entire five-week study.

CHECKING IN: Begin each group conversation by briefly sharing any answers to your group's prayer requests from the previous week.

MESSAGE INTRODUCTION: Ask a volunteer to read aloud Pastor Andy's introduction to the week's study. This material will help you more fully understand the vision for the future of Saddleback Church.

VIDEO LESSON: There is a video lesson for the group to watch together each week. There are three ways to access the video. Scan the QR code on the page, or go to Saddleback.com/DreamNow, or visit Saddleback's YouTube channel on your television.

DISCUSSION NOTES: Use the space provided for taking notes on Pastor Andy's video message. Discussion Questions will be found at the end of each video.

A WORD ABOUT OUR DREAM NOW OFFERING: In three of the five lessons, we have included encouragement from Pastor Andy about the Dream Now offering. Please ask a volunteer to read the feature aloud.

GROUP PRAYER: At the end of each session, you will find space for your group prayer requests. Praying together is one of the greatest privileges of small group life. Please don't take it for granted. We suggest that you not only pray together in your group meeting, but also commit to pray for each other's requests every day until your next meeting.

DIVING DEEPER: This section contains directions for your group members' daily devotions.

DAILY DEVOTIONS: There are five daily devotions and journaling pages for reflection each week.

SMALL GROUP RESOURCES: There are additional small group resources, such as Small Group Guidelines, Helps for Hosts, Small Group Roster, etc., in the back of this study guide.

WELCOME LETTER FROM PASTORS ANDY & STACIE

Dear Saddleback Family,

For over four decades, Saddleback has been a church filled with dreamers. Together, we've pursued the vision of transforming lives through the love of Jesus. We've seen thousands of marriages restored, broken lives healed, and countless people set free. We've impacted cities and transformed nations. We've sent our members to every country in the world to share the Good News of Jesus Christ, leading over 60,000 people to say yes to Jesus and declare their faith publicly through baptism.

Today, Saddleback is thriving with fifteen Southern California campuses and five international campuses on four continents. Our mission to reach the lost will always be the heartbeat of our church, fueled by a passion to reach one more life for Jesus.

It's time for us to dream again. It's time to Dream Now for the next generation. God is inviting us to dream bolder, brighter dreams to make the biggest impact with our lives. But those dreams will require faith, courage, and sacrifice as they push us beyond our comfort zones.

God's dreams consume us. They change us. They channel our energies and resources for his purposes. And God's dreams are costly. They require a willingness to go all in for what God has in store for us.

Dream Now is a call to pursue God-sized dreams over the next three years. It's a commitment to build for the next generation with higher levels of generosity and faith. It's about building for the future, pursuing life-transforming initiatives, and ultimately having an impact for decades to come.

God has a dream for your future individually and for us collectively as a church. Over the next five weeks of this study, you will be challenged to dream God-sized dreams in the following five areas: God's dream for your life; God's dream for your family; God's dream for our church; God's dream for your community; and God's dream for our world. Dream Now is an initiative that will empower each of us to live according to God's design and purposes, provide resources to strengthen families, start new campuses, improve existing

campuses, reach people behind prison doors, serve our communities, and impact our world for Jesus Christ.

For the past forty-five years, Saddleback Church has courageously taken bold steps to chase God's dreams. It's time to do it again. Stacie and I are asking you to dream now, pray now, believe now, and act now in bold faith. We're asking you to commit to sacrificial giving above and beyond your regular tithe for the next three years. It's going to take all of us doing our part.

The hour is *now*. We want to encourage you to walk into this season of dreaming with your heart, mind, and hands open before God. As we move forward in faith, obedience, and generosity, we are confident God will do the miraculous once again.

Stacie and I are thrilled to be on this journey with you. We cannot wait to see how God will work through our lives together.

We love you,

A handwritten signature in grey ink that reads "Andy & Stacie". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andy and Stacie

D D R E A
E A M D
N N O W N

**FOR
YOUR
LIFE**

SESSION ONE

CHECKING IN

- Take a moment to allow everybody to introduce themselves to the group. There is a Small Group Roster in the back of this book where you can record names and contact information.
- Ask a volunteer to read the following Introduction aloud.

INTRODUCTION: DREAM NOW FOR YOUR LIFE

God is in the business of giving his dreams to ordinary people. We see it throughout Scripture. Abraham, Moses, Gideon, Ruth, Joseph and Mary were ordinary people who made an extraordinary difference. But it all started with a dream, a vision, an invitation from God to step into his divine design and pursue his purpose for their lives. In every case, his purpose was about far more than their individual lives. God's purpose was about partnering with him to change the world.

God wants to move you beyond your comfort zone and into his dream zone. He has so much more in store for you. The Bible says, *"God is able to do immeasurably more than all we can ask or imagine according to his power that is at work within us"* (Ephesians 3:20). That verse is about you. God has a dream for your life. It flows out of his divine design. The Bible says, *"You are God's masterpiece. He has created you anew in Christ Jesus, so you can do the things he planned for you long ago"* (Ephesians 2:10 NLT). When you discover how God has designed you, it opens your eyes to his dream for you. In this week's session, we want to help you pursue God's dream for your personal life.

The way of the world grinds against God's design, leading to destruction and ruin. Studies show that six in ten adults suffer from chronic diseases due to lifestyle choices, and one in two report feeling lonely. This contributes to rising rates of depression, anxiety, and premature death. Over fifty percent of people feel they lack purpose and are living by default rather than design.

In contrast, God's wisdom guides us to a fulfilling life. His Word promises that living according to his principles leads to blessing. As the master designer, God offers a better way to do relationships, conduct business, manage our finances, and structure our lives. Those who follow God's divine design experience a rich and satisfying life.

This year as part of the Dream Now initiative, we are building group curriculum, practical life planning tools and other personal resources to help you thrive in every aspect of your life. Our vision is to raise up Saddleback Life Coaches who will help every member develop a Life Development Plan. Imagine the impact we could make if every person in our church embraced a clear, God-sized dream and vision for their life, transforming not only themselves but the world around them.

NOW WATCH THE VIDEO FROM PASTOR ANDY

There are three ways to access the video. Scan the QR code, go to *Saddleback.com/DreamNow*, or visit Saddleback's YouTube channel on your television.



A WORD ABOUT OUR DREAM NOW OFFERING

Ask a volunteer to read the following message aloud.

ENTERING OUR FUTURE WITH GRATITUDE FOR OUR PAST

“You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord’s people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.”

2 CORINTHIANS 9:11-12 (NIV)

Over the past 45 years, Saddleback Church has grown from a small group of seven people meeting in a living room, to a global church of over 30,000 meeting in twenty campuses on four continents. All of this is the result of your faithful, sacrificial giving. Thank you! And here’s the best part: the past 45 years of our story have all been preparation for our future.

When you come onto a Saddleback Campus, take a look around you. Everything you see is the result of the tithes and offerings of our people. Every chair, every microphone, every classroom, every cup of coffee is there because somebody gave to make it possible. We are living in the obedience and sacrifice of the generation that has gone before us.

And think about this: as we step into our future together, every person saved, every believer baptized, every marriage healed, every hungry family fed, every life changed will be the result of your generosity. When Jesus told us to store up treasures in heaven, that’s what he was talking about. Every financial gift of yours is an investment in eternity. Let that truth motivate you as you pray about your part in the Dream Now offering.

GROUP PRAYER

“Far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you.”

1 SAMUEL 12:23

Share prayer requests with your group and pray for one another. Use the space below to write down the prayer requests of your group. Take time to pray for each other now. Commit to pray for these requests every day this week.

