



This guide is an invitation to follow Jesus with greater purpose and hope. It will help you to explore the scriptures and challenge you to live out your faith. Each week we'd love for you to think about how you relate: **Up** (with God), **In** (with church) and **Out** (with neighbors).

Weekly Questions:

- How is God getting my attention? For help, think about these areas:
- How are you living up with God?
- How are you living in community with other followers of Jesus?
- How are you living out on mission with your neighbors?
- What are you going to do about it?

Revelation: Following the Lamb into New Creation

Revelation 1 and any of the letters from Revelation 2-3

- **The vision of the Living One.** John's vision of Jesus isn't just a mystical experience; it is a recalibration of our reality. Amid empires and struggle, we see the "First and the Last," the one who holds the keys of death and Hades. This vision invites us to move beyond a surface-level existence and see our lives through the lens of the New Creation. What does the word revelation mean? What does John want to "reveal" about who Jesus is? What are some of the ways that the claims of Jesus as Lord create problems for Christians living in the Roman Empire? What are some of the differences between the Roman Empire and the Kingdom of God?
- **Church revelations.** Jesus speaks directly to the seven churches, naming both their strengths and their failures. Like the habit of reconciliation, these letters call us to admit where we have "forsaken our first love" or become "lukewarm". The letters follow a pattern: Christ, Affirmation, Judgment, Challenge, Invitation & Promise. Read through a letter or two to identify the pattern. Look for Christ, affirmations of what the churches are doing right, what they are being judged for doing wrong, the challenge to change, and the invitation and promise if they become faithful. Then, ask: how might this letter apply to my life, our church, or relationships? How does the practice of "listening to what the Spirit says to the churches" help you hear God's voice over the noise of your own agenda?
- **The challenge to overcome.** To "overcome" is not to win by force, but to follow the Lamb by practicing presence, justice, and sacrificial love in our neighborhoods. We are invited to be people who "hear and take to heart" what is written, living as citizens of the New Creation right now. What would it look like for our church to "open the door" when Jesus knocks, inviting Him into the messy, vulnerable parts of our shared life? How does the promise of "new name" living with Jesus in the new creation change how you view your "mundane" responsibilities this week?

Practice: Opening the Door

Where do we make it hard for our neighbors to see our distinct faith in Jesus before commitments to anything else? Where do you sense Jesus is knocking on the door and asking you to avoid being lukewarm or stuck?