

# SIX WEEKS TO SATURATE





*Hours after arriving on Staten Island as a new ministry leader Pastor Dave Beidel invited me to a weekly clergy prayer meeting. I could hardly believe my good fortune! I had no idea I would find more than just a prayer circle! I discovered a group of leaders passionate for Jesus and desperate to make an impact for the Kingdom of Jesus—Together! Under Dave’s leadership the churches of Staten Island have united to form a beautifully connected church—truly the way church should be. This book will inspire you take steps in your local context to form the connected and collaboratively minded church that your community desperately needs. — Stephen Mayes*

*David Beidel gets it. We become answers to Jesus’ prayer — and the prayers of others — and advance Jesus’ kingdom “on earth as it is in heaven,” when we demonstrate the Gospel, not just talk about it. This book offers a framework for believers to practice tangibly what we preach rhetorically in ways that impact real people where they live, work, and go to school every day. — Jeremy Del Rio, Esq., Thrive Collective*

*With his book, Saturate, David Beidel accomplishes something of great value to the 21st Century church. He offers church leaders a concrete, step-by-step blueprint for empowering their congregations to fulfill the Great Commission on every level: Individual to individual, church to individual, and church to community. Drawn from what he learned through his church’s mobilization across Long Island in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, Beidel goes beyond the platitudes and clichés we know so well. The wisdom found in this book is hard-earned through experience. And that experience has shown Beidel a model that works. Readers of Saturate will see a clear path – one modeled in both the Old and New testaments – to build their churches into pillars of light within their communities and beyond. — Mike Scales*

*Saturate is both inspiring and practical. Rev. Dave Beidel offers insights and tools for each person who wants to learn how to serve Jesus Christ more effectively in their home, workplace, neighborhood and city. Saturate will help you step out in faith and you’ll see God bring surprising changes to your world. — Dr. Glenn Barth, President of GoodCities*

*Saturate is more than a good idea, it is truly a desire of many of our pastors and leaders in Staten Island. David Beidel’s passion to see the church united for Gospel and Kingdom saturation is expressed in his life and leadership. His efforts to gather the body of Christ together for collective ministry is equaled by his desire for Christ alone to be made known and glorified. — Tim McIntyre, Oasis Church*

*Dave Beidel has written a compelling story on how churches can collaborate together to impact their communities. Dave is a practitioner who was instrumental in the collaborative work after Super storm Sandy in New York City. — Dr. Mac Pier, CEO and Founder, The NYC Leadership Center; Senior Associate for Cities – Lausanne Movement*

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# INTRODUCTION

In one of the darkest times in Israel's history, Elijah the prophet "bowed himself down on the earth and put his face between his knees" and cried out for rain. He sent his servant to look for any sign of rain. Six times his servant came back to report no wind, no clouds, no rain, no hope: "There is nothing." The seventh time his servant came back and said, "Behold, a little cloud like a man's hand is rising from the sea." He arose and told his servant: tell the king, get moving, the skies are about to let loose. (1 Kings 18:41-46)

We are living in troubled times. A drought of hope and peace is haunting cities and nations. However, thousand, maybe millions have been praying with their faces to the ground, and we are seeing a cloud the size of man's hand rising from the sea. In spite of the political and social distress and gloom, there is a palpable spirit of expectation and excitement filling our nation. A movement of prayer and holy unity is sweeping through our country. Churches and para-churches are gathering together to pray in nearly every major American city. God is restoring the Church, healing its brokenness, breaking down dividing walls and preparing a mighty army.

As more and more ministries join hands for the good work, we are overjoyed and bursting with expectation. Nevertheless, just as our physical bodies thrive or perish primarily due to health at the cellular level, likewise, the body of Christ lives or dies, advances or retreats only and always at the cellular level. The strength of our bodies is determined by the health, wholeness, cooperation and replication of each and every cell in each and every function of our being. The greatest unity movement and evangelistic effort ever seen in the USA could take place this year, but if the individual members of the body sit back and expect the work of the kingdom to advance upon the shoulders of charismatic leaders and crusade events, the greatest of campaigns will bear little fruit and have minimal lasting impact.

God is looking to **you** to be the key player in the greatest revival that the world will ever see. This is not a sales pitch; it is the only way God intended for his Kingdom to advance: one by one, family by family, neighbor by neighbor.

