* **Apostles Creed**
* **Series Slide**
* Two of the greatest novels of the 20th century, and 2 of my all time favorites, were stories about a dystopian future in which TV & Movies are used by the government to control people.

In George Orwell’s 1984, the government…known as “Big Brother”… keeps its citizens under constant surveillance with two-way televisions…where you are being watched while you watch.

* Typically, when folks talk about 1984…its all about “Big Brother” watching the people, but today, I want to talk about what Big Brother had the people watching.
* In the novel, every day the people of Oceania are required to tune into the “The Two Minutes Hate”. It's a short propaganda film that shows the enemy leader speaking. And during the two minutes he’s on screen, everyone joins in screaming at him, cursing him, and kindling their hatred for their enemy country.
* Here’s Orwell’s description of the Two Minutes Hate and its effects on people.
* **“The horrible thing about the Two Minutes Hate was not that one was obliged to act a part, but that it was impossible to avoid joining in. Within thirty seconds any pretense was always unnecessary. A hideous ecstasy of fear and vindictiveness, a desire to kill, to torture, to smash faces in with a sledge hammer, seemed to flow through the whole group of people like an electric current, turning one even against one's will into a grimacing, screaming lunatic.”- 1984, George Orwell**
* Even for those who didn’t want to participate in the Two Minutes Hate, they find themselves swept up within 30 seconds in the bigger story… that all Big Brother’s enemies deserve hate and death.
* Imagine doing that day after day for your entire life.
* Amazing what binge watching can do to a person.
* **BACK TO SLIDE**
* The other great novel came out in 1953, four years after Orwell’s dystopian vision.
* In Ray Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451*, firemen burn books so people do as little thinking as possible and TV isn’t used for indoctrination so much as its used as distraction.
* In every home, the televisions take up entire walls. In fact, the TV rooms are called “parlors”. Ironically, parlors are rooms that are supposed to be used for face-to-face conversations. But in this future, each wall of the Parlor is a TV Screen. So instead of facing each other, everyone faces a screen.
* And the programming is all mindless entertainment- like clowns chopping off their own hands to get a laugh. The protagonist, Montag, has a wife who spends all her days watching these Parlor Walls, and when the TV walls go off, she is depressed, anxious, and suicidal. She calls the people on the TV “her family”, even as she neglects a relationship with her actual family. Additionally, her girlfriends…who watch the parlor walls with her, all hate their own kids and proudly plop them in front of the screens to avoid unpleasant interactions with them.
* In one scene, Montag’s wife and friends are are talking about how much they hate their own children but love the actors on the Parlor walls. So, Montag comes into the room with an illegal book of poetry, and starts reading. And it breaks them out of their trance…and out of their superficial happiness. Some of them, actually start crying. But they hate him for it. Because they would rather live in a constant state of entertainment “happiness” than face the reality of the broken state of the world. They would rather laugh at the clown on the screen … than weep for or lament their own fallen condition.

At one point in the novel, Montag is frustrated with his life and the happiness that he can’t seem to find in the shows on television, so he meets up with this guy, Faber…who has supposedly read a lot of books and just might have some wisdom to offer. Sort of like a wise man in the woods, like Yoda or John the Baptist.

This is what Montag tells Faber when he asks him why he came to seek his advice.

**“Nobody listens any more. I can’t talk to the walls because they’re yelling at me. I can’t talk to my wife; she listens to the walls. I just want someone to hear what I have to say. And maybe if I talk long enough, it’ll make sense. And I want you to teach me to understand what I read.” Montag, Farenheit 451**

2 different pictures of the future. In one, screens are used to control people by indoctrinating hate. In another, screens are used to control people distracting them with entertainment.

But in both instances, the problem is the same. The problem is not the existence of the screens- its that no one is thinking about the stories the screens are telling them…or the stories the screens are distracting them from.

* **Title Slide- “Fahrenheit 1984: How We Become the Stories We’re Baptized Into” – Acts 2:37-3:21**

Over the last several weeks, we’ve been talking about intentional habits…spiritual disciplines… that we call Soul Handles. They are habitual practices that help us hold on to our souls.

We are using what’s called the Common Rule. Its very simply a set of 4 daily habits, and 4 weekly habits that we are learning to practice together.

