

HOLY

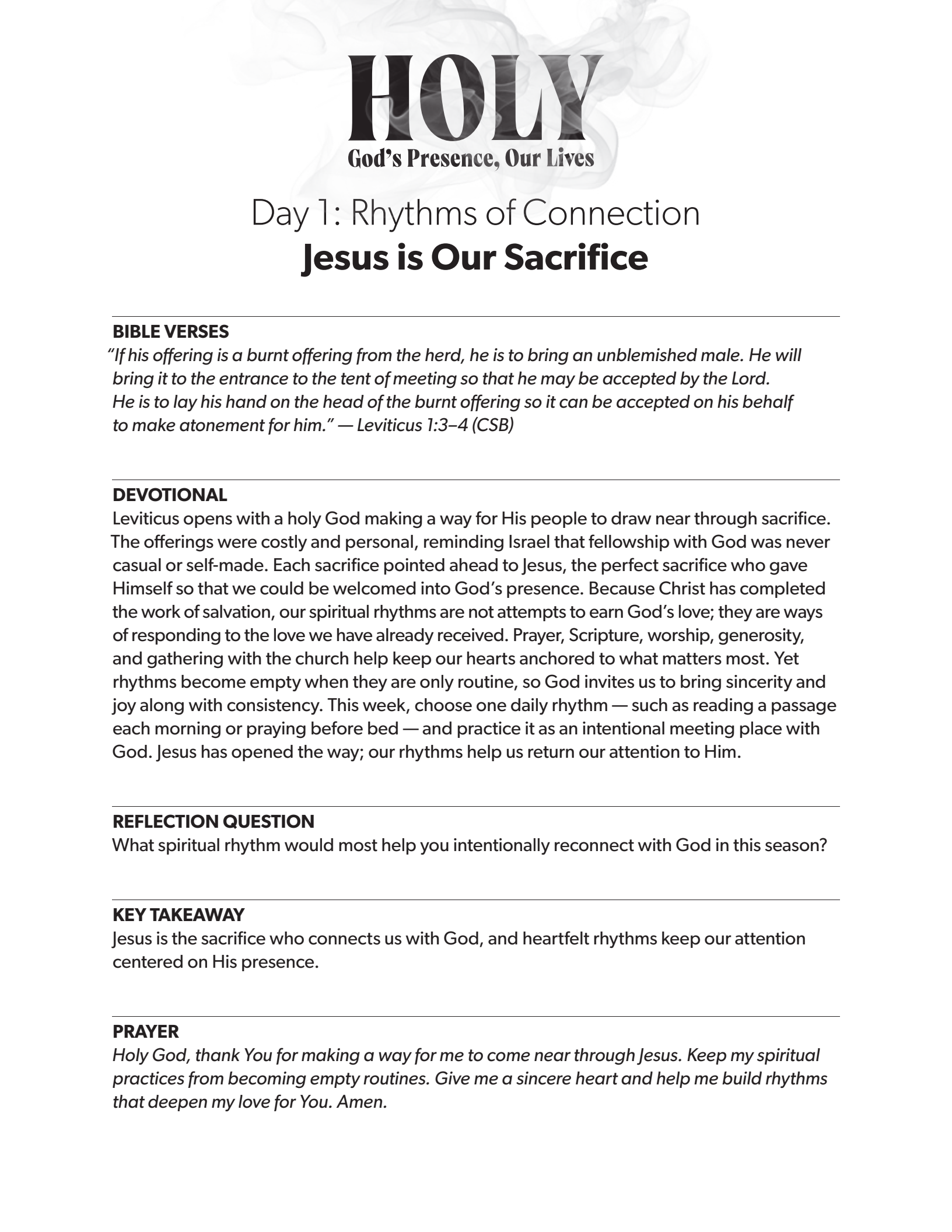
God's Presence, Our Lives

Five-Day Devotional + Discussion Guide

A journey through Leviticus to see how Jesus brings us near to a holy God and transforms the way we live in His presence.



HOUSTON'S FIRST
BAPTIST CHURCH



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God's Presence, Our Lives

Day 1: Rhythms of Connection

Jesus is Our Sacrifice

BIBLE VERSES

"If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he is to bring an unblemished male. He will bring it to the entrance to the tent of meeting so that he may be accepted by the Lord. He is to lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering so it can be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him." — Leviticus 1:3–4 (CSB)

DEVOTIONAL

Leviticus opens with a holy God making a way for His people to draw near through sacrifice. The offerings were costly and personal, reminding Israel that fellowship with God was never casual or self-made. Each sacrifice pointed ahead to Jesus, the perfect sacrifice who gave Himself so that we could be welcomed into God's presence. Because Christ has completed the work of salvation, our spiritual rhythms are not attempts to earn God's love; they are ways of responding to the love we have already received. Prayer, Scripture, worship, generosity, and gathering with the church help keep our hearts anchored to what matters most. Yet rhythms become empty when they are only routine, so God invites us to bring sincerity and joy along with consistency. This week, choose one daily rhythm — such as reading a passage each morning or praying before bed — and practice it as an intentional meeting place with God. Jesus has opened the way; our rhythms help us return our attention to Him.