God Almighty descended from glory to this fallen planet to have one on one, heart-to-heart conversations with his children. Much of God's greatest impact was made through these deep and personal relationships. Similarly, our personal, individual outreach will have rich and lasting impact.

Ezekiel the prophet was once told to prophesy over the demoralized and divided nation of Israel. They were so hopeless, the vision that God gave to the prophet to reveal their sorry state of mind and heart was a valley full of dry bones. God raised those corpses from the dead, and they rose up by his Spirit to be a vast and mighty army (Ezekiel 37). We are calling upon the vast and mighty army of the body of Christ to arise, shine and join what could be the greatest work the earth has ever seen.

The statistics are daunting. In his book, *The Unchurched Next Door*, Dr. Thom Rainer writes, "Only two percent of church members invite an unchurched person to church." Ironically, Dr. Rainer also found that



“Eighty-two percent of the unchurched are at least somewhat likely to attend church if invited.”<sup>1</sup> A recent Barna survey found that only forty-eight percent of Evangelicals have shared their faith with one person in the last year.<sup>2</sup> If the thought of sharing your faith terrifies you, you are not alone. There is a glorious flip-side to these disturbing statistics. Imagine the radical holy transformation we would see in our city if only half of the paralyzed and cloistered believers took one step up towards God and one step out towards their neighbor.

*If you are already in motion, please take a giant step forward. If you have been immobilized for a long time, today is the day to break free. Take the smallest but biggest step of all: the first step.*

*It is my hope that this study will ignite a passion and a fire within you to live in the fullness of your calling. In fact, that’s the title of the final chapter: Ignite! However, before we get there, we will be examining the five deadly “I’s” that often trap and incapacitate the powerful people of God: Inertia, Intimidation, Isolation, Insignificance, and the “I” of “me, myself and I.” Along the way, you’ll discover practical tools to overcome these potential fire extinguishers so that your flame will ignite, burn bright and bring the light of Christ to your neighborhood, your workplace and your city.*

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1 Back to Church Statistics: <http://backtochurch.com/participate/resources/statistics/#sthash.846GGnvR.dpuf>

2 Barna Research Institute: <https://www.barna.org/barna-update/faith-spirituality/648-is-evangelism-going-out-of-style#.VlibUzHF-AU>

# 1. INERTIA

*Imagine what would happen if every Christian in our city took one giant leap up to God and one giant leap out towards the lost? I believe a tsunami of glory would flood the world. Let's get moving.*

Inertia is a powerful force, but momentum is more powerful. Trading inertia for momentum requires only one step. There are very few things the enemy of our souls works harder at than keeping sleeping giants inert. The Christian is more than a sleeping giant; he is a joint heir of Christ, imbued with power like none other. Satan seeks to keep us contained and anesthetized at all cost.

An enormous boulder can be immobilized by a small wedge. Although each believer wields more force than a boulder the size of our planet, little lies and a bit of discouragement can act as a wedge and result in spiritual paralysis. In this study, we will lay out a simple biblical strategy with the potential to transform our region and world for Christ. However, its execution is contingent upon the waking of giants and the loosing of mighty boulders. Spiritual paralysis is a disease that has trapped us all at one time or another. It is our desire to help remove the various wedges that may have immobilized you. Personally, I've often been immobilized by "piddlewood."

*Piddlewood: noun; \pi-dul -wu(-ə)d\  
the gnarly, twisted, endless mat of refuse, bark, sawdust, leaves and small branch particles; the vast scattered remnants of a tree felling*

When I operated a tree service, the clean-up at end of the day was the worst part of the job. I'm a climber/squirrel, so swinging around in a tree with a chainsaw while roping down branches and logs can be a bit of a thrill for me. However, at the end of a long day, the thrill is over. All that is left is a tired crew, hungry mosquitos, and what seems like an acre of piddlewood. I've wasted countless hours with rake in hand, staring at the mess, paralyzed.

Then, one sweet day, a simple strategy emerged. I honestly believe it was divine. "Put your feet down somewhere, anywhere in the middle of the mess, and rake a circle as far as you can reach." I began to make circles. I told my crew, "Don't stress about the whole yard—just make a circle around your feet." Within 20 minutes, the huge mess was broken down into small piles. It was revolutionary. Within another 20 minutes, the piles were bagged up, we got paid, and we were on our way home.

