

Next Steps

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family and/or with a group.

No one stumbles into discipleship or accidentally begins to follow Jesus better. NEXT STEPS outlines the priorities and strategies of The Hills Church to help make and grow followers of Jesus. What's your next step?

1 NEXT STEPS is our church's strategy to help followers become more like the One we are following. At first glance, it could seem like a list of rules if taken out of its intended context. What is the difference between "being legalistic" and encouraging spiritual disciplines? How have you experienced this tension in your relationship with God?

2 FOLLOWING must be RELATIONAL. Read **Matthew 1:21**. Jesus' mission was bigger than the salvation of individuals; it was the creation of a new community. How does this impact the way we understand and live out the gospel?

3 DO LIFE TOGETHER... is how Jesus lived. The first chapter of the Bible reminds us that Jesus lived in community, "*Let us make mankind in our image*" **Genesis 1:26**. What does that tell us about the nature of God, and what does it imply about the nature of man?

4 DO LIFE TOGETHER... is how Jesus taught. Jesus taught that loving people is the primary way we love God. Several teachings from the "Sermon on the Mount" (**Matthew 5-7**) like the Beatitudes, the Lord's Prayer, and the Golden Rule assume that people do life together. With that in mind, why do we turn so much of the focus of his teachings on "me" instead of "we"?

5 What do you think Rick meant by his statement "*community remains shallow when it is built around preferences instead of promises*"? Agree or disagree? Why is it important for us to be bound by something stronger than preferences?

6 DO LIFE TOGETHER... is how Jesus disciplined. Read **Mark 3:13-14**. Jesus invested most of his discipling efforts in a small group rather than a crowd. Why did he do that, and what are the implications for churches today?

7 RELATIONAL must be INTENTIONAL. Growing disciples need circles, not just rows. What are the blessings of being in a community group? What are the fears and struggles? What is your group's next step?