REFLECTION QUESTION

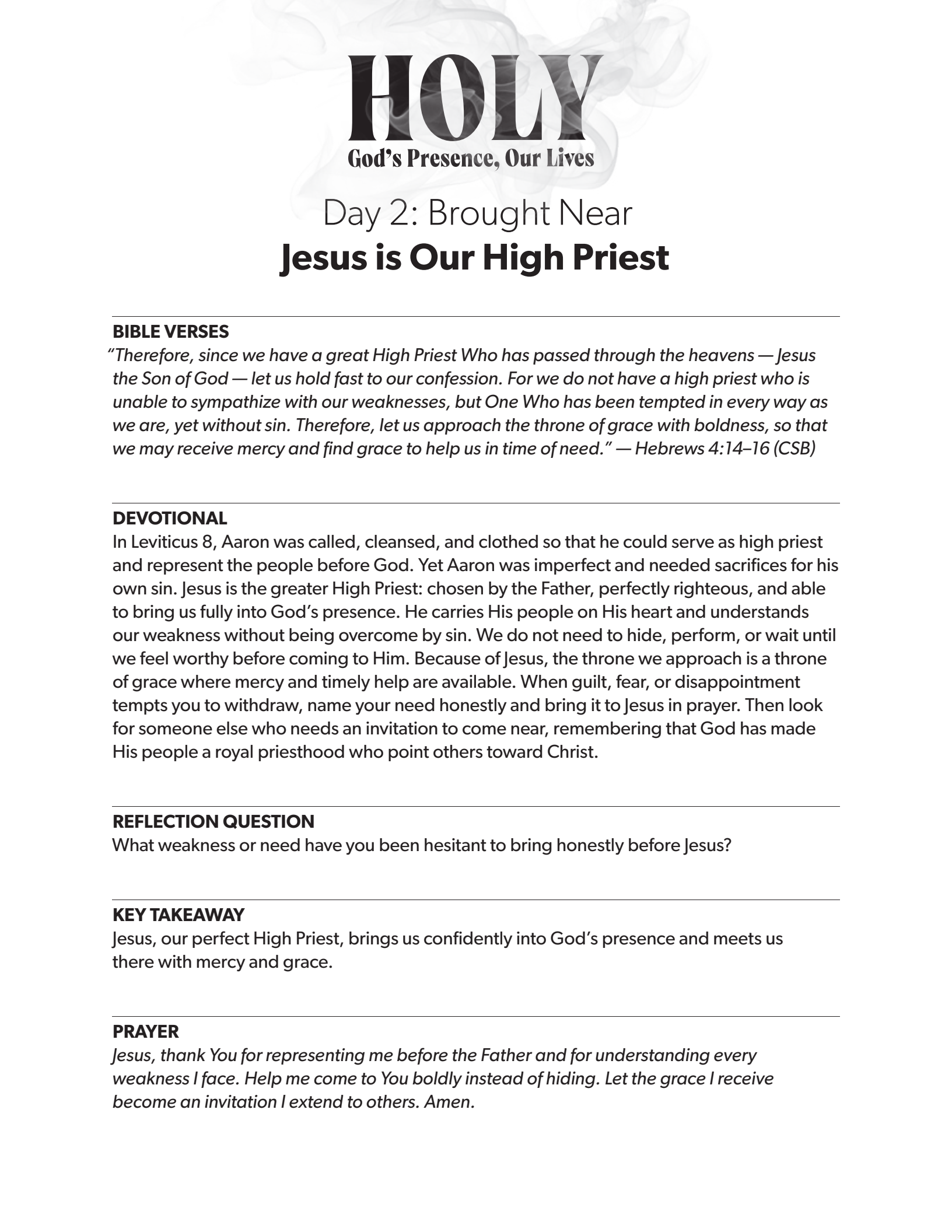
What spiritual rhythm would most help you intentionally reconnect with God in this season?

KEY TAKEAWAY

Jesus is the sacrifice who connects us with God, and heartfelt rhythms keep our attention centered on His presence.

PRAYER

Holy God, thank You for making a way for me to come near through Jesus. Keep my spiritual practices from becoming empty routines. Give me a sincere heart and help me build rhythms that deepen my love for You. Amen.