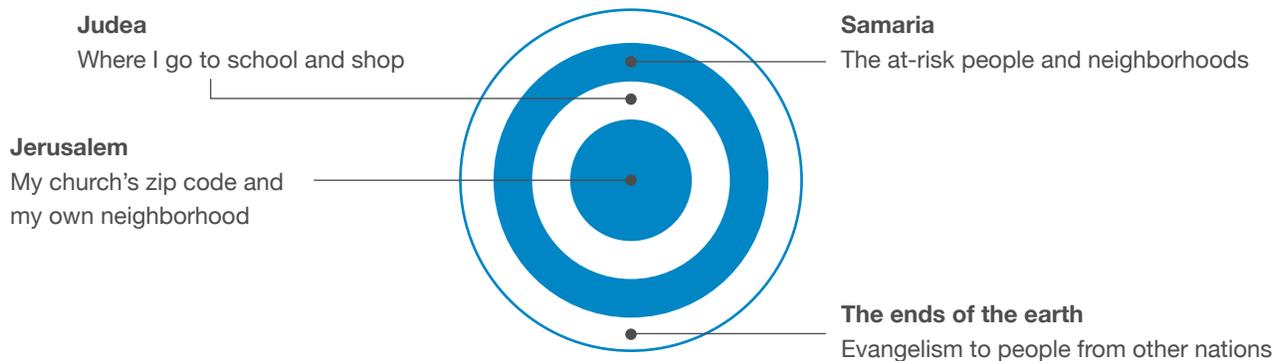
This simple strategy served me well as a tree man, but it has been transformational in my work as an inner-city pastor. The depth of sorrow that surrounded me, and the entrenched brokenness of a community of multi-generational devastation, was paralyzing. Over and over again, God would remind me of this simple lesson: I can't save my whole city, but I can do my part where God has planted me. None of us can do everything, but all of us can do something. If we all do something, everything will change!

If we all put our feet down somewhere and reach out to rake one circle in our neighborhood, our place of work, our school, or in a troubled part of town, the life-giving force will be incredible. If we all begin to reach out in prayer, in word, and in deed, the world will never be the same.

## Rake a Circle

The command of Christ in Acts 1:8 provides a perfect strategic plan to reach the world one circle at a time. “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).

It might help you to draw your city or county on the next page and begin to identify the four quadrants God calls us to be witnesses in.



## Now Put Your Feet Down

Make one prayer circle in each of the Acts 1:8 quadrants. Write down 1 to 3 names in each of the circles. Welcome the power of the Holy Spirit to come upon you. Prayerfully remove the wedge of paralysis from your heart and mind by praying for each person. In this time of prayer, you will take the first step of the amazing journey God has planned for you.

Who am I praying for	How am I praying for them	Scriptures that will guide prayer
My Jerusalem:		
My Judea:		
My Samaria:		
The ends of the earth:		

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- Pray for God to bring each one into a true relationship with him.
  - Ask God to use you as his ambassador in any way he desires.
  - Ask God to deepen your love for him and for those that surround you.

Next to the names of those from your four circles, write down what you prayed for and any Scripture that God may have impressed on your heart as you prayed for them.

Pray for strength to share with some of your co-workers, friends or neighbors that you often pray for them. For example: “I wanted to let you know that I pray for all my friends. If you ever have anything specific you want me to pray about, let me know.”

Pray daily or weekly for these neighbors, acquaintances and their families. Ask God to reveal himself to them.

Pray for God to give you wisdom and insight into practical ways you can bless them and reveal God’s love.

## Going Deeper

In the following great commandments of Christ, we see our Lord giving us first steps: one step up to God, and one step out towards our neighbor. Meditate on these two passages, and affirm to God your desire to love, honor and obey him. Then, spend some time working through the devotional guide individually or in your small group.

*“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.” (MATTHEW 22:36-40)*

*Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.” (JOHN 21:15)*

There is a direct connection between your brain and your spine. When the spinal column is damaged, it may result in death or complete paralysis. The first commandment is, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength and mind.” This is the first step to healing your paralysis: repent of anything that has corrupted, diluted or distracted you, and return to your first love. Remember the story of the Prodigal Son. As the son turned his heart towards his father, the father ran to meet and restore him (Luke 15:11-32).



The second commandment is, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Jesus said that all the law and all the prophets hang on these two commandments. If you shrink back from these two, your faith is somewhat disingenuous. As you honor these foundational commandments essential for all believers, you will come alive in Christ Jesus.

