

SMALL GROUP AND SUNDAY SERMON SERIES



PRACTISING THE WAY

JOURNEY WITH US AS WE EXPLORE THE TEACHINGS OF CHRIST IN DAILY LIFE

7 June - 26 July 2026

HOME GROUPS AND CLASSES GUIDE:

1. Open in Worship and Prayer: this is to invite God into the meeting. For example, you can light a candle, sing together, or use a YouTube Hymn or song.
2. Open your Bibles and read the Bible verses for this week (take turns?) see below.
3. Reflect on the Bible verses and the reflection written by a Minister or Lay Preacher.
4. Connect with each other and take the reflection deeper by answering the Questions.
5. Works out: What have we learned that we can apply in our lives in this session? Keep each other accountable for promises made or important steps taken. Pray for and over each other (after taking prayer requests).

Practising the Way

Week 1 — WALKING IS THE WAY

Week 2 — COMMUNAL HARMONY

Week 3 — THE WAY IS COSTLY

Week 4 — BEING AUTHENTIC

Week 5 — WALKING THE WILDERNESS ROAD

Week 6 — STRENGTH FORGED IN STRUGGLE

Week 7 — THE JOURNEY IS UNFOLDING, AND NEVER FIXED

Week 8 — ENGAGEMENT WITH THE WORLD

Friends, according to our Christian calendar we are moving into 'Ordinary Time'. This refers to the numbered weeks outside of the major liturgical seasons, lasting about 33-34 weeks each year, and focuses on living out the teachings of Christ in daily life. It emphasizes the ongoing mission of the Church, discipleship, and growth in faith rather than commemorating a single event like Christmas or Easter. Ordinary Time in the Christian calendar is often misunderstood as "plain" or "less important", but it's **the season where discipleship is lived out in daily life**. It is about applying faith in everyday life, not just during festive seasons. Ordinary time reminds Christians that faith is not about high holy days but also about consistent practice and witness in daily life. It provides space for teaching, reflection, and mission, grounding believers in the rhythm of ordinary weeks.

I have titled our series **"Practising the Way"**. Practising the Way means actively following Jesus' way of life, not just believing in Him. Many churches emphasize belief but neglect formation and this leads to the crisis of discipleship, **"Practising the Way"** addresses this gap. **Practising the Way is essentially about intentional discipleship – ordering life around Jesus' teachings and example, within community, to grow in faith and mission.**

John Mark Comer wrote a book titled **"Practising the Way"** to help believers move beyond simply believing in Jesus to apprenticing under him. Comer argues that everyone is being formed by something – whether culture, media, or habits – and that Christians must intentionally choose to be formed by Jesus. The book begins by exploring what it means to be an apprentice to Jesus drawing on the ancient rabbinic tradition where disciples

would follow their teacher closely, imitating not just their words but their way of life. Comer insists that discipleship is not passive belief but active practice, requiring rhythms that open space for God's Spirit to transform us. He frames this apprenticeship around three movements – (e, Become, Do):

- *Being with Jesus* – emphasizes cultivating presence through prayer, silence, scripture, and sabbath. This is about learning to live in constant awareness of God's presence.
- *Becoming like Jesus*: He explains that transformation of character doesn't happen overnight or through sheer willpower alone but through intentional practices – fasting, simplicity, community, and generosity – that reshape desires and habits. These practices are not ends in themselves but means of opening our lives to God's work.
- *And doing as He did*: is about living missionally in the world: serving others, pursuing justice, and sharing the good news in everyday life.

Comer's vision is that discipleship is not reserved for spiritual elites but is the ordinary calling of every believer: to apprentice under Jesus, to be transformed by him, and to live out his way in the world. The book speaks to Christians navigating distraction and hurry, offering concrete steps to integrate faith in ordinary life.