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Day 2: Brought Near

Jesus is Our High Priest

BIBLE VERSES

"Therefore, since we have a great High Priest Who has passed through the heavens — Jesus the Son of God — let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but One Who has been tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin. Therefore, let us approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in time of need." — Hebrews 4:14–16 (CSB)

DEVOTIONAL

In Leviticus 8, Aaron was called, cleansed, and clothed so that he could serve as high priest and represent the people before God. Yet Aaron was imperfect and needed sacrifices for his own sin. Jesus is the greater High Priest: chosen by the Father, perfectly righteous, and able to bring us fully into God's presence. He carries His people on His heart and understands our weakness without being overcome by sin. We do not need to hide, perform, or wait until we feel worthy before coming to Him. Because of Jesus, the throne we approach is a throne of grace where mercy and timely help are available. When guilt, fear, or disappointment tempts you to withdraw, name your need honestly and bring it to Jesus in prayer. Then look for someone else who needs an invitation to come near, remembering that God has made His people a royal priesthood who point others toward Christ.

REFLECTION QUESTION

What weakness or need have you been hesitant to bring honestly before Jesus?

KEY TAKEAWAY

Jesus, our perfect High Priest, brings us confidently into God's presence and meets us there with mercy and grace.

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for representing me before the Father and for understanding every weakness I face. Help me come to You boldly instead of hiding. Let the grace I receive become an invitation I extend to others. Amen.

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God's Presence, Our Lives

Day 3: Once for All Jesus is Our Atonement

BIBLE VERSES

"But Christ has appeared as a High Priest of the good things that have come. In the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands — that is, not of this creation — He entered the most holy place once for all time, not by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood, having obtained eternal redemption." — Hebrews 9:11–12 (CSB)

DEVOTIONAL

Leviticus 16 describes the Day of Atonement, when the high priest entered the Most Holy Place on behalf of the people. One goat was sacrificed as payment for sin, while another carried the confessed sins of the people away into the wilderness. Together they pictured both forgiveness and removal—two gifts Jesus would perfectly fulfill. At the cross, Jesus offered His own sinless life, not a temporary sacrifice that had to be repeated. His blood secured eternal redemption, and He removes our sin as far as the east is from the west. This means believers do not have to keep punishing themselves for what Christ has already paid in full. Confess any sin you are holding onto, receive His forgiveness, and take one concrete step that reflects repentance rather than shame. Atonement makes us "at one" with God again, free to live from restored relationship instead of lingering condemnation.

REFLECTION QUESTION

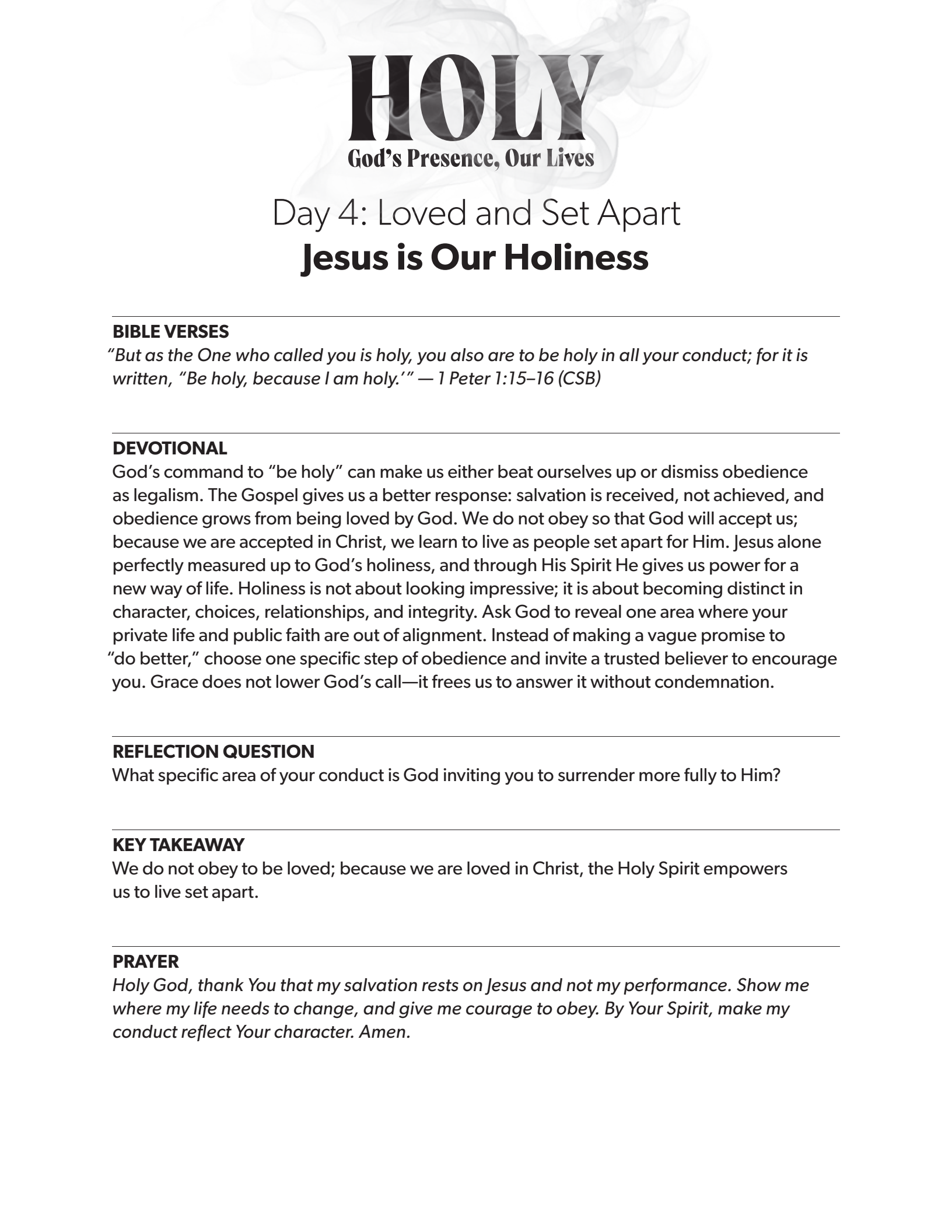
Where are you still carrying guilt that Jesus has already invited you to confess and release?

