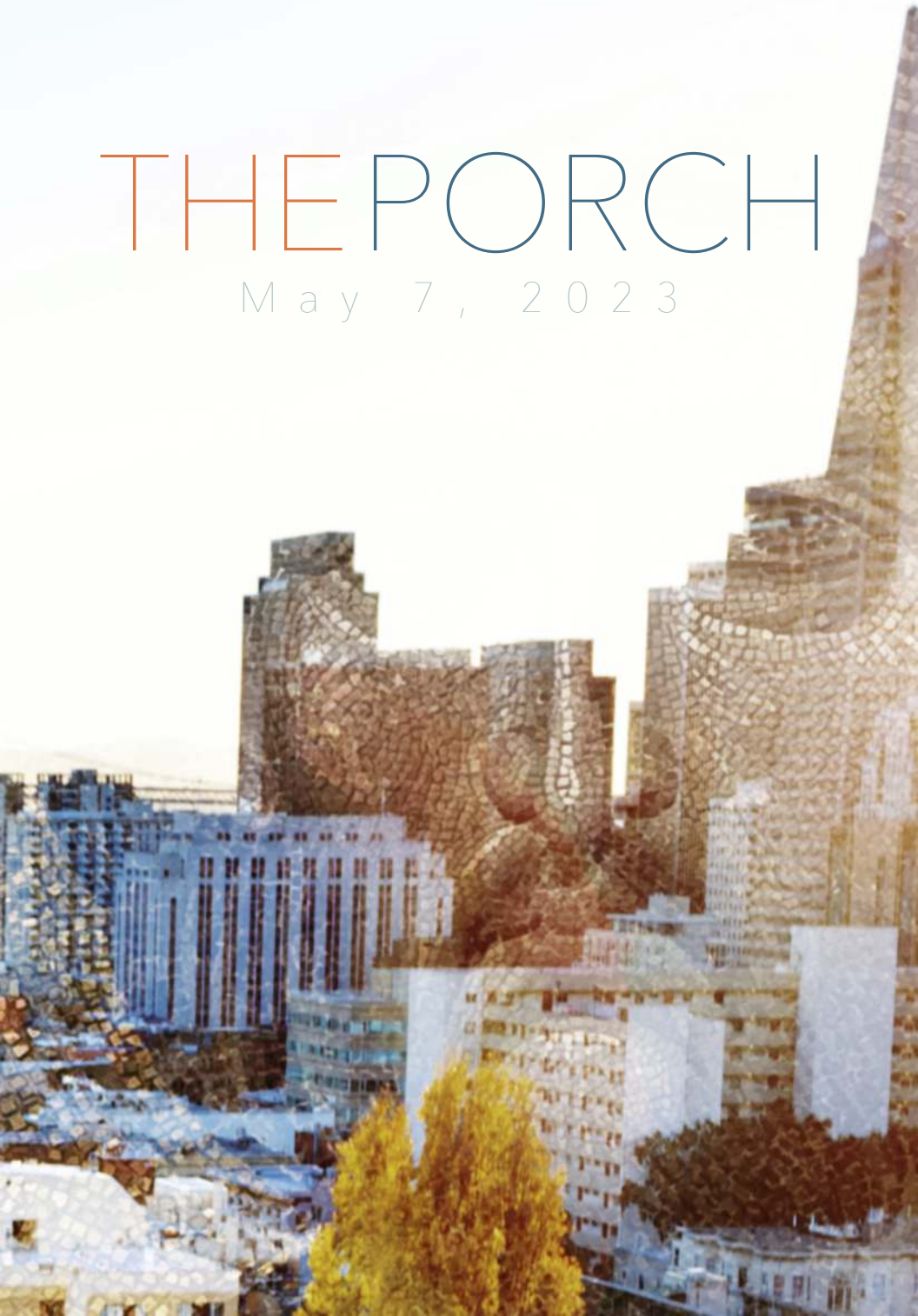


THE PORCH

May 7, 2023



About Our Liturgy

We are all creatures of habit. Habits and rhythms shape who we are. Our Sunday gatherings are designed to help us press the story of Jesus into our souls and change who we are by repeating that same story over and over again.

