

Love Can Change a City

Vision Casting for He Gets Us, LHNL, 1Day Houston, and Bless Every Home

Thesis: The Lord is at work in our culture. Because of God's initiative, we have the opportunity to use different resources which help us love our city.

Text: *Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working" (John 5:17).*

I believe that one of the reasons the Father sent his Son was to show us that love could change the world. The power of transforming love is one result of the coming of Christ.

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him (John 3:16-17).

According to the Word of God, **love can change an individual, a city, a nation, and a world.**

In John 5, Jesus partnered with his Father who was on mission in the world. On that day, God was healing a lame man at the Pool of Bethesda.

John 5:1 Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for a feast of the Jews. 2 Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. 3 Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. 5 One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to get well?"

7 "Sir," the invalid replied, "I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me."

8 Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." 9 At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.

The day on which this took place was a Sabbath, 10 and so the Jews said to the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath; the law forbids you to carry your mat."

11 But he replied, "The man who made me well said to me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.'"

12 So they asked him, "Who is this fellow who told you to pick it up and walk?"

13 The man who was healed had no idea who it was, for Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there.

14 Later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, "See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you." 15 The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

16 So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jews persecuted him. 17 Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working." 18 For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

19 Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does." 20 For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does... (John 5:1-20).

As Jesus said, God the Father is always at work to this very day, and Jesus is working, too (John 5:17). Our joy is to join God on his mission in our spheres of influence together with others.

Today, I want to let you know about some ways that the Lord is at work in our culture. Because of God's initiative, we have the opportunity to use different resources which help us love our city.

Here are four ways that God is at work in our city to express his love:

1. [He Gets Us](#) Campaign.
2. [Love Has No Limits](#).
3. [1Day Houston](#).
4. [Bless Every Home](#).

[He Gets Us](#)

[He Gets Us video.](#)

In a sermon last fall and in an email this week, you have heard about this incredible evangelistic event that we have the opportunity to participate in tonight. **Jesus is in the Super Bowl!** We've partnered with the [He Gets Us](#) campaign to help you start conversations with the people in your life who don't yet know Jesus.

[He Gets Us](#) is running TWO ads during tonight's game that can become conversation starters for you as you engage with people you know who might be far from God. If you haven't yet gotten involved, **you can text "Super Bowl" to 70193** to learn more, know when today's [He Gets Us](#) commercials will run, and equip yourself to have conversations in the weeks to come.

The great commission that Jesus talks about in Matthew 28 can only be accomplished if we're all spreading the word about Jesus' confounding love and forgiveness and inviting those in our lives to learn more by joining us here on a Sunday. It's our prayer at Calvary Community Church that these ads would empower you to share the good news of Jesus.

[Unprecedented Ads for an Unprecedented Cultural Moment](#)

We live in a time when [church attendance is down](#) and [religious volunteering is dropping](#). While [75 percent of Americans self-identified as Christians in 2011](#), only 63 percent said the same a decade later. While Christians often [describe](#) themselves as giving, compassionate, and loving, non-Christians often see Christians as against them—not for them.

At the same time, researchers are seeing [rising spiritual openness](#) as three out of four American adults say they want to grow spiritually. Nearly half of Americans say they are more open to God today than they were before the COVID-19 pandemic.

All of these realities lead to a singular conclusion: it's time for the real Jesus to take center stage in the American cultural imagination. And that's exactly what the [He Gets Us](#) campaign is doing. While the Super Bowl will represent the largest splash their ads have made, the campaign has already made a tremendous impact. Since the spring of 2022, [He Gets Us](#) ads have made nearly 6.5 billion impressions. Millions of people experience [He Gets Us](#) content every week through social media, YouTube, and television ads.

The conversation has started for it. Are you ready for it? [Conversation Guide.](#)

[He Gets Us Super Bowl Conversation Guide.](#)

Watch to see Jesus in the Super Bowl. The [He Gets Us](#) campaign will run TWO ads that play during the game.

- The first ad is about friendship.
- The second ad is about confrontation.

Here are the scripture and thoughts behind these two ideas:

ON BEING CHILDLIKE:

Matthew 19:14 - Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Luke 18:17 - "Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."

Jesus calls us to be childlike not only in our faith but in how we love and relate to others.

ON CONFRONTATION AND DISAGREEMENTS:

Luke 6:28 - "Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who mistreat you."

Matthew 6:14 - "For if you forgive people their wrongdoing, your heavenly Father will forgive you as well."

Jesus could have reacted to his circumstances with anger or avoidance. Instead, he countered conflict with God's confounding love.

Tips for facilitating a great conversation with others:

Be discerning. You don't need to lead a formal discussion about these ads unless it organically happens. In the days following the game on Sunday, people will be talking about the Super Bowl and the commercials. Consider the best opportunity for conversation based on the atmosphere and your relationship with those who encounter the ads.