KEY TAKEAWAY

Jesus paid for our sin and carried it away; His once-for-all sacrifice restores us to God.

PRAYER

Father, thank You that Jesus is the complete atoning sacrifice for my sin. Help me confess honestly, receive Your forgiveness, and release the shame I was never meant to carry. Teach me to live in the freedom of restored relationship with You. Amen.



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God's Presence, Our Lives

Day 4: Loved and Set Apart

Jesus is Our Holiness

BIBLE VERSES

"But as the One who called you is holy, you also are to be holy in all your conduct; for it is written, 'Be holy, because I am holy.'" — 1 Peter 1:15–16 (CSB)

DEVOTIONAL

God's command to "be holy" can make us either beat ourselves up or dismiss obedience as legalism. The Gospel gives us a better response: salvation is received, not achieved, and obedience grows from being loved by God. We do not obey so that God will accept us; because we are accepted in Christ, we learn to live as people set apart for Him. Jesus alone perfectly measured up to God's holiness, and through His Spirit He gives us power for a new way of life. Holiness is not about looking impressive; it is about becoming distinct in character, choices, relationships, and integrity. Ask God to reveal one area where your private life and public faith are out of alignment. Instead of making a vague promise to "do better," choose one specific step of obedience and invite a trusted believer to encourage you. Grace does not lower God's call—it frees us to answer it without condemnation.