DIVING DEEPER

Read the *Dream Now for Your Life* daily devotions this week. Spend a few moments reflecting on the questions at the end of each devotion.

DREAM NOW FOR YOUR LIFE

DAY 1

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

EPHESIANS 2:10

We live in a culture that constantly tells us who we should be through our achievements, our relationships, or even our social media profiles. We often end up measuring our worth by what others think of us or by how successful we appear. But here's the thing: that's not where our true identity lies. God's Word reminds us that our identity isn't based on what we do or how others see us. It's rooted in something far deeper—our relationship with Christ.

Ephesians 2:10 says that *we are God's handiwork*. Just think about that for a moment. You're not a mistake or an accident. You're not defined by your past. You're not defined by your failures. You are God's masterpiece, crafted with love and intention by the Creator of the universe. He formed you with a purpose, and you were created in Christ Jesus to do good works that he has already prepared for you.

When you let this truth sink in, it changes everything. No longer do you have to chase after approval from the world. No longer do you have to let your mistakes or shortcomings define you. Instead, you are defined by what God says about you. 1 Peter 2:9 tells us that *we are chosen, a royal priesthood, and God's special possession*. That's your real identity—fully loved, fully accepted, and deeply valued by God himself.

Here's the beautiful part: living out God's dream for your life starts with knowing who you are in Christ. When you embrace your true identity, you can stop striving for acceptance or validation from others. You're free to live with confidence, knowing you are already enough because God has called you his own. When you live from that place of security, you can fully step into the good works God has prepared for you.

DREAM NOW FOR YOUR LIFE

DAY 2

“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden . . . Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

MATTHEW 5:14, 16

Do you ever wonder if your life really matters? If you're making a difference at all? Everyone feels that way at times. We get caught up in the daily grind—working, paying bills, juggling schedules—and we wonder, “Is this it?” But here's the beautiful truth: as a follower of Jesus, you are called to something bigger. Your life is meant to shine with purpose. You're not here just to survive or chase after fleeting goals. God has placed you on this earth for a reason, and he wants you to live with intention.

In Matthew 5:14-16, Jesus says something incredible: “*You* are the light of the world.” Not someone else. You. Your life is meant to radiate his love, grace, and truth in such a way that people can't help but see it. You don't have to be perfect, have it all figured out, or wait for some grand moment. Jesus is calling you to shine right where you are—at work, at home, and in your relationships. Some days you may feel like you're a 150 watt LED bulb; other days, you may feel like a flickering candle. But know this: darkness can never overcome light. It is impossible. No matter how big or small, bright or dim you feel your light is, let it shine wherever you are today. Darkness always flees from light. The smallest acts of kindness and faithfulness can light the way for others to see Jesus.

Living with purpose means you make the most of your time, your gifts, and the opportunities God places in front of you. In Ephesians 5:15-16, Paul encourages us to walk wisely, making the most of every opportunity because life is short. None of us know how much time we have, and honestly, we don't want to waste a minute on things that don't matter in the long run. God has given you unique gifts, talents, and a circle of influence, and he invites you to use those for his glory.

DREAM NOW FOR YOUR LIFE

DAY 3

I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.

PHILIPPIANS 4:13

Have you ever found yourself thinking, “*I’m just not enough for this*”? Whether it’s a challenge in your family, a calling you’re trying to live out, or even the everyday tasks that feel overwhelming, we all have those moments. We see our weaknesses, our limitations, and our doubts, and we wonder how we could ever accomplish what God is asking of us. But here’s the truth: you’re not supposed to do it alone. God never intended for you to rely solely on your own strength. That’s where his power comes in.

Philippians 4:13 is one of those verses that gets quoted a lot, but let’s not miss the depth of it. “*I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.*” It’s not saying you have to be strong enough to handle everything on your own. It’s saying Christ will be your strength. It’s a reminder that when you come to the end of yourself, that’s where God begins. He meets you in your weakness, fills you with his power, and carries you through.

Think about this: the strength God gives isn’t only for the big, life-changing moments. It’s for the everyday moments too. It’s the strength to keep showing up in your relationships when things are hard. It’s the strength to keep forgiving when you’ve been hurt. It’s the courage to step out in faith, even when you feel unsure. Acts 1:8 tells us that we will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon us. This power isn’t something we tap into just when we’re feeling especially spiritual. It’s available to us daily, moment by moment.

Here’s the key: staying connected to God is what keeps you walking in his strength. When you make time for prayer, when you dive into his Word, when you worship him—even on the hard days—you’re inviting his power into your life. It’s in those moments of connection that God fills you up again and reminds you that you don’t have to do this life alone.

DREAM NOW FOR YOUR LIFE

DAY 4

Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me."

LUKE 9:23

Surrender isn't something we're naturally comfortable with. We live in a world that tells us to be independent. But when it comes to following Jesus, surrender is non-negotiable. It's not something we do once and move on from; it's a daily decision to lay down our plans, desires, and need for control, and let God lead. It's telling God, "Everything I have is yours!"

When Jesus invites us to take up our cross and follow him, he's calling us into a life of surrender. It's not about losing ourselves but about finding the fullness of life that he has designed for us. Surrender means trusting that his plans are better than anything we could dream up on our own. It's about releasing our grip on what we think we need and opening our hands to receive what God has for us.

Matthew 6:33 tells us to *seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness*, and when we do that, everything else falls into place. Surrender isn't about missing out on something better—it's about stepping into something greater. God's dream for our lives is always bigger, deeper, and richer than our own plans, but we have to be willing to let go and let him take control.

And let's be honest—surrender can be hard. We love the feeling of control. We like knowing what's coming next. But when we hold on too tightly to our own plans, we often miss out on what God wants to do in and through us. There's so much freedom and joy in letting go and trusting that God has it all figured out.

Surrendering to God's plan requires trust—trust that he is good, that he loves you deeply, and that his plans are for your ultimate good. It's about laying down your fears, your pride, and your need to have everything perfectly mapped out. When you walk by faith and

DREAM NOW FOR YOUR LIFE

DAY 5

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

JEREMIAH 29:11

Let’s be honest—trusting God’s plan can be one of the hardest things we do. We set goals, dream about the future, and make plans that seem right . . . but then life happens. Unexpected twists, setbacks, and detours often leave us feeling confused or even disappointed. In those moments, it’s easy to wonder, “God, do you really have a good plan for me?”

Jeremiah 29:11 is one of those verses we hold onto when life feels uncertain. Yes, this was originally written to the Israelites in exile, but it reveals such a beautiful truth about God’s heart. He does have plans for us—good plans filled with hope and a future, even when we can’t see it in the moment. Just two verses later in Jeremiah 29:13, we get an invitation from God: *“If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me.”* Trusting God’s plan means choosing to seek him, even when life feels unclear.

If you need a companion verse for those days when trusting God feels tough, Proverbs 3:5-6 is the perfect reminder: *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.”* That’s huge, right? We want answers, and we want them now. But these verses call us to let go of trying to figure everything out on our own and, instead, to acknowledge God in every situation. When we do that, he promises to make our paths straight. It doesn’t mean life will be easy, but it means we can walk in peace, knowing God is guiding every step. And notice it does not say he will show you the ultimate destination in complete detail. It says he will show you the path. That’s because the path is more important to God than the destination. He’s not asking you to be more successful; he’s asking you to be faithful.

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**FOR
YOUR
FAMILY**

SESSION TWO

CHECKING IN

- Are there any praise reports from your group prayer requests last week?
- Would anyone like to share an insight that was particularly meaningful from your Dream Now devotions this past week?
- Ask a volunteer to read the following Introduction aloud.

