



PASSIONCREEK



**Passionately
Pursuing
the Life
and Lifestyle
of Christ
in Queen Creek.**



OUR HEART & SOUL

CONTENTS

01	PASSIONATELY PURSUING	4
02	LIFE IN CHRIST	10
03	LIFESTYLE OF CHRIST	16
04	IN QUEEN CREEK	22
05	RESOURCES	28

01

PASSIONATELY PURSUING

THE 4 STAGES OF THE
CHRISTIAN LIFE

01

PASSIONATELY PURSUING

The beauty of the Christian life is that it is never complete this side of heaven. With that in mind, we consider it our responsibility to do all that we can to assist in that growth. The first-half of the Christian life is predominantly achieved through active spirituality. Essentially, you pursue a life without lack by leaning into your longings. Active spirituality includes Bible study, worship, fasting, serving, and more. The second-half of the Christian life is predominantly received through passive spirituality. Essentially, you pursue a life without lack by leaning into your limitations. Passive spirituality includes the practice of acceptance, awareness of God, silence and solitude, and contemplative prayer.

We intentionally use the words "passionately pursue" because it implies active and passive spirituality. Passion can be defined as "passive, non-activity" and pursue implies a determination to move forward. By God's grace, we use both like pedals on a bike.

It's important to know that the Christian life is not linear. You will likely experience these four stages of the Christian life in a cyclical manner. Therefore, this isn't a competition to reach the next stage and it doesn't define one's holiness. Jesus may not be calling you to the next stage but He is certainly calling you to a next step. Those steps look different in every season of life and it's our desire to help you.

FIRST HALF OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

1

AWAKENING: REDEEMED FROM A POINTLESS LIFE TO A PURPOSE IN LIFE.

This is what is commonly referred to as "getting saved." Your eyes are opened to God and His purpose for your life. You experience regeneration by putting your faith and trust in King Jesus (Rom. 10:9-10). You learn to receive grace (Eph. 2:8-9). You learn and experience the freedom of forgiveness. In the words of St. Augustine, "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you."

2

PURGATION: RELEASING DISORDERED DESIRES TO FEAST ON DEEPER DESIRES.

Once the honeymoon phase is over, you grow more and more discontent with your sins. You initially work on overt sins such as adultery, greediness, and malice (Col. 3:5-11). You then allow God to chip away at socially acceptable sins like gossip and materialism. Furthermore, you work through addictions that are hard to overcome and motivations that the plain eye can't see (Rom. 7). This is all about pursuing genuine pleasure that is only found in God's created order. In the words of Dallas Willard, "Grace is not opposed to effort, it is opposed to earning."

SECOND HALF OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

3

ILLUMINATION: REDEEMED FROM AN IMPRESSIVE LIFE TO AN EMPOWERING LIFE.

By God's grace, we begin to exhibit the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:16-26). We fully embrace that Jesus is not just a beautiful Savior but a brilliant Teacher. Life becomes less about me and more about we. God begins to do what only he can do because you realize your dreams are not about you. You care about the generation above and below you. You begin to truly embody love of God and love of neighbor (Matt. 22:36-40).

4

UNION: RELEASING WHAT'S INTERESTING TO FEAST ON WHAT'S INTEGRATING.

Thankfully, sin becomes the exception rather than the rule. You are constantly aware of the presence of God and you listen to him throughout your day. You learn to find joy in the mundane. John 15-17 best describes the disposition of your life. This stage is usually met in the last years of your life. You haven't allowed the suffering to make you bitter. In fact, you genuinely crave to be at home with the Lord because there is nothing better than his presence (Ps. 63:3).

PROCESS

 **DISCUSSION**

1. Which stage of spiritual maturity do you identify with? Do you believe you should be further by now? Why or why not?
2. Have you ever personally encountered Christ and changed the direction of your life?
3. Have you ever viewed sin as a disordered desire that is pointing to a deeper desire?
4. Do you know anyone in your life that is in the third stage? Do you think you have/will reach this point of maturity?
5. Do you know anyone in the stage of union? What are the boring things they're willing to do that many of us are not willing to do?