*In Matthew 26:30, Jesus distilled 750,000 words of Scripture into two sentences.  
Does this encourage you? Why?*

*What are a few issues or challenges in your life that you could picture as hanging on these two commandments?*



## 2. INSIGNIFICANCE

One of the most popular Bible stories is the account of the boy who gave his fish and loaves to Jesus. Jesus blessed the child's lunch offering, and then he multiplied it to feed thousands of people. The lesson we usually get from this story is that when we share and are not selfish, Jesus can do something wonderful through us. I often wonder if the real hurdle the boy overcame wasn't selfishness as much as it was a sense of insignificance. The boy's lunch could be compared to a cheap tuna-fish sandwich. Perhaps he was wondering, "Why should I give up my measly lunch when it won't make a difference anyway?"

*Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?" He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little." One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?" Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number. Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted. (JOHN 6:5-11)*

Are you paralyzed because you feel that what you have to offer is insignificant?

What would you have done on that day, if you were the boy with the fish and loaves? Why?

What do you have to give that seems like it is too small to make a difference?

Think about or discuss the potential that might be found in seemingly "insignificant" gifts.

## Going Deeper

*“For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master’s money. Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’ But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’” (MATTHEW 25:14-30)*



Why did the master give different amounts to his servants?

Was the master fair? How does this parable relate to the story of the boy with the fish and the loaves?

What do you think about the Master's rewards and punishment?

What is the big-picture lesson that Jesus is teaching?

Have you been angry at God because you feel he has shortchanged you in the area of gifts, talents, or resources? What if God has uniquely appointed you to reach a certain "nook and cranny" in this world that no one else can? Are you willing to do the small things because you are compelled by the love of Christ? Repent of any resentment you may have harbored toward God. Write down the nook and cranny on which God has called you to focus.



# 3. INTIMIDATION

## Zero in on a Hero

The commissioning of Moses is one of the most ironic stories in the Bible. We always imagine Moses as a powerful, awe-inspiring leader, but the opposite is true. He was looking for any excuse to get out of God's job offer to deliver Israel out of Egypt's captivity.

Five times, Moses tried to avoid the job to which God had called him. If you are reluctant to move forward, you are in good company. Even in the midst of experiencing the glory of God at the burning bush and hearing God's voice directly calling him, Moses was trying to dodge his world-changing assignment. In his mind, he was just an old, disillusioned shepherd.

In our celebrity-enamored culture, it is easy to fall into the trap of believing that sharing the Gospel should be left to the professionals, the talented, and the scholars. Church historian Michael Green counters this mindset. In studying the impact of the early Church, he discovered that it was the "informal missionaries"—the peasants, merchants, servants and washwomen—that spread the Gospel throughout the known world (Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, 172-173). The explosive growth of the ancient Church slowed to a crawl when laypeople were told they were not worthy to read or share the word of God.

Charismatic leaders are like the Air Force: they are important, but without ground troops going door-to-door, very little territory is retained. The most powerful ministers of the Gospel have always been friends, neighbors, co-workers and business associates ... you.

If you have bought the lie that your life is insignificant, you have swallowed one of Satan's grandest deceptions. Almighty God has made his home within you and called you his ambassador, his hands, and his feet. God asks us to beg on his behalf for his lost children to come home (2 Corinthians 5:20).

Maybe you have not experienced a life of significance thus far. Jesus explained this in the famous "Sermon on the Mount." He said, "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house" (Matthew 5:14-15). So you see, in Christ Jesus, you have always been significant. Maybe, until now, you have been hidden and covered up.

Moses experienced the same identity crisis. Let us learn from his story by taking another step up towards God and another step out towards our friends and neighbors.

But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt" (Exodus 3:11)?

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1. What are you saying to God as he is calling you to step out as his ambassador?
  2. What is your emotional response to the question, “Who am I?” What is the biblical answer to this question?
  3. Moses had several objections to obeying God. What are yours?
  4. What or who is your Pharaoh? Who or what is your greatest hindrance to obeying God in being his ambassador to some of the circles you have identified (fear of rejection, arrogant coworkers, personal failure, etc.)?
  5. Share this hindrance with your small group or with a close Christian friend. Ask God to set you free from your Pharaohs. Express below in a short written prayer your desire to honor God. Remember: those who hunger and thirst for righteousness will be satisfied.

## Create a list of all the greatest heroes of the Old Testament. Who is your favorite?

Write down their names and why you chose them. If you are in a small group, share your thoughts.