Last week, we read Acts 3, a story of a miraculous healing and the beautiful proclamation of the gospel that followed it. Today, I want to show you the habits that the church in Acts was practicing together that set the whole thing up…

…and then, very practically, I want to help you to think…about the stories that are shaping you…and the story that you are constantly distracted from.

**Acts 2:37-47**

* **37 When they heard [the gospel], they were pierced to the heart and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles: “Brothers, what should we do? ”**
* **38 Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is for you and for your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call.” 40 With many other words he testified and strongly urged them, saying, “Be saved from this corrupt generation! ” 41 So those who accepted his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand people were added to them.**
* **42 They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer.**

**43 Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and signs were being performed through the apostles. 44 Now all the believers were together and held all things in common. 45 They sold their possessions and property and distributed the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple, and broke bread from house to house. They ate their food with joyful and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. Every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.**

**Acts 3:1-21**

* **Now Peter and John were going up to the temple for the time of prayer at three in the afternoon.**
* **2 A man who was lame from birth was being carried there. He was placed each day at the temple gate called Beautiful, so that he could beg from those entering the temple. 3 When he saw Peter and John about to enter the temple, he asked for money. 4 Peter, along with John, looked straight at him and said, “Look at us.” 5 So he turned to them, expecting to get something from them. 6 But Peter said, “I don’t have silver or gold, but what I do have, I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, get up and walk! ” 7 Then, taking him by the right hand he raised him up, and at once his feet and ankles became strong. 8 So he jumped up and started to walk, and he entered the temple with them ​— ​walking, leaping, and praising God. 9 All the people saw him walking and praising God, 10 and they recognized that he was the one who used to sit and beg at the Beautiful Gate of the temple. So they were filled with awe and astonishment at what had happened to him.**
* **11 While he was holding on to Peter and John, all the people, utterly astonished, ran toward them in what is called Solomon’s Colonnade. 12 When Peter saw this, he addressed the people: “Fellow Israelites, why are you amazed at this? Why do you stare at us, as though we had made him walk by our own power or godliness? 13 The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our ancestors, has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and denied before Pilate, though he had decided to release him. 14 You denied the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer released to you. 15 You killed the source of life, whom God raised from the dead; we are witnesses of this. 16 By faith in his name, his name has made this man strong, whom you see and know. So the faith that comes through Jesus has given him this perfect health in front of all of you.**

**17 “And now, brothers and sisters, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your leaders also did. 18 In this way God fulfilled what he had predicted through all the prophets ​— ​that his Messiah would suffer. 19 Therefore repent and turn back, so that your sins may be wiped out, 20 that seasons of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send Jesus, who has been appointed for you as the Messiah. 21 Heaven must receive him until the time of the restoration of all things, which God spoke about through his holy prophets from the beginning.**

**Transition**: One of the mistakes that’s easy to make when we start talking about developing good habits…is that you think those habits are mainly about you becoming a better person.

What I’ve said from the start of this series is that we are using these Soul Handles …to ground us in the gospel of Jesus…the one that Peter preaches right here in Acts 3, so that. Because, if we’re shaped by the Beauty, Justice, and Fellowship that flows out of the gospel, we will overflow that same Beauty, Justice and Fellowship to our City, just like Peter and John did in Acts 3.

In other words, our hope for you practicing these Soul Handles is NOT a New Year’s Resolution sort of “Better YOU”….its so that you proclaim and live the implications of the gospel…almost as second nature. A reflex.

So by the end of this message today, we’re gonna talk about the habit of shaping the media that's shaping you. But first, lets talk about baptism…

