



for Good Soil? (Mark 4:1-20)

God, make me want to want you.

How do I set the conditions  
to want God?

# The Parable of the Soils

Mark 4:1-20

Jesus began to teach beside the lake again. Such a large crowd gathered that he climbed into a boat there on the lake. He sat in the boat while the whole crowd was nearby on the shore. He said many things to them in parables. While teaching them, he said, “Listen to this! A farmer went out to scatter seed. As he was scattering seed, some **fell on the path**; and the birds came and ate it. Other seed **fell on rocky ground** where the soil was shallow. They sprouted immediately because the soil wasn’t deep. When the sun came up, it scorched the plants; and they dried up because they had no roots. Other seed **fell among thorny plants**. The thorny plants grew and choked the seeds, and they produced nothing. Other seed **fell into good soil** and bore fruit. Upon growing and increasing, the seed produced in one case a yield of thirty to one, in another case a yield of sixty to one, and in another case a yield of one hundred to one.” He said, “Whoever has ears to listen should pay attention!”

Mark 4:1-9

“Don’t you understand this parable? Then how will you understand all the parables? The farmer scatters the word. This is the meaning of the seed that ***fell on the path***: When the word is scattered and people hear it, right away Satan comes and steals the word that was planted in them. Here’s the meaning of the seed that ***fell on rocky ground***: When people hear the word, they immediately receive it joyfully. Because they have no roots, they last for only a little while. When they experience distress or abuse because of the word, they immediately fall away. Others are like the seed ***scattered among the thorny plants***. These are the ones who have heard the word; but the worries of this life, the false appeal of wealth, and the desire for more things break in and choke the word, and it bears no fruit. The seed ***scattered on good soil*** are those who hear the word and embrace it. They bear fruit, in one case a yield of thirty to one, in another case sixty to one, and in another case one hundred to one.”