Now read the following passage: Matthew 11:7-11

*As John’s disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the wind? If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings’ palaces. Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written:*



*‘I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’  
Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than  
John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.’ ”*

Declare this truth:

**I, (Your Name Here) am greater than (Your Biblical Superhero), because Christ himself lives in me.**

Throughout the week, declare this aloud in front of a mirror until you can say it in absolute confidence in Christ.

## Going Deeper with Moses

*Then Moses said to God, “Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you.’ Now they may say to me, ‘What is his name?’ What shall I say to them?’” (EXODUS 3:13)*

Moses expresses something that is not an easy fix. He is basically saying, “I really don’t know you that well, God, so how can I tell other people about you?” This is the greatest challenge of all; in fact, the apostle Paul expressed it as the highest calling of his life: “That I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his suffering” (Philippians 3:10). Paul, after years of seeking, studying and preaching Christ, still held knowing him as his highest passion. None of us know him fully; we are all on a glorious lifelong journey to know the height, the width, the length and the depth of his love.

If you are waiting to share your faith until you know God better, you will never move forward.

Here is a simple prayer that God always answers:

“O God, how I long to know you, love you and be used by you. Fill me with your Holy Spirit, change me, and somehow make me like you.” Allow time for God to minister to you. If you are comfortable, share with a friend or your small group the way in which God is ministering to you or how this is challenging to you.

*Then Moses said, “What if they will not believe me or listen to what I say?  
For they may say, ‘The LORD has not appeared to you.’ ” (EXODUS 4:1)*

Moses had concerns that weren’t his to worry about. We are called only to be a witness for God. How other people respond should not be a factor in the equation. A witness is only responsible to share accurately what they have seen and heard. Be a faithful and true witness.

Write down what you have seen, heard and experienced as a follower of Christ. This is your testimony. It does not need to be elaborate or profound. It does not need to be dramatic or cataclysmic. Here is a simple way to frame your testimony: “This is who I was, and this is who I am. Jesus made the difference.”



Mine is very simple:

“As a 16-year-old young man, I was struggling to fully embrace the faith of my parents, and challenged by the mocking voices of atheism in my NYC public school education. Thankfully, before throwing away the honest faith of my parents, I decided to look deeper. As I looked, I found that all I had known up to that point was like the tip of an iceberg. As I dove deeper, I discovered a mountain more massive and vast than I ever dreamed. I am still diving and treasuring the endless depths of God’s power and love.”

I have shared that story hundreds of times throughout my life. I was not saved from drug abuse or gang activity; this is my simple and true testimony, and I am happy to share it with anyone who will listen.

During this week, write down your testimony.

THIS IS WHO I WAS...

THIS IS WHO I AM...

THIS IS HOW I CAME TO KNOW JESUS...

Ask the Lord to give you an opportunity to share your testimony with someone within the next week or month. Write down any names that come to mind.

*But Moses said to the LORD, “Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue.” Then the LORD said to him, “Who has made man’s mouth? Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the LORD? Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak.” But he said, “Oh, my Lord, please send someone else.” (EXODUS 4:10,13)*

This is really hilarious when you think about it. It’s hard to believe that one of the greatest leaders of all time tried so desperately to escape his calling. Now Moses probably looks down from heaven and shakes his head in bewilderment at us. He knows that the fullness of God has been given to us. He is well aware that the glory of God that was manifested to him at the burning bush now resides within our hearts. We have a far more compelling reason to fulfill our calling.

As you finish this study, write down every excuse or flaw that hinders you from walking in the fullness of your high and holy calling. Remember that your calling is of great significance. One day you will look back and laugh at the small wedges that the enemy used to paralyze you.



### My Flaws and Hindrances:

<b>When I am weak</b> List three flaws or hindrances in your life	<b>He is strong</b> List three verses that show God's Strength to overcome weakness

Lift up to the Lord in prayer each one of the flaws or excuses that you have written. For each flaw or hindrance, search for a Bible verse or passage that can help you to stay focused on the victory that is yours in Christ Jesus.

Declare Aloud: “Abba Father, I believe that your grace and power is greater than my \_\_\_\_\_ (list your struggles). I will no longer allow intimidation to paralyze me. I believe your word more than my own emotions. I choose to live strong for you because you have given me your strength and your power. I can do all things through you, my Savior and my God. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

Now go back to your Acts 1:8 prayer list. Pray boldly for your friends, neighbors and co-workers.



