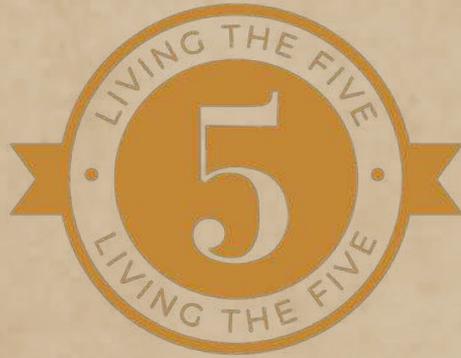




**JOURNEY
JOURNAL**







JOURNEY JOURNAL

THIS BELONGS TO:



X TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIVING THE FIVE / JOURNEY JOURNAL



WEEK ONE: READ YOUR BIBLE

WE OBTAIN A SETTLED SENSE OF CLARITY CONCERNING WHO WE LOOK TO FOR LEADERSHIP AND GUIDANCE IN EVERY ASPECT OF OUR LIVES THROUGH READING GOD'S WORD REGULARLY.

PG. 9



WEEK TWO: PRAY

WE HAVE DETERMINED WHO THE LEADER OF OUR LIVES IS - AND IT'S NOT US! WE PARTNER WITH GOD THROUGH DAILY PRAYER AND GAIN A DEEPER WALK WITH HIM - LEANING ON THE ONE WHO KNOWS US BEST: OUR CREATOR!

PG. 19



WEEK THREE: GIVE

SECURE PEOPLE TRUST THAT GOD IS THE TRUE OWNER OF ALL WE HAVE AND ARE, AND WE ARE HIS STEWARDS - GIVING BACK JOYFULLY THE FIRST FRUITS OF THE RESOURCES HE PLACES IN OUR LIVES.

PG. 29

CONTACT US: DAMASCUS@DAMASCUS.COM

01 Journey Journal.



READ THE BIBLE



THIS 'LIVING THE FIVE' JOURNAL WRITTEN BY:
CONTENT: MIKE BERNOI & CONVERSATION STARTERS: DAVID MEES

LEARN MORE: damascus.com/livingthe5 / 40 DAYS TO TRANSFORMATION

PG. 39 # WEEK FOUR: DO LIFE TOGETHER

WE WERE MADE FOR COMMUNITY! WHEN WE SHARE LIFE, SERVE, AND GROW TOGETHER IN GENUINE FRIENDSHIP, WE BECOME MORE LIKE JESUS WHO MODELED TRUE LOVE.

PG. 49 # WEEK FIVE: SERVE

SECURE PEOPLE SERVE - CONSISTENTLY. IT IS THEIR ORIENTATION IN LIFE. WHEN WE USE OUR GOD-GIVEN GIFTS AND TALENTS TO HELP OTHERS, WE ARE FINDING OUR PURPOSE AND TRUE NORTH!

PG. 59 # WEEK SIX: SHARE JESUS

THROUGH LIVES OF HONEST VULNERABILITY, UNSELFISH LOVE AND SERVICE, WE SEEK TO HELP AS MANY AS POSSIBLE TO RECEIVE THE GIFT OF ETERNAL LIFE IN JESUS.

PG. 69 # WEEK SEVEN: REMOVE BARRIERS

JESUS SAID: "IF YOU HOLD TO MY TEACHINGS, YOU ARE TRULY MY DISCIPLES. THEN YOU WILL KNOW THE TRUTH AND THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE." WE FULLY COMMIT TO REMOVING THE BARRIERS IN OUR LIVES TO FOLLOWING CHRIST, AND HELPING OTHERS DO THE SAME.



TRUE NORTH:

LIFE ON PURPOSE, WITH PURPOSE.



WELCOME TO 40 DAYS OF ADVENTURE!

ADVENTURE CAN BE DEFINED AS AN UNUSUAL, EXCITING, EVEN HAZARDOUS EXPERIENCE OR ACTIVITY. IN THE BIBLE, 40 IS OFTEN A SPIRITUALLY SIGNIFICANT TIME PERIOD. IT SEEMS GOD OFTEN USES THIS TIME FRAME ON PURPOSE, WITH PURPOSE, FOR A PURPOSE -- OFTEN TO INVITE PEOPLE INTO DEEPER RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM.

NOAH'S LIFE AND THE ENTIRE WORLD WAS ALTERED BY 40 DAYS OF RAIN. MOSES SPENT 40 DAYS IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD ON MT. SINAI. THE SPIES SPENT 40 DAYS "SPYING OUT" THE PROMISED LAND. DAVID WAS TRANSFORMED BY GOLIATH'S 40-DAY CHALLENGE. ELIJAH WAS STRENGTHENED BY JUST ONE MEAL FROM GOD FOR 40 DAYS. THE ENTIRE CITY OF NINEVEH WAS TRANSFORMED WHEN GOD GAVE THE PEOPLE 40 DAYS TO CHANGE OR ELSE.... JESUS LAUNCHED HIS MINISTRY AFTER BEING BAPTIZED AND SPENDING 40 DAYS FASTING IN THE WILDERNESS. FINALLY, THE DISCIPLES



WERE TRANSFORMED AFTER SPENDING 40 DAYS WITH THE CRUCIFIED AND RISEN CHRIST. YOU ARE BEING INVITED ON SUCH AN ADVENTURE: TO SPEND 40 DAYS PUTTING INTO PRACTICE "LIVING THE FIVE."

WHAT ARE THE FIVE?

**READ YOUR BIBLE & PRAY,
SERVE & GIVE,
'DO LIFE TOGETHER',
SHARE JESUS,
AND REMOVE BARRIERS.**

**DANGEROUS? YES! EXCITING? ABSOLUTELY!
TRANSFORMATIVE? YOU BET!**

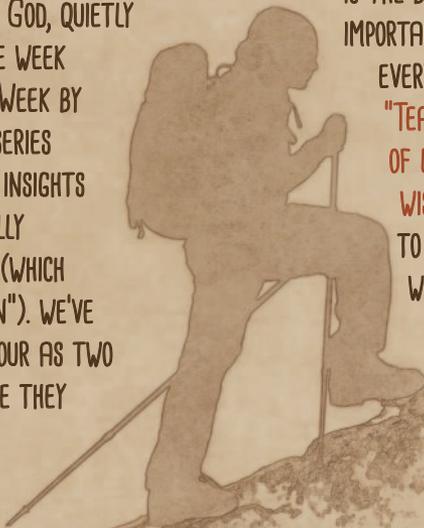
YOUR FIRST STEP.

40 DAYS TO TRANSFORMATION!

THIS JOURNAL...

USE THIS JOURNAL AS A FIELD GUIDE. IT WILL HELP POINT THE WAY. USE IT DURING THE MESSAGE SERIES TO WRITE DOWN A KEY THOUGHT WHEN LISTENING TO THAT WEEK'S MESSAGE. BUT IT'S MOSTLY MEANT FOR YOU TO ENGAGE WITH GOD, QUIETLY EACH DAY DURING THE WEEK BETWEEN MESSAGES. WEEK BY WEEK THE MESSAGE SERIES TOPICS WILL GIVE YOU INSIGHTS ON HOW TO PRACTICALLY LIVE OUT "THE FIVE" (WHICH ACTUALLY ARE "SEVEN"). WE'VE GROUPED THE FIRST FOUR AS TWO SETS OF TWO, BECAUSE THEY GO WELL TOGETHER WHEN LIVING OUT THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. BESIDES, WHILE

SEVEN IS ONE OF GOD'S PERFECT NUMBERS, "LIVING THE FIVE" JUST SOUNDS SO 'COOL', 'FIRE', 'GUCCI', OR 'SLAY', IF YOU CATCH MY DRIFT. WHY ARE THESE NEXT 40 DAYS IMPORTANT? ONE OF THE THINGS WE ARE CONFRONTED WITH IN READING THE BIBLE IS THE BREVITY OF OUR LIVES AND THE IMPORTANCE OF HOW WE SPEND EACH AND EVERY DAY. PSALM 90:12 SAYS, "TEACH US TO REALIZE THE BREVITY OF LIFE, SO THAT WE MAY GROW IN WISDOM." GOD WANTS EVERY DAY TO BE OUR BEST. HE ALSO WANTS WHAT'S BEST FOR EACH OF US.