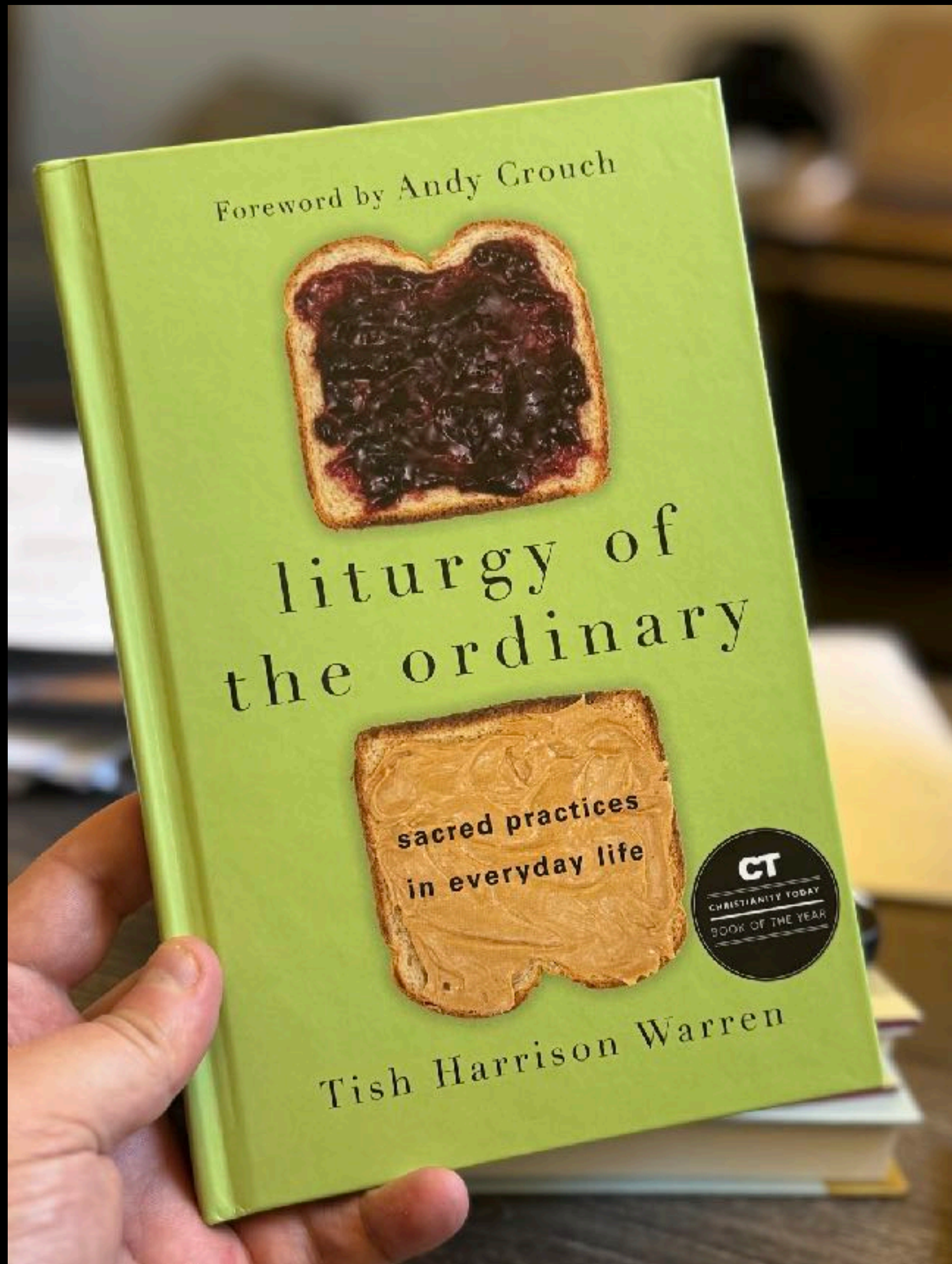
Mark 4:13-20

Jesus is concerned with our lives today and his words for living that fall on our hard paths, our rocky ground, among our thorny plants, and on our good soil.

v. 15, “This is the meaning of the seed that **fell on the path**:  
When the word is scattered and people hear it, right away  
Satan comes and steals the word that was planted in them.”

v. 16-17, “Here’s the meaning of the seed that **fell on**  
**rocky ground**: When people hear the word, they  
immediately receive it joyfully. Because they have no roots,  
they last only for a little while. When they experience distress  
or abuse because of the word, they immediately fall away.”

v. 18-19, “Others are like the seed **scattered among thorny plants**. These are the ones who heard the word; but the worries of this life, the false appeal of wealth, and the desire for more things break in and choke the word, and it bears no fruit.”