## 4. ISOLATION

For our honeymoon, my bride Rebecca and I went to California. Dear friends of my parents loaned us their mountain house in a beautiful town called Mt. Hermon. We were staying near the sequoia forests, and were excited to see these ancient, enormous trees. As we craned our necks and gazed in awe, I was curious about their root system. It seemed impossible that any structure this tall could survive hundreds of years of hurricanes and floods. I knew that an oak tree has a tap root that grows straight down, as deep as the tree is tall. So I asked our tour guide about the tap root of the sequoia. Since they grow nearly 300 feet high, I wondered aloud at the root depth of these giants. He floored me when he said, “Sequoias don’t have tap roots. They have surface roots, between 6 and 20 feet deep.” Baffled, I said, “How can they possibly stand?” He explained that sequoia forests all come from one tree. As the roots spread out, trees will spring up from the roots themselves, so a sequoia forest only has one root system. In order to knock down a sequoia tree, you need to knock down a sequoia forest. The root system of the sequoia provides an awesome image for the words of Christ in John 17:11-26.

*“Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.... I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.*

*Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.” (JOHN 17:11-26)*

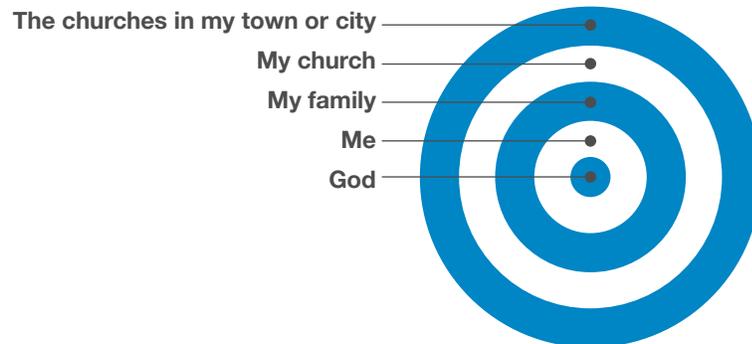
John 17 is our Lord’s longest recorded prayer, which concludes his longest recorded teaching. This teaching immediately precedes Jesus’ betrayal, arrest and crucifixion. It is impossible to overstate the weight of these words. For the sake of Christ and his Kingdom, we must in every way, and in every

season, overcome all divisive incidents and inclinations. It is clear that all the laws and all the prophets hang on two commandments. One is to love God; the other, to love our neighbor (and all the more, our brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus). This is not easy—that is why it is a command. The apostle Paul admonishes us to “make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3, NIV).

Read the above selection from John 17 once more. Highlight every direct and indirect reference to unity. Write down and/or discuss in your small group your observations regarding:

1. Jesus’ passion for our oneness
2. The resources provided for our oneness
3. The potential impact of oneness

Below, you will see five concentric circles. Using a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being least connected and 10 being most connected), rate how connected you feel to each one.



**Write a plan on how to move up one step in each relationship.**

## 5. “I”

Sometimes it's just, “me, myself, and I,” good old fashioned selfishness that stops us cold. Judas Iscariot had the same problem. He loved, followed, and served Jesus for years, but he also liked to steal from him. Sadly, we all have a little bit of Judas in us. We walk with Jesus but still can be so discontented, self-absorbed and full of grumbling. We love Jesus, but we want compensation for being a disciple. When things don't work out as we thought they would, betrayal is nearer to our hearts than we ever want to admit. If you remember the story, all the other disciples thought they were betrayers too; they all had something ugly brewing in their hearts that night. Of course I hate what Judas did, but meditating on the motive of his actions helps me to confront directly my Judas-like attitudes and inclinations. If we don't address and confess our thieving and selfish spirit, it will steal our souls and bring about horrible destruction.

The following is a passage that shows the difference between selflessness and selfishness. Compare the reactions between the two characters as you read.

*Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus (whom Jesus raised from the dead) lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, “Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages.” He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it. “Leave her alone,” Jesus replied. “It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me” (John 12:1-8).*



- Think about the differences between Judas and Mary.
- What legacy has Judas left behind? (How many children do you know who have been named Judas?)
- How valuable would Mary's perfume be in the twenty-first century?
- Do you think Mary ever regretted her rash decision later in life? (This was probably her dowry, in which case she may not have ever married.)
- Now that she is with Christ in glory, what do you think Mary might ponder regarding that day?
- What characteristics of Mary do you see in yourself? Can you remember a moment similar to this day?