REFLECTION QUESTION

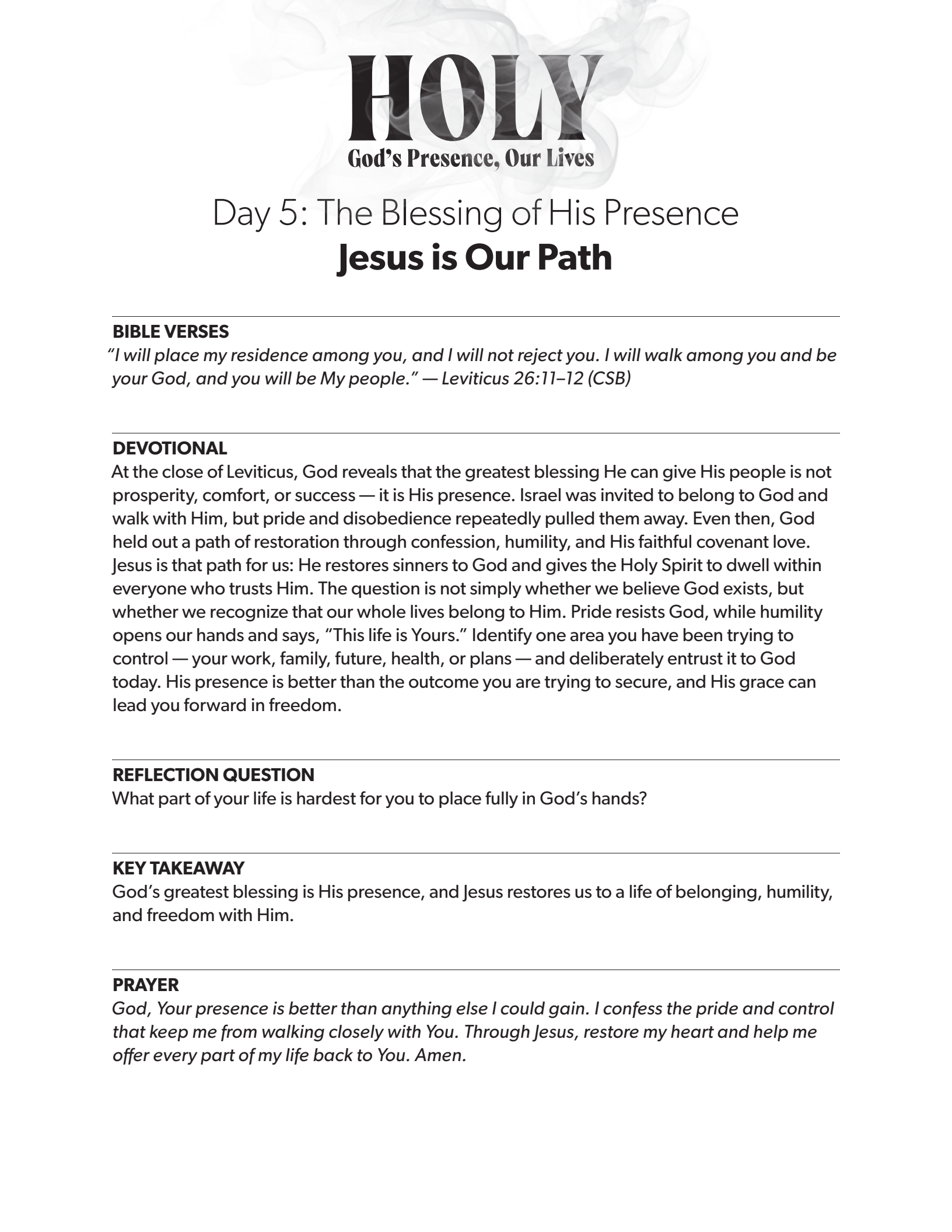
What specific area of your conduct is God inviting you to surrender more fully to Him?

KEY TAKEAWAY

We do not obey to be loved; because we are loved in Christ, the Holy Spirit empowers us to live set apart.

PRAYER

Holy God, thank You that my salvation rests on Jesus and not my performance. Show me where my life needs to change, and give me courage to obey. By Your Spirit, make my conduct reflect Your character. Amen.



HOLY

God's Presence, Our Lives

Day 5: The Blessing of His Presence

Jesus is Our Path

BIBLE VERSES

"I will place my residence among you, and I will not reject you. I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be My people." — Leviticus 26:11–12 (CSB)

DEVOTIONAL

At the close of Leviticus, God reveals that the greatest blessing He can give His people is not prosperity, comfort, or success — it is His presence. Israel was invited to belong to God and walk with Him, but pride and disobedience repeatedly pulled them away. Even then, God held out a path of restoration through confession, humility, and His faithful covenant love. Jesus is that path for us: He restores sinners to God and gives the Holy Spirit to dwell within everyone who trusts Him. The question is not simply whether we believe God exists, but whether we recognize that our whole lives belong to Him. Pride resists God, while humility opens our hands and says, "This life is Yours." Identify one area you have been trying to control — your work, family, future, health, or plans — and deliberately entrust it to God today. His presence is better than the outcome you are trying to secure, and His grace can lead you forward in freedom.

