

SPREADING HOPE

5 DAY DEVOTIONAL



LIFE IN ABUNDANCE[™]
INTERNATIONAL



SPREADING HOPE

› INTRO

DAY 1: COME

DAY 2: SEE

DAY 3: GIVE

DAY 4: GROW

DAY 5: GO

TAP ABOVE TO JUMP TO DAY



› J O H N 1 0 : 2 5 - 2 8 (N I V)

“...The works I do in my Father’s name testify about me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand.”

› I N T R O D U C T I O N

Dear Friend,

In our world, there are many paths that lead to death. Sin is a universal disease, widespread and deep-seated. To deal with the crisis of humanity, we can easily turn to all kinds of destructive patterns and temporary solutions in order to survive. Our enemy



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wants nothing more than to snatch us out of our Good Shepherd's hand. When violence breaks out among people, news headlines cause stress, storms shake our landscapes, or sickness brings us face to face with our mortality, we may doubt the works of God.

Yet Jesus says there is still a plan. We are able to hear his voice. He knows us personally and invites us to believe and follow him.

When we do, he offers eternal life. Life that isn't merely hanging on by a thread, but is abundant, vibrant, and lasting, the way we long for it to be.

When we look at the state of our globe, perishing seems the likely end. It's a challenge to choose to stay on the straight



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and narrow path, to listen to the Lord's voice instead of the world's noise. At Life In Abundance (LIA), we understand this. It's been our mission for the past 25 years to empower local churches to serve the poor and vulnerable in Africa and the Caribbean, because we want to share the hope of life that comes with following Jesus.

As we've served, we have seen how our Savior brings solid ground, clarity on the journey, and the cure for sin's curse when his sheep take steps in his direction. Now, through this devotional, we want to encourage you to take those steps too. The following pages will walk you through five days of intentional focus on some of the life-giving steps Jesus calls us to take



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in the gospels. We pray these Scriptures, reflections, and interactive pieces are a blessing to you during this season.

Join us in spreading hope.

For God's glory,

Your LIA Family



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DAY 1: COME



› MATTHEW 14:25-29

Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. “It’s a ghost,” they said, and cried out in fear.

But Jesus immediately said to them: “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.”

“Lord, if it’s you,” Peter replied, “tell me to come to you on the water.”

“Come,” he said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.



› DAY 1 : C O M E

“Come.”

That word alone is a powerful call to action. Peter had heard Jesus say it before and made the decision to become a follower of Christ, a fisher of men. At once after hearing Jesus’ invitation, he and his brother had left their fishing boat and nets in order to pursue a more miraculous life.

On the lake that night, Peter still longed for greater things. Surrounded by shock, confusion, and fear, Peter made a bold request of his Lord: “Tell me to come to you.” And Jesus did.



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Though we see Peter's doubt resurface later, when the disciple's focus is on Christ, he's able to walk on water. The only fitting response afterward is to worship the One who was walking on the lake in the first place, which is exactly what the apostles do.

What does it take for us to get down out of the boat? To open up the possibility for those around us to witness miracles? To step toward our Lord with courage, regardless of being afraid? For Peter, all it took was Jesus' invitation to come.



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P R A Y E R :

Lord, thank you for your invitation to come.

We acknowledge that word is powerful and that you do miraculous things when we accept your call. We, like Peter, long for the life that following you brings. When we face uncertain circumstances, help us to boldly take steps toward you, even when it feels scary or impossible. As we come to you, may the result lead us and others around us into more worship, because you deserve all the glory. In Jesus' name, Amen.



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QUESTIONS:

- What keeps you from getting out of the boat? How have you seen God work when you or others do take steps towards him?
- How is Jesus calling you to come now?
- What are ways that you can keep your eyes on Christ this week as you follow him?



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Enjoy this playlist of worship songs
as you follow God this week.



CLICK THE ICON ABOVE
TO START LISTENING





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DAY 2: SEE



› M A R K 6 : 3 4 - 3 8

When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like a sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. “This is a remote place,” they said, “and it’s already very late. Send the people away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.”

But he answered, “You give them something to eat.”



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They said to him, “That would take more than half a year’s wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?”

“How many loaves do you have? Go and see.” When they found out, they said, “Five—and two fish.”



› DAY 2: SEE

Being a disciple means learning to see the way your teacher sees.

When Jesus looked out over the people, he compassionately saw they were in need—a wandering flock with no one to show them the way. So, he taught them.

When the masses became hungry, the disciples did what Jesus did: they saw a problem and wanted to address it. But how do you fill what is empty? The teacher asked them an important question. “How many loaves do you have?” He told his apostles to “Go and see.”