DID YOU KNOW...

THAT THE AVERAGE LIFE EXPECTANCY IN THE UNITED STATES IS 28.124 DAYS?

THAT EQUATES TO FOUR THOUSAND WEEKENDS. MOST OF US DON'T START LIVING SELF-DIRECTED LIVES UNTIL OUR LATE TEENS OR RIGHT AT THE CUSP OF AGE 20. DO THE MATH AND THAT EQUATES TO ROUGHLY ONE THOUSAND WEEKENDS, LEAVING THE AVERAGE ADULT THREE THOUSAND WEEKENDS TO SPEND IN PURSUIT OF WHATEVER IT IS THEY DEEM MOST IMPORTANT IN LIFE.

OUR TIME IS PRECIOUS AND IMPORTANT. I CAN'T HELP BUT THINK OF A SONG RELEASED BACK IN 1980 BY THE CANADIAN POP BAND LOVERBOY, TITLED 'WORKING FOR THE WEEKEND' (CHECK IT OUT ON YOUTUBE, SPOTIFY, OR YOUR FAV).

05 Journey Journal.

■ "WHEN
PEOPLE DO NOT
ACCEPT DIVINE
GUIDANCE,
THEY RUN
WILD..."

PROVERBS
29:18 NLT



→

THIS SONG WITH ITS SIMPLE LYRICS, AND ESPECIALLY THE CHORUS WHICH STARTS WITH THE LINE, "EVERYBODY'S WORKING FOR THE WEEKEND," CAPTURES THE MUNDANE ROUTINE MOST OF US GET CAUGHT UP IN - WORKING HARD ALL WEEK, WAITING FOR THE WEEKEND TO ARRIVE SO WE CAN "LIVE."

THIS WAS NEVER WHAT GOD INTENDED FOR ANY OF US! HE HAS PLANS FOR YOU. HE BUILT YOU FOR A PURPOSE. THAT'S WHAT THIS GOD-ADVENTURE IS ALL ABOUT. LIFE IS A JOURNEY, NOT A DESTINATION. IT'S ABOUT DISCOVERY, TRANSFORMATION, AND TRULY LIVING ON THE WAY - GOD'S WAY.

CHECK OUT THE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE ON HOW WE WILL PREPARE FOR THIS TRANSFORMATIONAL JOURNEY...





+ READ

TAKE TIME TO READ THE BIBLE VERSES FOR A GIVEN DAY - PREFERABLY FROM AN ANALOGUE (PRINTED) BIBLE. WE RECOMMEND THE NEW LIVING TRANSLATION VERSION (NLT). IF YOU DON'T OWN A PRINTED BIBLE, THE CHURCH WILL GLADLY PROVIDE ONE FOR YOU TO KEEP. USING A PRINTED BIBLE WILL HELP YOU LOCATE WHAT YOU ARE READING IN THE LARGER CONTEXT OF THE BIBLE - WHICH BOOK THE VERSES ARE IN AND WHERE THAT BOOK SITS IN RELATIONSHIP TO ALL THE OTHER BOOKS OF THE BIBLE. YOU WILL TRULY EXPERIENCE THE VERSES AS YOU HOLD THE BIBLE. FLIP THROUGH THE BIBLE, FEELING THE PAGES IN YOUR HAND WHILE DOING SO. YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO READ THE LARGER CONTEXT OF EACH VERSE, SUCH AS VERSES AROUND THE VERSE YOU'VE READ, THE CHAPTER IN WHICH IT RESIDES, OR EVEN PORTIONS OF THE BOOK (SOME ARE LETTERS AND QUICK READS) - YOU DECIDE OR LET GOD GUIDE YOU BASED UPON THE TIME YOU HAVE EACH DAY.

➤ # REFLECT

THEN QUIETLY REFLECT ON WHAT YOU'VE READ. ALLOW GOD'S SPIRIT TO SPEAK TO YOU. WRITE DOWN YOUR REFLECTIONS OR WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IMPRESSES UPON YOUR HEART AND MIND IN THIS JOURNAL.



#RESPOND...

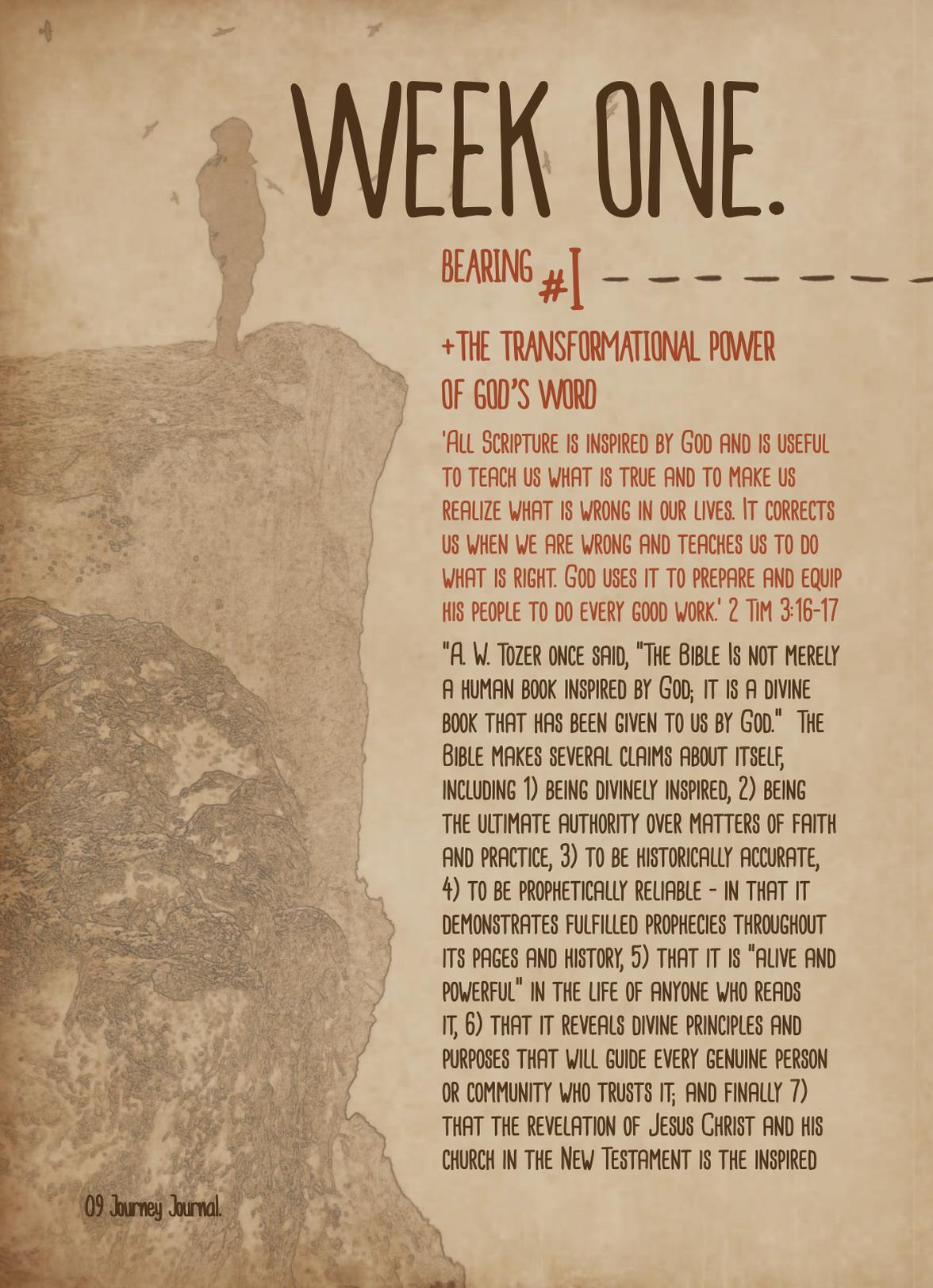
RESPOND BY HAVING A SHORT CONVERSATION WITH GOD (PRAYER) AND WRITING YOUR PRAYER TO HIM.