The path to betrayal is often a long-winding road, beginning with self-absorption and continuing on to frustration, bitterness, and finally, betrayal. Can you identify a stretch of this dangerous road that you may be walking on? Mary had "Jesus-absorption," which may be one of the most important keys to breaking the downward spiral towards betrayal and destruction. Her major frustration was: "I can't possibly give him enough." Judas' frustration was: "He's not giving me what I want."

It is painful but important to confront our Judas-like attitudes. They creep up on us on a regular basis. Like a small infection, they will overpower us when ignored. We must constantly bring our sin-prone souls to our Savior and healer. He will forgive, rescue and restore us.

Mary is famous for doing the "one thing that is necessary." She treasured our Lord and gazed upon his beauty. Her heart then was rightly poured out in worship before him. The fragrance of her love still fills the earth and blesses God's heart. This short passage sets before us two pathways, one leads to glory, the other to disgrace. Let us all dedicate our lives to being a fragrance to Christ and our world.

Identify any part of Judas' road on which you have a tendency to wander. Confess it to God and to a Christian friend that can keep you accountable.



What steps can you take to break free from Judas-like attitudes?

What steps can you take to be more of a sweet fragrance to Christ (more Jesus-absorbed)?

Pray through this, and confess your sins. God is faithful and just to forgive and cleanse you. Share with your small group one way that you will take to move one step forward towards loving God more and one step outward towards those in need of him.

# 6. IGNITE

We pray that this study has effectively assisted you in removing the wedges that have immobilized you. Never forget what Jesus says about you: “You are the light of the world.” It is easier to swallow that statement when Jesus says it about himself. It’s laughable to think of anyone else saying such a thing. Yet when Jesus declares that he is more powerful, meaningful and glorious than the very sun that enlivens our planet, we nod in joyful agreement. Then he looks into our eyes and says, “Because I am with you, the same is true about you.” Somehow because Jesus says it, we can begin to believe it. Christ in us is truly the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27).

If you don’t often feel very glorious, you are in good company. Most of the great evangelists of the New Testament were quite inglorious as well. The Shepherds in Bethlehem, the Samaritan woman and the Gadarene demoniac were by no means model citizens, yet each of them impacted their entire city for Christ. They, the disciples, you and I were/are all broken, fragile “jars of clay” (2 Corinthians 4:7).

Sometimes the most beautiful lamps are those encased with paper thin material, or fractured and splintered glass. When filled with light, their glory is breathtaking. We will conclude this study with a closer look at the story of the Gadarene demoniac. He is the most unlikely of heroes; a very fractured and broken soul, the kind Jesus loves to shine through.

*They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. And crying out with a loud voice, he said, “What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me.” For he was saying to him, “Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!” And Jesus asked him, “What is your name?” He replied, “My name is Legion, for we are many.” And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and they begged him, saying, “Send us to the pigs; let us enter them.” So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the sea.*



*The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened. And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs. And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region. As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. And he did not permit him but said to him, “Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.” And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled. (MARK 5:1-20)*

1. Are there people that you write off? People that you think could never be reached with the Gospel? Jot down a few names or even a few types of people that fall into this category in your mind. Discuss in your small group and/or bring them before your heavenly Father. Ask God if he writes them off or if he wants you to stand in the gap for them (Ezekiel 22:30).
2. Do you write yourself off? Do you have a list of reasons you cannot be greatly used by God? Please write them down as well and bring each one before God. Ask him to bring beauty from your ashes (Isaiah 61:3). Ask him to “work all things together for good” and for his glory (Romans 8:28). He will guide you into good and fruitful pastures.
3. Did you find it disturbing that Jesus didn’t listen to the former demoniac’s plea (Mark 5:18-19)? If you were in his shoes, what are some reasons you might want to leave your hometown? Also discuss/journal some of the possible reasons Jesus left him behind.

The following passage occurs a short time later in the same Decapolis region. What is the difference in reception that Jesus receives this time? (Compare with Mark 5:17). Do you think the Gadarene demoniac could have changed the receptivity of an entire metropolis? Why and how?<sup>3</sup>



*When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored to the shore. And when they got out of the boat, the people immediately recognized him and ran about the whole region and began to bring the sick people on their beds to wherever they heard he was. And wherever he came, in villages, cities, or countryside, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and implored him that they might touch even the fringe of his garment. And as many as touched it were made well.*

(MARK 6:53-56)

Go back to your Acts 1:8 prayer list. Pray again with faith for the many that God has strategically placed along your path, in your neighborhood and workplace. Welcome God to saturate and baptize you with the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that anyone who believes in him, “from his innermost being will flow rivers of living water” (John 7:38). Go saturate your world with the love and power of God.