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Surely, Jesus can make something out of nothing, but instead he directs his followers' focus to what is already there: five loaves of bread and two fish. He empowers the people to take responsibility by recognizing the problem and keeping their eyes open to find solutions among the resources they'd already been given. When the disciples really look, they see a chance for people to sacrifice what they have, giving it back to God so he can multiply it.

Our Provider calls us to see abundance in the world's great needs, our meager offering of what we already have, and some faith. Do we see the potential the way he does?



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P R A Y E R :

God, we are so grateful that you see your people and have compassion on the world you made. When we look at the problems around us, give us your eyes. Help us to see not only the hunger, but also the fish and the loaves you want to use to meet our need in abundance. We know that you can make anything multiply. Thank you for all the surprising, creative, and generous ways you fill us. In Jesus' name, Amen.



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QUESTIONS:

- When you look at the world around you, what needs do you see?
- “How many loaves do you have?” What resources have you been given to help meet those needs?
- How have you seen God provide through multiplying what you already have?



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Here is a graphic as a reminder
to look for God's provision.



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DAY 3: GIVE



➤ MATTHEW 10:5 - 8

These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. As you go, proclaim this message: ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.”



› DAY 3 : G I V E

Tax collectors and fishermen, sinners and brothers. Jesus' first disciples were just twelve ordinary men who had come and followed, seen and believed, repented and worshiped. Much like us today, they probably didn't feel like heroes. They often made mistakes, they worried about their futures, and sometimes they doubted what they'd seen in the past.

Yet, although the apostles had been lost sheep, they weren't anymore. They'd been given the gift of a Good Shepherd. They knew his voice and were learning to follow him.

When Jesus sent this group of men out on



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a mission for the first time on their own, the instructions were clear. They'd seen him perform miracles and they already had his authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness. But they had even more than that. They had the promise of the kingdom of heaven, hope of eternal life that was meant to be spread to all those who were lost.

They had been given an extraordinary gift. This gift was not meant for them alone. Instead Jesus encouraged them to share it. What he told them in the dark, they were meant to speak in the light. The words he whispered in their ears were the good news they should proclaim from rooftops. It was the time to pass hope on. Freely they had



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received. Now they were asked to freely give.

P R A Y E R :

Lord, we know you have a heart for lost sheep and that the kingdom of heaven has come near through you. Your message brings hope. You give life. Thank you for that life that you have freely given to us. It's incredible that although we were once lost, through believing and repenting, we get to follow you. Please help us to be like the disciples and freely pass on the hope you've given us to others in need. In Jesus' name, Amen.



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QUESTIONS:

➤ In what ways have you received? How does this inspire you to give?

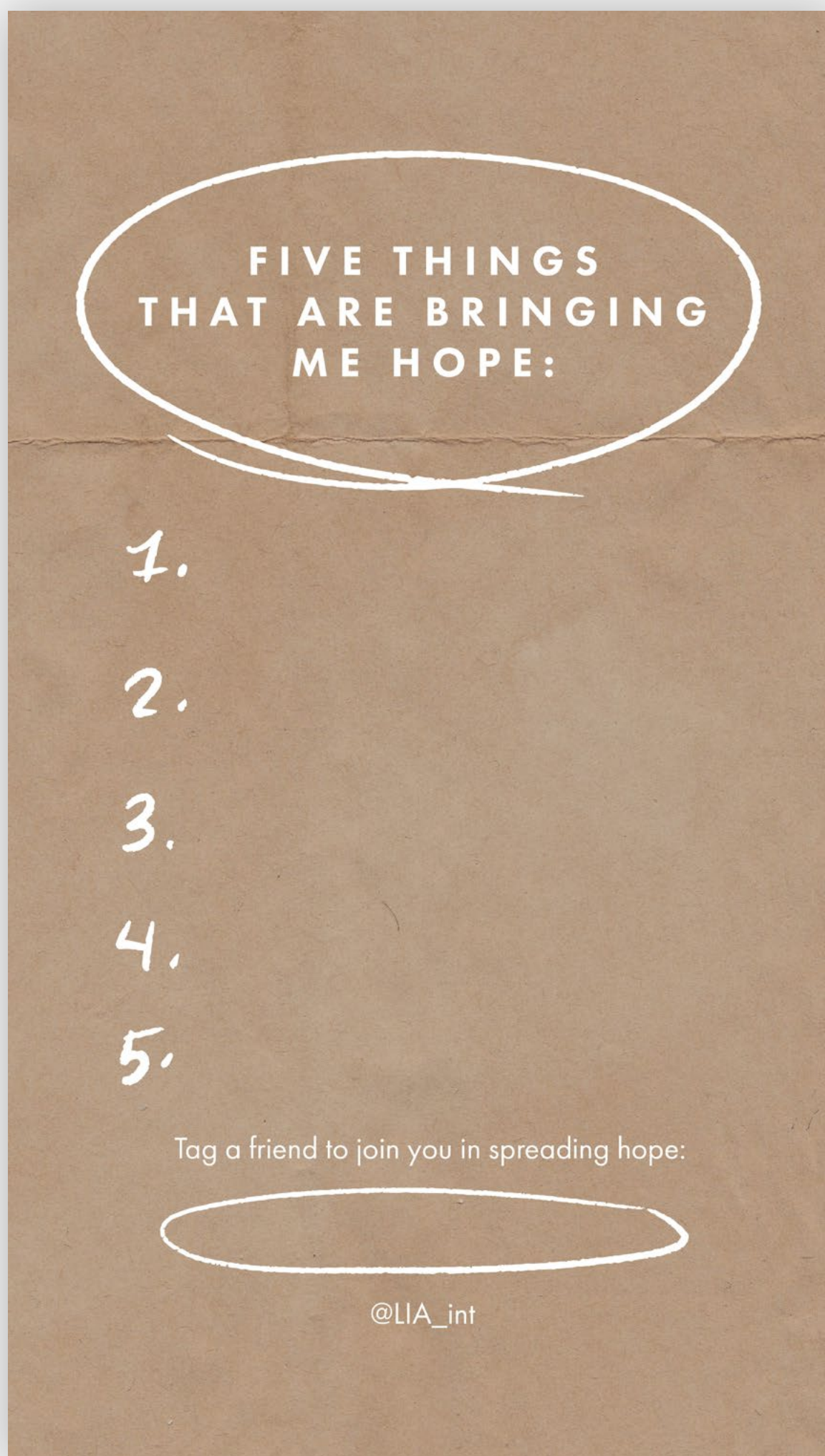
➤ How has knowing the gospel brought you hope and transformed your life? In what ways can you pass this on?