#REMEMBER

LASTLY, TAKE TIME TO READ AND THEN STRIVE TO REMEMBER OUR DAILY KEY VERSE (COMPASS POINT FOR THAT DAY).

HOW WE WILL NAVIGATE THE JOURNEY #OUR COMPASS POINTS



WEEK ONE.

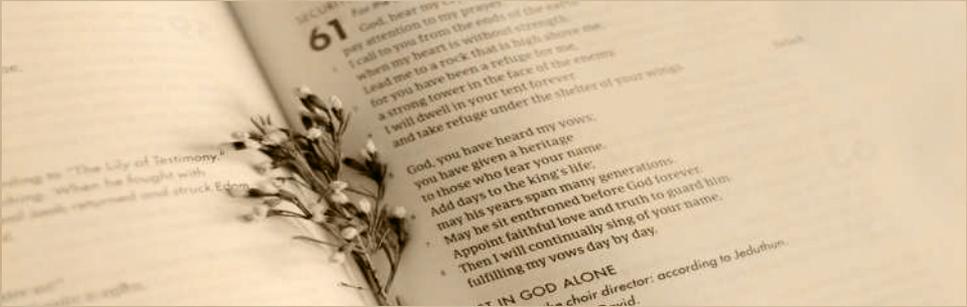
BEARING #1

+THE TRANSFORMATIONAL POWER OF GOD'S WORD

'ALL SCRIPTURE IS INSPIRED BY GOD AND IS USEFUL TO TEACH US WHAT IS TRUE AND TO MAKE US REALIZE WHAT IS WRONG IN OUR LIVES. IT CORRECTS US WHEN WE ARE WRONG AND TEACHES US TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT. GOD USES IT TO PREPARE AND EQUIP HIS PEOPLE TO DO EVERY GOOD WORK.' 2 TIM 3:16-17

"A. W. TOZER ONCE SAID, "THE BIBLE IS NOT MERELY A HUMAN BOOK INSPIRED BY GOD; IT IS A DIVINE BOOK THAT HAS BEEN GIVEN TO US BY GOD." THE BIBLE MAKES SEVERAL CLAIMS ABOUT ITSELF, INCLUDING 1) BEING DIVINELY INSPIRED, 2) BEING THE ULTIMATE AUTHORITY OVER MATTERS OF FAITH AND PRACTICE, 3) TO BE HISTORICALLY ACCURATE, 4) TO BE PROPHETICALLY RELIABLE - IN THAT IT DEMONSTRATES FULFILLED PROPHECIES THROUGHOUT ITS PAGES AND HISTORY, 5) THAT IT IS "ALIVE AND POWERFUL" IN THE LIFE OF ANYONE WHO READS IT, 6) THAT IT REVEALS DIVINE PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSES THAT WILL GUIDE EVERY GENUINE PERSON OR COMMUNITY WHO TRUSTS IT; AND FINALLY 7) THAT THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT IS THE INSPIRED

READ YOUR BIBLE



FULLFILLMENT AND INTERPRETATION OF ALL GOD REVEALED TO ISRAEL IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. SUCH CLAIMS MOVE BEYOND SIMPLY HELPING US NAVIGATE LIFE'S CHALLENGES AND MAKING DIVINELY-GUIDED DECISIONS (WHICH THE BIBLE DOES QUITE WELL). THEY PROMISE SALVATION, TRANSFORMATION, AND REVELATION.

+REMINDER:

EACH DAY THIS WEEK WE WILL READ VERSES FROM EITHER THE OLD TESTAMENT, THE NEW TESTAMENT, OR BOTH WHICH SPEAK TO WHAT THE BIBLE HAS TO SAY ABOUT ITSELF. EVERY DAY OUR APPROACH WILL BE TO **READ** THAT DAY'S VERSES, THEN TO **REFLECT** ON THEM BY WRITING DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS OR IMPRESSIONS IN THE SPACE PROVIDED, THEN TO **RESPOND** TO GOD IN A SHORT CONVERSATIONAL WRITTEN PRAYER IN THE SPACE PROVIDED. FINALLY, WE WILL END EACH DAY'S QUIET TIME WITH A VERSE TO **REMEMBER** AND PONDER THROUGHOUT OUR DAY.

"FOR THE WORD OF GOD IS LIVING AND ACTIVE, SHARPER THAN ANY TWO-EDGED SWORD, PIERCING TO THE DIVISION OF SOUL AND OF SPIRIT, OF JOINTS AND OF MARROW, AND DISCERNING THE THOUGHTS AND INTENTIONS OF THE HEART." HEBREWS 4:12



NOTES

WEEK # I





Day 1. The Bible is divinely inspired
and authoritative.

READ: 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Matthew 4:4

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

‘But Jesus told him, “No! The Scriptures say, ‘People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”
Matthew 4:4, NLT



Day 2. The Bible is historically accurate
and prophetically reliable.

READ: Luke 1:3-4; 1 Peter 1:10-12; 2 Peter 1:16-21

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

'But Jesus told him, "No! The Scriptures say, 'People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"
Matthew 4:4, NLT



Day 3. The Bible is living and powerful,
fully penetrating our inmost person.

READ: Hebrews 4:12-13; Psalm 119 :23-24; Ephesians 3:16-17

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

'But Jesus told him, "No! The Scriptures say, 'People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"
Matthew 4:4, NLT



Day 4. The Bible reveals divine principles and purposes that will guide those who trust in God.

READ: James 1:5; Psalm 119:105; Proverbs 3:1-12

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

‘But Jesus told him, “No! The Scriptures say, ‘People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”
Matthew 4:4, NLT



READ YOUR BIBLE!

Day 5. The Bible claims that the revelation of Jesus Christ and His church in the New Testament is the inspired fulfillment and interpretation of all God revealed to Israel in the Old Testament.

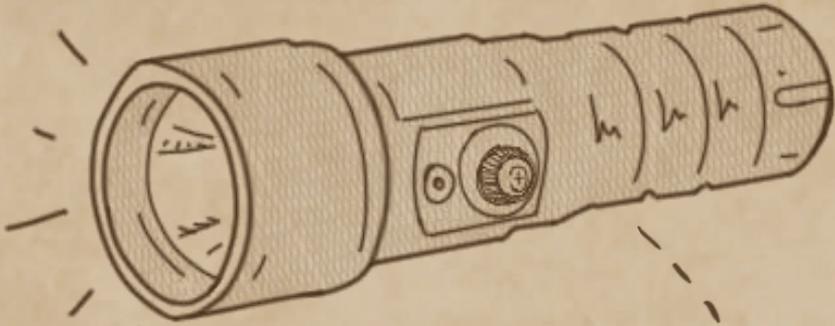
READ: Hebrews 1:1-3; John 1:1-3; 14; Ephesians 2:15-16; 3:5-6

REFLECT:

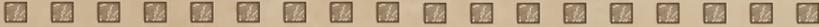
RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

'But Jesus told him, "No! The Scriptures say, 'People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"
Matthew 4:4, NLT



CONVERSATION STARTERS



CONVERSATION STARTER #1

DO YOU INCORPORATE BIBLE READING INTO YOUR DAILY ROUTINE? IF SO, HOW? IF NOT, HOW COULD YOU INCORPORATE IT?

