

SPACES

*The Places Where
God Meets Us*



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Scan as You Read!



Open your phone camera, point it at any QR code in this issue, and tap the link to dive deeper.

Welcome to *Spaces*

Our Bible is full of spaces—different places like roads, seas, vineyards, mountains, and cities. In each space, God drew near to people, showing up where they lived, worked, wandered, and waited.

Throughout this sermon series, ***Spaces: The Places Where God Meets Us***, we'll walk through some of the Bible's most significant spaces and discover how God desires to meet us in our own places. Each space ultimately points us toward Jesus—the one who brought heaven to earth.

We designed this magazine to pair with both the weekend sermon series and your group

Bible study this fall. Inside, you'll find artwork, poetry, and songs created by people from our church family—friends and neighbors who have used their gifts to help us see these spaces in fresh ways. We hope their reflections help you slow down and open your heart alongside the weekend messages and your group study.

I invite you to engage fully this season—join us each weekend, work through your group lessons, and take time with this magazine. My prayer is that as you do, you'll sense God meeting you in your own spaces, right where you are.

With Gratitude,



Pastor Aaron Buer

You are in this Space

Matt Hanegraaff
MUSICIAN

*Experience
the full song!*

Listen here:



Verse 1

When I walk along the sidewalk
in the city late at night
Or drive out to the country fields
Where your stars shine so bright

I'm longing for your presence
For the God that I can feel
Your Spirit always finds a way
Of reminding me to kneel

Pre-Chorus

It's in those spaces I know
you can be found
So open up my eyes to see
your presence all around

Chorus

You are the springs of water
You meet me on the road
You find me in the wilderness
When I think I'm alone.
You calm fear inside my heart
When tossed on stormy seas
You're in every space that I need.

Verse 2

When I step into your temple
A space I know you dwell
Or watch the fruit grow on the vine

Hear the stories that they tell
I'm grateful for your presence
And the ways you're forming me
Spirit help me now to see
All the ways you lead

Pre-Chorus 2

It's in those spaces I know
you can be found
So lead me to your promised land
and trust the joy I've found

Chorus

For you are the springs of water
You meet me on the road
You find me in the wilderness
When I think I'm alone.
You calm fear inside my heart
When tossed on stormy seas
You're in every space that I need.

Ending

You are in this space,
You are in this space.
Sometimes I just need to say it,

You are in this space.
You are in this space,
You are in this space
Help me to believe it,

You are in this space
You are in this space,
You are in this space
Open up my heart to feel
the warmth of your embrace

You are in this space,
You are in this space
Lord, I believe that,
You are in this space

The Land of Promise

Spaces Series / Week 1



HEBREW DEFINITION

Barakh “to bless”

In Genesis 12:2, God tells Abram, “I will bless you... and you will be a blessing.” The Hebrew word *barakh* means “to bless,” and the root word connects to the idea of kneeling—receiving a gift humbly and passing it on. In just three verses, God uses *barakh* five times. The blessing was never meant to stop with Abraham. It was designed to move outward—through Israel, to the nations, and ultimately to the whole world. Paul makes this connection clear: “He

redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:14a). When God places us in the Land of Promise—and wherever he places us today—it is always with the same purpose: to receive his blessing and become a blessing to others.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Promised Land

The “honey” in the Bible’s “land of milk and honey” almost certainly wasn’t bee honey—it was a thick syrup boiled down from grapes or dates. Grapes

(vines) and honey are two of the Seven species of Israel, the crops that defined the Promised Land’s fertility. See the full list in Deuteronomy 8:8.

Ancient Israel sat between two major forces of the ancient world: the Mediterranean Sea to the west and the Fertile Crescent’s trade routes to the east.

The Promised Land is surprisingly small—about 150 miles long and just 30 to 85 miles wide, roughly the size of Connecticut and Delaware combined.