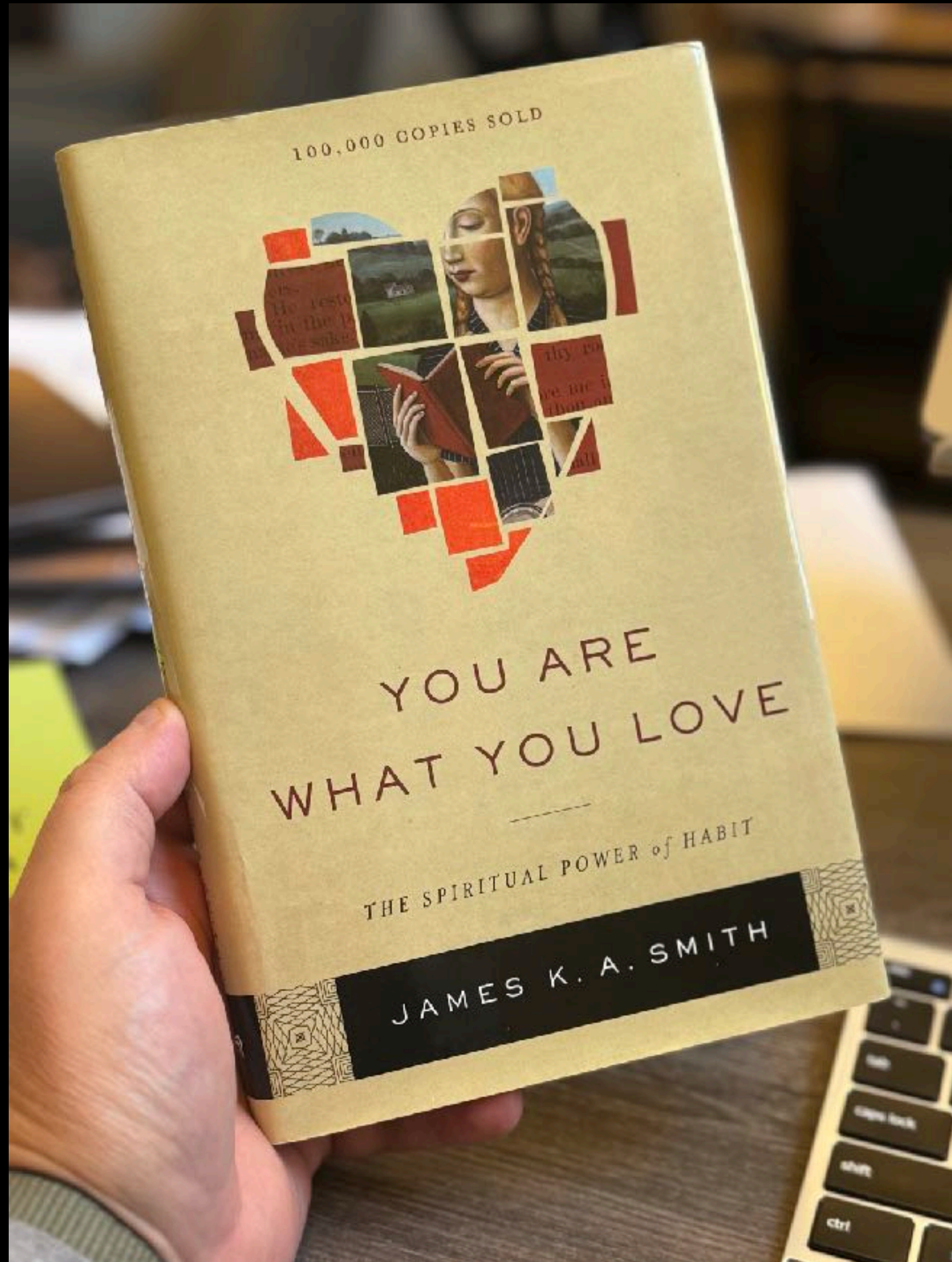


# The Liturgy of the Ordinary

Tish Harrison Warren



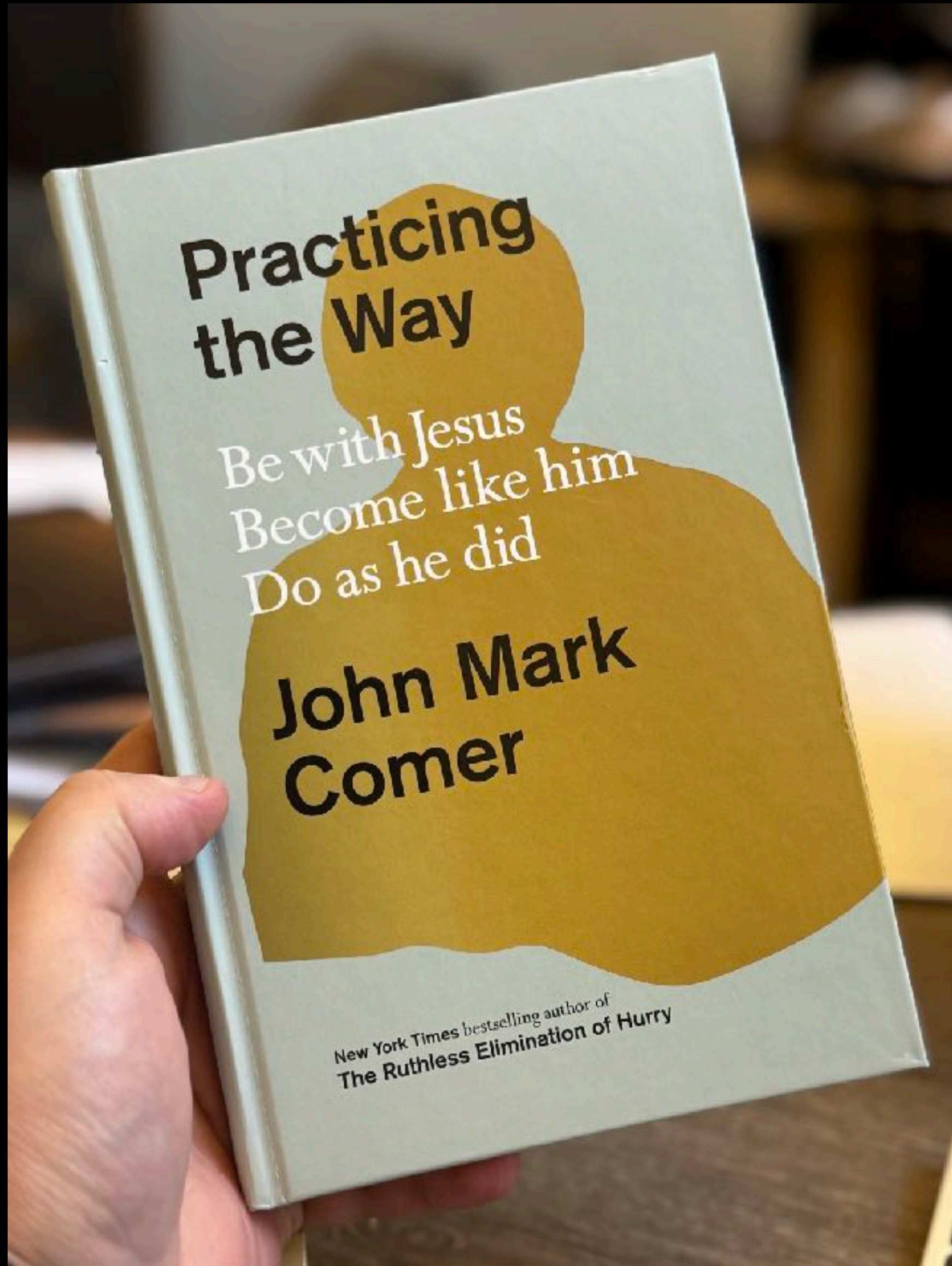
v. 20, “The seed **scattered on good soil** are those who hear the word and embrace it. They bear fruit, in one case a yield of thirty to one, in another case sixty to one, in another case one hundred to one.”