INTRODUCTION: DREAM NOW FOR YOUR FAMILY

One of God's primary strategies from the beginning has been to bless the world through strong families that carry the faith from generation to generation. This requires us to dream now for the future of our families.

Parental anxiety is increasing and teen mental health issues are at an all-time high. We are at risk of losing an entire generation of our sons and daughters, grandsons and granddaughters. The enemy continues to spread confusion and lies that are leading to chaos and strained relationships in our homes. When marriages and families weaken, culture erodes. It's increasingly uncommon to see people do family according to God's ways.

It's time to fight for the family. It's time to fight for *your* family. The Dream Now initiative will launch an effort we're calling Stronger Homes, which will impact families in two ways:

1. The **STRONGER HOMES INITIATIVE** will equip people to build a multi-generational legacy of faith. God is calling us to create resources, coaching, discipleship tools, focused small

DREAM NOW FOR YOUR FAMILY

DAY 1

“Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and he will give you everything you need.”

LUKE 12:31 (NLT)

Life gets busy, doesn't it? Between school, work, practices, and social commitments, it's so easy for our faith to slip into the background. We often find ourselves running from one thing to the next, just trying to keep up with the demands of the day. But here's the thing: God's dream for your family is bigger than just getting through the busyness. His heart for you is that faith would be the foundation of everything—that it wouldn't just be an “add-on” to your schedule, but the very thing that shapes how you live every part of your life.

In Luke 12:31, Jesus invites us to *“seek the Kingdom of God above all else.”* What does that mean? It means more than anything, you want your life to bring glory to God. You want your family to live by God's wisdom and values. When you prioritize God—when you make seeking him the most important thing—everything else finds its place. It doesn't mean you ignore your responsibilities or let things slide, but it does mean you approach life with a Kingdom mindset. When faith comes first, it influences how you make decisions, handle stress, and invest your time and resources. It changes the way you love, serve, and lead your family.

Joshua 24:15 echoes this same commitment. Joshua boldly declared, *“As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”* That's what it looks like to put God at the center of family life. It's not just a Sunday decision—it's a daily, intentional choice to seek God's will in everything you do.

It's important to remember that you are always setting an example for your kids. Even if you don't have kids of your own, God has put children in your life for a reason—grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and neighbors. He wants you to help shape their character and spiritual health.

DREAM NOW FOR YOUR FAMILY

DAY 2

“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden . . . Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

MATTHEW 5:14, 16

This verse is not only true of you individually, but is also true of your family collectively. Together, you are called to be lights in this world—shining brightly for Jesus in everything you do.

No other family can light the world the way yours can. That’s because no other family has the unique mix of gifts, talents, passions, and experiences yours has. No other family in the world has the same members, connections, and opportunities. If you don’t light up the world the way only your family can, no one else will.

God’s dream for your family doesn’t stop at your front door. He wants your family to be a beacon of his love, grace, and truth to your neighbors, your friends, and your entire community.

When your family reflects the love of Christ, you become a source of hope, joy, and encouragement to everyone around you. Whether through serving others, showing hospitality, or just living with honesty and kindness, your family has the power to make an incredible impact for the kingdom of God. When you live authentically and love like Christ, others will be drawn to the beauty of the gospel.

Shining the light of Christ doesn’t have to be complicated or grand. It starts with small, intentional things—like opening your home to neighbors, offering a helping hand to someone in need, or sharing a meal with a family who could use some encouragement. Simple acts of kindness and hospitality can have a ripple effect, showing others the goodness of God through your actions.

As your family lives out this calling, the world will notice. People will see Christ’s love at work in your home, and they’ll be drawn to the hope and peace that only God can provide. Your family has

DREAM NOW FOR YOUR FAMILY

DAY 3

Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.

PROVERBS 22:6

Raising kids who love and follow Jesus doesn't happen by accident—it takes intentionality. In a world that's pulling our families in so many directions, God's dream for your home is that it would be a place where faith can thrive, and where each family member, especially your children, can grow in their relationships with Christ. That doesn't happen by chance. It happens when we as parents decide to prioritize their spiritual growth in the same way we prioritize their education, health, or future plans.

Proverbs 22:6 encourages us to *"start children off on the way they should go."* As parents, we have this incredible responsibility to guide our kids toward Jesus, starting when they're young. While we can't control their future or make every decision for them, we can build a strong foundation of faith that will impact their lives for years to come.

Ephesians 6:4 gives us practical instruction, telling us to *"bring [our children] up in the training and instruction of the Lord."* This goes far beyond bringing them to church once a week. Intentional discipleship is about weaving faith into the fabric of everyday life—teaching them how to pray, studying Scripture together, and creating space for meaningful conversations about what it looks like to follow Jesus. It's about making God's Word a normal part of family life, something that guides how we live, love, and make decisions as a family.

In today's busy world, it's easy to let faith take a backseat. Our schedules are packed with school, sports, and activities, and it's hard to find time for spiritual growth. But if we want our kids to grow in their faith, we have to be intentional about it. We must carve out time to pray as a family, to read the Bible together, and to model Christ-like behavior in our daily interactions. Our kids are

DREAM NOW FOR YOUR FAMILY

DAY 4

Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain.

PSALM 127:1

Building a family isn't easy, is it? We live in a world full of distractions, pressure, and competing values that pull us in so many directions. We work hard to create a home where love, peace, and security can flourish. Maybe that's through family traditions, providing for our loved ones, or trying to create a positive environment. But no matter how much effort we put in, if God isn't the foundation, we're missing the mark. Psalm 127:1 reminds us that all our hard work will be in vain unless the Lord is the one building our homes.

God's dream for your family starts with the foundation. Jesus said in Matthew 7:24-25 *"Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, yet it did not fall."*

When Christ is at the center, everything changes. It's not just about praying before meals or attending church on Sundays (though those are good!). It's about cultivating a daily habit of seeking God—together as a family—and letting his Word guide every aspect of our lives.

Building a family on Christ means making a choice—a choice to let Jesus be the cornerstone of your home. That's not only in the big moments, but in the small, everyday decisions. It means choosing love, grace, and forgiveness when it's hard. It means handling conflict in a way that honors God. It's about turning to Scripture for direction and relying on God's strength when you feel overwhelmed.

Storms will come. Life will throw challenges your way—whether it's financial strain, health crises, or relational tension. But when Christ is the foundation, those storms don't get the final say. A family built on prayer and the truth of God's Word is anchored in his love and grace. And that's what holds us steady when the winds blow hardest.

DREAM NOW FOR YOUR FAMILY

DAY 5

These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

DEUTERONOMY 6:6-7

Every family leaves behind a legacy. But the real question is, *what kind of legacy are you building?* God's dream for your family is that you leave a spiritual legacy that echoes faith, love, and God's truth, impacting generations long after you're gone.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 gives us a beautiful picture of what this kind of legacy looks like. God instructs his people to impress his commandments on their children. Notice how he doesn't just say to teach them once and move on. No, it's meant to be woven into the everyday moments of life—whether you're at home, out and about, lying down at night, or getting up in the morning. The heartbeat of this passage is that faith isn't just for Sundays or special occasions. It's meant to be part of the rhythm of everyday life.

From conversations around the dinner table to prayers before bed, every moment can be an opportunity to point our families to Jesus. It's about teaching them who God is, reminding them of his goodness, and showing them what it looks like to live a life centered on Him. Psalm 78:4 says it so clearly: *"We will not hide them from their descendants; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done."* Sharing stories of God's faithfulness, teaching his Word, and modeling what it means to follow Christ lays a foundation that will shape your children's spiritual journey for the rest of their lives.