CONVERSATION STARTER #2

SHARE A PASSAGE OR STORY FROM THE BIBLE THAT HAS IMPACTED YOUR LIFE.

CONVERSATION STARTER #3

HOW HAS READING THE BIBLE HELPED YOU UNDERSTAND WHO JESUS IS? DISCUSS HOW READING THE BIBLE CAN PROVIDE GUIDANCE AND WISDOM FOR NAVIGATING LIFE'S CHALLENGES. ARE THERE ANY PASSAGES IN THE BIBLE THAT YOU FIND DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND OR ACCEPT?



WEEK TWO.

+ PRAYER: PERSISTENT COMMUNICATION WITH THE CREATOR

PRAYER IS RELATIONAL. PRAYER IS A POWERFUL MEANS OF COMMUNICATION WITH GOD. IT ALLOWS US TO EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE, SEEK GUIDANCE, AND PRESENT OUR NEEDS AND CONCERNS TO THE CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE. THROUGH PRAYER, WE DEVELOP A DEEP, PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD, EXPERIENCING HIS PRESENCE, RECEIVING, HIS COMFORT AND PEACE. SADLY, MANY VIEW PRAYER AS AN "EASY BUTTON" TO BE PUSHED, RATHER THAN A RELATIONSHIP TO BE PURSUED.

+ DOES PRAYER WORK?

WELL, YES, IT DOES. BUT PRAYER DOESN'T WORK BECAUSE I GOT WHAT I WANTED. GOD IS SOVEREIGN. HE DOESN'T RESPOND TO OUR EVERY WHIM AND PRAYER WITH A "YES." IF HE DID, THE WORLD WOULD BE A CHAOTIC MESS. WELL THEN, HOW DOES PRAYER WORK?

"NEVER STOP PRAYING." ~ 1 THESSALONIANS 5:17

→ TAKE TIME TO PRAY

~ BEARING #2

ONLY GOD KNOWS. TO BE SURE, PRAYER DOES 'WORK', BUT IT WORKS VERY DIFFERENTLY THAN WE'D LIKE IT TO. SOME PRAYERS ARE CONDITIONAL, OTHERS REQUIRE PERSISTENCE (MATTHEW 7:7). SOME PRAYERS ARE MEANT TO BE DONE CORPORATELY, OTHERS PRIVATELY. SOME SITUATIONS REQUIRE MUCH PRAYER, FAITH & EVEN FASTING - JESUS SAYS SO (MATTHEW 17:20-21; MARK 9:29).

+ THIS WEEK...

AS WE PROBE THE BIBLE AND READ VERSES ABOUT PRAYER, NOTICE WORDS LIKE 'IF,' 'WHEN,' 'HUMBLE,' 'GIVE' AND 'FORGIVE.' THE BIBLE SAYS GOD HEARS OUR PRAYERS. JESUS EXPECTS US TO PRAY ("WHEN YOU PRAY..."). GOD SAYS WHEN WE CALL TO HIM, HE WILL ANSWER US, WE JUST NEED TO BE PREPARED FOR ANSWERS THAT OFTEN DON'T ALIGN WITH OUR DESIRES. PRAYER HELPS TO CORRECT OUR NEAR-SIGHTEDNESS AND CAN HELP US BEGIN TO SEE THINGS FROM GOD'S POINT OF VIEW.



NOTES

WEEK #2





Day 1. Prayer is relational.
not transactional.

READ: Matthew 6:5-13; Psalm 145:8, 18

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

'Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything.
Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.'
Philippians 4:6 NLT



Day 2. Prayer is powerful,
personal, corporate, and experiential.

READ: Jeremiah 29:11-13; Philippians 4:4-8

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

'Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything.
Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.'
Philippians 4:6 NLT



Day 3. Prayer is sometimes conditional,
and often requires persistence.

READ: 2 Chronicles 7:14; Matthew 7:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:17;
Luke 18:1

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell
God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. '
Philippians 4:6 NLT



Day 4. Prayer is an opportunity to seek God's forgiveness and healing, and extend it to others.

READ: Daniel 9: 3-19; James 5:13-18

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

'Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.'
Philippians 4:6 NLT



PRAY!

Day 5. Prayer opens our eyes to the things of God and the world as He sees it.

READ: Psalm 119:18; John 17:1-26

REFLECT:

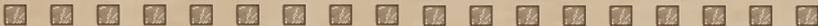
RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

'Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.

'Philippians 4:6 NLT

CONVERSATION STARTERS



CONVERSATION STARTER #1

HOW HAS PRAYER HELPED YOU DEVELOP A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD AND WITH JESUS?

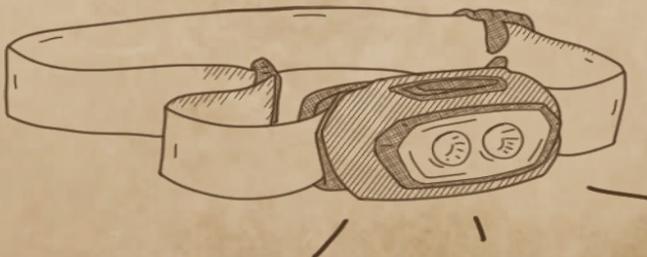
CONVERSATION STARTER #2

SHARE A PERSONAL TESTIMONY OF A TIME WHEN YOU EXPERIENCED THE POWER OF PRAYER AND MADE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR LIFE.

IS PRAYER A CONSISTENT PART OF YOUR DAILY LIFE?

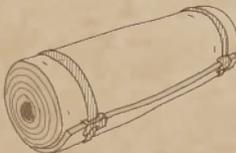
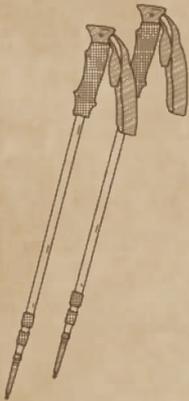
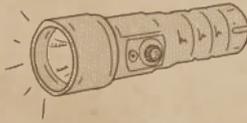
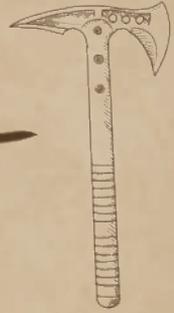
CONVERSATION STARTER #3

WHEN AND WHY DO YOU PRAY? (EXAMPLES: IN GRATITUDE, IN "CRISIS", AT SPECIFIC TIMES, FOR NEEDS AND WANTS, SEEKING GUIDANCE, ETC.)
WHAT ARE SOME SPECIFIC PRAYER REQUESTS YOU HAVE RIGHT NOW?





Those who give,
truly live. A heart of
generosity reflects
the Creator.