REFLECTION QUESTION

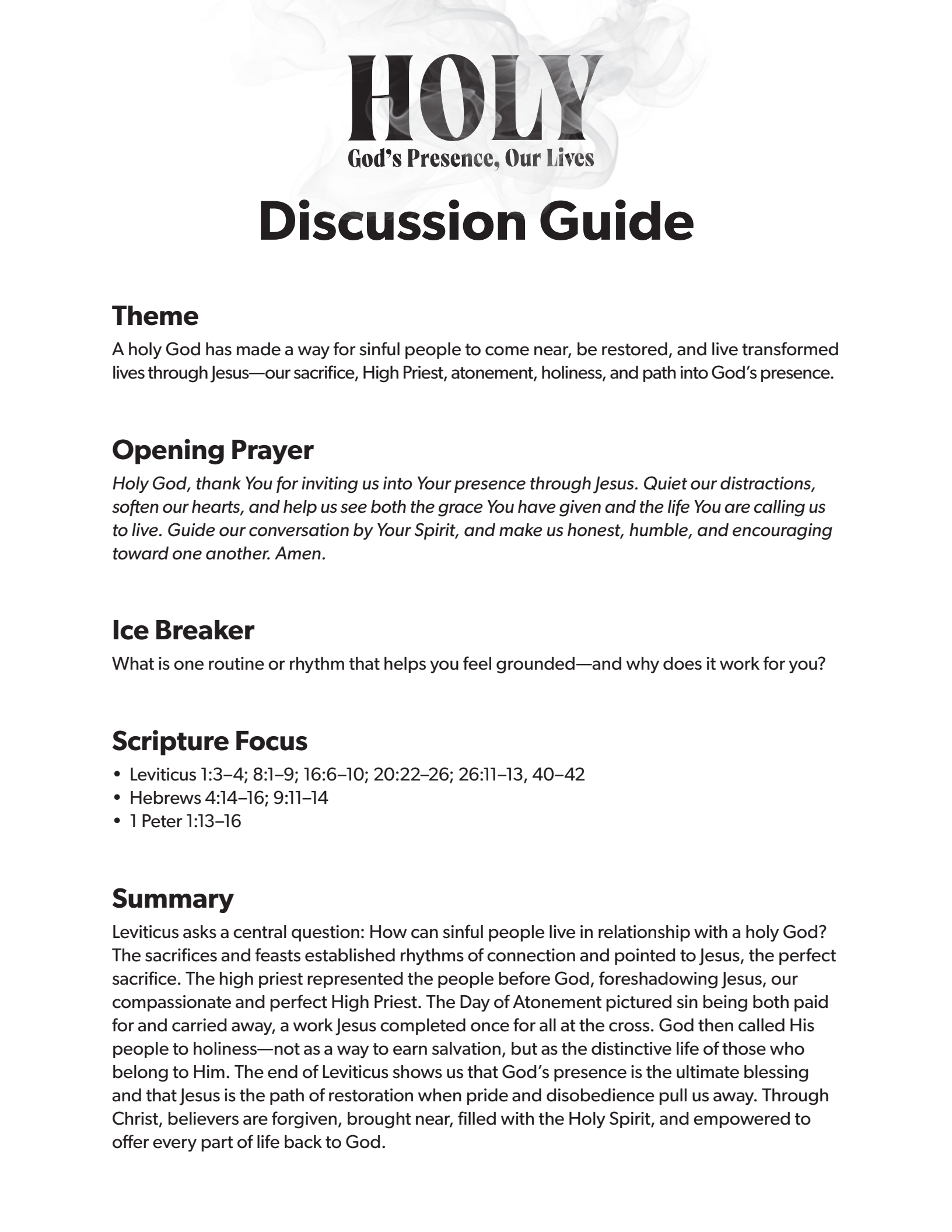
What part of your life is hardest for you to place fully in God's hands?

KEY TAKEAWAY

God's greatest blessing is His presence, and Jesus restores us to a life of belonging, humility, and freedom with Him.

PRAYER

God, Your presence is better than anything else I could gain. I confess the pride and control that keep me from walking closely with You. Through Jesus, restore my heart and help me offer every part of my life back to You. Amen.



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God's Presence, Our Lives

Discussion Guide

Theme

A holy God has made a way for sinful people to come near, be restored, and live transformed lives through Jesus—our sacrifice, High Priest, atonement, holiness, and path into God's presence.

Opening Prayer

Holy God, thank You for inviting us into Your presence through Jesus. Quiet our distractions, soften our hearts, and help us see both the grace You have given and the life You are calling us to live. Guide our conversation by Your Spirit, and make us honest, humble, and encouraging toward one another. Amen.