GROWING IN CHRISTLIKENESS

Generosity

God promised his generosity before Israel ever set foot in the Promised Land. "I will bless you... and you will be a blessing... all peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (Genesis 12:2-3). The land itself was a lesson in dependence on his generosity. Unlike Egypt, where they could water their fields by hand, the Promised Land drank rain from heaven (Deuteronomy 11:10-11). Every harvest was a reminder—only God could provide it.

Jesus is the fulfillment of the promised blessing for all peoples. "For God so loved the world that

Behind the Scenes Content!

Glimpse into the artist's
digital process:



he gave his one and only Son" (John 3:16a). Jesus gave his life so we could have the ultimate blessing of eternal life in him, a gift that starts when we believe in him.

This is who God is—endlessly generous. He blesses us so that we, too, become a blessing to others.

Springs of Water

Spaces Series | Week 2

HEBREW DEFINITION

Mayim Chayim

“living” or “flowing” water

The Hebrew phrase *mayim chayim* means “living” or “flowing” water, distinguishing it from stagnant, collected water, like that found in cisterns. It appears in Jeremiah 2:13 and 17:13, where God describes himself as the spring of living water. Understanding this term deepens the contrast Jeremiah is drawing. Israel didn’t just leave God—they abandoned the only source of water that was truly alive and flowing, in exchange for cracked containers that couldn’t hold anything at all. Centuries later, Jesus tells the Samaritan woman that he can give her



living water (John 4). He’s picking up the language in Jeremiah and applying it to himself. Jesus isn’t just offering what God offers. He’s claiming to be what God declared himself to be in Jeremiah.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Water Sources in Ancient Israel

Ancient Israel had no Nile or Tigris—no great river to rely on, just rainfall, springs, and hand-dug cisterns.

Jerusalem was built where it was strictly because of one spring, the Gihon—no spring, no city.

Not every spring ran cold—hot mineral springs along the Sea of Galilee’s shore, reaching around 140°F, were prized in the ancient world for their healing properties.

Jericho, one of the oldest cities on Earth, exists because of a single perennial spring, Elisha’s Spring, that turned bone-dry desert into a livable oasis.

GROWING IN CHRISTLIKENESS

Satisfaction in God

God has never lacked anything. Father, Son, and Spirit live in perfect love and unity, complete in himself before the world ever existed. In the garden, God invited people into that same satisfaction—relationship with him, made to be enough. Sin broke humans’ relationship with God. People have been searching ever since, chasing things that promise to satisfy but never do.

Jesus shows us the way back. Fully satisfied in the Father, he found his purpose and joy there alone—never searching, never striving. And he offers us that same living water: “Whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst...[it] will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life” (John 4:14).

This is who God is—complete, satisfied, overflowing. He is teaching us to stop chasing and simply come to him, the only one who truly satisfies.





Springs of Water ~ Autumn Hansen, Oil Painting

Keep reading!

Read the complete
artist statement:



The Road

Spaces Series / Week 3

GREEK DEFINITION

Hodos

“road” or “path”

In Acts 9:2, Luke writes that Saul wanted to persecute “any there who belonged to the Way.” The Greek word *hodos* means “road” or “path” and metaphorically means “a course of conduct” or “a way of thinking.” The Way became the earliest name for followers of Jesus. Why? Jesus said, “...I am the way and the truth and the life...” (John 14:6). He is the only way to a restored relationship with God. Christianity isn’t just a set of beliefs—it’s a journey, a road we walk with Jesus as we follow him. When God meets us on the road, he invites us to follow him on the Way.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Roman Roads

Rome built roads straight to Jerusalem—from Lod through Emmaus, from Jericho, and from Ashkelon through Beit Guvrin—each marked with stone milestones that still survive.

Ancient Israel sat on the only land bridge connecting Africa, Asia, and Europe, which is exactly why Rome invested so heavily in roads to control it.

The road from Jericho to Jerusalem (the setting for the Good Samaritan) drops about 3,500 feet over just 14 miles—one of the steepest, most treacherous stretches in the region. On the Hebron-to-Jerusalem road alone, archaeologists have found 29 separate Roman milestones.