WEEK

THREE ~ BEARING #3

"FOR THIS IS HOW GOD LOVED THE WORLD: HE GAVE HIS ONE AND ONLY SON, SO THAT EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT PERISH BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE." JOHN 3:16

THIS MIGHT SEEM TO BE A STRANGE VERSE TO USE AS OUR BEARING POINT FOR THIS WEEK'S TOPIC, GIVING, ALONG OUR JOURNEY. BUT LET'S TAKE A MOMENT TO CONSIDER JOHN 3:16. NOTICE HOW THE VERSE UNFOLDS, 1) GOD - THE GREATEST LOVER, 2) "LOVED," TO THE GREATEST DEGREE, 3) "THE WORLD," THE GREATEST NUMBER, 4) THAT "HE GAVE," THE GREATEST ACT, 5) "HIS ONE AND ONLY SON," THE GREATEST GIFT, 6) "SO THAT EVERYONE," THE GREATEST INVITATION, 7) "WHO BELIEVES," THE GREATEST SIMPLICITY, 8) "IN HIM," THE GREATEST PERSON, 9) "WILL NOT PERISH," THE GREATEST DELIVERANCE, 10) "BUT," THE GREATEST DIFFERENCE, 11) "HAVE" THE GREATEST CERTAINTY, 12) "ETERNAL LIFE," THE GREATEST POSSESSION.

GIVE

WE SEE INTENSE GENEROSITY AT THE HEART OF THIS TEXT. WE OFTEN THINK OF GETTING, NOT GIVING, TO GAIN GREAT POSSESSIONS. IT TURNS OUT, WE HAVE BEEN OFFERED THE GREATEST POSSESSION OF ALL, AND IT'S A FREE GIFT.

THIS IS THE HEART OF CHRISTIANITY: A GRACIOUS, GIVING, AND FORGIVING GOD, WHO FREELY OFFERS TO EACH ONE OF US, IN THE PERSON OF HIS SON - ETERNAL LIFE. AS SUCH, GENEROSITY AND GIVING ARE CENTRAL TO THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. THE ACT OF GIVING HELPS US ACKNOWLEDGE THAT EVERYTHING WE HAVE IS A GIFT FROM THE CREATOR, THAT WE ARE CUSTODIANS ENTRUSTED WITH RESOURCES TO BLESS OTHERS. GIVING CULTIVATES A SPIRIT OF GRATITUDE AND CONTENTMENT IN THE GIVER. GOD WANTS US TO GIVE AS HE DID, NOT RELUCTANTLY OR OUT OF COMPULSION (2 CORINTHIANS 9:7). WHEN WE GIVE TO OTHERS OR THE CHURCH, WE ARE PARTNERING WITH GOD, PARTICIPATING IN HIS WORK. SUCH GIVING HAS AN IMPACT BEYOND OUR IMMEDIATE SPHERE - EVEN BEYOND OUR OWN LIFETIME.



NOTES

WEEK #3





Day 1. Giving reflects God's heart
and true discipleship involves
sacrificial giving.

READ: Matthew 6:1-4; Luke 14:12-14; Mark 12:41-44

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

'You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully." ' 2 Corinthians 9:7 NLT



Day 2. Generosity and giving are central to the Christian life.

READ: Luke 6:38; Proverbs 19:17; 1 Timothy 6:17-19

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

'You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully." ' 2 Corinthians 9:7 NLT



Day 3. We receive more of a blessing when we give than when we receive.

READ: Acts 20:35; Deuteronomy 15:10; Matthew 25:35-40

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

'You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully." ' 2 Corinthians 9:7 NLT



Day 4. Giving stretches us.
Sacrificial giving to those in need
pleases God.

READ: Matthew 5:42; Hebrews 13:16

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

'You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully." ' 2 Corinthians 9:7 NLT



Day 5. God wants us to test Him when it comes to giving, having an attitude of gratitude in our giving.

READ: Malachi 3:10; 2 Corinthians 9:11-12

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

'You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully." ' 2 Corinthians 9:7 NLT

CONVERSATION STARTERS

CONVERSATION STARTER #1

WHAT DOES GIVING MEAN TO YOU AS A FOLLOWER OF CHRIST?
IF YOU'RE NOT YET A FOLLOWER OF JESUS, SHARE YOUR PERSPECTIVE.

CONVERSATION STARTER #2

SHARE A PERSONAL STORY OF HOW GIVING HAS IMPACTED YOUR LIFE OR SOMEONE ELSE'S.

CONVERSATION STARTER #3

DISCUSS DIFFERENT WAYS WE CAN GIVE BACK TO OUR COMMUNITY OR THOSE IN NEED.

HOW DOES GIVING REFLECT THE GENEROSITY AND SACRIFICIAL LOVE OF JESUS?





+EMBRACING AUTHENTIC CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY MEANS 'DOING LIFE TOGETHER!'

"ALL THE BELIEVERS DEVOTED THEMSELVES TO THE APOSTLES' TEACHING, AND TO FELLOWSHIP, AND TO SHARING IN MEALS (INCLUDING THE LORD'S SUPPER), AND TO PRAYER - AND ALL THE BELIEVERS MET TOGETHER IN ONE PLACE AND SHARED EVERYTHING THEY HAD. - THEY WORSHIPED

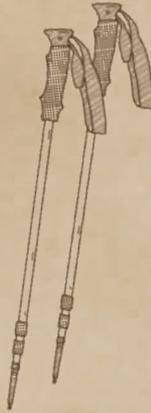
TOGETHER AT THE TEMPLE EACH DAY, MET IN HOMES FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER, AND SHARED THEIR MEALS WITH GREAT JOY AND GENEROSITY - ' ACTS 2:42,44,46 NLT

THE POWER OF CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY, WHAT WE CALL - 'DOING LIFE TOGETHER,' PLAYS A VITAL ROLE IN NOT ONLY THIS GREAT ADVENTURE BUT YOUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY OVER YOUR LIFETIME. GOD KNOWS THAT WE ARE 'BETTER TOGETHER' - ANOTHER OF OUR KEY MANTRAS AROUND DAMASCUS ROAD - BECAUSE IT'S TRUE! GOD HIMSELF LIVES IN COMMUNITY. HE'S ONE ETERNAL, HOLY GOD,



**CHECK OUT OUR CORE BELIEF #2 AT DAMASCUS.COM/BELIEFS. TO GO DEEPER, DOWNLOAD OUR STATEMENT OF BELIEFS.*

INFINITE, PERSONAL, AND KNOWABLE, WHO HAS REVEALED HIMSELF IN THREE DISTINCT PERSONS: GOD THE FATHER, GOD THE SON, AND GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT*. HE MADE US TO REFLECT HIM. WHY DO WE THINK WE CAN GO IT ALONE WHEN GOD DOESN'T? IT'S IN COMMUNITY WHERE WE CAN BE KNOWN AND LOVED, AND IN TURN WHERE WE LEARN TO KNOW AND TO LOVE OTHERS IN THE WAY OF JESUS. IT'S IN COMMUNITY WHERE WE CAN BE SERVED AND LEARN
39 Journey Journal.



Community was
God's idea!

