

FIELD-TESTED SERMON RESOURCES

# SERMON SERIES

TRUSTED | BIBLICAL | FIELD-TESTED

Thank you for downloading this sample PDF from our Sermon Series line of resources.

When you stand up in front of students to proclaim the Word of God, you need trusted, creative, and biblically solid content. YM360's Sermon Series are exactly what you're looking for!

Field-tested, from-the-trenches of youth ministry, YM360 Sermon Series are complete detailed sermon outlines, discussion questions, and graphic packages designed to help you lead students closer to God through proclaiming His Word.

## SERIES OVERVIEW FOR [Walk This Way: Finding Place and Purpose on Your Faith Journey](#)

The opening chapter of Colossians lays the foundation for our lives as followers of Jesus. It shows us how to determine where we are, where we came from, and where we are going in our walk with Jesus.

This series will walk step by step through the opening chapter of Paul's letter to the Colossians. While this letter was written nearly 2000 years ago, the truths, encouragement, and instructions it holds resonate just as loudly for our lives today. We will learn how to pulse-check our current spiritual life, how to center our hearts on Jesus, and how to grow in our relationship with Him.

### "WALK THIS WAY" COVERS THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES AND PASSAGES:

- **Session 1 – Finding your way (Colossians 1:1-8) |** Most of us can recall a time when we felt or really were lost- it's not a feeling that most of us enjoy. In our spiritual lives in particular, the desire to know we are on the "right path" can be overwhelming. In the opening verses of Colossians, we'll discover that love is both the "X" that marks the spot for where we are on the map of our faith journey and the compass that guides us to a deeper relationship with God.
- **Session 2 – The first mile (Colossians 1:9-14) |** In our spiritual journey, some moments feel like the first mile of a run- when it feels like everything hurts and God seems distant. In this lesson, we'll explore how understanding God's will for redemption provides us with the strength needed to get through these difficult seasons. Whether you're in a dry season right now or preparing for one in the future, understanding God's will fortifies your soul for the journey ahead.
- **Session 3 – When we wander (Colossians 1:15-24) |** In today's world, distractions are everywhere, affecting not just our daily tasks but also our spiritual journey. This sermon delves into Paul's letter to the Colossians, focusing on how to re-center ourselves when we drift away. By examining Colossians 1:15-23, we learn that Jesus serves as our ultimate anchor. He is close to us, the main character in our stories, and the reconciler of all things. When distractions lead us astray, the person and story of Jesus can refocus us, grounding our identity and purpose.
- **Session 4 – Where are we going? (Colossians 1:25-29) |** We've discussed the markers of our spiritual journey, but where are we going? This week, we explore the concept of spiritual direction, likening it to a "superpower" some people possess. Using the end of Colossians 1 we'll define the direction of this journey personally and communally. Paul lays out our destination- understanding the depth of God's story in us and the breadth of God's story in the world.

### "WALK THIS WAY" IS PART OF YM360'S SERMON SERIES LINE OF RESOURCES AND IS IDEAL FOR:

- Any large group setting
- Mid-week youth service
- "Master teacher" format

# BACKGROUND SLIDES, PROMOTIONAL ARTWORK, AND MORE . . .

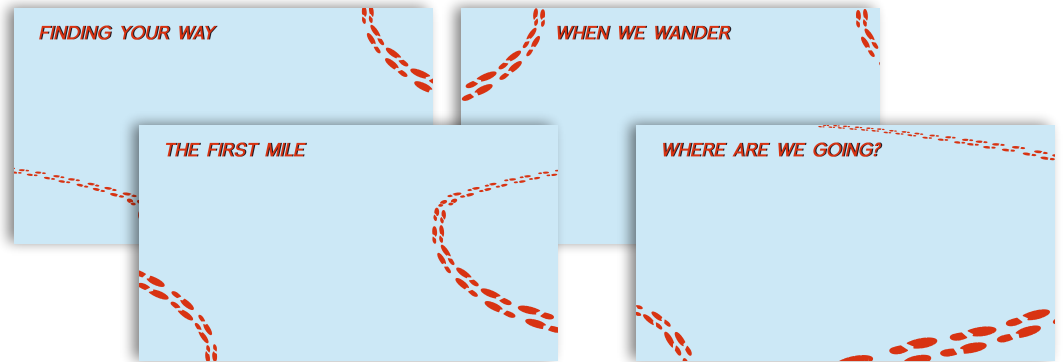
## EVERY SERMON SERIES FROM YM360 COMES WITH:

