

DEEPLY



ROOTED



Practicing the Way? September 2025 Ministry Leader Training

WELCOME HERE!

Please find a seat, enjoy some coffee, and get to know some people.

We'll get started shortly after 8:30.

Practicing the Way? September 2025 Ministry Leader Training

Schedule:

- 8:35 Introductory Comments: Why this topic? - Kristal Toews
- 8:50 How we become deeply rooted, according to Scripture - Jesse Wilson
- 9:20 Break
- 9:30 Trends we see in Christian Culture - Joshua Scott
- 10:00 Q & A
- 10:30 Breakouts (various rooms)

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Why this topic?

- Widespread acclaim for John Mark Comer's book, "Practicing the Way"
- Hunger (especially in Millennial and Generation Z) for deep and meaningful faith expressions that are experiential and ancient
 - The Quiet Revival - UK: <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/research/quiet-revival>
 - Confronting Christianity Podcast: The Quiet Comeback of Church in the UK
- Increased interest in attending Greek Orthodox and/or Catholic churches
- Northview Pastors & Elders
 - What do we affirm?
 - Where would we suggest that people exercise caution?

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John Mark Comer's Aim & Goal

"You may already be a Christian but find in your heart a growing desire to take your faith more seriously ... to add a new level of intentionality to your spiritual formation. To live on purpose, not on accident.

Or you may be a long time follower of Jesus but feel like you've hit a plateau, you're stuck, and you ache to get unstuck, to experience a deeper level of healing... In other words, you want to become a saint"

- Practicing the Way, p 17

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John Mark Comer's Aim & Goal cont'd

"If the kingdom of God is "near" but is not a kingdom with borders and passports - in fact, it's been "hidden... from the wise and learned" - then it makes sense that we'd need some serious training in *how* to access this extraordinary new society and enter the inner life of God that's been made available to us through Jesus"

- Practicing the Way, p 40

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With these quotes in mind, the issues we want to wrestle with are:

- When it comes to *plateaus and valleys*, what should we expect of the Christian life?
- Can Christians expect to *once & for all* get unstuck & push past plateaus by adding spiritual practices to their faith?
- Do we need *serious training* that is hidden from 'the wise and learned', or do we already have everything that we need in Jesus, and in God's word?

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How *should* Christians grow? How *do* Christians grow?

These questions have been around since the beginning of the Christian church and, since people have often gotten it wrong, we have a lot of teaching in the Bible on what to do and what to avoid.

- Case Study: The Church in Colossae

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Paul's concern for the Colossians:

*In an effort to grow spiritually, people were adding **human traditions** (arising from their culture's view of spirituality and philosophy) to their faith experience.*

"See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ." - Colossians 2:8

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Paul's concern for the Colossians:

*In an effort to grow spiritually, people were adding **legalistic requirements** to their faith experience.*

"Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ."
- Colossians 2:16-17

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Paul's concern for the Colossians:

*In an effort to grow spiritually, people were adding **mystical practices** to their faith experience.*

"Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind, and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God..."
- Colossians 2:18-19

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The danger of human tradition, legalistic requirements and mystical practices is:

They give people a false hope:

"These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh."
- Colossians 2:23

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The danger of human tradition, legalistic requirements and mystical practices is:

They give people a false faith:

"We have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding... giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." - Colossians 1:9-14

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Instead of focussing on human tradition, legalistic requirements and mystical practices Paul encourages the Colossians:

"Therefore, **as you received Christ Jesus** the Lord, **so walk** in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving." Colossians 2:6-7

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How We Become Deeply Rooted, According to Scripture

Reflect on these 9 Practices.

Are some more important than others or are they all equally important?

Are there any others you would add? Any you would delete? Why or why not?

- 1 - Sabbath
- 2 - Solitude
- 3 - Prayer
- 4 - Fasting
- 5 - Scripture
- 6 - Community
- 7 - Generosity
- 8 - Service
- 9 - Witness

How We Become Deeply Rooted, According to Scripture

ROOTED IN CHRIST

REMAINING IN CHRIST

BEARING FRUIT BY THE SPIRIT

How We Become Deeply Rooted, According to Scripture

John 14:15:

If you love me, **keep my commands**.

Matthew 28:19-20:

19 Go therefore and **make disciples** of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 **teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you**. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

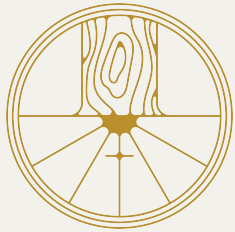


ROOTED IN CHRIST

How do we become rooted in Christ, according to Scripture? *Repentance and faith.*

Mark 1:14-15: Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

Hebrews 6:1 - Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God...



ROOTED IN CHRIST

How do we become rooted in Christ, according to Scripture? *Repentance and faith.*

There's a difference between turning to the practices of Christ and turning to the *person* of Christ!