I have chosen the theme 'Practising the Way' to help us see how faith isn't just celebrated in high feasts but embodied in ordinary rhythms. It is about discipleship as a lifestyle rather than a one-time decision. So, Practising the Way is about embodying Jesus' way of life here and now – a radical apprenticeship that reshapes how you spend time, use resources, and relate to others. It is about transformation – not just believing in Jesus but allowing his Spirit to reshape our character so that we increasingly reflect his life. For us, this is a call to slow down, to be present with Jesus, and to let discipleship permeate ordinary routines. To invite believers to see everyday life – work, rest, relationships, service – as the arena where discipleship is lived out. This theme reminds us that discipleship is lived out in the everyday; in how we speak to our families, how we handle work pressures, how we respond to neighbours, and how we steward our time. It is about becoming more Christlike not just in sacred spaces but in the ordinary rhythms of life. Over time, this path produces the fruit of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control – making believers living witnesses of Jesus in ordinary settings.



Conclusion: As we journey through this series, may we discover that practising the Way is not about perfection but about persistence – not about rigid formulas but about unfolding faith – not about escape from the world but about engaging it with Christ's love. It is not a single step but a lifelong road. So, let us go forth with courage, knowing that the wilderness will not defeat us, the struggle will not break us, and the cost will not outweigh the eternal reward. Practising the Way is walking with Christ – and in Him, the journey itself becomes our joy. Enjoy the journey, for it is the Way of Christ.

God's blessings, Zamani Sikupela.

Week Six: 12 July 2026

Theme: "Strength Forged in Struggle:

Scriptures: Psalm 73: 25-28; Isaiah 40: 25-31; Romans 5:1-5; Luke 9: 23-27

Worship Song: All sons and daughters-Rest in you <https://youtu.be/mVKjCKYSGT4>

Practising the Way is not about avoiding hardship but about discovering strength in it – each struggle becomes the forge where faith is refined and hope is secured. Growth is not born in comfort but in the crucible of tension, challenge, and perseverance. True growth emerges when we endure the storm, adapt to the pressure, and rise stronger than before. Hardship bends us, tension stretches us, and perseverance tempers us into something stronger. Each obstacle is not a wall but a doorway – a passage through which resilience, wisdom, and character are born. True transformation is not the absence of struggle, but the courage to endure it, the will to arise from it, and the vision to see beyond it.

Reflection on the Scriptures written by: LOCAL PREACHER – YVONNE ROBERG

Living for the glory of God

A colleague of mine has a saying that we need to learn how to “suffer well”. What an alarming thought this is for many of us. Most of us live our lives trying to avoid suffering and desperately hope that we will be spared from calamity, sickness, injury or loss. But experience tells us and the Bible too, that these are all a part of our earthly existence. Peter notes, *“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.”* (1 Pet 4:12-13). And James calls us to, *“count it all joy when you fall into various trials”* (Jas 1:2-4).

But how can this be? Surely something is amiss! We much prefer to hear about how we as followers of Jesus Christ will be blessed, healed, live the good life in abundance and be spared from hardship. And yes, although that, at times, is what we experience, there is another much more difficult truth readily found in scripture. A truth that is not popular and less likely to be preached about. C.S Lewis notes *“We were promised sufferings. They were part of the program. We were even told; Blessed are they that mourn.”* Interestingly, Paul in Romans 5:1-5 firmly plants our suffering as an act of glory, whereby suffering produces perseverance, perseverance, character, and character hope. Similarly, James notes that trials *“test our faith”* which *“produces perseverance, and that perseverance”* shapes us so that we are *“mature and complete, not lacking anything”*.

Job is an Old Testament figure that we easily associate suffering with. Scripture tells us that he endured huge financial, emotional and personal loss. His suffering included the loss of all his assets, his family, his social standing and his health and yet despite this Job remarks, *“But he knows the way that I take; when he has tried me, I shall come out as gold.”* (ESV, Job 23:10). In Romans 5:1-5, Paul notes that *“since we have been justified through faith we have peace with God through Jesus Christ.”* No matter what may happen this side of eternity we as followers of Jesus Christ are assured of peace with God, and because of that we can hope in the glory of God. Yes, we suffer, yes it is difficult and painful, but suffering refines us, grows us, matures us, so much so that when we meet our saviour face to face, we are more Christlike, more whole, more complete, and ready for eternity with him.

