



40 DAYS *Prayer*

October 19 - November 27

Morning prayer

- Pause and be still – recenter scattered senses
- Rejoice with a Psalm and reflect on scripture
- Ask God for help in your life
- Yield to God's will in your life



Evening prayer

- Reflect on the day that has passed
- Rejoice in God's goodness
- Repent of sins, receiving forgiveness
- Rest in readiness for sleep

Jesus Followers

The background features several large, overlapping organic shapes. On the left, a dark red shape curves upwards. In the center, a dark brown shape overlaps with a teal shape on the right. Below these, a lighter brown shape curves across the bottom. The overall composition is abstract and layered.

Jesus Followers

God Cares More
About All This Than

Having the Mind of Christ

Eight Axioms to Cultivate a Robust Faith

Ben Sternke and Matt Tebbe



1. God is always present and at work.

- **God cannot be absent**
- **God cannot be idle**



2. God is just like Jesus.

- If you want to know who God is, look to Jesus**



3. God meets us in our messy reality.

We try to hide our reality

- **Naming our reality is important**
- **Giving our mess to Jesus**



4. God cares more about all of this than we do.



4. God cares more about all of this than we do.

5. God does the same work through us and in us.



6. God's love always reckons with power.



- 6. God's love always reckons with power.**
- 7. God transforms us through embodied participation.**



- 6. God's love always reckons with power.**
- 7. God transforms us through embodied participation.**
- 8. God is love, so it's all about love.**



**God cares more about all of it
than we do!!!**



“For some reason we think that spiritual progress is marked by a lack of struggle... this is simply not the case. Spiritual progress is learning to confront struggle in a new way so that we don't struggle with the fact that life is fraught with struggle.”

- Martin Laird



“If the God who is love, who is present and at work, who looks just like Jesus, is meeting us right in the middle of our messy reality, then it follows that God cares about (all of) it more than we do”

-Ben Sternke and Matt Tebbe



**What do you need to loosen
your grip on?**



¹¹ Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ² (This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair.)



John 11:1-16

³ So the sisters sent word to Jesus, “Lord, the one you love is sick.”

⁴ When he heard this, Jesus said, “This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God’s glory so that God’s Son may be glorified through it.”



John 11:1-16

⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶ So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days, ⁷ and then he said to his disciples, “Let us go back to Judea.”



John 11:1-16

⁸ “But Rabbi,” they said, “a short while ago the Jews there tried to stone you, and yet you are going back?”

⁹ Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Anyone who walks in the daytime will not stumble, for they see by this world’s light.



John 11:1-16

¹⁰ It is when a person walks at night that they stumble, for they have no light.”

¹¹ After he had said this, he went on to tell them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up.”



John 11:1-16

¹² His disciples replied, “Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better.” ¹³ Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep.



John 11:1-16

¹⁴ So then he told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead, ¹⁵ and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.”

¹⁶ Then Thomas (also known as Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”



John 11:1-16

- **There is hardship**



- **There is hardship**
- **Jesus loved Lazarus, Mary and Martha**



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- **God has the full story**



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- **Jesus is honest**



- **There is hardship**
- **Jesus loved Lazarus, Mary and Martha**
- **God has the full story**
- **Jesus is honest**
- **The disciples were holding tightly**



¹⁷ On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. ¹⁸ Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁹ and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother.



John 11:17-34

²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

²¹ “Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died.



John 11:17-34

²² But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.”

²³ Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”

²⁴ Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”



John 11:17-34

²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; ²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”



John 11:17-34

²⁷ “Yes, Lord,” she replied, “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

²⁸ After she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. “The Teacher is here,” she said, “and is asking for you.”



John 11:17-34

²⁹ When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. ³⁰ Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him.



John 11:17-34

³¹ When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there.



John 11:17-34

³² When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”



John 11:17-34

³³ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. ³⁴ “Where have you laid him?” he asked.
“Come and see, Lord,” they replied.



John 11:17-34

- **The Spiritual Approach of Jesus**



- **The Spiritual Approach of Jesus**
- **The Practical Approach of Jesus**



- **The Spiritual Approach of Jesus**
- **The Practical Approach of Jesus**
- **The Posture of Jesus**



³⁵ Jesus wept.

³⁶ Then the Jews said, “See how he loved him!”

³⁷ But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”



John 11:35-43

³⁸ Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. ³⁹ “Take away the stone,” he said. “But, Lord,” said Martha, the sister of the dead man, “by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days.”



John 11:35-43

⁴⁰ Then Jesus said, “Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?”

⁴¹ So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me.



John 11:35-43

⁴² I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.”

⁴³ When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!”



John 11:35-43

Jesus...