Here's the thing: leaving a spiritual legacy isn't about being a perfect parent. It's not about having all the answers or getting everything right all the time. It's about being *intentional*. It's about choosing to live out your faith in a way that your children can see and experience.

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EAM **D**
W **NOW** **W**

FOR
OUR
CHURCH

SESSION THREE

CHECKING IN

- Are there any praise reports from your group prayer requests last week?
- Would anyone like to share an insight that was particularly meaningful from your Dream Now devotions this past week?
- Ask a volunteer to read the following Introduction aloud.

INTRODUCTION: DREAM NOW FOR OUR CHURCH

God's dream is for the church to reach the lost in every nation and every generation.

With 25 million residents in Southern California and another 40 million lost people near our international campuses, there is a great need for our church to have an increased level of urgency to reach those who don't know Jesus.

The Dream Now initiative will provide significant resources to strengthen and multiply our church for greater impact in the following areas:

1. **STARTING NEW SADDLEBACK CAMPUSES.** This includes new campuses in Temecula Valley, California, and Davao City, Philippines. We are also launching our first campus behind prison doors in California at Norco Prison in partnership with God Behind Bars.
2. **EXPANSION OF OUR EXISTING CAMPUSES.** This includes a new 700-seat auditorium on our Irvine South campus as well as significant expansion to our Lake Forest campus kids

A WORD ABOUT OUR DREAM NOW OFFERING

Ask a volunteer to read the following message aloud.

GIVING BY REASON OR REVELATION

Without faith it is impossible to please God.

HEBREWS 11:6 (NIV)

Every gift matters. Not everybody can give the same amount or in the same way. But everybody can give something according to their ability. It's not the size of the gift that matters to God, it's the size of the sacrifice.

Our Dream Now offering will be the largest faith-step we've taken together at Saddleback Church to change the world. As you pray about your part in the Dream Now offering, consider this: There are two ways to give: reason or revelation. Giving by reason is simple: just look at what you have and ask yourself, "How much can I afford to give?"

Giving by revelation, on the other hand, is much more challenging. When you give by revelation you ask God, "How much do you want to give through me?" Both kinds of giving require discipline and follow-through, but only giving by revelation requires faith. What would faith look like in your giving commitment? Are you ready for your faith to grow? Remember this: generous people will be blessed generously. The Bible says, "*A generous person will be made rich, and whoever satisfies others will himself be satisfied*" (Proverbs 11:25 GW).

***“GOD IS ABLE
TO DO
IMMEASURABLY
MORE THAN ALL
WE CAN ASK
OR IMAGINE
ACCORDING
TO HIS POWER
THAT IS
AT WORK
WITHIN US.”***

EPHESIANS 3:20

DREAM NOW FOR OUR CHURCH

DAY 1

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

JOHN 13:34-35

The church isn't just a group of people who happen to show up in the same place once a week. It's a family—a community held together by the love of Christ. One of the most defining marks of this community should be the way we love each other. Jesus didn't say this love was optional. He made it clear: the way we love one another is how the world will recognize that we belong to him.

John 13:34-35 isn't a feel-good suggestion. It's a command to love sacrificially, just as Jesus has loved us. It's about putting others' needs before our own, forgiving when it's hard, and building relationships that reflect humility, grace, and generosity. True love in the church isn't about loving when it's convenient or comfortable. It's about loving each other through the messy, hard moments, just as Jesus loves us through ours.

We get a glimpse of this kind of love in Acts 2:44-45, where the early church shared everything they had. They made sure no one was in need and were committed to doing life together. That kind of sacrificial love didn't just strengthen their community—it drew people in from the outside. The world took notice. When the church loves one another with the kind of deep, sacrificial love that reflects Jesus, it becomes a powerful witness to the world. As Pastor Rick Warren says, “When people find a church where members are genuinely loved and cared for, you'll have to lock the doors to keep them out.”

God's dream for our church is for us to be a community that's defined by love—a love that's so deep and so real that people can't help but be drawn to the source of it. When we commit to loving each other in this way, we create a culture where people feel valued, supported, and seen. It's in this kind of community that the

DREAM NOW FOR OUR CHURCH

DAY 2

Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:12

One of the most beautiful things about the church is that every single person has a purpose. The church isn't just a place we show up on Sundays; it's a living, breathing body of believers, each of us playing a vital role in God's bigger story. God's dream for his church includes *you*—your gifts, your passions, your service. You matter in his kingdom.

In 1 Corinthians 12:12, Paul gives us this picture of the church as a body. Just like our physical bodies have many parts—each doing something different, but all working together—the church is made up of people with different strengths, abilities, and roles. And here's the best part: *every single role matters*. Whether you're leading from the stage or serving behind the scenes, whether you're teaching or showing hospitality, your contribution is essential to the health and strength of the church.

Ephesians 4:11-12 is about the diversity of gifts in the church—how God has given some to be apostles, some prophets, some pastors, teachers, and evangelists. But the goal is always the same: to build up the body of Christ and equip God's people for works of service. When we all embrace the roles we've been given, something powerful happens. The church becomes stronger, more unified, and more effective in its mission. It's not about one person doing everything; it's about everyone working together, using their God-given gifts for his glory.

It can be easy to feel like your role doesn't matter or that someone else could do it better. But the truth is, God created you with a specific purpose, and your gifts are needed in the church. You were placed in your church community for a reason. When you step into that calling, using your talents for God's kingdom, you're helping fulfill his dream for the church. It's not about comparing ourselves

DREAM NOW FOR OUR CHURCH

DAY 3

And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

EPHESIANS 1:22-23

God's dream for the church is not something we have to figure out on our own or carry by our own strength—it's led by Christ himself. Jesus is the head of the church, giving us direction, purpose, and vision. Just like a body is completely dependent on its head to function, the church is dependent on Christ for everything. He is the one who leads us, equips us, and empowers us to bring his light and life to the world.

But get this: just as the body is dependent on its head to function, the head is dependent on the body to carry out its will. We depend on Jesus to direct us for his purposes, and in the same way, Jesus is depending on us to be his hands and feet accomplishing his purposes in the world. Yes, God is sovereign and omnipotent—he can do whatever he wants however he wants. But in his sovereign omnipotence, he has chosen to work through us.

In Ephesians 1:22-23, Paul makes it so clear: *Jesus* is in charge of the church. He's not just a part of it—he's the foundation and the head over everything. This means that every decision we make as a church, every action we take, needs to come from a place of following his lead. The church isn't built on a pastor, a leadership team, or anyone's personal agenda. It's built on Jesus. He's the one guiding his people toward his mission, and we're simply called to follow.

Colossians 1:18 echoes this truth, reminding us that "*Christ is the head of the body—the church.*" And because of that, he holds all authority. Our role as his followers is to submit to his leadership and trust that he knows what's best for his church. When we align ourselves with Christ, something beautiful happens. The church becomes united in its purpose, and we step into the power that comes from living out God's dream for his people.

DREAM NOW FOR OUR CHURCH

DAY 4

For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

ROMANS 12:4-5

Unity is at the core of God's dream for his church, but let's be clear—unity doesn't mean uniformity. God's vision for his church celebrates diversity, and each of us brings something unique to the table. We're not all supposed to be the same. The beauty of the church is found in how different we are—our backgrounds, our gifts, and our callings—all working together for one purpose. And that diversity? It's not a flaw; it's a strength.

In Ephesians 4:16, Paul reminds us that from Christ, the whole body is joined and held together by every supporting ligament, as each part does its work. Think of it like a team: every player has a different role, but it's when each one plays their part that the team works smoothly and efficiently. That's exactly how God designed the church. We all bring something important—something that no one else can bring—and when we each do our part, the body of Christ thrives.