Roman roads weren’t just paved on top—they were engineered in layers, with a foundation, packed gravel, and a fitted stone surface curved slightly to shed rainwater, which is why sections still survive 2,000 years later.

GROWING IN CHRISTLIKENESS

Humility

Jesus walked the hardest road with complete humility. Though he was “in very nature God,” he didn’t use that status to his own advantage. Rather, he “made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.” Jesus humbled himself all the way to death on



a cross, the most humiliating way to die (Philippians 2:6-8). He came not for his own interest, but for his people, surrendering his will to the Father at every turn.

This is who God is—humble enough to set aside glory for the sake of his beloved children, obedient even into death. Jesus continually submits himself to the Father, doing only what he sees the Father doing (John 5:19).

He teaches us to walk that same road—to hold our plans loosely and trust his good work, even when it costs us something.

There's more to see!

View all the photos here:



The Wilderness

Spaces Series / Week 4



HEBREW DEFINITION

Midbar

“wilderness,”
“uninhabited land”

The Hebrew word for wilderness refers to a vast, uninhabited place far from the rhythms of ordinary life. But in Scripture, *midbar* is consistently where God meets, tests, and provides for his people—even when they grumble. At Marah, they complain about bitter water. In the wilderness of Paran, they despise the very manna God gave them. And yet God provides. Centuries later, Jesus is led by the Spirit into that same wilderness, faces every temptation, and responds each time with the Word of God. The pattern holds—the wilderness is not where God goes silent. It's where he shows up.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Regions of Ancient Israel

The wilderness exists because of a rift: the same fault line that drops the land here also carved out the Dead Sea and the Jordan River.

Much of the wilderness is soft limestone, chalk, and marl—rock so soft that a single flash flood can reshape a canyon within hours.

The wilderness's harsh dryness comes from a rain shadow—Mediterranean moisture gets wrung out over the western hills, leaving little for the east.

The “wilderness” in Scripture refers to several distinct arid regions, including the Judean wilderness, the Negev, and the Wilderness of Sinai.

GROWING IN CHRISTLIKENESS

Faithfulness

Before Israel ever doubted him in the wilderness, he was already providing for them—a dramatic rescue from slavery, parting the sea before them, and guiding them by his presence in a pillar of cloud and fire (Exodus 14). Their wilderness grumbling didn't block his faithfulness. He provided heaven's bread and water from the rock (Exodus 16–17).

Jesus shows us the same, faithful God. In the wilderness, he held fast to the truth when tempted: “Man shall not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4). Where Israel wavered, he stood firm—faithful all the way to the cross.

This is who God is—faithful through and through. He doesn't wait to see if we'll be faithful first. He will patiently teach us to trust him and grow in faithfulness in every wilderness we face.

1 When I despair in the valley, I remember—
“He makes me lie down in green pastures”

2 When I cannot hear You, I remember—
“Your word is a lamp for my feet”

7 When I’m tempted, I remember—
“Man shall not live on bread alone”



6 When I fear, I remember—
“He will never leave you nor forsake you”

5 When I can’t see what’s next, I remember—
“I know the plans I have for you”

4 When enemies close in, I remember—
“You prepare a table for me”

3 When the way is narrow, I remember—
“Ask for the ancient paths”

1. Psalm 23:2

2. Psalm 119:105

3. Jeremiah 6:16

4. Psalm 23:5

5. Jeremiah 29:11

6. Deuteronomy 31:6

7. Matthew 4:4

Artists' statement!

Read here:



The Sea

Spaces Series / Week 5

GREEK DEFINITION

Pistis

“trust,” “confidence,”
or “reliance” on someone

In the ancient world, *pistis* was often used to describe the confidence one person placed in another's reliability and character. Throughout the New Testament, the word describes a wholehearted trust in God rather than mere intellectual agreement with facts. In Luke 8, when the disciples feared the storm more than they trusted Jesus, their *pistis* faltered despite his presence in the boat. The same word appears throughout the Gospels and Epistles to describe the proper response to God's saving work in Christ (e.g., Romans 1:17; Ephesians 2:8). Biblical faith is not the absence of fear but confidence that Jesus remains trustworthy even when circumstances appear chaotic.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Sea of Galilee

At roughly 700 feet below sea level, the Sea of Galilee is the lowest freshwater lake on Earth.