 **REFLECTION**

In your journal, reflect on what next step God is calling you to. Write down one or two things you can do to take that next step. End with a prayer that asks God for wisdom and joy for this new pursuit.

02

LIFE IN CHRIST



THE 4 CHAPTERS
OF THE GOSPEL

02

L I F E I N C H R I S T

The gospel means "good news" and we find great joy in knowing that Jesus didn't come just to give us "good advice." Jesus dwelt among us in order to give us life and life in abundance (Jn. 10:10). He is the giver of life and we joyfully receive all that he deserves because (on the cross) Jesus received all that you and I deserve.

We believe the gospel is a compelling story that offers much more than fire insurance. John Ortberg puts it best, "What if salvation isn't mostly about getting you into heaven, but about getting heaven into you?" We affirm that eternal life includes being with God in heaven after we die... but we also affirm that eternal life starts the moment you put your faith and trust in Christ. Life in Christ starts now.

For the last 200 years, America has consistently shared the gospel in two chapters. It makes much about our deficiencies but not enough about our dignity. It talks a lot about our wounds but not enough about our worth. We cannot skip creation and the doctrine of the image of God. We also ought not skip the call to restoration and the doctrine of God's kingdom. The following will present the gospel in four chapters: Creation, Fall, Redemption, Restoration. The two chapter gospel may secure our place in eternity but the four chapter gospel gives us a compelling purpose and meaning to life and work.

THE FOUR CHAPTERS OF THE GOSPEL

1

CREATION

The gospel begins with the triune God (Gen. 1:1). The Father, Son and Holy Spirit dwelt in unity and created us, not because he needed us but because he loved us. Bearing God's image, our purpose is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. God gave mankind the mandate to walk in love and work with purpose (Gen. 1:28).

2

FALL

In the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve rebelled against God through the sin of omission and commission. Not trusting in God's goodness, they brought sin and death into the world by believing Satan's lies. Since Genesis 3, mankind is kicked out of Eden and lives with enmity toward God and man. What once was whole is now broken. Today, you and I enter this broken world not as victims but as enemies of God (Rom. 5:10). Without God, we are utterly hopeless in saving ourselves and deserve condemnation for eternity (Eph. 2:1-3).

THE FOUR CHAPTERS OF THE GOSPEL

3

REDEMPTION

By God's grace, he didn't leave us in our sin, suffering and death. 2,000 years ago, Jesus, fully God and fully man, lived the perfect life and died in our place (1 Pet. 3:18). On the cross, he bore God's wrath in order to give us his righteousness (2 Cor. 5:21). Through the resurrection, he defeated sin, Satan and death (1 Cor. 15). This new life is offered to all who put their faith and trust in King Jesus. We now live by grace alone through faith alone.

4

RESTORATION

The story is not over (Rev. 21). We are called back to our original purpose of walking in love and working with purpose. In short, we are participants in ushering in the kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven (Matt. 6:10). As a body of believers, we seek the well-being of our city, our society, and the world (Jer. 29:7-13). We push back the realm of darkness and care for each person spiritually, physically, relationally, and emotionally. This Great Commission will not be fully fulfilled until every tribe, tongue, and nation knows the name of Jesus (Matt. 28:18-20; Rev. 7:9).

PROCESS



DISCUSSION

- 1. What happens if you leave out any of the four chapters?*
- 2. How does being created in the image of God affect how you see yourself and others? How does sin tarnish the image of God?*
- 3. What are some sins of omission and commission in your own life? Do you think they require your repentance?*
- 4. Why was it important for Jesus to be fully God and fully man?
Did God have to punish Jesus on the cross?*
- 5. What role does the local church have in ushering in God's kingdom to our city and the world?*



REFLECTION

In your journal, reflect on all that Jesus has saved you from. Ask God what role you'll play in bringing God's kingdom to the earth. End with a prayer that asks God for a renewed sense of purpose and passion for others.