Romans 12:4-5 shows us that each member belongs to the others. We're not a collection of disjointed parts; we're interconnected. And that interconnectedness is what makes us stronger. In a world that often emphasizes division, the church is called to be a place where differences are celebrated and unity is pursued. When we embrace the diversity in the body of Christ, we reflect God's creativity and the incredible beauty of his design.

Living out God's dream for the church means learning to appreciate both our uniqueness and our togetherness. We need each other. Every person's gift, perspective, and role matters. When we see and value what others bring to the table, we grow stronger together. This is how God designed the church to function—each person

DREAM NOW FOR OUR CHURCH

DAY 5

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

PHILIPPIANS 2:3-4

Sacrifice is at the core of what it means to be the church. Jesus set the ultimate example when he laid down his life for us, and as his followers, we're called to reflect that same kind of humility and selflessness in the way we live and serve. God's dream for his church involves each of us putting others first—putting the needs of the body above our own. That's how we build a church that's strong, unified, and full of love.

In Philippians 2:3-4, Paul challenges us to embrace humility and value others more than ourselves. Let's be honest—this isn't always easy, especially in a world that tells us to look out for number one. But when we choose to lay aside our own interests and prioritize the well-being of others, we step into something bigger than ourselves. Whether it's through serving, giving, or encouraging someone who needs it, these small acts of humility make a huge difference. They strengthen the church and reflect the heart of Jesus to the world around us.

We see a beautiful picture of this kind of sacrificial love in the early church, described in Acts 2:42-47. They didn't just talk about loving one another—they lived it out. They shared what they had, made sure no one was in need, and were devoted to building a community of fellowship and generosity. And you know what? It wasn't just a momentary thing. This was their way of life. Their commitment to putting each other first and making sacrifices for the good of the church had a ripple effect on everyone around them.

That's what God is calling us to today. Sacrificing for the strength of the church means giving of our time, our talents, and our resources—even when it's inconvenient. It means choosing to serve,

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FOR
OUR
COMMUNITY

SESSION FOUR

CHECKING IN

- Are there any praise reports from your group prayer requests last week?
- Would anyone like to share an insight that was particularly meaningful from your Dream Now devotions this past week?
- Ask a volunteer to read the following Introduction aloud.

INTRODUCTION: DREAM NOW FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Saddleback has a rich history of serving the needs of our communities for the past forty-five years. We deeply desire to expand that legacy. As part of the Dream Now initiative, we are launching a new churchwide emphasis called Love Local to unleash greater love and compassion in our neighborhoods.

Through Love Local projects, we will provide each campus with resources to meet specific local needs, empowering our whole church to serve and share the Good News of Jesus in practical ways. This initiative will also increase our efforts to care for vulnerable children, refugees, widows, and orphans, while also addressing food scarcity.

As part of this vision, we'll host regional Mission Summits and How to Share Your Faith Workshops to equip our church for greater outreach.

In a world that feels increasingly divided, we envision every community seeing Saddleback as its friend. We are invited by God to be the hands and feet of Jesus, building bridges that people can walk across to find the Savior. God has placed us into twenty

DREAM NOW FOR OUR COMMUNITY

DAY 1

“Love your neighbor as yourself.”

LUKE 10:27

In Luke chapter ten, Jesus was approached by a religious leader who wanted to haggle with him. He asked Jesus what he must do to be saved. Jesus, in turn, said, “What is written in the law?” The man replied, “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.” But then the religious expert asked, “Who is my neighbor?” He was thinking, “If I can get Jesus to define who my neighbor is, I can limit my responsibilities and rule out everybody else.” In response, Jesus told him the story of the Good Samaritan who went out of his way to help another man in need. The point Jesus made is that your neighbor is whoever you encounter who is in need, regardless of race, religion, or economic status. Your neighbor is not defined by similarity. Your neighbor is defined by proximity. Who is in your neighborhood or community who needs help . . . and what are you going to do about it?

That message still holds true for you today. Whether you are living in a city you love or a place that feels unfamiliar or even hostile, God calls you to care deeply about the well-being of your neighborhood, city, and even nation. You’re not placed in your location by accident. There’s a purpose for your presence. God has you exactly where he wants you to be—you are his hands and feet to bring peace, hope, and restoration to those around you.

This kind of service requires awareness, intentionality, and determination. You must be aware of the people who surround you and the condition they are in. You must be intentional to stop and help. And you must be determined to do whatever you can to relieve their suffering. James 2:15-17 says, *“Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, ‘Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing*

about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.”

Seeking the good of our community means taking practical steps. That’s what our Love Local initiatives are about as we “dream now for our community.” We are standing up for justice, helping the vulnerable and marginalized, feeding the hungry, and offering kindness where it’s most needed. When we engage in these ways, we reflect God’s love in a world that desperately needs to see it. Our actions, rooted in prayer, become tangible expressions of God’s heart for our cities.

You cannot do everything, but you can do something to show love and kindness to those around you. John Wesley said, *“Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can.”*

And here’s the amazing part: when you seek the good of your community, you are blessed as well. God designed it this way—your well-being is connected to the well-being of the place you live. The Bible says, *“Those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed.”* (Proverbs 11:25) As you pray for and work toward the peace and prosperity of your community, you will see God’s goodness unfold in ways you couldn’t imagine.

PRAYER: Lord, help me to see people the way you do. Show me how I can spread the love and mercy of Christ through prayer and service. Use me to be a blessing to my neighbors and city, and may your presence be felt in all that I do. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

REFLECTION: Use the space below to reflect on these questions.

- *How are you currently seeking the welfare of your neighbors?*
- *What can you and your family do to shine the light of Jesus in your neighborhood?*

DREAM NOW FOR OUR COMMUNITY

DAY 2

All the believers were one in heart and mind . . . And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all.

ACTS 4:32-33

The early church in Acts paints a beautiful picture of what happens when believers live in unity and love. Acts 4:32-35 describes a group of people who were completely united in heart and mind, living out their faith through radical generosity, boldness, and love. It was about more than individual faith or personal spirituality—it was about creating a community that embodied the values of God's Kingdom right here on earth.

When the church operates in this kind of unity, something powerful happens. The early believers didn't just look after each other's spiritual needs; they cared for the physical, emotional, and social needs of those around them. Their selflessness and generosity were tangible expressions of God's love, and it had a profound impact on the broader community. People outside the church took notice, and many were drawn to the gospel—not only because of what the believers said, but because of how they lived. Acts 2:47 says, *"The Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."*

This is still God's dream for the church today. He desires for us to be united in heart and mind, reflecting his love in such a way that it transforms our communities. When we are generous with our time, our resources, and our love, the ripple effects spill over into the world around us. The church becomes a place of hope, healing, and transformation—not only for those inside the walls, but for everyone who comes into contact with us.

This kind of transformation doesn't happen on its own. It starts with us as believers being intentional about how we live out our faith. It begins when we commit to being united in purpose, to serving one another selflessly, and to being bold in sharing the love of Jesus. When we come together in unity and operate out of a place of generosity,

DREAM NOW FOR OUR COMMUNITY

DAY 3

“You are the salt of the earth . . . You are the light of the world.”

MATTHEW 5:13-16

When Jesus calls us to be salt and light, he’s inviting us to live lives that make a difference. Salt preserves, enhances, and brings out the best in the flavor of food. Light shines in the darkness, making things visible and giving direction. Jesus is saying our lives should be like that—adding value to the world around us and illuminating the path toward him.

