



- JESUS 101 -

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the BEAT...

Someone once said that music is the language of the soul. That's a scary thought if its true. Just think about the music being piped into our souls every day. Musical Artist, Actors and Reality TV are playing the songs that our souls are dancing to!

There's no wonder that this generation of student's is full of lust, anger, depression, isolation, substance abuse and self love. The beat behind these songs scream fulfillment through things and people and self promotion. The beats behind these songs are actually shaping who you are and what you do.

This is maybe the scariest part, You are part of a generation that has been positioned for success like no other generation before and perhaps marching to the wrong beat...

There has never been a time to be more concerned about who or what you soul is dancing to. There has never been a greater reason to pause and consider who or what is actually shaping your soul and what you do.

The Beat is about recognizing that only God can take a generation positioned for success and truly make it successful.

The Beat is about dancing to the music and the words of the God that created you and wants desperately to talk to and through you.

The Beat is about filling your soul with faith, hope, life and love. As you read these pages remember that you have been chosen to dance to the beat of God and your generation has been positioned to change the world.

May your should dance to God's beat!

What's a Devotional?!

A devotional is a time of personal interaction between you and God. It's very different from Life Groups or Element because it's a one-on-one thing: just you and Jesus. It can be as short as 5 minutes or as long as you want.

We've divided it up into different parts to guide you through it...

Read & Reflect:

In this part, you are going to open your Bible to the passage of the day and read it. After reading the passage, read the Reflect section and answer the questions...

Act:

What are you going to do about it? This part challenges you to apply the passage to your life today...

Go Deeper:

Hungry for more? Here you will find more verses you can read...if you want to keep going!

Pray:

Some things you can pray for at the end of your devo.

The Beat

Simply put, the main idea for the day.

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

MONDAY

**day
ONE**

Read
Matthew 1:18-25

Reflect

Sounds like a reality TV show, doesn't it? A teenage girl is pregnant out of wedlock. The difference: she wasn't sleeping around. Mary and Joseph had remained pure, but then...all of a sudden....they found out they were having a baby!

Do you think anyone believed they hadn't slept together?

Everyone assumed they were just fooling around. And in that day, if you had sex before marriage, you were condemned and treated as an outcast. Everyone assumed that's what was going on, but it wasn't true.

What have you assumed about someone that you later found out wasn't true?

God was working in Mary and Joseph, but the people around them couldn't see that. They just saw an unwed, pregnant girl. They assumed the worst. People judged them. In reality, God found favor with Mary and Joseph and chose them for a special honor and privilege: to be the parents to the Savior of the World!

MONDAY

Act

God calls Christians to do things that often appear strange or weird to others. For example: not cussing or drinking, being honest, staying pure, sharing your faith...

What is God calling you to do that others may think is odd?

Mary and Joseph kept moving forward and trusted God's direction, even though they faced great opposition. God wants you to do the same. Trust in his direction. He won't let you down!

Pray

Ask God to give you the courage to move forward in whatever he is calling you to do. Pray that you can be an example to other believers of what it means to follow God's direction under any circumstances. Turn it all over to Him today.

Go Deeper

Memorize these verses about trusting God in all circumstances:

Proverbs 3:5-6
Psalms 27:1

The Beat

Following God means trusting Him in whatever he calls us to do.

TUESDAY

**day
TWO**

Read
Matthew 2:1-12

Reflect

Have you ever waited a really long time for something and felt like it was never going to arrive?

Maybe you're in the waiting process right now. You could be waiting for something trivial like the weekend...or summer! Or, something more serious like your parents getting back together. Sometimes it feels like it will never happen, right?

What would it be like to wait 400 years for God to answer your prayer?

You would be: _____ .

Well, that's how the Jewish people felt as they waited centuries for the Messiah to come. Way back in the Old Testament, God told them he was going to send someone special to come and save them. And then, they had to wait...

...and wait...

...and wait...

Finally, he arrived! Baby Jesus was born at last! After waiting hundreds of years, He had come to Earth! And God's people were so excited.

TUESDAY

Act

Just like God perfectly timed the birth of Jesus, He perfectly times every event in your life - because he knows what's best for you.

He knows exactly where you'll go to college, when you'll meet your future spouse, when you'll get married, and even when you'll die. He knows everything.

Sometimes you wish you could speed up the process and not have to wait. But, while you're waiting, you have the unique opportunity to grow closer to God. God's timeline is different from yours.

What things are you waiting on right now? Make a list below:

-
-
-
-
-

Pray

Commit your list above to the Lord in prayer. Ask for contentment until his timing comes. Pray that you can be excited about God's timing...because it's always better than yours!

Go Deeper

For a more in-depth look at God's timing..

Psalm 31:15

Ephesians 1:4-5

The Beat

Gods timing is always perfect. Trust in it.

WEDNESDAY

**day
THREE**

Read
Luke 2:41-52

Reflect

How would someone describe you to a person you've never met? What kind of words would they use?

Would they be positive or negative? Would they tell of extraordinary things you've done or use you as an example of what not to do?

Jot down what you think they would say:

Today's passage is the only biblical story of Jesus' life as a young teenager (he was 12). It's brief, but powerful.

He is described as an intelligent, young man who impressed the religious leaders of the day. Two things stand out...

- 1. He had a desire to keep learning (2:46).**
- 2. He was obedient to his parents (2:51).**

And the result? He continued to grow in wisdom and in favor with God and man. What a great example!

Act

So what about you? Do you have a teachable spirit and obedient heart?

How do you respond when someone corrects you or asks you to do something you don't want to do? Are you obedient like Jesus, or do you get annoyed?