- **Detailed Sermon Outlines** – Every Sermon Series comes with detailed sermon outlines. Teach them "as is" or adapt them to suit your specific ministry context.
- **Discussion questions** – Questions are designed to foster conversations, help students think critically about the teaching, and wrestle with how these Biblical truths impact their complicated and ever-changing lives. You can use these discussion questions to facilitate small groups after your large group teaching or even create handouts for students to work through the message as you go.
- **Title and Background slides** – These are designed to be dropped into your favorite presentation software to help you build a creative environment around your sermon. Use them as a backdrop for song lyrics, Scripture passages, teaching points, and any illustrations you choose to display.
- **Artwork for promo and social media** – Social media images, web banners, and a printable poster file are included. Perfect for newsletters, websites, social media platforms, or print them off for posters and bulletin inserts.
- **Logo (including native logo design files)** – We include a logo file and the native design files to allow you to use the logo in ways you see fit.
- **100% downloadable and adaptable**

# Walk This Way Teaching Guide | A One-Page Glimpse Of Everything You Need To Prepare

Each YM360 Sermon Series comes with title and background slides, promotional art (including Instagram images), and logo treatments. Here is what to expect.

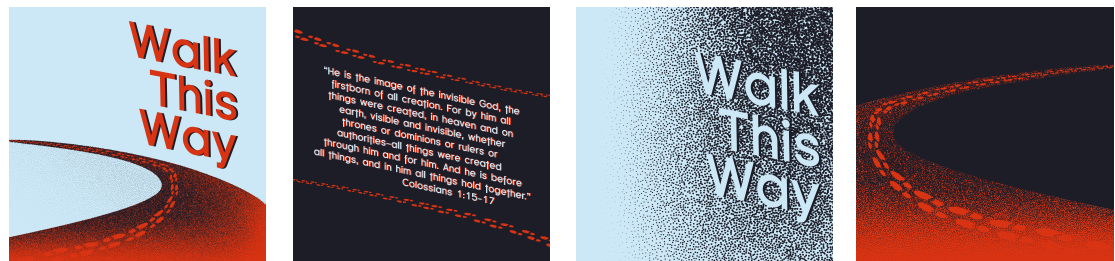
## BACKGROUND AND TITLE SLIDES



## PROMOTIONAL ARTWORK



## INSTAGRAM IMAGES



## LOGO TREATMENT

**Walk  
This  
Way**

NOTE: Each YM360 Sermon Series also comes with the native files of the logo in case you want to replicate the design for other uses.

**How To Use A YM360 Sermon Series** | YM360 Sermon Series are designed for use by a communicator in a large group setting. Each series download provides various elements such as a detailed sermon outline, suggestions on illustrations or images, Scripture passages, background information, and application points that you can use to craft a message that speaks to your students in your specific context.

This series download also includes discussion questions that can be used to facilitate small groups after your large group teaching or even create handouts for students to work through the message as you go. These questions are designed to foster conversations, help students think critically about the teaching, and wrestle with how these Biblical truths impact their complicated and ever-changing lives.

Make sure to leverage the series logo, title slide, background slides, and social media artwork this YM360 Sermon Series provides for promotion and message support. We've even included the native design files to allow you the freedom to use the logo in any way that meets your needs.

This YM360 Sermon Series was created to be suitable for all types of churches and ministry environments. It was intentionally designed to provide you with everything you need while also allowing you the freedom to make it fit your particular ministry context. Nobody knows your ministry like you do. Therefore, we encourage you to make any adjustments to this series you feel are necessary to best fit the needs of your students, church, or ministry context.

**A Prayer Before You Prepare** | God, thank you for the opportunity I have to walk alongside these students. I pray that you move in their hearts over these four lessons. I pray that you fill them with your love and belonging so that they know it beyond a doubt. Set love as their compass and grow them to be mature in you. I pray the same over myself, use these lessons to draw me deeper into your love, so that I can take part in creating the more beautiful world you have called us to create.

# Walk This Way Teaching Guide | A One-Page Glimpse Of Everything You Need To Prepare

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**Series Snapshot** | The opening chapter of Colossians lays the foundation for our lives as followers of Jesus. It shows us how to determine where we are, where we came from, and where we are going in our walk with Jesus.