Be curious. Ask people what they think about what they saw.

- What did they like?

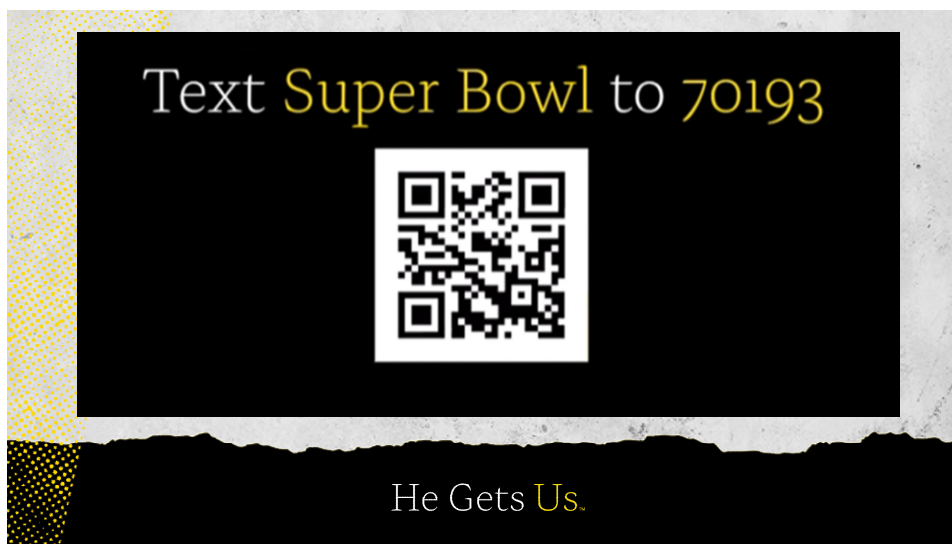
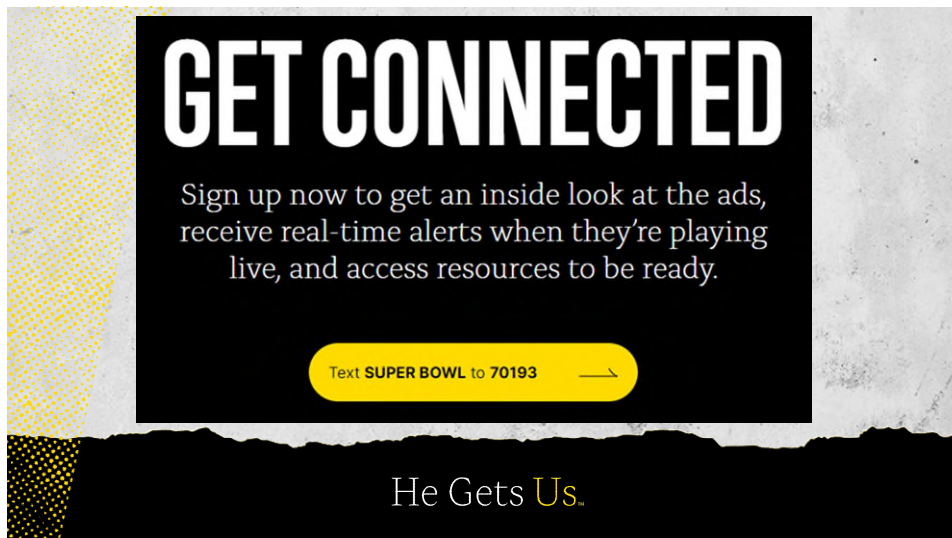
- How did the spots make them feel?
- **When you do share, speak from your personal experience.**
- There is no need to be an expert or answer every question either—you can always direct people to [HeGetsUs.com](https://hegetsus.com) to get more information.

Stay connected - Encourage your friends to stay connected to [He Gets Us](https://hegetsus.com):

HeGetsUs on social media → <https://www.instagram.com/hegetsus/?hl=en>

HeGetsUs.com → <https://hegetsus.com/en>

YouVersion Bible Reading Plans → <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/28926>



Love Has No Limits

Love Has No Limits (LHNL) is an apolitical, nonpartisan collaboration infrastructure uniting spheres of influence to produce sustainable change across America. The nation's cities face deeply entrenched challenges like poverty, homelessness, and an overburdened child welfare system. By rallying businesses, faith communities, nonprofits, government, and thousands of volunteers to team-tackle these issues on an unprecedented scale, LHNL is building models of transformation in key cities that can be replicated across the nation.