**1) Habits tell stories. Stories are immersion. Immersion unites.**

* + I used to watch the Nickelodeon game show “Double Dare” when I was a kid. And on nearly every episode, someone would end up swimming around in a pool of green slime. And when they got out of the pool. It was really difficult to tell where the slime ended and the person started. The green slime would cling to their face and hair and clothes so much so that when the kid would first start to emerge from the pool…it almost looked like the slime itself was getting up and walking.
	+ When you are immersed in something, you become united to it. Like a kid to slime on Double Dare.
	+ In 1984, people are immersed in “The Two Minutes Hate”…and they are united to hate & anger. They lose themselves…and become one with the story of BIG BROTHER- hating his enemy.
	+ In Fahrenheit 451, the habitual immersion of the parlor screens unites people to a story of superficial happiness to distract them from the broken state of their world.
	+ Now, lets look back at this story of Peter and John healing this man that couldn’t walk…the one we looked at last week…because I want you to see the story that PETER & JOHN were immersed in. And the habits that were telling them this story.
	+ **2:38 & 41**
	+ In Acts chapter 2, the Apostle Peter is finishing his sermon at Pentecost. At Pentecost, a whole bunch of folks from different nations all over the known world…who all speak different languages are together…and Peter has just preached the gospel to them, that Jesus is the long awaited Messiah and he should be worshipped as their Lord…and they are so moved by this they ask him…what are we supposed to do now?
	+ So Peter tells them to REPENT. Or turn around. Face a new direction.
	+ To Repent means that you stop chasing whatever it is that you think is going to satisfy you, and instead follow Jesus as the only way to be made whole and complete.
	+ And then he says, they should also, “BE BAPTIZED”.
	+ That word- baptized- literally means “to be immersed”.
	+ Now, on one hand to be baptized is referring to the religious ceremony that we’re going to do (or did- 2nd service) today, in just a few minutes.
	+ But Baptism is symbol that points to a different kind of immersion.
	+ Notice he says that these folks are to be baptized in the name of Jesus and they will receive the Holy Spirit.
	+ **Matthew 28:18-20**
	+ When Jesus gave the command for us to baptize, he says we should make disciples of all nations…and as we do that we baptize in the name of the Trinitarian God. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. AND he says, “Teach these disciples to obey everything that Jesus teaches.” In other words, immerse them in the story of the gospel…and the relational love of our Trinitarian God.
	+ God…and the story of the gospel of his son…are the Double Dare pool we’re baptized in. We are united to HIM & his story.
	+ What we do with the water in baptism is a representation of the immersion that’s actually happening to us.
	+ Paul puts it like this in his letters to the Galatians & Roman Church
	+ **Gal 3:27-28 & Romans 6:3 & 5**
	+ **27 For those of you who were baptized into Christ have been clothed with Christ. 28 There is no Jew or Greek, slave or free, male and female; since you are all one in Christ Jesus.**
	+ **Or are you unaware that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?**
	+ **For if we have been united with him in the likeness of his death, we will certainly also be in the likeness of his resurrection**
	+ TO be baptized IN THE NAME of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, means that we are united to Christ. We are IN CHRIST. And by virtue of the Holy Spirit, Christ is in us.
	+ To be baptized in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit means that bit by bit, as you are immersed more and more in the gospel story…your life begins to become indistinguishable from the life of Christ.
* **Back to 1)**
	+ When we baptize someone here, it is a symbol of that deeper, more profound immersion in Christ.
	+ We are hidden in Christ, and he is living in us.
	+ In fact, Baptism is itself a little gospel story. When you go under the water, it tells the story of Jesus’ death. When you come up it's the story of his resurrection. It retells the story of Noah in the flood, Baby Moses in the Nile river, and Israel in the Exodus, who God delivered safely through the water. And it tells the story of God’s work in your own life…that you have died to an old way of life that pursued other gods, and now you are living a new life that pursues Jesus as your Lord.
	+ As we are immersed in the gospel story, we are not only united to Christ…we are united to each other.
	+ And, we become, together, the living “Body of Christ”. The Church.
	+ And…together, we immerse ourselves in all sorts of habits of telling us the gospel story …to stay united to each other.
	+ When we recite the Apostles’ Creed…when we receive the Lords Supper, when we sing Gospel-rich hymns and songs. Its like the anti-“Two Minutes Hate”. Its like “Two Minutes Love”. Together we become one voice LOVING our enemies.