In Matthew 5:13-16, Jesus doesn’t ask us to blend in with the world. He calls us to *stand out*. But not for our own glory—for his. We are to live in such a way that our actions point others to God. As salt, we are called to preserve what is good and true. We live in a world that often moves in a different direction from God’s kingdom, but we are called to hold onto the values of grace, love, and righteousness. We’re here to enhance the lives of those around us by offering kindness, speaking truth in love, and showing compassion.

As light, we have the privilege of shining in dark places. In a world filled with uncertainty, division, and hopelessness, the light of Christ in us can bring hope and clarity to those who are searching. We don’t have to have all the answers, but we know the One who does. Our lives can point people toward Jesus, the true source of hope and life.

What does this look like practically? It’s not always about big, bold moves. Often, it’s about how we live in the common, everyday moments. It’s in the way we treat the cashier at the grocery store, or how we interact with our coworkers. Are we quick to offer a helping hand or a kind word? These are the moments that matter. When our actions are rooted in the love of Christ, people take notice.

Here’s the beautiful thing: when we live as salt and light, we reflect God’s character to the world. Our lives become a testimony of his

DREAM NOW FOR OUR COMMUNITY

DAY 4

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

COLOSSIANS 3:17

Every action you take matters, especially in the community you live in. Paul's reminder in Colossians 3:17 is powerful: *whatever* you do, whether in your words or actions, you are called to do it in the name of Jesus. That means every interaction you have, every moment of service you offer, every conversation you engage in—it all becomes an opportunity to reflect Christ to the world around you.

Think about that for a moment. Your community is watching. The way you treat others, how you handle stress, and how you respond to those in need—these things either draw people toward Jesus or push them away. It's a humbling thought, but it's also an incredible opportunity. When you live in a way that reflects God's love, patience, and grace, you become a living testimony of his goodness. And sometimes, your actions and words open doors for the gospel that you may never fully realize.

Here's the good news: living out your faith in your community doesn't have to be complicated. It's not about doing grand, extraordinary things all the time. It's about being intentional in the small, uneventful moments. It could look like showing kindness to your neighbor, lending a helping hand, being generous with your time, or simply listening when someone needs to talk. When you approach every interaction with the mindset that you are representing Christ, it transforms how you engage with the world. Suddenly, even the smallest act of kindness becomes an opportunity to bring glory to God.

A key aspect of reflecting Christ in your community is *integrity*. Are your words and actions consistent with your faith? Do the people around you see the love and character of Jesus in the way you live?

DREAM NOW FOR OUR COMMUNITY

DAY 5

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

1 TIMOTHY 2:1-2

One of the most powerful ways we can serve our communities is through prayer. In 1 Timothy 2:1-2, Paul encourages believers to pray for *all people*, especially those in positions of authority. Why? Because prayer isn't just a religious routine—it's a partnership with God. When we pray for our cities, neighborhoods, and leaders, we invite God to move in ways that bring peace, justice, and healing. Prayer creates space for God to work in our communities.

It's easy to get caught up in the busyness of life and overlook the importance of prayer for our communities. But Paul reminds us that this is where it all begins. Before we serve, before we act, we pray. Prayer isn't reserved for church or our quiet times with God—it's something that should shape how we engage with the world. When we bring our cities, government leaders, schools, and neighbors before God, we align our hearts with his will for those places.

What happens when we pray for our communities? We're not asking for surface-level blessings; we're inviting God's presence and power into every part of the community. We're asking him to move in the hearts of people, to open doors for the gospel, and to bring transformation that only he can accomplish. Prayer is the foundation for change. It sets the stage for God to work in ways that go far beyond what we could ever plan or imagine.

So, how do we start? It begins with *intentionality*. Set aside time to pray specifically for your community. Ask God to give you his heart for the people around you. Get to know the needs and challenges in your area, and bring them before the Lord. Pray for wisdom and discernment for your leaders, for unity in your neighborhood, and

D D R E A
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N N O W N

**FOR
OUR
WORLD**

SESSION FIVE

CHECKING IN

- Are there any praise reports from your group prayer requests last week?
- Would anyone like to share an insight that was particularly meaningful from your Dream Now devotions this past week?
- Ask a volunteer to read the following Introduction aloud.

INTRODUCTION: DREAM NOW FOR OUR WORLD

Together with our founding pastor, Rick Warren, we are praying and working to see an established local church for every people group by 2033, the 2,000th birthday of the church. To finish the task, we must partner with strategic churches in global gateway cities. These partnerships will accelerate regional transformation through PEACE efforts. By establishing church-to-church partnerships, we will empower local churches to be the heroes in their local community.

Following our impactful history in Rwanda, we will extend our reach to even more cities and nations beyond the U.S. This will include cities where our international campuses exist and additional cities where large groups of unreached people reside.

A WORD ABOUT OUR DREAM NOW OFFERING

Ask a volunteer to read the following message aloud.

YOUR LEGACY OF GENEROSITY

Just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

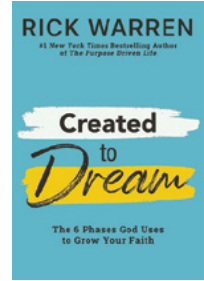
2 CORINTHIANS 8:7

Your Dream Now offering is a great opportunity for you and your family to experience the adventure of giving by revelation. As you prepare for our Dream Now commitment weekend, be praying with your family about how God wants to use you to accomplish his vision in our church. Your kids are watching to see what it looks like to “*seek first the Kingdom of God.*” So include them in the conversation and let them be a part of your family’s decision.

Your example of faithful giving will be a chapter in their story with Jesus Christ. They will learn from you how to step out in faith and obedience. In years to come, when it is their turn to respond to God’s invitation to join him in his dream for their church, they will look back on this moment in time and remember the lessons they learned from your generous sacrifice. They will have seen with their own eyes how God provided everything your family needed because you put his Kingdom first.

DIVING DEEPER

If you would like to learn more about the process God uses to grow your faith while you pursue his dreams, we recommend you read Pastor Rick Warren's book, "*Created to Dream.*" Visit createdtodream.com to purchase your copy.



BEFORE YOU GO

Congratulations! This is the last session of Dream Now. Before you close your group meeting, make a plan for a sixth session next week just for fellowship and to celebrate what God has done in your life through this study. This is also an excellent opportunity for you to invite people who might be interested in joining your group. It gives potential group members a welcoming environment in which to get acquainted with the rest of you. Talk about your celebration before you leave your meeting. Where will you have your party? When will you have it? Will it be a potluck, will someone barbeque, or will you call out for pizza? Divide up the responsibilities and then get ready to enjoy a great time of fellowship together.

DREAM NOW FOR OUR WORLD

DAY 1

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

MATTHEW 28:18-20

The Great Commission is at the heart of God’s dream for the world. These are some of Jesus’ final words to his disciples before ascending into heaven, and they are packed with both authority and purpose. Jesus didn’t only give this command to his twelve disciples—it’s a calling for every believer, in every generation. We’re all invited to be part of God’s global mission, spreading the gospel and making disciples across nations, cultures, and languages.

But let’s be honest—it’s easy to get wrapped up in the busyness of our own lives, our families, and our local communities. Sometimes, the idea of global missions can feel distant or overwhelming. We might think, *What does that have to do with me?* But here’s the thing: the call to make disciples of all nations isn’t just for a select few. It’s for all of us. Jesus’ command was clear: *go and make disciples*. That’s a command for each of us to take personally.