03

LIFESTYLE OF CHRIST

THE 4 PRACTICES
OF JESUS

03

L I F E S T Y L E O F C H R I S T

We need to understand that the Gospels are not just a biography about the death of Jesus but also about the life of Jesus. He is not just a beautiful savior but a brilliant teacher. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life (Jn. 14:6). Jesus doesn't just offer us a better way to life but a better way to live.

We use the term "practices" because it's not about trying to behave like Jesus, which leads to death, but training to become like Jesus, which leads to life. In short, our practices have the power to form our future. Your habits are either forming you or failing you. Every day we are intentionally or unintentionally being formed by what we do and what's being done to us.

Looking at the life of Jesus, he spent his days engaging in: God time, Gather time, Group time, and Go time. This can vary for each person and will probably look different in each season of life. We care deeply about helping you figure out what rhythms work best for you. At the same time, these four practices are not optional to the follower of Jesus. We don't say this to be rigid but true freedom is often found in routines. This is why we encourage a combination of feasting and releasing. Feasting practices are the ones that give you joy and come easy. Releasing practices are the ones that give you joy in the long run but do not come easy.

THE FOUR PRACTICES OF JESUS

1

GOD TIME

There is no greater joy than to be in the presence of God. The beautiful thing is that we have access to intimacy with God today. Practices include meditation, prayer, Bible reading, fasting, sabbath, and more. There are several ways to do all of these and it is important to implement the ones that come easy and the ones that are more difficult.

2

GATHER TIME

There is something powerful about the gathering of the local church. It is a place to love and be loved by God's people. Practices include serving, giving, worship, preaching, communion, prayer, and more. We believe in the consistency of gathering together every week to protect ourselves from the evil one and encourage our hearts to stay in the Lord.

THE FOUR PRACTICES OF JESUS

3

GROUP TIME

Experiencing God is better in community. Even Jesus spent most of his time with a small group of believers. Practices include Bible study, fellowship, peacemaking, confession, and more. This is a place to know and be known by others. Additionally, it gives us tangible ways to serve and care for members of our community.

4

GO TIME

We are saved to be sent. Jesus' last command was to go and make disciples of all nations. While this can be intimidating for some, we believe there are creative ways for all of us to get involved. Practices include hospitality, evangelism, disciple making, community outreach, and more. We believe God empowers us to be his messengers and there's no greater joy than to see prisoners set free.

PROCESS



DISCUSSION

- 1. In what ways can rituals and routines be helpful? In what ways can they be hurtful?*
- 2. Which of the God time practices come easy to you? Which are difficult? What keeps you the most from having God time?*
- 3. Which of the Gather time practices come easy to you? Which are difficult? What is your next step in your Gather time?*
- 4. Which of the Group time practices come easy to you? Which are difficult? What's the value of getting vulnerable with a group?*
- 5. Which of the Go time practices come easy to you? Which are difficult? What is your role in Go time at Passion Creek?*



REFLECTION

In your journal, reflect on habits and practices that have already formed you. Write down intentional and unintentional practices that you partake in. End with a prayer that asks God for joy in the routine.

04 IN QUEEN CREEK

THE 4 NEEDS
OF QUEEN CREEK

04

IN QUEEN CREEK

We are so grateful to be a part of a heritage of churches that are passionate about evangelism and renewal. As a Southern Baptist Church, we spend a considerable amount of our resources toward people outside of the four walls of the church. We are also grateful that our heritage not only includes serving people's spiritual needs but also their physical, emotional and relational needs.

Throughout the Bible, we see God commanding his people to bring shalom to the world. Shalom (or peace) is not just an absence of conflict but an overall flourishing of every element of society and humanity. We take Jeremiah 29:1-11 as more of a call to living on mission than it is a call to living in comfort. Certainly in the Gospels, we see Jesus caring for the physical, emotional, relational and spiritual needs of the people he came into contact with.

At Passion Creek Church, we care about the overall flourishing of our city. We want to be a part of the solution and not the problem. We have zero reservations organizing service projects that predominantly focus on a physical, emotional or relational need. We believe this is a part of God's call and will serve to give us a greater sphere of influence to lead people to total transformation in Christ.