	+ When we say the Apostles’ Creed and sing hymns together…its like Montag reciting poetry in the Parlor Room. It breaks up the superficial foolishness on our parlor walls, selling us false versions of the good life. It cuts through the distraction of superficial lies with something profoundly true and deeply beautiful.
	+ Before Peter & John healed this man…before the movement that was later called the church took off and overtook one of the most powerful and evil regimes in the history of the world- the Romans…
	+ They were practicing similar Soul Handling, story-telling, immersive habits with these 3,000 original church members.
	+ **Acts 2:42& 46-47**
	+ First, notice this word “devoted”. It comes up twice here.
	+ It means to continue to do something with intense effort.
	+ This is what it takes to create a positive habit.
	+ Its what it takes to immerse yourself in a story.
	+ You have to keep getting back up and doing it again and again and again.
	+ And look at what they do.
	+ They immerse themselves in the apostles teaching…who are constantly reminding them of the life, death, resurrection and second coming of Jesus. This like us reading the Bible before we pick up our Phones in the morning.
	+ They immerse themselves in fellowship…in the community of the church. The one-anothers of Scripture. Loving, encouraging, rebuking, listening, helping, serving.
	+ They immerse themselves in eating together…most probably the Lord’s Supper is what’s in mind here, which probably looked a lot more like our habit of eating a meal once a day with someone else.
	+ And, they devoted themselves to prayer…like the prayers we are devoting ourselves to 3 times a day.
	+ And, they did this with gratitude and joy. …and look at the result. They become a beautiful & attractive community that people are drawn to.
	+ Simply through their immersion in these habits remembering the story of Jesus’ life, death, resurrection and second coming.- thousands of people are transformed and saved from a corrupt generation.
	+ That's why I’m telling you, these habits are NOT simply about making you a better person…they are about getting the message of the gospel out in a beautiful way to our city.
* **Back to 1)**
	+ All of these shaping habits… re-tell us these immersive stories…that unite us to GOD and to each other…they carry out the reality of our baptism as they more deeply unite us to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit…to the point when we come up out of those waters…its hard to tell where we end…and Jesus begins.
* **Transition:** So, that's another angle on why we’re doing a series on habits…why we’re practicing the Common Rule together…
* **COMMON RULE SLIDE**
* Now, I want to zero in specifically on this habit of “Curating Media”.
* The point is not just to get you to watch less TV or Youtube videos, …the goal is that you start to think about the stories that you are immersing yourself in every time you binge watch a season of Stranger Things… or scroll through a Newsfeed.
* Our aim is not just to CUT SCREENS out of our lives…its to make our Screens serve us up stories that make us think about the key components of the gospel story. So, lets talk about 3 themes that Jesus’ life, death, resurrection, and promised second coming immerse us in.
* **2) We become the stories we pay attention to. The gospel is a story of Beauty, Justice, & Presence.**
	+ In *1984*, the movies had everyone hating their enemy.
	+ In *Fahrenheit 451*, the TV shows made people forget that they were missing beauty and the presence of people in their lives.
	+ Because they immersed themselves everyday in the Two Minutes Hate or staring at the Parlor Walls, this is the sort of people they became.
	+ The truth is, we don’t just watch stories…we become them.
	+ Every advertisement you see, every movie you watch, every TV show you binge…they are not only entertaining you…they are setting up the way you think about and react to the world around you.
	+ I’ve told you before, whenever I watch a suspenseful movie, it always changes how I go to bed. When I click out the last light in the living room, I do a quick high-step back to the bedroom.
	+ Because I’ve just soaked in a story for 2 hours…and now my actions reflect the what I saw on the screen. The guy in the movie could be out to get me too!
	+ So, lets talk for a minute about 3 things that the gospel story soaks you in when you pay attention to it…and how that changes your actions.
	+ **Beauty- Impractical Sacrifice**
	+ **Acts 4:1-3**
	+ Beauty is Impractical Sacrifice.
	+ Think about a beautiful painting.
	+ Its very impractical. But its totally worth the artist’s work and time. It adds value to our life. It communicates truth in a way that a simple statement cannot.
	+ You know, the earth is a work of art. So is humanity. We are God’s craftsmanship. And God didn’t need us. So his overflowing act to even create us was beautiful. He didn’t need us, yet he overflowed to create us.
	+ Then, when we rebelled against him, in Christ he sacrificed, humbled himself to bring us near. …even though he doesn’t NEED US…he sacrificed to bring us back to him.
	+ That is Beauty. Impractical Sacrifice. When someone acts in a way that gives life to someone else, at great cost to themselves…when it doesn’t really profit them very much. That is Beauty.