So, what does that look like for you? Not everyone is called to physically go to another country, but every one of us is called to participate in God’s global dream. Maybe it means praying daily for our work in one of our Dream Now global gateway cities, asking God to open doors for the gospel in hard-to-reach places. Maybe you have access to resources needed for our mission work. Or perhaps God is calling you to roll up your sleeves and go on one of our global PEACE trips and see for yourself what God is doing through our church.

The beautiful thing about God’s global mission is that it’s not about *how far* you go—it’s about being faithful to say “yes” to whatever he’s

DREAM NOW FOR OUR WORLD

DAY 2

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

ACTS 1:8

In Acts 1:8, Jesus left his disciples with both a promise and a mission. The promise? The Holy Spirit would come upon them, giving them power beyond anything they could find within themselves. The mission? To be his witnesses, starting locally and expanding outward, reaching not only their own communities, but the entire world. It wasn't just talking about Jesus in their own hometowns—it was about going out into the world, carrying the message of salvation to every corner of the earth.

This commission didn't stop with the disciples—it's still our mission today. We are called to be Christ's witnesses, beginning right where we are and moving outward. The idea of *starting locally* is key. For the disciples, that meant starting in Jerusalem, their immediate context. For us, that could mean our families, neighborhoods, workplaces, or schools. But the mission doesn't stop there. Jesus wants us to push beyond our comfort zones and take his message to the wider community, across cultural boundaries, and even to the ends of the earth.

And here's the best part: we're not expected to do it on our own. The same Holy Spirit that empowered the early disciples is alive in us today. It's the Holy Spirit who gives us the boldness to share the gospel, the wisdom to speak truth in love, and the strength to persevere when the mission feels daunting. When we lean into the power of the Spirit, we can be effective witnesses for Christ—right where we are and beyond.

But being a witness isn't just about sharing the gospel and moving on. It's about making disciples—walking with people as they grow in their faith, teaching them to follow Jesus, and showing them what

DREAM NOW FOR OUR WORLD

DAY 3

After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

REVELATION 7:9-10

Revelation 7:9-10 gives us a stunning glimpse of God's dream for the world—a vision of people from every nation, tribe, people, and language gathered together, standing in unity before God's throne, worshipping the Lamb. This is the end goal of the global mission—the moment when the gospel has reached the ends of the earth, and people from every corner of the world are united in worship. It's a breathtaking picture of unity in diversity, and it shows us that God's heart is for *everyone* to know him.

Living with a global perspective means seeing the world the way God sees it. It means caring about people who are different from us—culturally, geographically, linguistically—and having a heart that longs for *all* nations to know and worship Jesus. It's easy to get so wrapped up in our own lives, our own communities, and our local concerns, that we forget the bigger picture. But God calls us to lift our eyes beyond what we know and see his kingdom advancing across the world.

When we start living with a global perspective, everything shifts. We become more intentional about praying for those who have never heard the gospel. We start to care more deeply about the broader, global-level work of the church as something bigger than ourselves. We are reminded that the Good News of Jesus isn't just for people who look, think, or live like us—it's for *everyone*.

So how can you begin to cultivate this global perspective in your own life? Start by learning about different cultures and people groups and

DREAM NOW FOR OUR WORLD

DAY 4

Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

MATTHEW 9:37-38

Fulfilling God’s dream for the world doesn’t begin with action—it starts with prayer. In Matthew 9:37-38, Jesus reveals a profound truth: the harvest is ready, but the workers are few. What’s interesting is that Jesus doesn’t begin by telling his disciples to jump into the field. Instead, he calls them to pray. Before we move, before we act, we need to *pray*. Prayer is the foundation of all mission work. When we pray, we’re inviting God to move. We’re asking him to raise up more workers, to prepare hearts, and to open doors for the gospel. Without prayer, our efforts lack the divine power that only God can provide.

Prayer aligns our hearts with God’s vision for the world. It’s not just about asking God to send others; it’s about asking him to work in us as well. As we lift up the needs of our community and the nations, we start to see the world as God sees it. Prayer allows us to be in step with the Spirit, seeking his guidance for where and how we can make an impact. It transforms our hearts, giving us a burden for the lost and a desire to see God’s kingdom expand.

When Jesus instructed his disciples to pray for more workers, He was highlighting the urgency of the need. The harvest is plentiful—there are people ready to receive the gospel—but there simply aren’t enough laborers. And this is still true today. The need for people who will boldly share the message of Jesus is as great as ever. But the first step is prayer. We need to be people who are committed to praying for the work in our five Global Gateway cities, for the workers there, and for the hearts of those who are yet to know Jesus.

Prayer isn’t passive—it’s powerful. When we pray for the global mission, we are actively engaging in God’s plan to reach the nations. Prayer changes things. It opens doors, it softens hearts, and it

DREAM NOW FOR OUR WORLD

DAY 5

Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.

ACTS 4:29-30

One of the most powerful things we can pray for in fulfilling God's mission is *boldness*. When the early church faced threats and opposition, they didn't pray for comfort or safety—they prayed for courage. In Acts 4, the believers asked God to enable them to speak his word with great boldness, even as the pressure mounted against them. And God answered. He filled them with the Holy Spirit, and they continued to proclaim the gospel with power, undeterred by the challenges they faced.

Boldness is essential for us today, too. Fulfilling the Great Commission isn't always comfortable or easy. It requires us to step out of our safe zones, trusting God to give us the courage to share the gospel—whether it's with a neighbor, at work, or in a place where Christ's name has never been heard. Boldness isn't something we can muster up on our own; it comes from being filled with the Holy Spirit. Just like the early church, we can pray for boldness, asking God to give us the courage to speak his truth and to act on the calling he's placed on our lives.

The good news is that we don't do this alone. Jesus promised that he would be with us always, to the very end of the age (Matthew 28:20). With his presence and power, we can be bold witnesses, knowing that God goes before us and that his Spirit works through us. Boldness is not about being loud or fearless—it's about stepping out in faith, trusting that God will give us the strength to do what he's called us to do.

So, as you reflect on your role in God's mission, ask him to fill you with boldness. Pray for the courage to speak the gospel boldly, to

***“SEEK THE
KINGDOM OF
GOD ABOVE
ALL ELSE,
AND HE WILL
GIVE YOU
EVERYTHING
YOU NEED.”***

LUKE 12:31 (NLT)

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HELPS FOR HOSTS

Congratulations! As the host of your small group, you have responded to the call to help shepherd Jesus' flock. Few other tasks in the family of God surpass the contribution you will be making. As you prepare to facilitate your group, whether it is for one session or for the entire series, here are a few thoughts to keep in mind.

Remember, you are not alone. God knows everything about you, and he knew you would be asked to facilitate your group. You may not feel ready; this is a common feeling all good hosts have! God promises, *"I will never leave you; I will never abandon you"* (Hebrews 13:5 GNT). Whether you are facilitating for one evening, several weeks, or a lifetime, you will be blessed as you serve.