# CONCLUSION

Pastors, myself included, can often get so focused on church ministry that we neglect our own “Jerusalems” and “Judeas.” In my case, I spend a great deal of time reaching out in the large housing project complex that is adjacent to my church. Yet reaching out to my own neighbors and along my own path can be more challenging, at times falling off of my radar.

As I was writing this study, I began to be more intentional about praying for my neighbors and the places I walked and shopped. As God would have it, soon after I began praying for my neighbors, a dear friend brought an NBA Celebrity Basketball evangelistic outreach to my town. I invited all my neighbors and ten participated.

Later that week, I was waiting in line to buy cold cuts at a local supermarket. I took out my phone and started to check my text messages when I sensed the Lord saying, “Put away your phone and engage.” So I got into a friendly conversation with the man behind the deli counter. He was sharing how he just moved back to Staten Island from North Carolina. I asked him if he liked living down South. He said he hated it because there were as many churches down there as there are McDonalds up here. He added, “And I’m an atheist.” I said, “Well, that’s funny, because I’m a pastor!” We laughed, and he qualified his statement. “I’m not sure if I’m an atheist, I just hate the hypocrisy. These people are in church on Sunday and devils on Monday.” I told him that I hate the hypocrisy more than he does.

I shared with him a little bit about our ministry to inner-city children. He took me to the side and told me that he is a professional comic book artist, and any time our kids would like some art lessons, he would donate his time. Since that conversation, he has already given our children several amazing art lessons. He was practically in tears the first day he came. They have been mesmerized with his outstanding talent and capacity to teach. He promised me he will come every week and work with our kids for as many hours as he possibly can.

We have been fooled into thinking that nobody wants to hear about Jesus. Just a few days ago, as I sat at a diner with my executive pastor, we asked our waitress if we could pray for her. Soon she was crying and sharing with us the bitterness that had been poisoning her heart for many years. The truth is that there are millions of people in our city right now that desperately want to hear the truth from real people who really love Jesus.

We are real people, fragile jars of clay. Life is challenging, often times brutally so, for all of us. We all have family members or loved ones who spurn the truth of God and break our hearts. For many, the pain and discouragement of this shuts us down. In those times, try to imagine your sorrow multiplied times infinity. Is it possible for you to enter into the “fellowship of his sufferings,” to feel God’s hunger for the lost and join him in rescuing the perishing?

In Luke 14, Jesus shares a parable about a man who threw a great banquet and invited many to come. Everyone he invited had an excuse not to come. The passage continues, “Then the man told his servants: ‘Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame.’ And the servant said, ‘Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.’ And



the master said to the servant, ‘Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled.’”

God has invited us all to a great wedding banquet. We are his bride. The life of Christ was the cost of this wedding banquet. He sends us into the streets, lanes and highways of our city. He sends us to the poor, crippled, blind and lame. He sends us to our Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria and to the ends of the earth. He longs to fill his house. He commands us to compel them to come in.

May the Lamb of God for sinners slain receive the reward of his suffering. May the knowledge of his glory cover our city as the waters cover the sea.

*For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. (HABAKKUK 2:14)*



## About the Author

Pastor Dave Beidel is the author of Samaria: the Great Omission, as well as Saturate, a forthcoming companion book to this study. For more information about Saturate and other future projects from this author, please check out the websites listed below.

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## About the Saturate Team

For more information about American Bible Society:

**[www.americanbible.org](http://www.americanbible.org)**

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For more information about God Belongs in My City:

**[www.godbelongsinmycity.com](http://www.godbelongsinmycity.com)**

For more information about New Hope Community Church:

**[www.newhopesi.com](http://www.newhopesi.com)**

To learn more about the work of the Staten Island Association for Evangelicals and the mission to unify the church on its common mission of bringing hope to the lost on Staten Island and throughout New York City, check out their website at

**[www.newlife4si.org](http://www.newlife4si.org)**

For more information about New York City Serve:

**[nycityserve.org](http://nycityserve.org)**

For more information about The New York City Leadership Center:

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