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## Walk This Way Series | Session 1

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**Large Group Teaching Summary** | Most of us can recall a time when we felt or really were lost- it's not a feeling that most of us enjoy. In our spiritual lives in particular, the desire to know we are on the "right path" can be overwhelming. In the opening verses of Colossians, we'll discover that love is both the "X" that marks the spot for where we are on the map of our faith journey and the compass that guides us to a deeper relationship with God.

**Key Takeaway** | When you feel lost in your faith, evaluate your love.

**Scripture Focus** | Colossians 1:1-8

**What You May Need** | *Optional Illustration:* Getting Lost (personal story)

### I. Introduction

- A. **Optional illustration: Getting Lost: Tell a personal story about a time you got lost.**
  - 1. How did it happen? How did it feel? How did you eventually find your way?
  - 2. Emphasize a moment that you began to ask the question “Am I headed in the right direction?” – We will use this question in the tension.
  
- B. We all know what it feels like to get lost.
  - 1. It can be anything from taking the wrong turn in the hallway on the way to a class to turning around in the grocery store only to find that your parents are nowhere to be found.
  - 2. There is usually a moment right before you realize that you are lost when you start to get suspicious. Do you know what I mean? When something inside of you begins to whisper: “Now this doesn’t look right, I feel like I have passed that tree three times now.”
  - 3. You know the voice, the one that whispers, “Am I headed in the right direction?”
  - 4. You can go to any city in the world, find any spot where people walk by, and eventually, you will see someone who is lost. Frantically looking at their phone and checking street signs. They’ll walk past you three or four times, clearly frustrated. Depending on how old they are, they may even pull out A PAPER MAP... Can you imagine?
  
- C. But you get it right? Nothing helps us more when we are lost than a good map. It can show you where you’re heading, how to get where you actually want to go, and what landmarks to look out for on a journey, to be sure you’re going the right way.
  - 1. But to read a map, you have to know one thing first: you need to know where you are.
    - a) The most important part of a map is the place you are. If you don’t know where you are on a map, it might as well just be a drawing with a bunch of squiggly lines... at best it’s useless at worst it’s actually frustrating.
    - b) The map on your phone does this automatically (which is why it is so great). Try it. Open the maps on your phone, and you will see that the first thing it will do is locate where you are. At that point, you can use the map to find your way again.
    - c) We’ve got it good nowadays and with a phone in our pocket, we probably get lost far less often than we used to or than our parents did when they were kids.

### II. Tension

- A. When we talk about our relationship with God, we often use similar language to getting lost and reading a map. We talk about our “path,” our “walk.” We describe moments of pain and confusion as being lost.
  
- B. We understand our lives with God as a journey, and it is the journey we were made to take. The most important journey of our lives. But on that journey, we have seasons where we get lost. We have seasons where we hear that same voice whisper: “Am I headed in the right direction?”
  - 1. When we hear this voice, it would be nice if we could just pull out the “spiritual maps” app on our phone and have it tell us where we are and where we are

going. But that is not a thing... I know, disappointing, right?

- C. So how do we know if we are headed in the right direction? How can we tell if we are growing in our relationship with God? How can we tell if our spiritual lives are growing, gaining strength and depth, as we walk through our day-to-day lives?
- D. How can you tell if you are headed in the right direction?

### III. Truth

- A. If you're asking this question right now, let me just offer some encouragement- you are not alone. For thousands of years, Christians have gone through seasons when they've asked that question of themselves. Feeling a little spiritually disoriented or altogether lost doesn't make you weird, it doesn't make you bad, and it's not something to embarrassed or ashamed of. If you're feeling this way, I'm really glad you're here with us for this series and I hope that what we talk about in the next few sessions encourages you and helps you to gain a little more clarity about where you are on your journey and where you're headed.
- B. Not long after Jesus's death, resurrection, and ascension, there was a community of Christians, that were asking these same questions about their faith journey.
  - 1. They lived in a place called Colossae, and they had a friend named Paul.
- C. You may have heard of Paul, his story is a pretty big part of the Bible. If not, that's ok!
  - 1. Through an incredible encounter with Jesus, Paul went from being one of the biggest opponents of Christianity to one of the biggest advocates for living in a relationship with Jesus. He was one of the first missionaries of the church, and he spent most of his life traveling all over the world, sharing the gospel, planting churches, and mentoring young believers.
  - 2. Paul wrote a letter to this community of young Christians in Colossae (that letter is the book of Colossians). In that letter, Paul gives instructions for how to live as followers of Jesus. He writes about how to head in the right direction in our journey with God.
    - a) That is what we are going to talk about in the next few sessions; how to walk with Jesus. But before we talk about how to walk with Jesus, we need to know two things:
      - (1) Where are we on the "map" of our faith journey?
        - (a) What's the state of my current relationship with God?
      - (2) Which direction to head from there
- D. Read Col. 1:1-5 ESV
  - 1. *"Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father. We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel,"*
  - 2. Right away we learn some things about this community.
    - a) Paul is grateful for them.
      - (1) Their lives bring Paul joy.
    - b) They are faithful to Jesus.