- 1. DON'T TRY TO DO IT ALONE.** Pray right now for God to help you build a healthy team. If you can enlist a co-host to help you shepherd the group, you will find your experience much richer. This is your chance to involve as many people as you can in building a healthy group. All you have to do is to ask people to help. You'll be surprised at the response.
- 2. BE FRIENDLY AND BE YOURSELF.** God wants to use your unique gifts and temperament. Be sure to greet people at the door with a big smile—this can set the mood for the whole gathering. Remember, they are taking as big of a step by showing up for this study as you are hosting a small group! Don't try to do things exactly like another host; do them in a way that fits you. Admit when you don't have an answer and apologize when you make a mistake. Your group will love you for it, and you'll sleep better at night.
- 3. PREPARE FOR YOUR MEETING AHEAD OF TIME.** Review the session and write down your responses to each question.
- 4. PRAY FOR YOUR GROUP MEMBERS BY NAME.** Before your group arrives, take a few moments and pray for each member by name. Ask God to use your time together to touch the heart of each person in your group. Expect God to lead you to whomever he wants you to encourage or challenge in a special way. If you listen, God will surely lead.
- 5. WHEN YOU ASK A QUESTION, BE PATIENT.** Someone will eventually respond. Sometimes people need a moment or two

of silence to think about the question. If silence doesn't bother you, it won't bother anyone else. After someone responds, affirm the response with a simple, "Thanks," or, "Great answer." Then ask, "How about somebody else?" or, "Would someone who hasn't shared like to add anything?" Be sensitive to new people or reluctant members who aren't ready to say, pray, or do anything. If you give them a safe setting, they will blossom over time. If someone in your group is a wallflower who sits silently through every session, consider talking to that person privately and encouraging them to participate. Let them know how important they are to you—that they are loved and appreciated, and that the group would value their input. Remember, still water often runs deep.

- 6. BREAK INTO SMALLER GROUPS OCCASIONALLY.** With a greater opportunity to talk in a small circle, people will connect more with the study, apply more quickly what they're learning, and ultimately get more out of their small group experience. A small circle also encourages a quiet person to participate and tends to minimize the effects of a more vocal or dominant member.
- 7. SMALL CIRCLES ARE ALSO HELPFUL DURING PRAYER TIME.** People who are unaccustomed to praying aloud will feel more comfortable trying it with just two or three others. Also, prayer requests won't take as much time, so circles will have more time to actually pray. When you gather back with the whole group, you can have one person from each circle briefly update everyone on the prayer requests from their subgroups. The other great aspect of subgrouping is that it fosters leadership development. As you ask people in the group to facilitate discussion or to lead a prayer circle, it gives them a small leadership step that can build their confidence.
- 8. ROTATE FACILITATORS OCCASIONALLY.** You may be perfectly capable of hosting each time, but you will help others grow in their faith and gifts if you give them opportunities to host the group.
- 9. ONE FINAL CHALLENGE (FOR NEW OR FIRST-TIME HOSTS).** Before your first opportunity to lead, look up each of the six passages listed below. Read each one as a devotional exercise to help prepare you with a shepherd's heart. Trust us on this one. If you do this, you will be more than ready for your first meeting.

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore to send out workers into his harvest field."

MATTHEW 9:36–38

I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep."

JOHN 10:14–15

Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

1 PETER 5:2–4

Therefore, if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS 2:1–5

Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

HEBREWS 10:23–25

But we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children. We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us . . . For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

1 THESSALONIANS 2:7–8, 11–12

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW LONG WILL THIS GROUP MEET?

This study is five sessions long. We encourage your group to add an extra session for a celebration. In your final session, each group member may decide if he or she desires to continue on for another study. At that time, you may also want to do some informal evaluation, discuss your group guidelines, and decide which study you want to do next. We recommend you visit saddleback.com/watch for more video-based small group studies.

WHO IS THE HOST?

The host is the person who coordinates and facilitates your group meetings. In addition to a host, we encourage you to select one or more group members to lead your group discussions. Several other responsibilities can be rotated, including refreshments, prayer requests, worship, or keeping up with those who miss a meeting. Shared ownership in the group helps everyone grow.

WHERE DO WE FIND NEW GROUP MEMBERS?

Recruiting new members can be a challenge for groups, especially new groups with just a few people, or existing groups that lose a few people along the way. We encourage you to use the **CIRCLES OF LIFE** diagram on page **94** of this study guide to brainstorm a list of people from your workplace, church, school, neighborhood, family, and so on. Then pray for the people on each member's list. Allow each member to invite several people from their list. Some groups fear that newcomers will interrupt the intimacy that members have built over time. However, groups that welcome newcomers generally gain strength with the infusion of "new blood." Remember, the next person you add just might become a friend for eternity. Logistically, groups find different ways to add members. Some groups remain permanently open, while others choose to open periodically, such as at the beginning or end of a study. If your group becomes too large for easy, face-to-face conversations, you can subgroup, forming a second discussion group in another room.

HOW DO WE HANDLE THE CHILDCARE NEEDS IN OUR GROUP?

Childcare needs must be handled very carefully. This is a sensitive issue. We suggest you seek creative solutions as a group. One common solution is to have the adults meet in the living room and share the cost of a babysitter (or two) who can be with the kids in another part of the house. Another popular option is to have one supervised home for the kids and a second home (close by) for the adults. If desired, the adults could rotate the responsibility of providing a lesson for the kids. This last option is great with school-age kids and can be a huge blessing to families.

SMALL GROUP GUIDELINES

It's a good idea for every group to put words to their shared values, expectations, and commitments. Such guidelines will help you avoid unspoken agendas and unmet expectations. We recommend you discuss your guidelines during your meeting in order to lay the foundation for a healthy group experience. Feel free to modify anything that does not work for your group.

WE AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING VALUES:

CLEAR PURPOSE

To grow healthy spiritual lives by building a healthy small group community

GROUP ATTENDANCE

To give priority to the group meeting (call if I am absent or late)

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

To create a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved (no quick answers, snap judgments, or simple fixes)

BE CONFIDENTIAL

To keep anything that is shared strictly confidential and within the group

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

To avoid gossip and to immediately resolve any concerns by following the principles of Matthew 18:15-17

SPIRITUAL HEALTH

To give group members permission to speak into my life and help me live a healthy, balanced spiritual life that is pleasing to God

LIMIT OUR FREEDOM

To limit our freedom by not serving or consuming alcohol during small group meetings or events so as to avoid causing a weaker brother or sister to stumble (1 Corinthians 8:1-13; Romans 14:19-21)

WELCOME NEWCOMERS

To invite friends who might benefit from this study and warmly welcome newcomers

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

To get to know the other members of the group and pray for them regularly

OTHER _____

We have also discussed and agree on the following items:

CHILDCARE _____

STARTING TIME _____

ENDING TIME _____

If you haven't already done so, take a few minutes to fill out the **SMALL GROUP CALENDAR** on page **95**.

CIRCLES OF LIFE

DISCOVER WHO YOU CAN CONNECT IN COMMUNITY

Use this chart to help carry out one of the values in the **SMALL GROUP GUIDELINES**, to “Welcome Newcomers.”

FAMILY
(immediate or extended)

FELLOWSHIP
(church relationships)

FRIENDS
(neighbors, kids, sports, school, etc.)

FUN
(gym, hobbies, hang-outs)

FACTORY/FIRM
(work, professional arenas)

FOLLOW THIS SIMPLE THREE-STEP PROCESS:

1. List one to two people in each circle.
2. Prayerfully select one person or couple from your list and tell your group about them.
3. Give them a call and invite them to your next meeting. Over fifty percent of those invited to a small group say, “Yes!”

SMALL GROUP CALENDAR

Healthy groups share responsibilities and group ownership. It might take some time for this to develop. Shared ownership ensures that responsibility for the group doesn't fall to one person. Use the calendar to keep track of social events, mission projects, birthdays, or days off. Complete this calendar at your first or second meeting. Planning ahead will increase attendance and shared ownership.

DATE	LESSON	LOCATION	FACILITATOR	SNACK OR MEAL
	SESSION 1			
	SESSION 2			
	SESSION 3			
	SESSION 4			
	SESSION 5			

SMALL GROUP ROSTER

NAME	PHONE	EMAIL
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		
12.		
13.		
14.		
15.		
16.		



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