- **Wept**
- **Loved**
- **Challenged**
- **Called**
- **Healed**
- **Met reality and showed care**



“God isn’t waiting for you to care more before getting involved. God is already more involved than you realize”

-Ben Sternke and Matt Tebbe



“Faith is consenting to God’s activity,
surrendering to God’s presence, participating in
God’s power.”

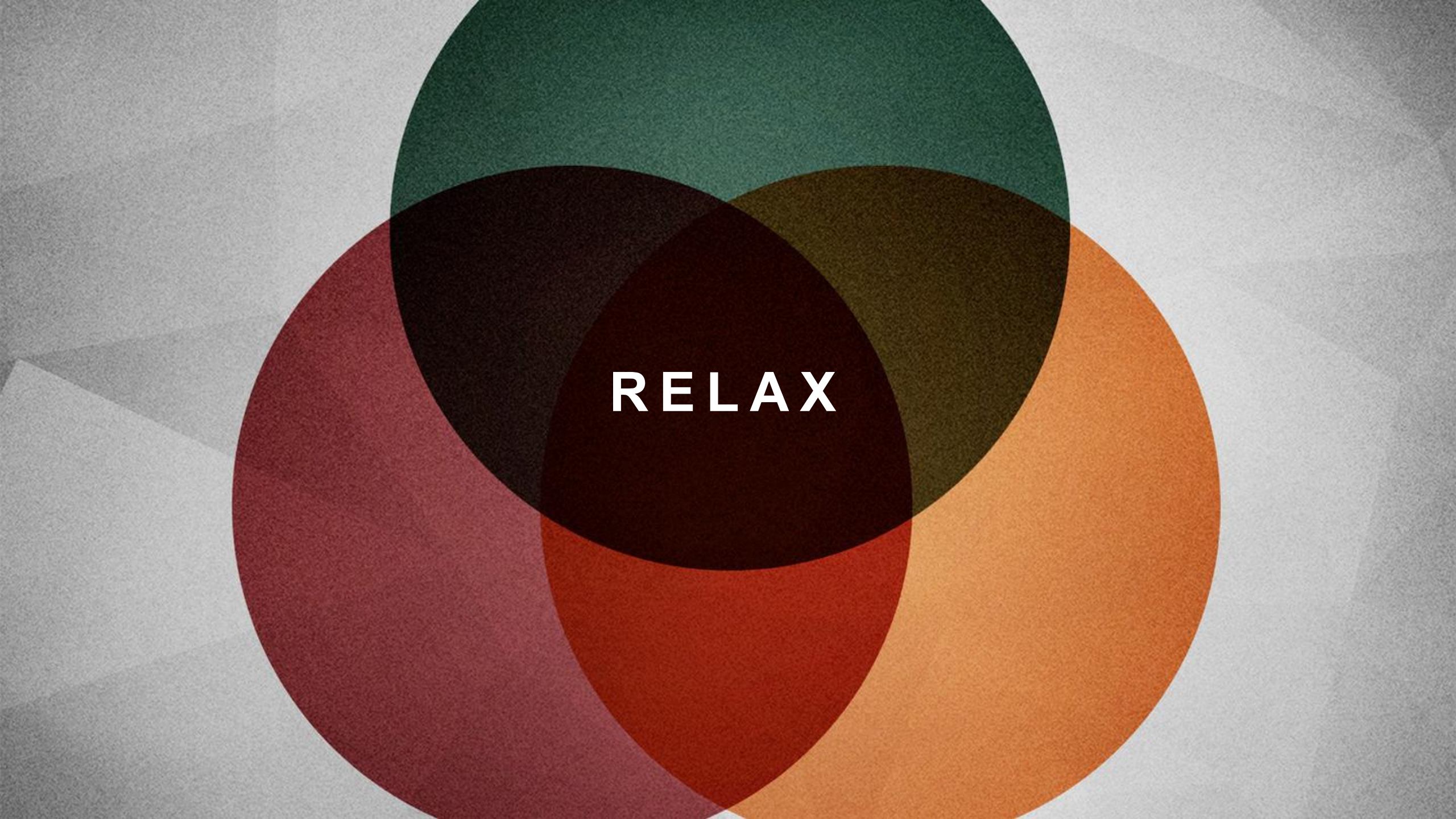
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RELAX

**Is believing that God is always
present and at work
good news to you?**



**Is the fact that God is just like
Jesus good news to you?**



**Is the fact that God meets us
in our messy reality
good news to you?**



**God cares more about all of it
than we do.**



**What are you holding
tightly today?**



**How can you take one step
to loosen your grip
to allow Jesus to lead?**