	+ Peter and John soaked in the beauty of the gospel message, the impractical sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.
	+ So, when they saw a lame man by the side of the Road…who really couldn't do much for them….they healed him…even though it put a target on their backs. And, when they saw people who didn’t understand what Jesus had done…they retold the gospel story even though they ended up in jail for it. It was an act of love and mercy that required risk and resulted in them losing their own freedom.
	+ **But they were shaped by the gospel story of beauty…of impractical sacrifice… so they lived it.**
	+ **Justice- Restoring of Peace & Order**
	+ **Acts 3:6-7**
	+ The Hebrew word for Justice is “Mishpat”. And that’s not retributive Justice- like punishment.
	+ It's the idea of restoring things to their proper place.
	+ God created the world in a perfect state of SHALOM. Or Peace. Which is not just the absence of war…its everything and everyone in God’s creation relating to each other exactly according to our created purpose.
	+ Justice is the actions we take to restore God’s order and peace.
	+ The gospel says that when humans chose to worship themselves, instead of their Creator, the world went out of order.
	+ It turned upside-down. With humans trying to tell God what was good.
	+ Jesus’ work on the cross and resurrection… is the start of God putting the world back together again.
	+ That work will be finished when Jesus returns, but until then, the church is called to give signs to the world of what the Kingdom of God is like. What a Just and rightly ordered world is like. Where God is King and humans flourish.
	+ This is a world without hurt and disease. So Peter gives a sign of that here when he heals this man.
	+ Its justice. This man is broken…and then restored.
	+ Of course, most of us have never been a part of a healing like this, I would assume, but we are called to pray for those who are sick and hurting…both emotionally, physically, and spiritually. We are called to bear one another’s burdens…and when things are at their most broken in someone’s life…to step in and help.
	+ **Acts 3:19-21a**
	+ Notice also, that when Peter preaches the gospel, he calls for people to be put back in right order with God.
	+ He tells them to repent…to turn around from their upside down world where they tell God what to do…
	+ …he calls them to put their faith in Christ…who’s Beautiful death on a cross has wiped away their sin…and he talks to them about what that does…it brings seasons of peaceful refreshing. Flourishing. Right order.
	+ And then he points to Christ’s return, when Jesus will make the whole world right again…when he brings justice in full.
	+ **Presence- With God & With People**
	+ **3:4, 8, 20a**
	+ I told you last week that most people entering the temple saw this lame man as a means to an end. They would give him money to sort of check of the religious box of “alms-giving” in the Jewish tradition.
	+ So he wasn’t used to being spoken to…and wasn’t used to being looked in the eye. He wasn’t used to presence. Of people or of God.
	+ Because of his physical condition, he wasn’t allowed into the temple. So this is a man who was removed from the presence of people…and the presence of God.
	+ But, Peter and John, soaked in a gospel story…because of continually practicing the presence of God in prayer and the presence of people in fellowship and breaking of bread…they live the story they have been baptized into.
	+ And they first, in a beautiful act of impractical sacrifice…they give this man their presence. They dignify him as a person created in God’s image. They look him in the eye.
	+ By the physical healing…he is able to go into the temple, back into the presence of God.
	+ and by the man’s faith in Christ, the presence of God comes with him when he leaves the temple. He enters a season of refreshing because God is now with him.
	+ You know, both Orwell and Bradbury were writing about a dystopian future.
	+ Because its helpful to see into the future…to think about…If we keep up what we’re doing…where will we end up.
	+ Of course, 1984 & Farhenheit 451 showed pretty bleak futures.
	+ In 1984, the people were committed to hating their enemy.
	+ In Farhenheit 451, they never looked each other in the eye. They were never really with one another because they were always with their screens.
	+ But the Bible, shows us something different. It shows us a future of BEAUTY & JUSTICE & more than anything- Presence.
	+ **Revelation 21:3-4**
	+ **3 Then I heard a loud voice from the throne: Look, God’s dwelling is with humanity, and he will live with them. They will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and will be their God. 4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; grief, crying, and pain will be no more, because the previous things have passed away.**
	+ This future is beautiful, because God doesn’t need us to be complete…but he impractically created us and then saved us from our own rebellion.
	+ Its justice, because all the former things…death, grief, pain…have passed away.
	+ And just look at the presence. Us with God. God with us.