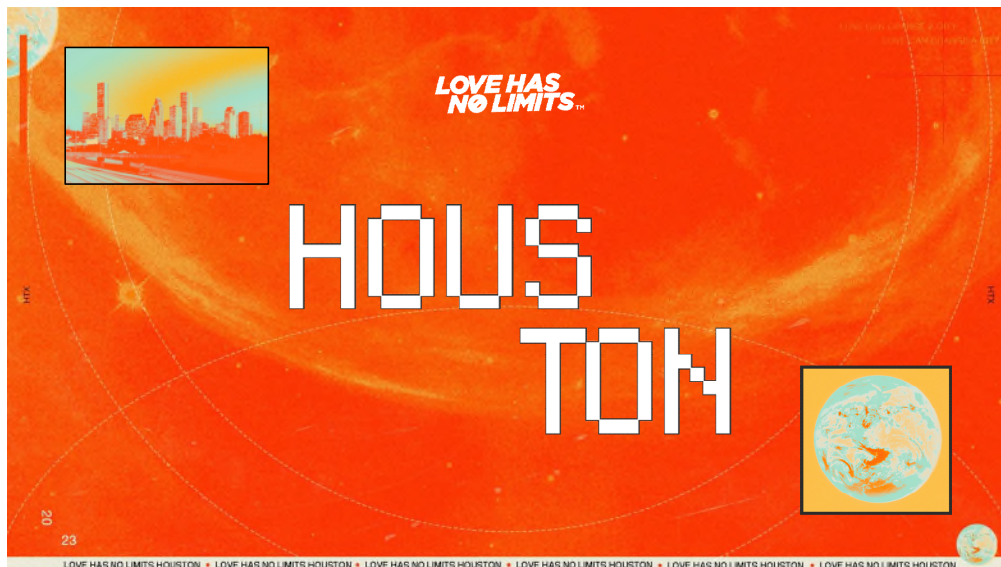
What Is Love Has No Limits?

Love Has No Limits unites, empowers, and activates hundreds of businesses, NGOs, faith communities, community champions, and influencers, alongside tens of thousands of volunteers, to provide sustainable solutions to some of the greatest challenges facing our communities.

Together, we can change the way we **see**, **serve**, and **solve** our community's problems.

50,000 VOLUNTEERS / 1,000 ORGANIZATIONS

This year, hundreds of NGOs, community champions, and influencers, alongside tens of thousands of volunteers from across the Houston metro area, will unite their focus to bring sustainable solutions to Houston's greatest challenges. By rallying businesses, nonprofits, government, and thousands of volunteers to team-tackle these issues on an unprecedented scale, **we can create new solutions for the long term.**





CHILD WELFARE / Getting involved in Foster Care.

Homelessness, poverty, lack of education, addiction, and crisis pregnancy all place families in troubled waters. As a result of these problems, children are swept up in a metaphorical river, at risk. Children removed from their homes are swept along the river towards the cliffs, statistically more likely to end up homeless, pregnant, unemployed, or caught up in human trafficking. We want to help you find your place along the river, and give you the tools you need to effectively empower vulnerable children and their families.

[**Get Started**](#)



STUDENTS / Building partnerships for faith communities and schools to strengthen students, parents, and faculties.

We believe healthy schools are an integral piece of any thriving community. That's why we're offering scholarships, leadership, and volunteer support to 50 Houston-area middle and high schools to begin a school-transforming journey through several free curriculums and courses specially designed for students, parents, and faculty. Your church can walk alongside a school and build relationships with students and families while helping increase emotional resiliency.

[**Get Started**](#)



REFUGEES / Mobilizing our city to welcome refugees with compassion, hope, and honor as they resettle and start a new life in Houston.

Houston is the #1 destination for the resettlement of international refugees. After escaping persecution, refugee families often struggle to adapt to their new homes – facing the challenges of a new language and culture. Imagine if local faith communities could become safe places for these families to find support, care, and community to walk alongside them in their new lives, offering them love in a tangible way.

[Get Started](#)



POVERTY / Building platforms of holistic support for families in poverty and debt.

No family should have to choose between essential goods and putting food on the table at dinner time, yet families in our community struggling with poverty face those types of choices on a daily basis. This year, 20% of Houston's children will face food insecurity. By providing resources to meet immediate needs, your church can help lift the burden and make your church the center of hope and help in your community.

[Get Started](#)

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me' (Matthew 35:35-36).

1Day Houston: A Citywide Demonstration of Love, Saturday, April 29, 2023.

[Recruitment video for 1Day Houston.](#)

On a Saturday, April 29, 2023, 50,000 volunteers will gather in the morning at hundreds of Serve Centers across Houston to distribute tens of millions of dollars of aid and services.

At each Serve Center, half of the volunteers will come from the local church and half of the volunteers will come from the community.

1Day Houston Stadium Event Options: Saturday, April 29 or Sunday, April 30.