The Sea of Galilee never gets deeper than about 141 feet at its lowest point—shallow enough that its famous storms can churn the entire body of water, not just the surface.

The cliffs and hills ringing the lake are made of basalt, leftover volcanic rock from ancient eruptions—a completely different geology than the limestone hills of Judea.

Even today, the Sea of Galilee still supplies about 10% of Israel's drinking water, carried across the country through a system called the National Water Carrier.

GROWING IN CHRISTLIKENESS

Trusting God

Jesus, being fully God, holds authority over everything—wind, waves, sickness, even death. He speaks, and the storm goes silent (Luke 8:24). No chaos is too great for him to calm; no power can stand against him.

Yet the same Jesus who commands the sea also knelt to face the greatest storm of all—death on a cross. Fully human, he was tempted and tested in every way yet never wavered. “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done” (Luke 22:42). The one with power over all things chose to trust completely.

This is who God is—powerful enough to calm any storm, yet humble enough to trust the Father in his hardest moment. He teaches us to trust him the same way: not because we understand the storm, but because we trust the one who holds it.



Calming Presence ~ Traci Hubble, Oil Painting

A Theology of the Sea (excerpt) ~ Ethan Cole, Essay

A Theology of the Sea

From the opening of Scripture's story in Genesis to the closing vision of Revelation, the sea functions as one of the Bible's most symbolically rich and theologically loaded images. In the Bible, the sea is more than a mere geographical setting. The sea represents chaos, danger, rebellion, judgment, and death—yet also the stage upon which God reveals his sovereign power, redemptive purpose, and final victory. [Read more...]

Keep reading!

Finish *A Theology of the Sea* and read Traci's artist statement:



The Vineyard

Discipleship Journey | Week 1

GREEK DEFINITION

Menō

“remain,” “stay,” “abide”

The Greek word *menō* means “to remain,” “to stay,” or “to abide.” In John 15, Jesus uses this word ten times in seventeen verses—it is the heartbeat of the entire passage. *Menō* is not passive. It describes an active, ongoing connection, like a branch that stays attached to the vine and draws everything it needs from that source. When Jesus says, “remain in me,” he is inviting his followers into a continuous, dependent, living relationship.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Vineyards in the Ancient World

The Central Highlands—Galilee, Samaria, Judah—offered ideal vineyard conditions: enough elevation for cooler temperatures, enough rainfall to skip irrigation.

Even the Negev desert grew grapes—ancient farmers at sites like Avdat caught seasonal flood runoff using stone mounds, turning bone-dry hillsides into thriving vineyards.



Vineyards from this region weren't just local—wine exported through coastal ports like Gaza and Ashkelon reached as far as Egypt, Greece, and Turkey.

GROWING IN CHRISTLIKENESS

Fruitfulness

Long before Jesus called himself the vine, God planted one. In Isaiah 5, he clears the ground, builds the walls, and tends the soil—the picture of a God who cultivates and longs for fruit, out of steadfast love.

Jesus became the vine that God's people could never be. “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener” (John 15:1). Fruit was never something Jesus produced on his own. He remained in the Father's love, keeping his commands, just as the Father had loved him (John 15:9–10). Jesus's fruitfulness flowed from his unbroken connection with the Father.



Remain ~ Elizabeth Hawkins, Oil Painting



This is who God is—the gardener who tends, the vine who sustains. Every good fruit in us flows from his Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). He empowers us to bear fruit as we remain in him.

ARTIST STATEMENT

This painting speaks to the mystery of the Vine being woven into us—perhaps most profoundly during seasons when God feels distant. My visual inspiration comes from the tradition of

the Sublime in art history, where the grandeur and power of nature evoke awe, wonder, and the nearness of something beyond ourselves. [Read more...]

Keep reading!

Read the complete
artist statement:



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