- (1) They trust Jesus' promise to redeem the brokenness of the world enough to let it affect how they live their lives.
    - c) They are known for their love.
      - (1) Paul said that their love for one another is what has caused him to be filled with joy.
  3. Something has happened in the lives of the people in this young community of believers.
    - a) In a world where people wanted to be known for so many different things, like beauty or wealth, talent or power, these followers of Jesus were known for their love.
      - (1) Can you imagine what that love must have been like? It was an obvious characteristic of this group of people, enough that Paul mentions it right in the opening of his letter to them.
        - (a) Maybe you know someone who is known for this kind of love. Maybe there are people in your life who love you like this. If you do, they're probably coming to mind right now.
      - b) There is evidence that a change has occurred in their lives. Something is different. The Colossians are not where they were, they're someplace new, and they're headed in a new direction compared to much of the world around them.
      - c) Love is the evidence of where they are, evidence that something has changed. That's the big red "X" that marks their location on the map of their life with God.
    4. And why has this change happened? Paul says they have this love because of the hope laid up for them in heaven.
      - a) What does this mean? He's saying they have love because of their hope in the gospel. They have a new love for God and that's shaping their love for others.
      - b) This change in their hearts stems from their relationship with God.
- E. **The love we have for the people around us helps us to know where we are in our journey with God.**
  1. If you feel lost and unsure of where you are in your faith, the best place to start is by evaluating how well you are loving your world.
    - a) When you encounter the people in your everyday life, how well do you love them?
      - (1) Think about your family and your friends, but also the people you don't like, and the people you don't know, and ask yourself if you're loving them well. Are you caring for them in the ways you can? Are you valuing them as fellow human beings?
  2. How we love can cue us into the state of our relationship with God. The more we know God, the more we love the world around us.
    - a) One of Jesus's first followers put it this way *"If anyone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen."*  
1 John
  3. So, Paul's letter to this young church shows us first how to find where we are in our walk with God, now we have to learn what direction to head from there.
- F. **Read Col. 1:6-8 ESV**

1. *"which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth, just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf and has made known to us your love in the Spirit."*
  2. If our love shows us where we are in our relationship with God, as Paul says, this piece shows us which direction to go from there.
  3. Paul is talking about this young church's walk with God, he has noticed their faith and their love (where they are), and it brings him joy because it is "bearing fruit and increasing." (where they are going)
    - a) This is the direction – growth, increase, fruit, deepening, widening.
    - b) It has grown enough that it has started to impact their world. It is "bearing fruit," as Paul says. In other words, their love has grown to the point that it's out there doing stuff, changing things, transforming their heart and the world around them.
    - c) The word "love" has certainly been messed with in our culture and maybe it's even lost some meaning for people because of how much it's thrown around and argued about. At its core, love is about service. It's not about tolerating, affirming, or meaningless acceptance. If I love someone, I am willing, and more than that I want to serve them.
    - d) Think about that person in your life who's known for their love. How does that love show itself? It likely impacts their behavior, affection, and willingness to serve people around them.
- G. This is the path, direction, and goal for followers of Jesus: to grow in our love.**
1. To grow in love for God and for the world. To become more loving, more kind, more gracious, more caring more life-giving.
    - a) There is a book by a guy named CS Lewis called *The Great Divorce*. The book is a fictional story about a trip Lewis takes to heaven.
    - b) When he gets there he finds that he is in a beautiful green plain, with a forest, and a river, and way off in the distance, there is a massive mountain range.
    - c) God's presence stems from these mountains, though you can feel, experience, and know God in the plain, the further you get into the mountains, the more you experience of God's presence.
    - d) When Lewis arrives, he is greeted by his favorite author, whose works transformed CS Lewis' life, and helped him grow in his own relationship with God. This author has been in heaven for a while and has come to guide Lewis.
    - e) Lewis asks him, what they do in heaven, what their purpose is. And his response is simply, to travel deeper and deeper into the mountains, forever. In that journey, they are completely fulfilled.
  2. Deeper and deeper into love, forever. Deeper and deeper into life, joy, meaning, justice, hope. Deeper into God's presence. That is the direction of our journey, the direction of our path.
- H.** So if you feel lost, confused, rudderless, purposeless, directionless, and you are looking to find your way out, first look at the state of your love. Not with guilt or shame, but with grace, notice where you are. And once you have done that, head in the direction of deeper love.
1. That is what brought Paul joy, the Colossians were doing just that. And you can too.