Every week we gather to remember and celebrate these same old gospel truths: that we are sinners but we have a great savior. That the death and resurrection of Jesus brought his kingdom here. That we have been adopted into the family of God. That he has called us to love each other and our city. That we were created for a perfect world, and that this world is not all there is.

So we invite you to participate with us as a group of imperfect people who tell the same story over and over again, the story of King Jesus.





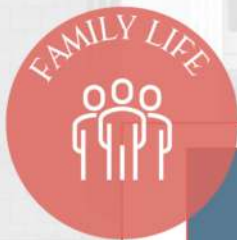
Call To Worship

Singing

* The American author David Foster Wallace wrote, "In the day-to-day trenches of adult life, there is actually no such thing as atheism. There is no such thing as not worshipping. Everybody worships. The only choice we get is what to worship." This is a powerful statement from a man who was not a follower of Jesus. He was 100% correct. We all have something at the center of our lives. Something that we believe will make us happy. Something that will fulfill us. Even those who follow Jesus often find that we are serving idols, something that ultimately won't fulfill us.

The gospel story tells us what will: Jesus Christ. Only he can fulfill us. Only he can redeem us. Only he can heal our deep spiritual wounds. Only he can give hope. Serving him as king is why we were created. This is why we open our gatherings with worship. Music touches our souls in a way that nothing else can. And so we use music as the people of God have done for thousands of years to remind ourselves that we serve an amazing King and that only he should be at the center of our lives.





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* One of the beautiful facets of the gospel is how it brings all kinds of people together (Galatians 3:28). We are God's people. We are called to live our lives together and to love one another. In this part of our gathering, we celebrate this truth. We pray for each other. We chat while getting coffee and tea. We talk about what's going on in the life of the family.

FAMILY LIFE



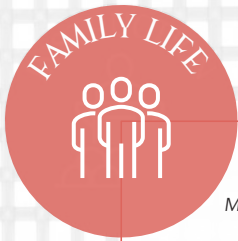
Chapter 5 on Wednesday, May 17

Potluck Dinner
Sunday, May 7



Ezekiel
JOURNALS

NEW TEACHING SERIES STARTS FEBRUARY 5
GRAB YOUR JOURNAL ON THE BACK TABLE



Prayer

Monthly Schedule

Week 1: We read a prayer from church history.

Week 2: We take requests and pray for each other.

Week 3: Congregational Prayer.

Week 4: Praying the Psalms.

Week 5: We take requests and pray for each other.

Coffee

This quick time of greeting isn't a break in the worship but rather a continuation of our worship. Take five minutes to grab a cup of coffee and say hello to someone you haven't met yet.





New City Catechism

Question 21: What sort of Redeemer is needed to bring us back to God?

Answer: One who is truly human and also truly God.

Question 22: Why must the Redeemer be truly human?

Answer: That in human nature he might on our behalf perfectly obey the whole law and suffer the punishment for human sin; and also that he might sympathize with our weaknesses.

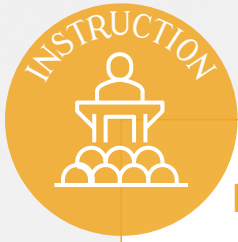
Question 23: Why must the Redeemer be truly God?

Answer: That because of his divine nature his obedience and suffering would be perfect and effective; and also that he would be able to bear the righteous anger of God against sin and yet overcome death.

Scripture Reading | *1 Peter 2:9-10 (ESV)*

But you are a chosen race, **a royal priesthood**, a holy nation, **a people for his own possession**, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, **but now you are God's people**; once you had not received mercy, **but now you have received mercy**.

* 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, "All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." God's word is precious. This time is less about the words of the preacher and more about the words of God. So here at The Porch we usually go through an entire book of the Bible verse by verse. We want to soak up the truth. We want to see Jesus on every page. We want to know the gospel better than we did yesterday. When that happens, we will be more loving, more humble, more hopeful, more joyful, and more blown away by what we learn about our King.