Life group Questions (taking discussions deeper):

1. What is your view of suffering in the world and how does that impact your view of God?
2. Are you able to share with your group a time of personal suffering and what impact that had on your life?
3. How might you bring glory to God through your suffering?

Daily Memory Verse and Prayer:

MONDAY

Memory Verse: *“Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you.”* — Psalm 73 73:25

Prayer: Lord, help us to desire You above everything else in this world. Draw our hearts closer to You and teach us to find our joy and security in Your presence.

TUESDAY

Memory Verse: *“Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.”* — Isaiah 40:31

Prayer: Father, renew our strength when we are weary and discouraged. Help us to wait on You with faith and confidence in Your unfailing power.

WEDNESDAY

Memory Verse: *“Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”* — Romans 5:1

Prayer: Jesus, thank You for the peace and grace we have through You. Fill our hearts today with assurance, gratitude, and steadfast faith.

THURSDAY

Memory Verse: *“Suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.”* — Romans 5:3–4

Prayer: Lord, use every challenge in our lives to shape us into people of deeper faith and hope. Help us trust that You are working through every season for our good.

FRIDAY

Memory Verse: *“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.”* — Luke 9:23

Prayer: Father, give us willing hearts to follow You faithfully each day. Teach us to surrender our own plans and walk closely in obedience to Christ.

SATURDAY

Memory Verse: *“What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self?”* — Luke 9:25

Prayer: Lord, keep our hearts focused on eternal treasures rather than temporary things. Help us live wisely, faithfully, and fully devoted to You.

Family Devotion: Growing Through Struggles Compiled by: Magogodi Nkuna – Volunteer

Scripture Reading: Romans 5:1-5 / **Song:** [Hallelujah in the Hard Things](#)

Background

Every single one of us struggles with something. Whether it is a tough subject like maths, feeling like you aren't good at sports, or dealing with friendship drama, challenges are a normal part of life. However, just because you are struggling right now does not mean you will struggle forever. In fact, Romans 5:3-4 reminds us that our trials have a purpose—how we choose to look at our hard times completely determines who we become.

Application

It doesn't feel good when you fail a maths test or miss out on making the A-team for netball or basketball. However, the truth is that when you put in the hard work to improve, you are doing more than just building skills; you are building patience and resilience (*the ability to bounce back*). Character isn't built when life is easy and comfortable. It is built when we face struggles head-on and refuse to give up. The next time you are facing a tough challenge, remember God is using this process to build a stronger, wiser, and better you.

Reflections

Pre-Teens:

1. What is one specific thing you are currently struggling with?
2. How have you responded to this struggle so far? (*Have you wanted to quit, have you asked for help, or are you trying to figure it out on your own?*)
3. What is this challenge teaching you about yourself?

Teens:

1. Honestly, do you usually view struggles as good things or bad things?
2. Explain your answer to the question above. Why do you look at them that way?
3. What is your automatic, "default" reaction when something gets really difficult?
4. After reading this devotion, do you think your attitude toward struggles will change? If so, how?

Activity: Struggle to Strength

On a piece of paper, list three things you are currently struggling with. Right next to each struggle, write a positive, faith-filled affirmation to help you push through.

Example 1: *"I am struggling to understand fractions."*

Affirmation: I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.

Example 2: *"I struggle with feeling left out at school."*

Affirmation: I may feel alone right now but God has promised to always be with me.

Prayer

Dear Lord, I thank You that You are always with me, especially during my hardest struggles. I know that You love me and that You are using these challenges to build my character, patience, and strength. Please help me to keep my eyes on You when things get tough and give me the grace to keep moving forward. Amen.