Following the historic morning of service, volunteers will gather at the Toyota Center to celebrate the power of what love can do. Volunteers from the church and the community Serve Centers will sit together at the stadium event in order to continue to build relationships.

At the Toyota Center, top-tier artists will collaborate to create an unforgettable concert experience and extend an invitation to the thousands in person and millions watching online to take their next steps towards hope and help in Jesus.

(Volunteers for 1Day Houston receive free tickets to the stadium event for either Saturday or Sunday night.)

[Longer video](#) for 1Day Houston, reporting on LA and talking about Houston. 3:39.

Q: How do you encourage volunteers to register before March 1st without seeing where the serve center is and what they will be doing? Will they be notified if they register before March 1st to then go back and pick a serve center?

A: The incentive to register early is important. You can register, complete the form, and secure your seat. The serve center option will be hidden. 1Day Houston will send out a reminder to all registered people to go online and pick a Serve Center.

[Sign up](#)

[Bless Every Home](https://blesseveryhome.com): <https://blesseveryhome.com>

Be a **Light** for Christ in your neighborhood: [Pray-Care-Share](#)

For the Lord has commanded us, "I have placed you as a Light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth" (Acts 13:47).

[Blesseveryhome.com](https://blesseveryhome.com) gives you the tools to become a **Light for Christ** in your neighborhood. Join an ever-growing community of Christ followers who are devoted to being a Light in their neighborhoods through praying for, caring for, sharing the gospel with, and discipling their neighbors.

[Bless Every Home](https://blesseveryhome.com) provides all the tools to get to know your neighbors by name so that you can begin to build relationships with them. Use your dashboard to track your individual progress with each neighbor.

Regularly, you will even receive reminder emails with a prayer prompt and 5 neighbors to pray for that day. You get to choose the days that you will receive the prayer reminder emails.

Personal testimony: I have committed to pray 2 days a week for my neighbors. I get the emails of 5 neighbors for whom I get to pray for by name using prayers based on Scripture.

Other members of our church have signed up to pray 5 days a week or even 7 days a week.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT BLESS EVERY HOME](#)

[SIGN UP FOR PRAYER EMAILS](#)



Summary:

As Jesus said, God the Father is always at work to this very day, and Jesus is working, too (John 5:17). Our joy is to join God on his mission in our spheres of influence together with others.

I hope you are encouraged to know about some ways that the Lord is at work in our culture. Because of God's initiative, we have the opportunity to use different resources which help us love our city.

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Ministry Time:

[He Gets Us:](#)

GET CONNECTED: Sign up now to get an inside look at the ads, receive real-time alerts when they're playing live, and access resources to be ready. **Text SUPER BOWL to 70193.**

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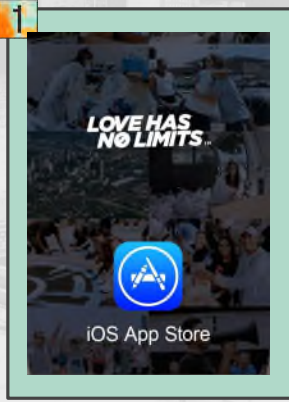
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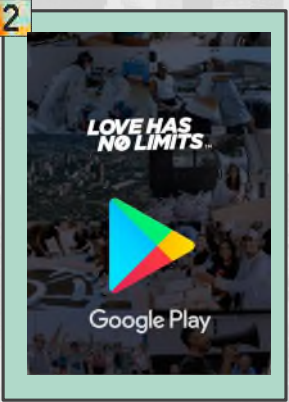


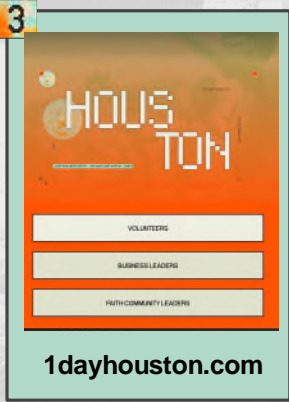
Text **Super Bowl** to **70193**



LOVE HAS NO LIMITS. / 3 WAYS TO REGISTER

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1. Download the Love Has No Limits app from the **iOS App Store**.
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2. Download the Love Has No Limits app from **Google Play**.
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3. Visit **1dayhouston.com** and register as a **VOLUNTEER**, **BUSINESS LEADER**, or **Faith Community Leader**.

1DAYHOUSTON

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

JOIN THE TEAM

UNITE TO SERVE HOUSTON!

📍 **APRIL 29, 2023**

REGISTER TODAY AT **1DAYHOUSTON.COM**

Or download the **Love Has No Limits** app

Download on the **App Store** | GET IT ON **Google Play**





 **BlessEveryHome.com**

Sign up for emails
<https://blesseveryhome.com/signup/>