Ezekiel 14-16 | Judgement Parables

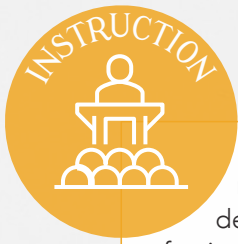
Ezekiel 14:12–23 (What Sin Deserves)

12 The word of the Lord came to me: 13 “Son of man, suppose a land sins against me by acting faithlessly, and I stretch out my hand against it to cut off its supply of bread, to send famine through it, and to wipe out both people and animals from it. 14 Even if these three men—Noah, Daniel, and Job—were in it, they would rescue only themselves by their righteousness.” This is the declaration of the Lord God.

15 “Suppose I allow dangerous animals to pass through the land and depopulate it so that it becomes desolate, with no one passing through it for fear of the animals. 16 Even if these three men were in it, as I live”—the declaration of the Lord God—“they could not rescue their sons or daughters. They alone would be rescued, but the land would be desolate.

17 “Or suppose I bring a sword against that land and say, ‘Let a sword pass through it,’ so that I wipe out both people and animals from it. 18 Even if these three men were in it, as I live”—the declaration of the Lord God—“they could not rescue their sons or daughters, but they alone would be rescued.

19 “Or suppose I send a plague into that land and pour out my wrath on it with bloodshed to wipe out both people and animals from it. 20 Even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, as I live”—the declaration of the Lord God—“they could not rescue their son or daughter. They would rescue only themselves by their righteousness.

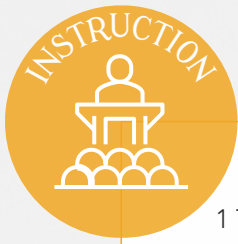


21 “For this is what the Lord God says: How much worse will it be when I send my four devastating judgments against Jerusalem—sword, famine, dangerous animals, and plague—in order to wipe out both people and animals from it! 22 Even so, there will be survivors left in it, sons and daughters who will be brought out. Indeed, they will come out to you, and you will observe their conduct and actions. Then you will be consoled about the devastation I have brought on Jerusalem, about all I have brought on it. 23 They will bring you consolation when you see their conduct and actions, and you will know that it was not without cause that I have done what I did to it.” This is the declaration of the Lord God.

Ezekiel 15 (The Useless Vine)

1 Then the word of the Lord came to me: 2 “Son of man, how does the wood of the vine, that branch among the trees of the forest, compare to any other wood? 3 Can wood be taken from it to make something useful? Or can anyone make a peg from it to hang things on? 4 In fact, it is put into the fire as fuel. The fire devours both of its ends, and the middle is charred. Can it be useful for anything? 5 Even when it was whole it could not be made into a useful object. How much less can it ever be made into anything useful when the fire has devoured it and it is charred!”

6 Therefore, this is what the Lord God says, “Like the wood of the vine among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire as fuel, so I will give up the residents of Jerusalem. 7 I will turn against them. They may have escaped from the fire, but it will still consume them. And you will know that I am the Lord when I turn against them. 8 I will make the land desolate because they have acted unfaithfully.” This is the declaration of the Lord God.

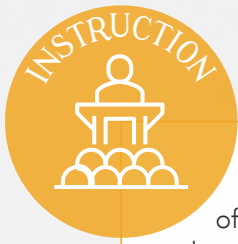


Ezekiel 16:1-58 (The Unfaithful Wife)

1 The word of the Lord came to me again: 2 "Son of man, confront Jerusalem with her detestable practices. 3 You are to say, 'This is what the Lord God says to Jerusalem: Your origin and your birth were in the land of the Canaanites. Your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hethite. 4 As for your birth, your umbilical cord wasn't cut on the day you were born, and you weren't washed clean with water. You were not rubbed with salt or wrapped in cloths. 5 No one cared enough about you to do even one of these things out of compassion for you. But you were thrown out into the open field because you were despised on the day you were born.

6 " 'I passed by you and saw you thrashing around in your blood, and I said to you as you lay in your blood, "Live!" Yes, I said to you as you lay in your blood, "Live!" 7 I made you thrive like plants of the field. You grew up and matured and became very beautiful. Your breasts were formed and your hair grew, but you were stark naked.