He designed us to
live our best lives
connected to Him
and to His Church.
Find a small group
and experience
community and
Christ's love along
the way.

damascus.com/groups

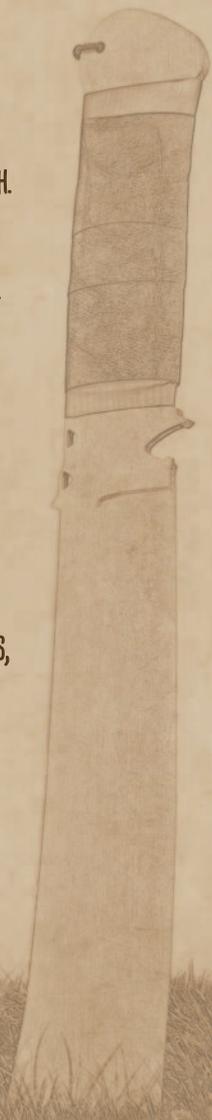
DO LIFE TOGETHER

WEEK FOUR. ~BEARING #4



TO SERVE OTHERS, WHERE WE CAN BE CARED FOR AND LEARN TO CARE FOR OTHERS, WHERE WE CAN BE ENCOURAGED AND ENCOURAGE OTHERS, AND WHERE WE CAN BE CHALLENGED TO GROW IN OUR FAITH. IN COMMUNITY WE DISCOVER OUR TRUE PURPOSE AND LIVE LIFE ON PURPOSE, WITH PURPOSE, BECOMING THE VERY BEST GOD DESIRES FOR US AS WE HELP OTHERS DO THE SAME IN THE WAY OF JESUS. WHAT IS JESUS' WAY? IT'S WHAT WE CALL THE "ONE ANOTHER'S" OF THE BIBLE***. THE PRIMARY "ONE ANOTHER" IS LOVE. JESUS SAID, "... LOVE ONE ANOTHER: JUST AS I HAVE LOVED YOU..." (JOHN 13:34-35). BOTTOM LINE - BY ENGAGING IN AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS WITH FELLOW BELIEVERS, WE FIND SUPPORT, ENCOURAGEMENT, AND ACCOUNTABILITY. DOING LIFE TOGETHER INVOLVES SHARING JOYS, SORROWS, AND STRUGGLES, AS WELL AS STUDYING THE BIBLE, WORSHIPING, AND PRAYING TOGETHER. THROUGH THESE RELATIONSHIPS, WE EXPERIENCE THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF COMMUNITY, GROWING IN FAITH AND BECOMING MORE CHRIST-LIKE. LIFE IS BETTER LIVED TOGETHER.

**NOTE: THERE ARE OVER 50 "ONE ANOTHER" COMMANDS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT (GOOGLE THEM TO GO DEEPER).





NOTES

WEEK #4





Day 1. In the beginning, before there was a beginning – God was in community: He said, It’s not good to be alone....

READ: John 1:1-3; 14; Genesis 1:1-2; 26-27; Genesis 2:7, 18-24

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

‘Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble.’ Ecclesiastes 4:9-10



Day 2. Authentic Community has sacrificial love at its center: 'As I have loved you, so you must love one another' (Jesus). It's the most excellent way.

READ: John 13:34-35; 1 Corinthians 12:31 - 13:13

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

'Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble.' Ecclesiastes 4:9-10



Day 3. Authentic community provides support, encouragement, and accountability.

READ: Galatians 6:2; Hebrews 10:24-25

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

‘Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble.’ Ecclesiastes 4:9-10



Day 4. In community we discover our true purpose. We learn to live life with purpose on purpose.

READ: Romans 12:4-8; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

‘Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble.’ Ecclesiastes 4:9-10



Day 5. Authentic community consists of mutual honor, mutual prayer, mutual patience, and mutual forgiveness.

READ: Romans 12:10-13; Colossians 3:13-17

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

‘Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble.’ Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

CONVERSATION STARTERS



CONVERSATION STARTER #1
DISCUSS THE IMPORTANCE OF FINDING A SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY THAT ENCOURAGES SPIRITUAL GROWTH. HOW HAS BEING PART OF A SUPPORTIVE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IMPACTED YOUR FAITH JOURNEY OR HELPED DURING TIMES OF CHALLENGE IN YOUR LIFE?

CONVERSATION STARTER #2
WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS REGARDING GOD HAVING ALWAYS BEEN IN COMMUNITY (FATHER, SON, SPIRIT) AND MAKING HUMANITY IN HIS IMAGE TO WALK IN COMMUNITY TOGETHER AS A COMPLETE REFLECTION OF HIMSELF?

CONVERSATION STARTER #3

BESIDES THIS SMALL GROUP, WHERE ELSE DO YOU DO LIFE TOGETHER WITH OTHER BELIEVERS?

DISCUSS WAYS WE CAN DEEPEN OUR CONNECTIONS AND SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER WITHIN OUR SMALL GROUP.

S E R

ONE ANOTHER

+ GOD MODELS WHAT HE ASKS OF US. TO SERVE OTHERS SELFLESSLY AND JOYFULLY FROM A PLACE OF LOVE.

"BUT AMONG YOU IT WILL BE DIFFERENT. WHOEVER WANTS TO BE A LEADER AMONG YOU MUST BE YOUR SERVANT, AND WHOEVER WANTS TO BE FIRST AMONG YOU MUST BE THE SLAVE OF EVERYONE ELSE. FOR EVEN THE SON OF MAN CAME NOT TO BE SERVED BUT TO SERVE OTHERS AND TO GIVE HIS LIFE AS A RANSOM FOR MANY." MARK 10:43-45 NLT

AT DAMASCUS ROAD, OUR CORE VALUE #5 STATES: "AS CHRIST'S FOLLOWERS, WE ARE EACH CALLED TO SERVE OTHERS THROUGH OUR UNIQUE SPIRITUAL GIFTEDNESS. WE DO MINISTRY IN A WAY THAT SPEAKS TO OUR CULTURE WITHOUT COMPROMISING THE TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD." SERVING OTHERS IS A FUNDAMENTAL ASPECT OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH. IT'S WHAT WE WERE BUILT FOR. WE ARE EACH UNIQUELY WIRED AND



"I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH HIM WHO STRENGTHENS ME." PHILIPPIANS 4:13

HAVE SKILLS, TALENTS, AND ABILITIES, AND ONCE WE'VE GIVEN OUR HEARTS FULLY TO JESUS - ARE GIVEN AT LEAST ONE SPIRITUAL GIFT FROM GOD TO SERVE OTHERS THROUGH THE CHURCH (OFTEN REFERRED TO IN SCRIPTURE AS THE BODY OF CHRIST). WE SHOULD SEEK TO SERVE OTHERS LIKE THE LORD JESUS WHO "...CAME NOT TO BE SERVED BUT TO SERVE..."

BY SELFLESSLY GIVING OUR TIME, TALENTS, AND RESOURCES TO HELP THOSE IN NEED, WE EMULATE CHRIST'S EXAMPLE OF LOVE AND

V E

IN LOVE WEEK FIVE. ~BEARING #5



"THE HIGHEST FORM OF WORSHIP IS THE WORSHIP OF UNSELFISH CHRISTIAN SERVICE." BILLY GRAHAM



"GOD IS LOOKING FOR THOSE WITH WHOM HE CAN DO THE IMPOSSIBLE. - WHAT A PITY THAT WE PLAN ONLY THE THINGS THAT WE CAN DO BY OURSELVES." A.W. TOZER

COMPASSION. SERVING NOT ONLY BENEFITS OTHERS BUT ALSO TRANSFORMS OUR OWN HEARTS, FOSTERING HUMILITY, HEALTHY EMPATHY, AND GRATITUDE. WHETHER VOLUNTEERING AT THE CHURCH WITH ONE OF DAMASCUS ROAD'S LOCAL MISSIONS PARTNERS (SUCH AS AT A LOCAL SHELTER, ETC.), OR PARTICIPATING IN A MISSION TRIP WITH ONE OF OUR GLOBAL MISSION PARTNERS, SERVING ALLOWS US TO MAKE A TANGIBLE DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF OTHERS WHILE GROWING IN OUR OWN FAITH WITH THE GOD WHO GAVE "HIS LIFE AS A RANSOM FOR MANY."





NOTES

WEEK #5





Day 1. God calls each one of us
to live lives of service with purpose.
on purpose.

READ: Ephesians 2:10; 1 Peter 2:21; 4:10-11; Jeremiah 29:11

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

'For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love.'

Galatians 5:13 NLT



Day 2. True religion will always have a heart of service stemming from a place of justice for others, especially the least among us.

