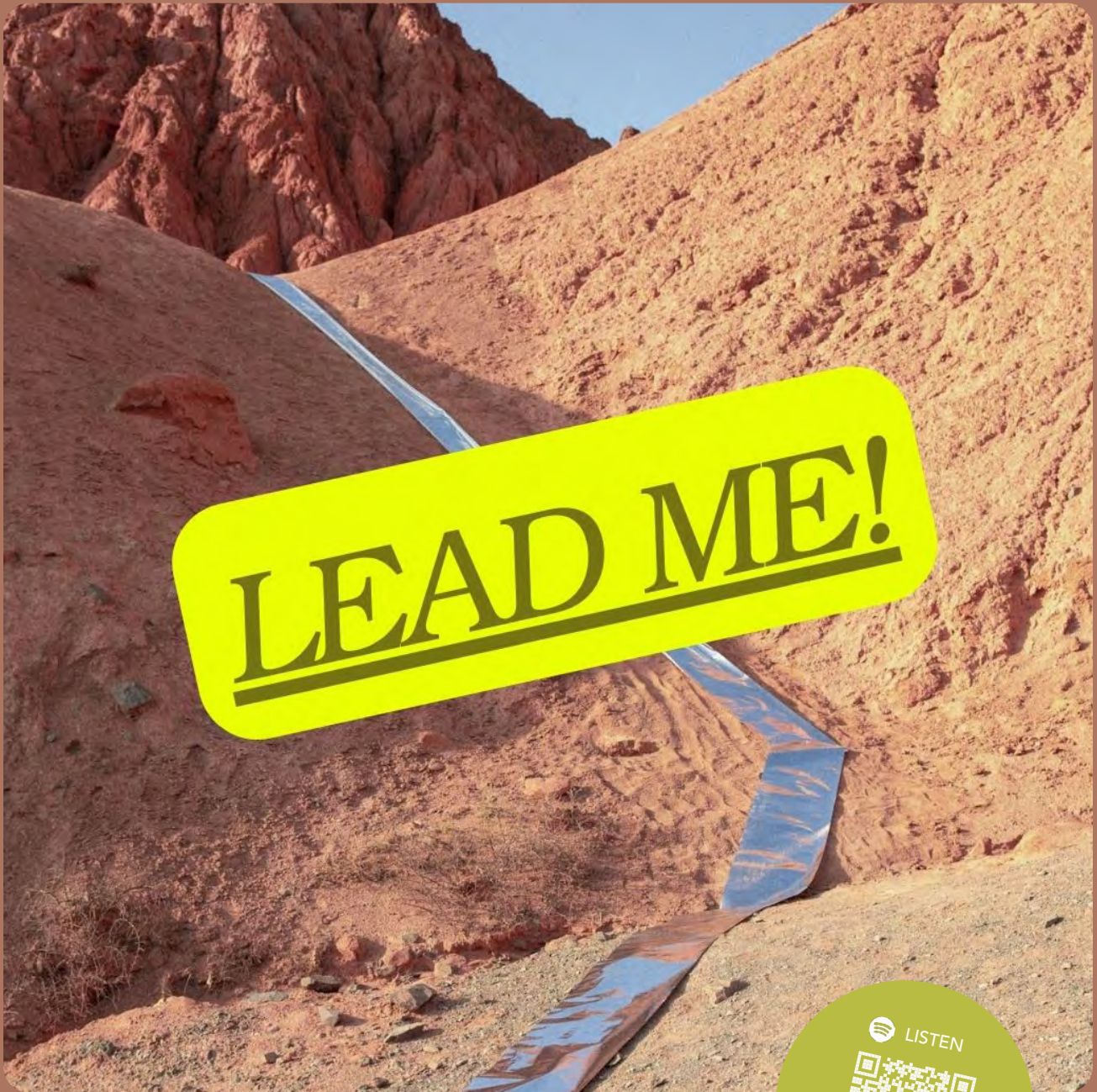


Tuesday, March 11, 2025



Day 06

*“Then Jesus said to his disciples, ‘If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me.’”*

—MATTHEW 16:24 (NLT)

## Reflect

If you’ve ever been around a toddler, you know they love to say, “I can do it myself.” (Or, more likely, “NO!” or “I do.” Vocabulary will come.) When Jesus invites us to follow him, he is saying, “Watch and learn. Do as I do.” But sometimes I still want to say, “No thanks!” or “Actually, I can think of a better way.” And honestly, sometimes we are not sure if Jesus really had it all right (can I say that out loud?). When faced with tougher choices, it’s tempting to think, “Not today. Maybe later.” But here’s the thing about life: it almost always asks more of us than feels comfortable.

It asks us to love that person we’d rather not. To listen longer than we’d like. To advocate for those on the margins. It means forgiving again, and then wondering, “Seriously, is there a punch card for this?”

When we see people living like this—with joy, generosity, and stubborn kindness—it makes us want to lean in, not pull back. Because even though it’s harder, that path is the one that makes me feel most alive. It’s messy and humbling, but so worth it.

## Respond

Where do you see compassion, kindness, love, joy, or belonging? How can you join in?

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# Blessing for moving forward anyway

*Blessed are you  
who feel so stuck*

*all you can see is the mud  
caking around your feet.*

*Let grace go first.  
Let it carve a path, however small,  
and show that  
even the tiniest efforts  
can multiply in love.  
We've seen the sun rise  
over an empty tomb  
and life spring up from dust,  
so, all things considered,  
Maybe we could finally believe  
that something good*

*could come from  
this day,  
this life,  
these weary limbs of yours.*

*Blessed are you,  
learning to follow where grace leads,  
stumbling forward,  
uncertain but held.<sup>6</sup>*

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<sup>6</sup> Kate Bowler. Adapted from "God, Lead Me" in *Have a Beautiful, Terrible Day: Daily Meditations for the Ups, Downs, and In-Betweens*. (New York: Convergent Books, 2024). 119.