8 " 'Then I passed by you and saw you, and you were indeed at the age for love. So I spread the edge of my garment over you and covered your nakedness. I pledged myself to you, entered into a covenant with you—this is the declaration of the Lord God—and you became mine. 9 I washed you with water, rinsed off your blood, and anointed you with oil. 10 I clothed you in embroidered cloth and provided you with fine leather sandals. I also wrapped you in fine linen and covered you with silk. 11 I adorned you with jewelry, putting bracelets on your wrists and a necklace around your neck. 12 I put a ring in your nose, earrings on your ears, and a beautiful crown on your head. 13 So you were adorned with gold and silver, and your clothing was made of fine linen, silk, and embroidered cloth. You ate fine flour, honey, and oil. You

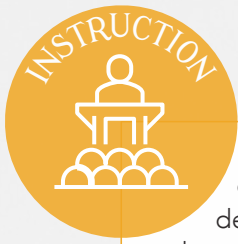


became extremely beautiful and attained royalty. 14 Your fame spread among the nations because of your beauty, for it was perfect through my splendor, which I had bestowed on you. This is the declaration of the Lord God.

15 " 'But you trusted in your beauty and acted like a prostitute because of your fame. You lavished your sexual favors on everyone who passed by. Your beauty became his. 16 You took some of your clothing and made colorful high places for yourself, and you engaged in prostitution on them. These places should not have been built, and this should never have happened! 17 You also took your beautiful jewelry made from the gold and silver I had given you, and you made male images so that you could engage in prostitution with them. 18 Then you took your embroidered clothing to cover them and set my oil and incense before them. 19 The food that I gave you—the fine flour, oil, and honey that I fed you—you set it before them as a pleasing aroma. That is what happened. This is the declaration of the Lord God.

20 " 'You even took your sons and daughters you bore to me and sacrificed them to these images as food. Wasn't your prostitution enough? 21 You slaughtered my children and gave them up when you passed them through the fire to the images. 22 In all your detestable practices and acts of prostitution, you did not remember the days of your youth when you were stark naked and thrashing around in your blood.

23 " 'Then after all your evil—Woe, woe to you!—the declaration of the Lord God—24 you built yourself a mound and made yourself an elevated place in every square.



25 You built your elevated place at the head of every street and turned your beauty into a detestable thing. You spread your legs to everyone who passed by and increased your prostitution. 26 You engaged in promiscuous acts with Egyptian men, your well-endowed neighbors, and increased your prostitution to anger me.

27 " 'Therefore, I stretched out my hand against you and reduced your provisions. I gave you over to the desire of those who hate you, the Philistine women, who were embarrassed by your indecent conduct. 28 Then you engaged in prostitution with the Assyrian men because you were not satisfied. Even though you did this with them, you were still not satisfied. 29 So you extended your prostitution to Chaldea, the land of merchants, but you were not even satisfied with this!

30 " 'How your heart was inflamed with lust—the declaration of the Lord God—when you did all these things, the acts of a brazen prostitute, 31 building your mound at the head of every street and making your elevated place in every square. But you were unlike a prostitute because you scorned payment. 32 You adulterous wife, who receives strangers instead of her husband! 33 Men give gifts to all prostitutes, but you gave gifts to all your lovers. You bribed them to come to you from all around for your sexual favors. 34 So you were the opposite of other women in your acts of prostitution; no one solicited you. When you paid a fee instead of one being paid to you, you were the opposite.

35 " 'Therefore, you prostitute, hear the word of the Lord!
36 This is what the Lord God says: Because your lust was poured out and your nakedness exposed by your acts of prostitution with your lovers, and because of all your detestable idols and the blood of your children that you



gave to them, 37 I am therefore going to gather all the lovers you pleased—all those you loved as well as all those you hated. I will gather them against you from all around and expose your nakedness to them so they see you completely naked. 38 I will judge you the way adulteresses and those who shed blood are judged. Then I will bring about the shedding of your blood in jealous wrath. 39 I will hand you over to them, and they will demolish your mounds and tear down your elevated places. They will strip off your clothes, take your beautiful jewelry, and leave you stark naked. 40 They will bring a mob against you to stone you and to cut you to pieces with their swords. 41 They will burn your houses and execute judgments against you in the sight of many women. I will stop you from being a prostitute, and you will never again pay fees for lovers. 42 So I will satisfy my wrath against you, and my jealousy will turn away from you. Then I will be calm and no longer angry. 43 Because you did not remember the days of your youth but enraged me with all these things, I will also bring your conduct down on your own head. This is the declaration of the Lord God. Haven't you committed depravity in addition to all your detestable practices?