➤ What holds you back from freely giving? How do Jesus' words empower you?



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Why not give some encouragement
by sharing what is bringing
you hope this week?



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DAY 4: GROW



› L U K E 8 : 5 - 8

“A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds ate it up. Some fell on rocky ground, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown. Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.”



› DAY 4: G R O W

When Jesus explains this parable to his disciples, he says the seed is the word of God. There are many who hear it, but the results vary. While some of the planting produces a good harvest, much of it does not.

Notice, the difference in outcomes isn't the seed. The Lord's message is unchanging. It is truth, regardless of what soil it lands on. It holds potential for life, the hope of more to come in its simple, unassuming package.

It is the soil that determines whether or not the seed yields a crop; we have ears, but it is up to us to listen. Like the disciples, we



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have been offered the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God. We have the opportunity to receive the seed and grow.

Are we?

Jesus says that the good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart. These people choose to not only hear the word, but to retain it and persevere. Hear and understand. Listen and obey, producing a bountiful crop—what every farmer hopes for when sowing seeds. Are we careful to listen so we can produce more with what we've been given?



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P R A Y E R :

God of the Harvest, thank you for the seed, your word that has been sown so that we could hear your good news. Help us not to take it for granted, but to have ears that truly hear you. We want to be the good soil, noble of heart and able to yield a crop. Please multiply your seed in us so that good things grow and have great impact for your kingdom. In Jesus' name, Amen.



SPREADING HOPE

QUESTIONS:

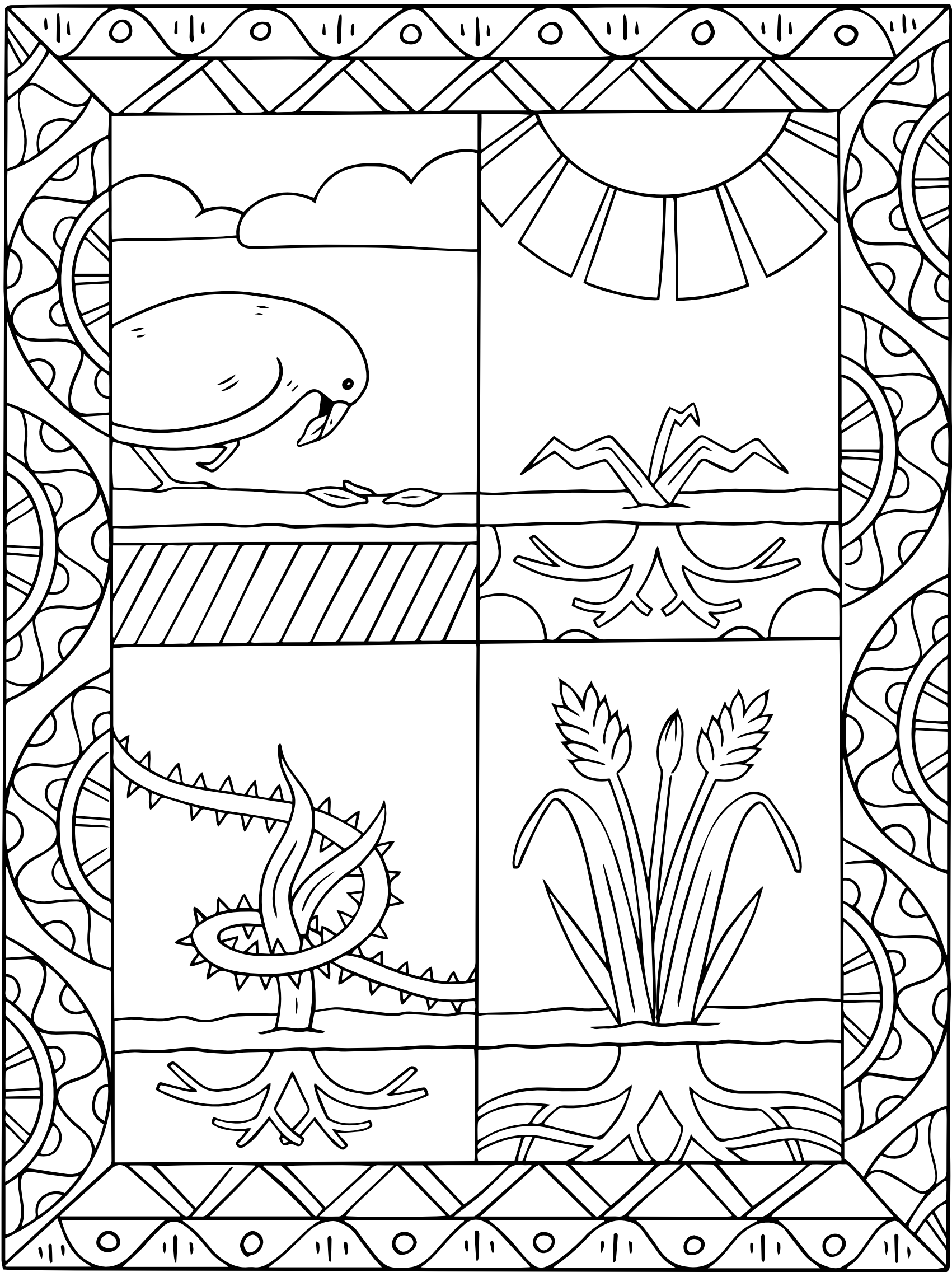
- When reading this parable, what soil looks the most familiar to you?
- How are you cultivating good soil in your life? How can you encourage others to do the same?
- What crops have you seen the gospel produce? What do you hope to see it bring in the future?



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Download this coloring sheet to
use as you reflect on Jesus’ story.

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DAY 5: GO



› MATTHEW 28:16-20

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."



› DAY 4: GO

After all that had taken place, the Bible tells us the disciples worshiped Jesus when he appeared to them as the risen Christ. Yet some doubted.

They had experienced miracles, they'd walked personally with the Good Shepherd, they knew he had lived a perfect life and died a criminal's death only to rise again. Now standing face to face with eternal life, they still felt uncertain. Even in the presence of their resurrected king, fear and questions surrounding man's sinfulness and the state of the world could easily arise.

It's here that Jesus reminds them that he is in



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control and has all the power over heaven and earth. Then he gives them instructions for the days ahead. They are to go and share with others all they've learned from following their Lord, inviting people from every nation of the globe to come and see, repent and believe, follow and obey.

The disciples had hope that the rest of the world needs. Because of their faithfulness in following Jesus, that hope has been passed down to us, many generations later. Sin is still a universal disease, but the hope of life through Jesus' presence is spreading. In even our most uncertain days, may we take steps like the first Christ followers to share God's good news wherever we go.



S P R E A D I N G H O P E

P R A Y E R :

Our Good Shepherd, you say that all authority in heaven and on earth is yours and that you are with us always, as we take the steps you call us to take. We believe that to be true. Help our unbelief. Give us the wisdom to worship you even in our uncertainty and the faith to go boldly where you want us to go. Thank you for the hope that Jesus' life, death, and resurrection give us and the promise of eternal life to come. Help us in our everyday lives to share this hope with others, making disciples who make disciples, bringing your abundant life to a world in desperate need. In Jesus' name, Amen.



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QUESTIONS:

➤ Where have you been called to go? How do you answer that call even in the face of uncertainty?

➤ What does making disciples look like in your life?

➤ What can you do this week to spread hope?



SPREADING HOPE

We hope you’ve been encouraged by these devotions. Here are some graphics to remind you of Christ’s words.



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