# You Are What You Love

James K.A. Smith





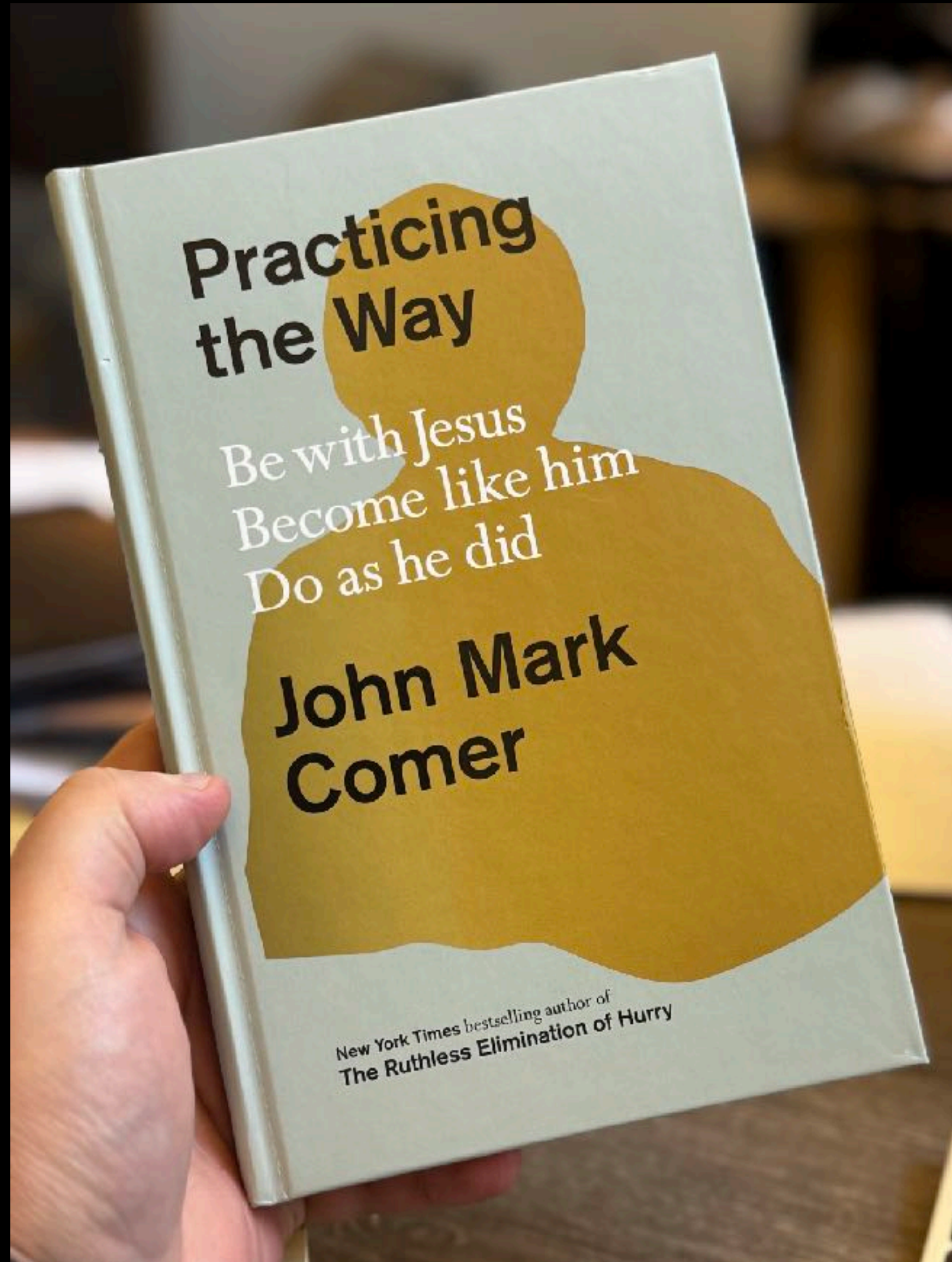
# Three Losing Strategies

Practicing the Way  
John Mark Comer



# 1. Willpower

“Self-effort and grace are partners, not competitors locked in a tug-of-war for glory. But the main function of self-effort in our formation is to do what we can do—make space to surrender to God via the practices of Jesus—so God can do what we can’t do: heal, liberate, and transform us...”