44 " 'Look, everyone who uses proverbs will quote this proverb about you: "Like mother, like daughter." 45 You are the daughter of your mother, who despised her husband and children. You are the sister of your sisters, who despised their husbands and children. Your mother was a Hethite and your father an Amorite. 46 Your older sister was Samaria, who lived with her daughters to the north of you, and your younger sister was Sodom, who lived with her daughters to the south of you. 47 Didn't you walk in their ways and do their detestable practices? It was only a short time before all your ways were more corrupt than theirs.



48 " 'As I live—the declaration of the Lord God—your sister Sodom and her daughters have not behaved as you and your daughters have. 49 Now this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters had pride, plenty of food, and comfortable security, but didn't support the poor and needy. 50 They were haughty and did detestable acts before me, so I removed them when I saw this. 51 But Samaria did not commit even half your sins. You have multiplied your detestable practices beyond theirs and made your sisters appear righteous by all the detestable acts you have committed. 52 You must also bear your disgrace, since you have helped your sisters out. For they appear more righteous than you because of your sins, which you committed more detestably than they did. So you also, be ashamed and bear your disgrace, since you have made your sisters appear righteous.

Romans 3:10-18 As it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; 11 no one understands; no one seeks for God. 12 All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one." 13 "Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive." "The venom of asps is under their lips." 14 "Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness." 15 "Their feet are swift to shed blood; 16 in their paths are ruin and misery, 17 and the way of peace they have not known." 18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

Ezekiel 16:53-63 (Notes of Grace)

53 " 'I will restore their fortunes, the fortunes of Sodom and her daughters and those of Samaria and her daughters. I will also restore your fortunes among them, 54 so you will bear your disgrace and be ashamed of all you did when you comforted them.



55 As for your sisters, Sodom and her daughters and Samaria and her daughters will return to their former state. You and your daughters will also return to your former state. 56 Didn't you treat your sister Sodom as an object of scorn when you were proud, 57 before your wickedness was exposed? It was like the time you were scorned by the daughters of Aram and all those around her, and by the daughters of the Philistines—those who treated you with contempt from every side. 58 You yourself must bear the consequences of your depravity and detestable practices—this is the Lord's declaration.

59 " 'For this is what the Lord God says: I will deal with you according to what you have done, since you have despised the oath by breaking the covenant. 60 But I will remember the covenant I made with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish a permanent covenant with you. 61 Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed when you receive your older and younger sisters. I will give them to you as daughters, but not because of your covenant. 62 I will establish my covenant with you, and you will know that I am the Lord, 63 so that when I make atonement for all you have done, you will remember and be ashamed, and never open your mouth again because of your disgrace. This is the declaration of the Lord God.' "

2 Corinthians 5:21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.





Singing

* In the sermon we listened to the gospel preached. Here, we respond with worship. We sing the praises of the God who has saved us and given us hope.

Confession & Lament Communion Singing

*The gospel is not the story of what we do to earn God's love. The gospel is the story of what God has done to bring us back to life. The problem is that we are forgetful and we all constantly slip into moralism where we think that we need to live a certain way to earn God's love. This is the time in our gathering where we intentionally confess our sin and take communion to remind us of the grace of God. We remember that we are not redeemed by doing anything. We are redeemed by the death of Jesus in our place.