Ice Breaker

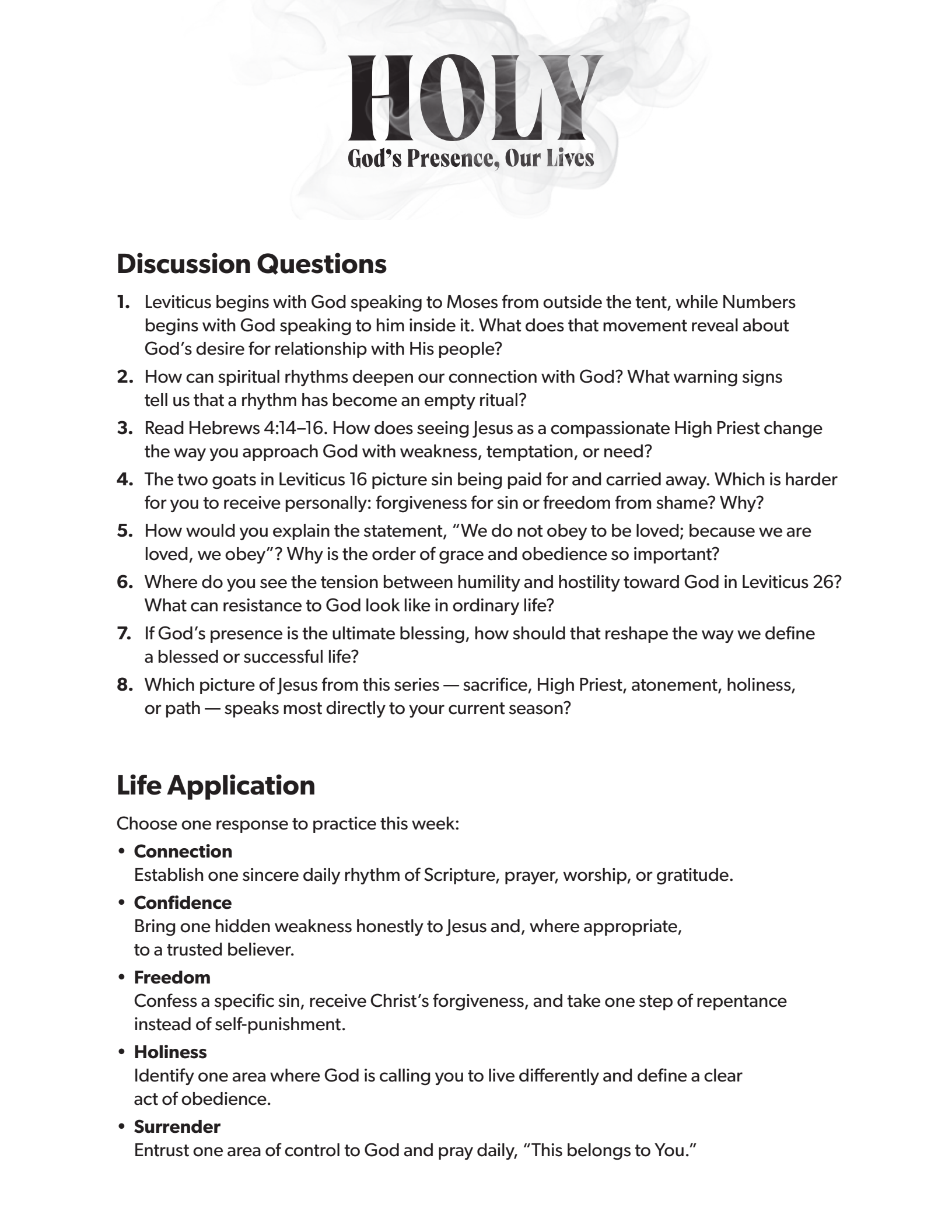
What is one routine or rhythm that helps you feel grounded—and why does it work for you?

Scripture Focus

- Leviticus 1:3–4; 8:1–9; 16:6–10; 20:22–26; 26:11–13, 40–42
- Hebrews 4:14–16; 9:11–14
- 1 Peter 1:13–16

Summary

Leviticus asks a central question: How can sinful people live in relationship with a holy God? The sacrifices and feasts established rhythms of connection and pointed to Jesus, the perfect sacrifice. The high priest represented the people before God, foreshadowing Jesus, our compassionate and perfect High Priest. The Day of Atonement pictured sin being both paid for and carried away, a work Jesus completed once for all at the cross. God then called His people to holiness—not as a way to earn salvation, but as the distinctive life of those who belong to Him. The end of Leviticus shows us that God's presence is the ultimate blessing and that Jesus is the path of restoration when pride and disobedience pull us away. Through Christ, believers are forgiven, brought near, filled with the Holy Spirit, and empowered to offer every part of life back to God.