READ: James 1:27; Isaiah 1:17; 58:6-7; Micah 6:8

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

‘For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don’t use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love.’
Galatians 5:13 NLT



Day 3. God has a heart to serve the poor, seen throughout the Bible; we should too.

READ: 2 Corinthians 8:9; Proverbs 14:20-21; James 2:14-17

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

‘For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don’t use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love.’

Galatians 5:13 NLT



Day 4. God wants us to love Him & others not merely with words but whole heartedly with service in action.

READ: 1 John 3:17-18; Hebrews 13:16; 1 Samuel 12:24

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

'For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love.'
Galatians 5:13 NLT



Day 5. We are to speak up
by serving those who can't speak up
for themselves – Jesus did so for us.

READ: Proverbs 31:8-9; Jeremiah 22:3; Philippians 2:1-11

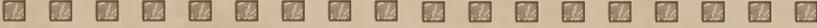
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RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

'For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love.'

Galatians 5:13 NLT



CONVERSATION STARTERS

CONVERSATION STARTER #1

HOW DO YOU CURRENTLY SERVE OTHERS IN YOUR COMMUNITY OR CHURCH? RE-READ MATTHEW 25: 35-40 (THIS PASSAGE DEMONSTRATES BOTH SERVING & GIVING). ARE THERE OTHER WAYS /PLACES YOU COULD SERVE?

CONVERSATION STARTER #2

SHARE A MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE WHEN YOU FELT BLESSED BY SERVING SOMEONE.

CONVERSATION STARTER #3

HOW DOES SERVING OTHERS REFLECT GOD'S LOVE AS REVEALED IN THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS?

DISCUSS HOW ACTS OF SERVICE CAN BE A TANGIBLE WAY TO DEMONSTRATE GOD'S LOVE TO OTHERS.

SHARE JESUS

WEEK SIX
~ BEARING #6

"AND ALL OF THIS IS A GIFT FROM GOD, WHO BROUGHT US BACK TO HIMSELF THROUGH CHRIST. AND GOD HAS GIVEN US THIS TASK OF RECONCILING PEOPLE TO HIM. FOR GOD WAS IN CHRIST, RECONCILING THE WORLD TO HIMSELF, NO LONGER COUNTING PEOPLE'S SINS AGAINST THEM. AND HE GAVE US THIS WONDERFUL MESSAGE OF RECONCILIATION. SO WE ARE CHRIST'S AMBASSADORS; GOD IS MAKING HIS APPEAL THROUGH US. WE SPEAK FOR CHRIST WHEN WE PLEAD, "COME BACK TO GOD!" ' 2 CORINTHIANS 5:18-20 NLT

YOU'VE BEEN WALKING WITH JESUS CHRIST AND THE CHURCH IN A GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS FOR A WHILE NOW, AND HE'S MADE A TRANSFORMATIONAL DIFFERENCE IN YOUR LIFE, OR PERHAPS YOU'RE NEW AT THIS AND HE IS BEGINNING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE. YOU WANT TO SHARE WITH OTHERS THE HOPE, LOVE, JOY, PEACE, AND BELONGING YOU ARE EXPERIENCING IN JESUS. HOW DO YOU DO THAT?



"WE ARE CHRIST'S
AMBASSADORS!
GOD IS MAKING HIS
APPEAL THROUGH
US!"

+WELL, HERE ARE 7 SIMPLE, AUTHENTIC STEPS:

- 1) BE A GOOD FRIEND - NO STRINGS ATTACHED.
- 2) PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTIES IN LIFE - DEATH OF A LOVED ONE, JOB-RELATED STRESS, HEALTH ISSUES, CHALLENGES WITH CHILDREN OR SPOUSE - WHEN DONE WITH GENUINE LOVE, CARE, AND CONCERN, PEOPLE WILL BE APPRECIATIVE AND RESPECTFUL OF YOUR FAITH.
- 3) TEXT VERSES OF COMFORT AND HOPE WHEN YOU LEARN OF GENUINE NEED - USE A DIGITAL APP SUCH AS YOUVERSION BIBLE OR THE DRCC APP. DON'T SPAM BUT DO SHARE FROM THE HEART.
- 4) GIVE BOOKS, BIBLES, AND OTHER CHRISTIAN RESOURCES (DIGITAL AND ANALOGUE) AS GIFTS WHEN APPROPRIATE.
- 5) BE A LIVING EXAMPLE OF JESUS IN ACTION BY USING ENCOURAGING WORDS & SUPPORTING OTHERS. MAKE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY AND FOR OTHERS WITH YOUR TIME, TALENTS, AND TREASURE.
- 6) INVITE OTHERS INTO COMMUNITY - YOUR SMALL GROUP, FRIEND GROUP, TO CHURCH & EVENTS.
- 7) ASK GOOD QUESTIONS AND LISTEN WELL. THE BIBLE RECOMMENDS THAT WE SHOULD "BE QUICK TO LISTEN AND SLOW TO SPEAK." ONLY SHARE IF YOUR FRIEND IS RECEPTIVE TO HEAR WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY. ASK WHAT YOUR FRIEND THINKS ABOUT JESUS, THE BIBLE, AND CHRISTIANITY.*



*TAKE TIME TO REALLY LISTEN.
FIND COMMON GROUND.*



*BE PREPARED TO SHARE THE HOPE
YOU HAVE WITHIN YOU - IN LOVE
AND WITH RESPECT.*



NOTES

WEEK #6





Day 1. Jesus calls His followers to be the salt of the earth. He wants us out of the salt shaker and into the world.

READ: Matthew 5:13-16; Matthew 9:10; Luke 19:5

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

“Jesus came and told his disciples, ‘I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’” Matthew 28:18-20 NLT



Day 2. Be a friend, setting aside your agenda (laying down your life) for others like Jesus.

READ: John 15:12-15; Proverbs 27:9; Proverbs 17:17

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

“Jesus came and told his disciples, ‘I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’” Matthew 28:18-20 NLT



Day 3. We love (God | Others)
because He first loved – this is what
motivates us to share Jesus.

READ: 1 John 4:19; Romans 5:1-8; John 13:34-35

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

“Jesus came and told his disciples, ‘I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’” Matthew 28:18-20 NLT



Day 4. Out of the Great Commandment (Loving God | Loving People), flows the Great Commission, and the Great Commitment – because people matter to God.

READ: Matthew 22:36-40; Matthew 28:18-20; John 21:15-17

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

“Jesus came and told his disciples, ‘I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’” Matthew 28:18-20 NLT



Day 5. God empowers us to share Jesus with others — in our own armor. God wants you to 'do you' when telling others about Him.

READ: Acts 1:8; 1 Samuel 17:38-39; Romans 10:14

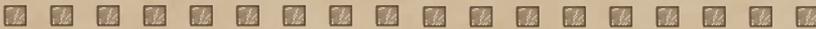
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RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

“Jesus came and told his disciples, ‘I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’” Matthew 28:18-20 NLT

CONVERSATION STARTERS



CONVERSATION STARTER #1

DISCUSS THE IMPORTANCE OF SHARING JESUS AS AN INVITATION FOR OTHERS TO EXPERIENCE HIS LOVE AND SALVATION.

CONVERSATION STARTER #2

HOW DO YOU PERSONALLY SHARE YOUR FAITH WITH OTHERS?

SHARE A TESTIMONY OF A TIME WHEN YOU SHARED JESUS WITH SOMEONE AND SAW A POSITIVE IMPACT.

CONVERSATION STARTER #3

DISCUSS COMMON CHALLENGES OR FEARS WHEN IT COMES TO SHARING JESUS AND HOW WE CAN OVERCOME THEM.