### IV. Application

- A. So what does that look like? Since growing in love doesn't seem like something that can be forced, we have to look for ways we can prepare our hearts for that growth to happen naturally.
  - 1. Think of these actions as though they were like preparing the soil and planting seeds. Though the actual growth of whatever is planted is something that happens naturally, there are ways we can care for the soil to help the seed grow. We can add fertilizer, make sure it has a lot of sunlight and water, etc.
  
- B. Take note of the beauty in the world around you.
  - 1. You'd be surprised how often we fail to notice the beautiful things right in front of us. Things like sunsets, flowers, or the way your significant other laughs at your jokes. Whatever it is, we are often surrounded by beautiful things, take note of them.
    - a) A fun thing to do is carry around a little notebook where you write down everything that brought you joy as you see it, from eating a Chipotle burrito bowl to seeing a chubby raccoon digging through your school's trash.
  
- C. Be intentional to tell people what you love about them.
  - 1. This one is fun. It feels awkward at first, but the more you do it, the easier it gets, and the funner it gets as well.
  - 2. You will brighten the people in your life's day in all sorts of little ways.
  
- D. Practice gratitude.
  - 1. Try this. Once a day, write down all the things you are thankful for that day. This step will help with the first two. It helps you notice the beauty around you, and the people around you that bring you joy. And the more you notice these things, the more your heart is prepared to grow in love.
  - 2. If you're curious, look into some of the science behind gratitude and what it can do for you physically, emotionally, and mentally. It's almost like the God who created us means for us to live in gratitude to experience a flourishing life.

### V. Gospel

- A. But the most important action of all to prepare your heart to grow in love is to remember this: we love because we were first loved. We love in response to God's love for us. And God's love was on full display on the Cross.
  
- B. God created the whole world to enjoy His love and He created humans particularly to help spread it around. But humanity was tempted and chose to rebel against God instead. This rebellion broke that love, it broke that relationship that all of humanity was meant to share with God.
  
- C. Because God is love He didn't want to leave us on our own, apart from Him. He wanted to repair that relationship and restore our purpose in life again. So, He came down from heaven to be with us, in the person of Jesus and then paid the price for our rebellion by dying on the Cross and rising to life again to defeat sin, rebellion, and its consequences.

- D. Any love that we show others is a response to that love, to the ultimate love that God has for the whole world- a love that He has for you.

### VI. Conclusion

- A. As we walk through these next few sessions, learning from this letter that Paul wrote to this young church. We are going to learn more about what it looks like to walk with God. But let's not forget that this walk, this journey, starts and ends with God's love for us, and our love for God and the world around us.
- B. Let's pray

## Walk This Way Sermon Series | Session 1 Discussion Questions: Finding Your Way

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**Scripture Focus** | Colossians 1:1-8

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#### Get Them Talking | An Optional Opening Question to Get Students Talking

1. Have you gotten lost? What was it like?

#### Discussion Questions

1. Read Colossians 1:1-8 What does this teach you about God? What does it teach you about yourself?
2. Can you recall a moment when you felt spiritually lost? What did it feel like?
3. What does it mean to be 'known for love' like the Colossians?
4. How do you think our love for others reflects our relationship with God?
5. How does the concept of love as a compass resonate with you?
6. Are there any obstacles in your life that are hindering your ability to love more deeply?
7. How do you practice gratitude in your life?
8. How do you measure 'spiritual growth'?
9. What role does community play in helping us grow in love?
10. What are some practical ways you can love those around you this week?