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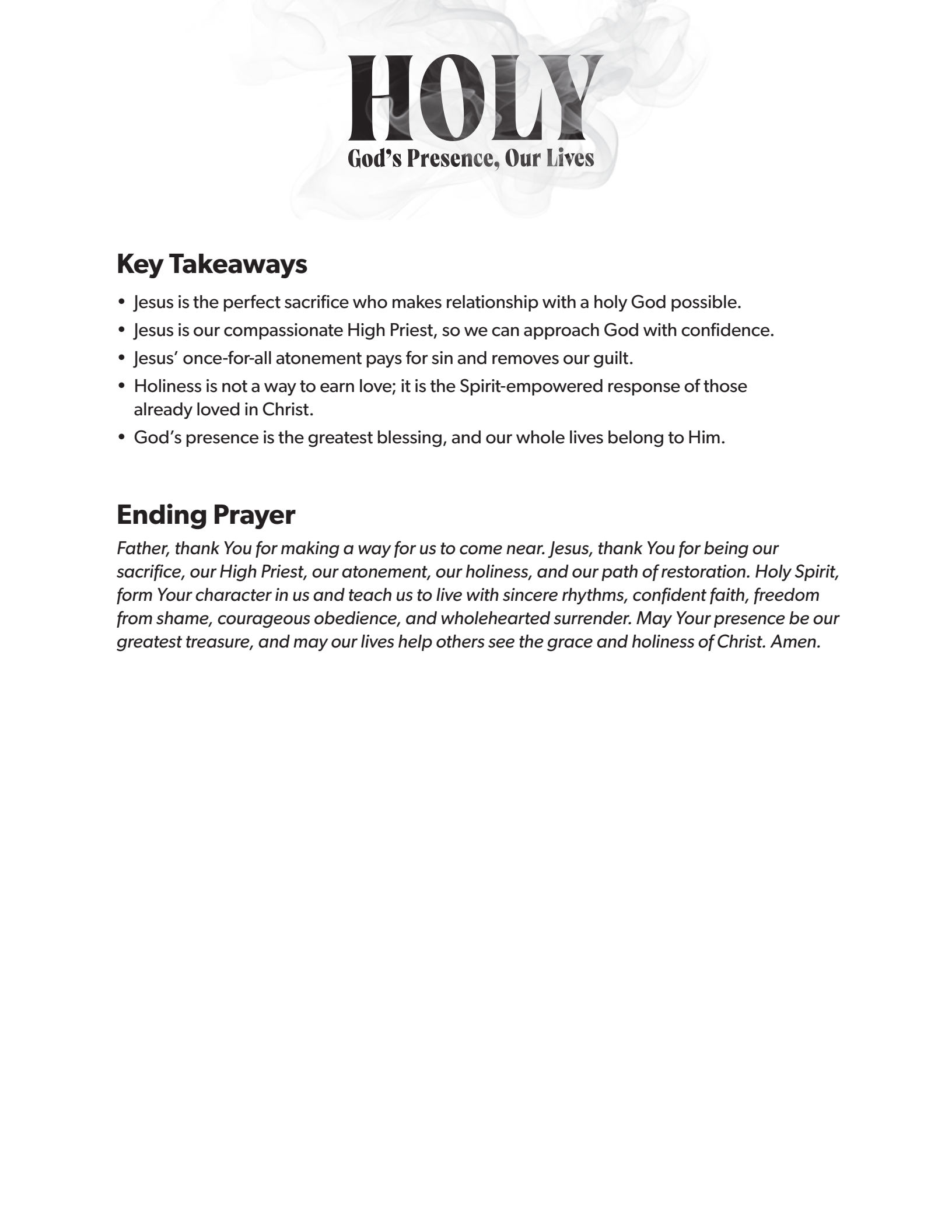
Discussion Questions

1. Leviticus begins with God speaking to Moses from outside the tent, while Numbers begins with God speaking to him inside it. What does that movement reveal about God's desire for relationship with His people?
2. How can spiritual rhythms deepen our connection with God? What warning signs tell us that a rhythm has become an empty ritual?
3. Read Hebrews 4:14–16. How does seeing Jesus as a compassionate High Priest change the way you approach God with weakness, temptation, or need?
4. The two goats in Leviticus 16 picture sin being paid for and carried away. Which is harder for you to receive personally: forgiveness for sin or freedom from shame? Why?
5. How would you explain the statement, "We do not obey to be loved; because we are loved, we obey"? Why is the order of grace and obedience so important?
6. Where do you see the tension between humility and hostility toward God in Leviticus 26? What can resistance to God look like in ordinary life?
7. If God's presence is the ultimate blessing, how should that reshape the way we define a blessed or successful life?
8. Which picture of Jesus from this series — sacrifice, High Priest, atonement, holiness, or path — speaks most directly to your current season?

Life Application

Choose one response to practice this week:

- **Connection**
Establish one sincere daily rhythm of Scripture, prayer, worship, or gratitude.
- **Confidence**
Bring one hidden weakness honestly to Jesus and, where appropriate, to a trusted believer.
- **Freedom**
Confess a specific sin, receive Christ's forgiveness, and take one step of repentance instead of self-punishment.
- **Holiness**
Identify one area where God is calling you to live differently and define a clear act of obedience.
- **Surrender**
Entrust one area of control to God and pray daily, "This belongs to You."



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Key Takeaways

- Jesus is the perfect sacrifice who makes relationship with a holy God possible.
- Jesus is our compassionate High Priest, so we can approach God with confidence.
- Jesus' once-for-all atonement pays for sin and removes our guilt.
- Holiness is not a way to earn love; it is the Spirit-empowered response of those already loved in Christ.
- God's presence is the greatest blessing, and our whole lives belong to Him.

Ending Prayer

Father, thank You for making a way for us to come near. Jesus, thank You for being our sacrifice, our High Priest, our atonement, our holiness, and our path of restoration. Holy Spirit, form Your character in us and teach us to live with sincere rhythms, confident faith, freedom from shame, courageous obedience, and wholehearted surrender. May Your presence be our greatest treasure, and may our lives help others see the grace and holiness of Christ. Amen.