**Back to 2)**

So, do the stories you watch…does the media you intake…does it immerse you in Beauty, Justice, and Presence?

What about the News you pay attention to?

The social media you scroll through?

The TV shows you binge?

The movies you watch?

What story are you immersed in?

Two-Minutes hate. Fear-mongering creating anger toward your enemiew?

Maybe it's a clown show on the Parlor Walls. Mindless entertainment that is muting the suffering in your life…which may be keeping you from hearing God in the middle of that suffering?

In the Common Rule, we are aiming at curating Media.

And as you make choices about what you’ll watch and what you won’t…I won’t you to keep in mind “Beauty, Justice, and Presence”

**3) Curate media to get real pictures of Beauty, Justice, and Presence. Turn off media to digest it. Let consumption lead to cultivation.**

* + In Farenheit 451, when Montag goes out into the woods to meet the wise and well-read “yoda-like” Faber…
	+ Faber tells him that the world is missing 3 things…because they have burned books…and are in a trance like state in front of their television. 3 things that would help them change the world they live in.
	+ He tells first, that we need quality information. By that, he means you don’t just need happy all the time. You need art, books, information that represent the brokenness of the world…so that you long for the wholeness of the world.
	+ We need to see our own sin so we long for forgiveness.
	+ We need to see our isolation so we long for presence.
	+ …and then, we need models of how beauty and justice and presence flood into those situations.
	+ Just think about the gospel of Jesus. Remove the unpleasant parts.
	+ Like the bloody ugly cross. Like our sin that deserves that cross.
	+ Without it, we just get a sort of Sacchrine- Sweet innocent Jesus that’s mainly used to sell products.
	+ Yet, Xians are often doing this with our media.
	+ We make nice neat little stories that don’t show the reality of our brokenness….and so…we reduce the gospel to a story that just sort of makes us nicer versions of ourselves…instead of Amazing Grace that saves a wretch like me.
	+ Now, I also don’t want to watch a bunch of stuff where the primary message is “Everythings Broken and No One can fix it” If I soak in that story…I’ll become that story.
	+ The gospel is that into the darkness…the light has come.
	+ Into our sin against God, Jesus offers forgiveness.
	+ While we were sinners, Christ died for us.
	+ So, when I’m looking at TV or a movie…I’m looking for something that is honest about the broken, unjust, isolated state of the world…and the way that impractical sacfrifice, people using their power to help others to bring order, and simply the closeness of others in our suffering helps solve those problems.
	+ And listen, those movies are not always going to even MENTION God…but I’m looking for that truth woven into the fabric of our world.
	+ The second thing that Faber tells Montag we need is time to digest what we’ve looked at. If you are constantly intaking entertainment, without ever turning it off to talk about the story its telling you, you are never really going to benefit from it or practice the discernment you need to stop watching it.
	+ That's why I’ve asked you to look at how much you watch and then watch less TV.
	+ Maybe 4 hours is not doable. Ok. Try something. My family is not watching screens on Tuesdays and Thursdays…and while we’ve had some withdrawl symptoms…its also lead us to read, and talk and think more.
	+ Try digesting what you’ve watched and talk about whether or not you saw Beauty, Justice, and Presence in that movie or TV show you watched the night before.
	+ Third, and finally, Faber tells Montag…that the world needs people who will act on what they digest.
	+ In a world full of social media activisim that simply virtue signals with hashtags, we want stories of beauty, justice, and presence to shape us.
	+ We want to let our consumption lead to action.
	+ When you consume food but don’t exercise…you get flabby…and out of shape.
	+ Likewise, when you consume gospel ideas but don’t live them out…you also get out of shape.
	+ The gospel frees us to serve God and serve others instead of ourselves. It pushes us to be present with people. To do something about suffering and injustice. And…it pushes us to share that gospel message with others.
* On the cross, Jesus took our TWO MINTUES HATE. When we had lost God’s presence because we rejected him, God became one of us…He looked at us in our suffering…and on the cross, made a way for justice. An impractical sacrifice of sheer beauty…all so we could have his presence. All to raise us to newness of life with him.
* And with that life comes a new purpose. A new mission. And a new power to do it. Now, we can lay aside all of those false gods we worshipped…and take up the task of loving others as he has loved us. Of showing others what Beauty and Justice and Presence look like. That is cultivation.
* Jesus promised that he is returning. And when he does, he’s putting the whole world back together. Lets go show Murfreesboro what that Kingdom is like.
* Trust Christ?
* Baptized?
* Commit to this church- God’s people?