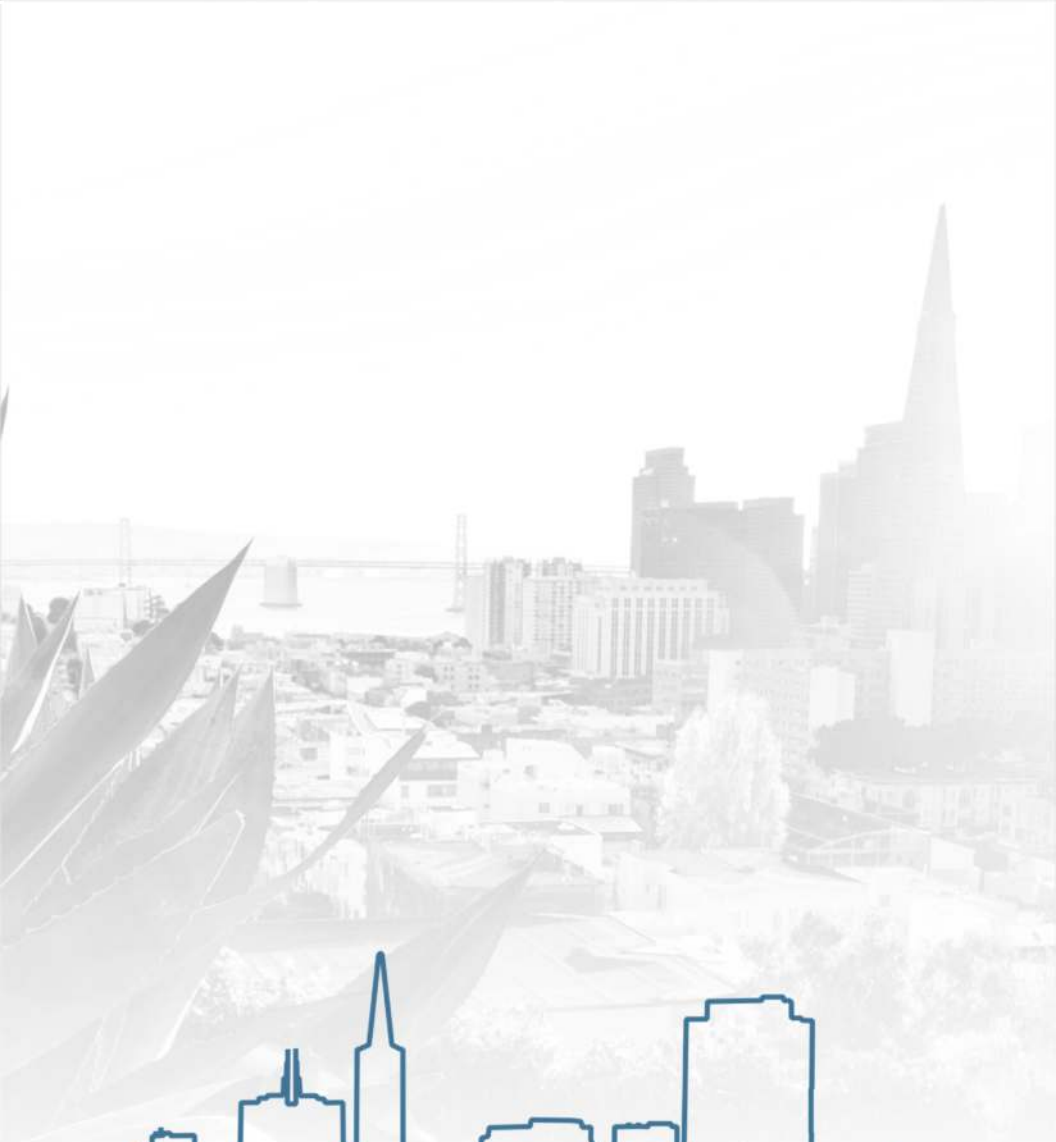
Benediction

II Thes 2:16-17

¹⁶ Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, ¹⁷ comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.



*We are not just followers of King Jesus for a few hours on Sunday morning. We are ambassadors of his kingdom everywhere we go. With our families. At work. With our friends and neighbors. So every week, we finish our gatherings by remembering that we represent him everywhere we go and that we are called to radically love people so that they see him in our lives.



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