THE FOUR NEEDS OF QUEEN CREEK

1

SPIRITUAL NEEDS

First and foremost, the greatest need of our city is to trust and believe in Jesus. We count everything as loss (Phil. 3:8) if people don't come to know and experience Christ. Therefore, we pray for our city and look for ways to bring up spiritual conversations. People will expect hostility until they experience our hospitality.

2

PHYSICAL NEEDS

Currently, Queen Creek and the cities surrounding it do not have a major problem with poverty. By God's common grace, most have a roof over their head and the basic essentials. This does not mean there aren't opportunities to practically meet needs in our community. We are always on the lookout for people who have hit rough times and we love to help. We also believe we are practicing the way of Jesus when we serve our city and neighborhoods with service projects such as cleaning, yardwork, painting, refurbishing, etc.

THE FOUR NEEDS OF QUEEN CREEK

3

RELATIONAL NEEDS

Our community is known for shutting the garage as soon as they pull in. The heat makes a lot of people stay inside and most have moved to Arizona and do not have as many friendships as a result. We consider it our duty to meet these relational needs by creating events and hangouts for neighbors to get to know each other. We want our church members to always be the best neighbors on the street.

4

EMOTIONAL NEEDS

Our local high school has experienced a lot of depression and suicide in recent years. We believe this reflects a reality that is prevalent in each generation. Theologically, we believe emotions matter but they're a terrible master. Therefore, we seek to serve people's emotional needs. We look for ways to serve our city by offering a listening ear and words of encouragement. Another way we meet these needs is by offering workshops in downtown Queen Creek that focus on practical issues everyone struggles with, such as parenting, marriage, leadership, and more.

PROCESS

 **DISCUSSION**

- 1. What happens if we only serve people's spiritual needs? How does that affect our witness?*
- 2. What is the best way for you to bring up spiritual conversations with friends and neighbors?*
- 3. What are some physical needs you see in our community and how can we best meet them?*
- 4. Do you personally struggle with relational needs? What affect does loneliness have on your walk with Jesus?*
- 5. In what ways can emotions be helpful as we follow the way of Jesus? How can they be hurtful?*

 **REFLECTION**

In your journal, reflect on the needs of the community around you. Ask God for a list of names that you already have influence with and begin to pray for them individually. End by asking God to expand your vision of what God can do in our city.

05

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

A LIST OF RESOURCES
TO EQUIP YOUR PURSUIT

05

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

NEW BELIEVERS

Eternity Is Now In Session // Ortberg

What Is The Gospel? // Gilbert

The Reason for God // Keller

Explicit Gospel // Chandler

Surrender to Love // Benner

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Soul Keeping // Ortberg

Celebration of Discipline // Foster

Mansions of the Heart // Ashbrook

Invitation to a Journey // Mulholland

You Are What You Love // Smith

PRAYER

Hearing God // Willard

A Praying Life // Miller

Praying the Bible // Whitney

LEADERSHIP

Failure of Nerve // Friedman

Managing Leadership Anxiety // Cuss

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality // Scazzero

The Leader's Journey // Herrington

THEOLOGY

New Testament in Its World // Wright

Delighting in the Trinity // Reeves

Divine Conspiracy // Willard

Hell Under Fire // Morgan

Historical Theology // Allison

CHURCH

9 Marks of a Healthy Church // Dever

Reappearing Church // Sayers

The Mission of God // Wright

Gaining by Losing // Greear

Sticky Church // Osborne

MARRIAGE

Meaning of Marriage // Keller

Mingling of Souls // Chandler

Why Emotions Matter // Collins

APOLOGETICS

Making Sense of God // Keller

Love Thy Body // Pearcey

Jesus Among Secular Gods // Zacharius

Mere Christianity // Lewis



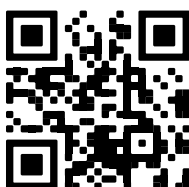
WATCH THESE ON VIDEO



Passionately Pursuing



Life in Christ



Lifestyle of Christ



In Queen Creek



PASSION CREEK CHURCH

PASSIONCREEK.CHURCH