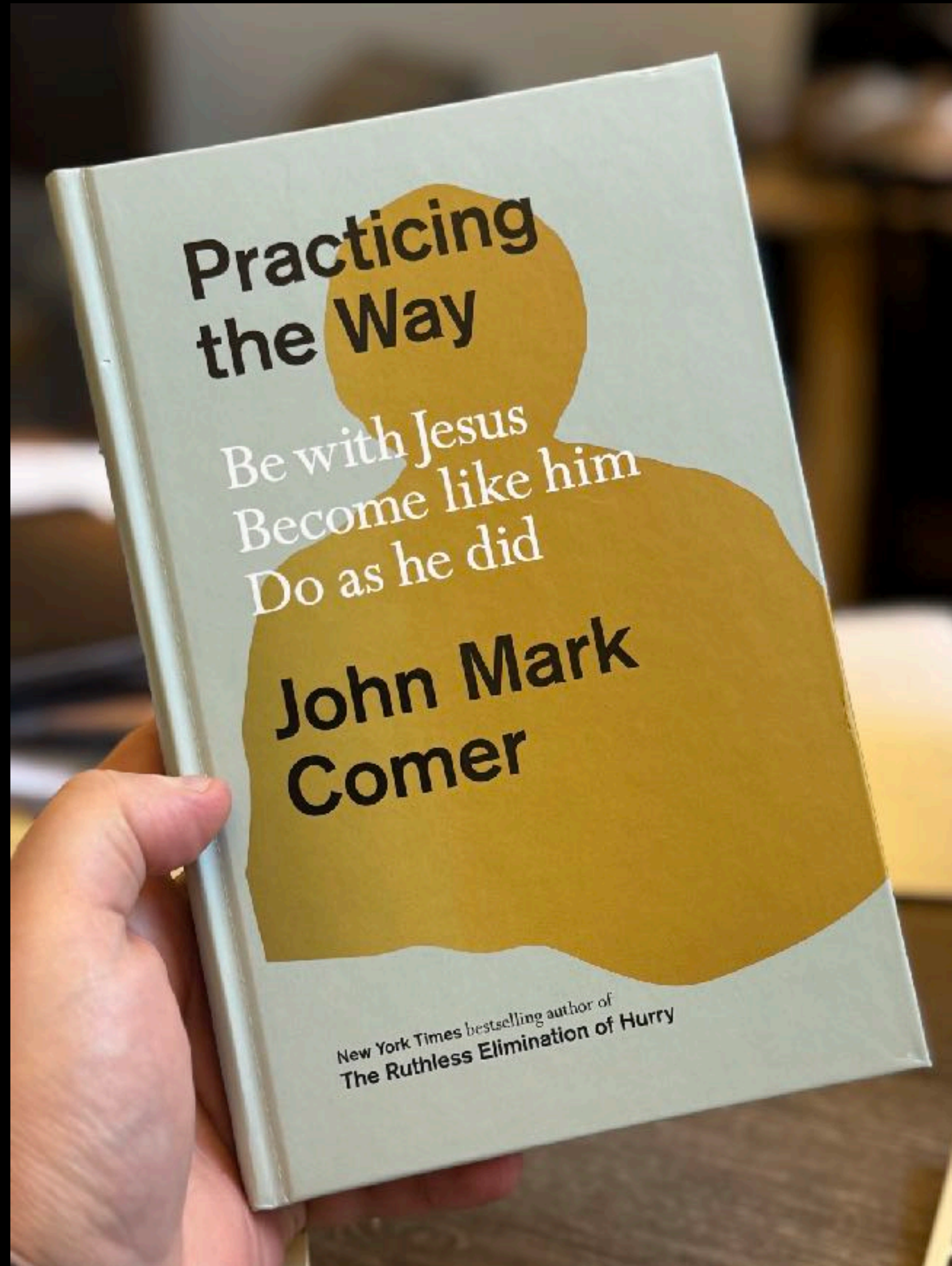


John Mark Comer



## 2. More Bible Study

“My point is that church attendance, good sermons, and regular bible study are all good—more than good, essential. But we must be honest: by themselves, they have a very poor track record of yielding a high level of transformation in large numbers of people.”