HOW HAS SHARING YOUR FAITH WITH OTHERS DEEPENED YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING OF JESUS?



JESUS REMOVED THE BIGGEST BARRIER OF ALL:

REMOVE BARRIERS

BUT NOW YOU HAVE BEEN UNITED WITH CHRIST JESUS. ONCE YOU WERE FAR AWAY FROM GOD. BUT NOW YOU HAVE BEEN BROUGHT NEAR TO HIM THROUGH THE BLOOD OF CHRIST. FOR CHRIST HIMSELF HAS BROUGHT PEACE TO US. HE UNITED JEWS AND GENTILES INTO ONE PEOPLE WHEN, IN HIS OWN BODY ON THE CROSS, HE BROKE DOWN THE WALL OF HOSTILITY THAT SEPARATED US. EPHESIANS 2:13-14 NLT

TO FULLY EMBRACE THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES WE'VE BEEN EXPERIENCING ON THIS JOURNEY, IT IS ESSENTIAL TO IDENTIFY AND REMOVE ANY BARRIERS THAT HINDER OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD AS WE CONTINUE TO WALK WITH JESUS AND IN THE WAY OF JESUS. THESE BARRIERS MAY INCLUDE SIN*, FEAR AND ANXIETY**, DISTRACTIONS, BUSYNESS, OR UNHEALTHY HABITS. BY INTENTIONALLY ADDRESSING AND ELIMINATING THESE OBSTACLES, WE CREATE SPACE FOR GOD TO WORK IN OUR LIVES, DEEPENING OUR FAITH AND ALLOWING US TO EXPERIENCE HIS TRANSFORMATIVE POWER.



Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock." - Matthew 7:25

+IF YOU STRUGGLE...

**IF YOU STRUGGLE WITH FEAR AND ANXIETY, WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO SEEK HELP FROM A LICENSED MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL OR THERAPIST. BROWSE TO THE BOTTOM OF OUR DAMASCUS.COM/CARE PAGE AND DOWNLOAD THE MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCE GUIDE PDF TO GET STARTED WITH LOCAL & NATIONAL RESOURCES.



BETWEEN US & GOD, AND BETWEEN US & OTHERS

WEEK SEVEN.
~BEARING #7



+AS A CHRISTIAN FAITH COMMUNITY..

WE ALSO WANT TO FIND WAYS TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR OTHERS TO EXPERIENCE THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH AND LEARN ABOUT GOD'S AMAZING LOVE - ESPECIALLY IN THE PERSON AND THE SAVING WORK OF JESUS CHRIST. EARLIER IN OUR SERIES WE LEARNED THAT ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO DO THIS IS TO SERVE OTHERS.

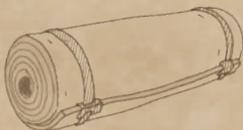
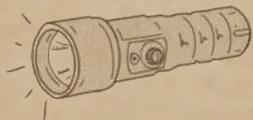
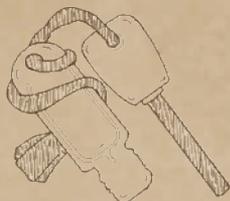
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+HOW?

BY SERVING IN THE BODY OF CHRIST, WITH LOCAL/GLOBAL MISSION PARTNERS, AND OTHER COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS THAT MAKE A POSITIVE IMPACT IN THE LIVES OTHERS AND IN THE QUALITY OF THEIR LIVES. PRACTICING THESE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES IS NOT MERELY A RELIGIOUS OBLIGATION BUT A TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEY THAT ENABLES EACH OF US TO GROW IN OUR FAITH, DEEPEN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD AND OTHERS, AND IMPACT THE WORLD AROUND US - BOTH LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY.

.....



CONSIDER JOINING ONE OF THE CARE GROUPS AT DAMASCUS ROAD: DAMASCUS.COM/CARE

*FOR FURTHER READING ON WHAT SIN IS, BROWSE HERE:
WWW.BIBLESTUDYTOOLS.COM/Dictionary/SIN/



NOTES

WEEK #7



REMOVE BARRIERS!

Day 1. Fear is a potential barrier in the lives of many personally, professionally, and spiritually – God says 365 times throughout the Bible. “Do not be afraid.”*

READ: John 14:27; Isaiah 41:10; 13; Joshua 1:9

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

“I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid.” John 14:27 NLT

*Go to bible.com (YouVersion). Type “Do not be afraid” in the search bar. Select NLT or any easy-to-read version. You can browse the many “Do not be afraid” verses.

**REMOVE
BARRIERS!**

Day 2. Anxiety* (worry) is another potential barrier many struggle with today. God wants us to bring all of our anxiety and worries to Him and to release them.

READ: Philippians 4:6-8; Matthew 6:25-34

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid. ' John 14:27 NLT

*According to ADAA.org, anxiety affects 40 million adults ages 18 and older every year. Get the help you need. Don't go it alone: damascus.com/care. We can point you to licensed professionals.

REMOVE
BARRIERS!

Day 3. Barriers come in many forms, sometimes as cultural traditions and prejudices we've grown up with.

READ: Acts 10:9-48

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

"I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid." John 14:27 NLT



Day 4. The story of Zacchaeus demonstrates Jesus' desire to remove barriers and bring individuals into fellowship (community) with Him.

READ: Luke 19:1-10

REFLECT:

RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

"I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid." John 14:27 NLT

REMOVE
BARRIERS!

Day 5. Division in the Body of Christ can create barriers. God desires unity in community (not uniformity). He also desires we embrace cultural diversity. Both remove barriers.

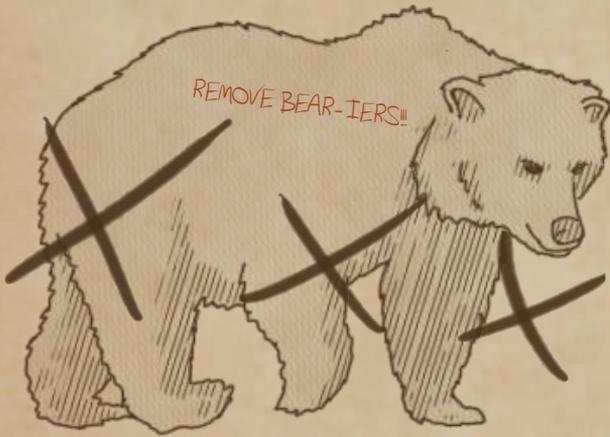
READ: 1 Corinthians 1:10; Galatians 3:28; Ezekiel 47:22-23; Romans 9:25-26; Colossians 3:11

REFLECT:

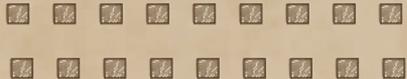
RESPOND:

REMEMBER:

“I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid. ‘ John 14:27 NLT



CONVERSATION STARTERS



CONVERSATION STARTER #1

WHAT ARE SOME COMMON BARRIERS THAT HINDER OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD?

SHARE A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF HOW REMOVING BARRIERS IN YOUR OWN LIFE BROUGHT YOU CLOSER TO JESUS.

CONVERSATION STARTER #2

DISCUSS PRACTICAL STEPS WE CAN TAKE TO REMOVE BARRIERS AND GROW CLOSER TO GOD.

CONVERSATION STARTER #3

DISCUSS THE IMPORTANCE OF ADDRESSING DOUBTS, MISCONCEPTIONS, OR PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS THAT MAY HINDER SOMEONE FROM KNOWING JESUS.

HOW CAN REMOVING BARRIERS HELP NONBELIEVERS BETTER UNDERSTAND JESUS' MESSAGE?



DAMASCUS ROAD COMMUNITY CHURCH
12826 Old National Pike
Mount Airy MD 21754

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