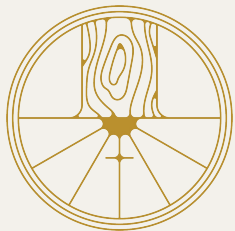


COMPARE THE “INVITATION”

“Jesus is calling you to slow down and simplify your life around the three goals of an apprentice: To be with your rabbi, become like him, and do as he did. To make apprenticeship to him the animating center of gravity for your entire life.”
(*Practicing The Way*, 77)

Acts 2:

37 Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” 38 And Peter said to them, “**Repent and be baptized** every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will **receive the gift of the Holy Spirit**.” 39 For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.” 40 And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation.”



ROOTED IN CHRIST

IN HIS WORD

Psalms 1; Jeremiah 17:7–9

IN RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM AND HIS PEOPLE

John 17:3; John 17:6–25; Hebrews 10:19–25

IN HIS STORY AND KINGDOM

Acts 13:15–40; Matthew 6–7

IN OUR NEW IDENTITY

Ephesians 1:3; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 2 Corinthians 5:17

A Gospel Paradigm: “Identity Leads To Activity”

IDENTITY
WHO WE ARE



ACTIVITY
WHAT WE DO

Example: Colossians 3 - IDENTITY / ACTIVITY

1 If then you have been **raised with Christ**, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. 3 For **you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God**. 4 When Christ who is your life appears, then **you also will appear with him in glory**.

5 Put to death *therefore* what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. 6 On account of these the wrath of God is coming. 7 In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. 8 But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, seeing that **you have put off the old self** with its practices 10 **and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator**. 11 Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

How Do We Become “Saints?”

Comer:

“...you may be a long time follower of Jesus but feel like you've hit a plateau, you're stuck, and you ache to get unstuck, to experience a deeper level of healing... In other words, you want to become a saint.” (*Practicing The Way*, 17)

“...there are no accidental saints.” (*Practicing The Way*, 98)

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“...there are no accidental saints.” (*Practicing The Way*, 98)

1 Corinthians 1:2: To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours...



REMAINING IN CHRIST

How do we remain in Christ, according to Scripture? *Repent, believe, abide.*

4 **Abide in me**, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.



REMAINING IN CHRIST

CONNECTED TO HIM AND LOVING ONE ANOTHER

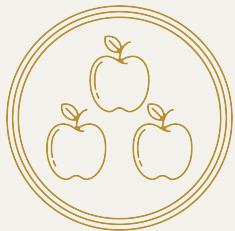
John 15:1–17; Colossians 2:6–7



BEARING FRUIT BY THE SPIRIT

How do we bear fruit by the Spirit, according to Scripture? *Repent, believe, abide, walk by the Spirit.*

Galatians 5:16 But I say, **walk by the Spirit**, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.



BEARING FRUIT BY THE SPIRIT

COMMITTED TO THE CHURCH

Acts 2:42–47; Ephesians 4:1–6, 11–16

FULFILLING GREAT COMMISSION

Matthew 28:18–20

FOR THE GOOD OF THE CITY

Jeremiah 29:4–7

TO BRING GOD GLORY

Colossians 3:17; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Revelation 4:11
Habukkuk 2:14, Psalm 115:1; Romans 12:1



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How We Become Deeply Rooted, According to Scripture

“Repent and believe” - ROOTED IN CHRIST

“Abide in me” - REMAINING IN CHRIST

“Walk by the Spirit” - BEARING FRUIT BY THE SPIRIT

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What Trends Do We See in Our Christian Culture?

Affirmations

Many Books on Spiritual Disciplines emphasize:

1. Actual Obedience

- **Luke 11:28**, “Blessed... are those who hear the word of God and keep it!”
- **John 14:15-16**, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever,”

Many Books on Spiritual Disciplines emphasize:

2. The Need for Spiritual Growth

- **1 Tim 4:7b-8**, "... train yourself for godliness; 8 for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come."
- **Col 1:28**, "Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ."

What Trends Do We See in Our Christian Culture?

Concerns

Bible-Bending

Bible-Bending

- **Matt 6:6** "But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

Bible-Bending

Matt 6:5-6 “And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Bible-Bending

- “One unusual activity that can be an effective spiritual discipline for those who are used to ‘the better things in life’ is to do grocery shopping, banking, and other business in the poorer areas in the city.” - Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, 157.

Bible-Bending

- **Acts 2:42** “And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Pragmatism

Pragmatism

- “The church tradition you grew up in or were saved into may have emphasized one or two dominant pathways that are different from your preferred approach to God.” - Comer, *Practicing the Way*, 276.

Individualism

Individualism

- **Eph 4:11-16** “And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers **12** to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, **13** until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, **14** so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. **15** Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, **16** from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.”

Individualism

- **Hebrews 10:24-24** “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, **25** not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

A Behaviour Management Gospel

A Behaviour Management Gospel

- **1 Peter 3:18a**, “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God...”

A Behaviour Management Gospel

- **John 14:15-16** “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. **16** And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever,

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