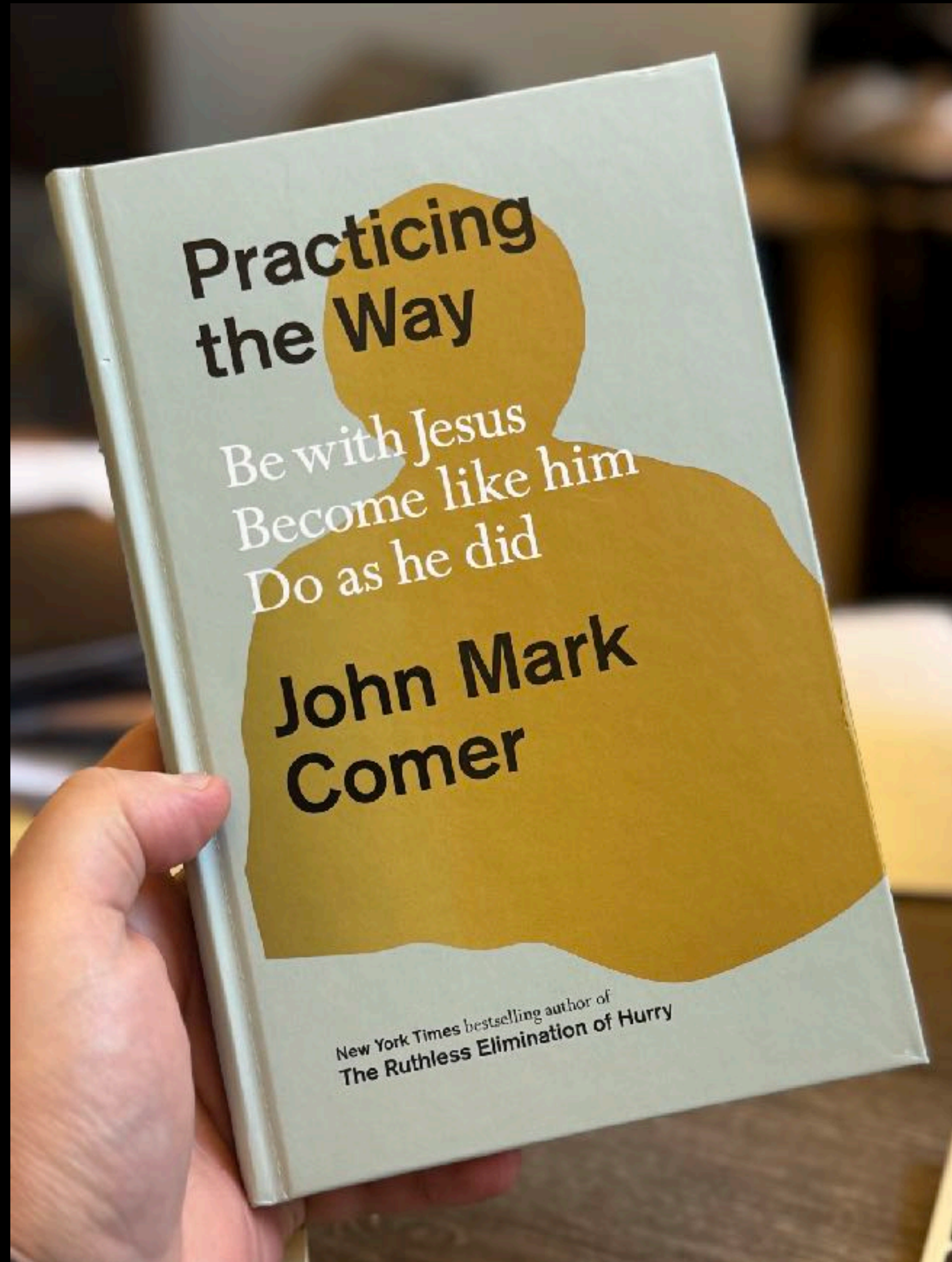


John Mark Comer



## 3. Zap From Heaven

“But at it’s worst, this is laziness, pure and simple, because it’s far easier to go to church once a week chasing a spiritual high and angle for a download from heaven than to do the daily, unglamorous work of discipleship...trying to skip over our pain and just have Jesus ‘fix’ us.”



John Mark Comer



We are going to need God's word planted and rooted in good soil if we have any hope to speak **a Christlike word of grace** in what will surely be a year of disagreement in the church, culture, and country.

As we see more of the life and times of Jesus in various Mark passages leading up to Easter, we will observe him engaged in **soil-cultivating practices** in his own life that lead to his ultimate obedience. If we say we want to be like Jesus, we need to be open to do what he did.

I want to whet your appetite for ways to engage with God apart from the consuming of more information, to **explore what making space would look like for you to encounter God** in more and life-giving ways.

I want to leave you with a few more questions today than answers, not about the text, but about your life with God and **what his invitation to you might be in light of the soils in your life.**



# The Parable of the Soils

Jesus