Are you growing in wisdom by studying your Bible and seeking Godly counsel?

Think about these things, and rate yourself on the chart below (1 means terrible, 5 means amazing). Be honest!

Obedience to authority	1	2	3	4	5
Teachable spirit	1	2	3	4	5
Growing in wisdom	1	2	3	4	5

When you're finished, ask a parent or good friend to review your answers and tell you if they agree with them or not. Spiritual growth requires honesty. Recognize where you are struggling and commit to improve.

Pray

Ask God to help you in the areas you identified. Pray that He will increase your desire to learn more and more about Him, and give you a passion to grow in spiritual wisdom. Ask Him for an obedient heart towards your parents and other authorities.

Go Deeper

Learn more about how to grow spiritually and be obedient:

Joshua 1:8
Exodus 20:12

The Beat

Teenage Jesus had a hunger for spiritual wisdom and an obedient heart. You should too.

It's Journaling **TIME!**

Take a few minutes to journal your thoughts. What's going on in your life? Where do you need God right now?

Wednesday Element **NOTES**

Date:

Speaker:

Notes:

THURSDAY

**day
FOUR**

Read
Matthew 3:13-17

Reflect

Have you ever been to a high school graduation ceremony?

There is so much excitement in the room as the students reflect on their accomplishments and anticipate the entrance of a new era in their lives.

Everyone is celebrating! There are parties before and parties after! The students are totally stoked about their success. And they want everyone to know it. They want to show it off and let everyone know about their big accomplishment.

How are you going to feel when you graduate?

Baptism is kind of like a spiritual graduation ceremony. It's a celebration of what God has done in a believer's heart and a marker of a new beginning. It's an opportunity to show off what God has done in your life.

A graduation ceremony is not what makes you a graduate. Finishing school does. In the same way, baptism does not make you a Christian. It is simply the celebration of your faith in him!

Act

If you are a Christian, have you followed Christ in believer's baptism? If not, identify what is keeping you from doing it? Jot it below:

Are these reasons really valid arguments for not knowing what Christ asks you to do? Talk to a student pastor today about scheduling your baptism!

If you have been baptized, what was your baptism experience like? Who baptized you? When was it? Who was there? Did you celebrate after?

Pray

Thank God for his amazing gift of salvation through Jesus Christ. If you have not been baptized, then ask Him for the courage to be obedient. Thank Him for his awesome faithfulness, today and always.

Go Deeper

Want some more passages about baptism? Here's some:

Romans 6:3-4
Galatians 3:27

The Beat

Baptism is a celebration of what God has done in our hearts.

FRIDAY

**day
FIVE**

Read
Matthew 4:1-11

Reflect

Have you ever fasted before? If not, have you ever been *really* hungry because you hadn't eaten in a long time? What happened?

You got cranky

...and frustrated

...and impatient!

Imagine going FORTY days without any food! FORTY days!

How would you feel...?

This is one of the few passages in the Bible where God has an actual conversation with Satan. Why does Jesus do this to himself?

Why does he go into the middle of the desert, not eat for 40 days and let Satan harass him?

Jesus is showing us that we must go through phases of testing and temptation in order to be able to do great things for him. And although Jesus was physically faint, he was armed with the power of God's Word. He beat Satan, and so can you.

FRIDAY

Act

Satan knows your weaknesses. Body image, greed, patience, the opposite sex?

Write down some lies Satan is telling you...

God allows testing because it increases your faith and prepares you to do something powerful for Him.

If Jesus needed forty straight days of testing before HE could go out and start his ministry, how much more might you need?

Pray

Ask God to give you strength and endurance during your time of testing. Thank Him for the opportunity to be tested because it means you will grow closer to him.

Go Deeper

Check out this verse on how to approach the testing of your faith:

James 1:2-3

The Beat

Testing of your faith is necessary to prepare you to do great things for God.

SATURDAY

**day
SIX**

Read
John 2:1-11

Reflect

Have you ever been to a party where they ran out of food and drinks? Awkward! What if one of the guests took some leftover cracker crumbs and turned them into **fresh kolaches** for everyone?

That would be an unforgettable party!

Mmmmm. Fresh kolaches!

That's essentially what Jesus did in this passage. He took something as basic and plain as water and turned it into fine, expensive (\$\$\$) wine! He made the ordinary extraordinary - completely new and better.

What if you could turn bread crumbs into any food you wanted? What would you turn it into?

This was the first miracle Jesus performed on earth and it points to the real purpose He came - to take ordinary lives and transform them into something extraordinary.

Just like he changed common tap water into fine and expensive wine, He takes sinful, dirty lives and turns them into something beautiful! Something useful for His purpose!

Act

Think about how your life was before you let Jesus come in and clean it out. What was it like?

What about now? What has he done to clean and purify your life?

He wants to remove all the junk and refine it into something amazing. He is in the miracle business. And not just once-in-a-lifetime miracles. He keeps working in lives, making them purer and purer.

Pray

Pray that God will work miracles in your heart today. Ask Him to cleanse you into a fine treasure for Him. Ask Him to take the ordinary in your life and make it extraordinary.

Go Deeper

The big word for purification is called “sanctification.” Learn more about it here:

Romans 15:14-21

The Beat

God wants to continually purify your heart.

SUNDAY

day **SEVEN**

Read
John 2:14-22

Reflect

What is your description of a “bad person”?

What about a “good person”?

Often, Christians think of themselves as the “good people”. And they think non-Christians are the “bad people”. Naturally, when you think about sin and the evilness of the world, your mind pushes it away from Christians and onto the lost world outside the church walls.

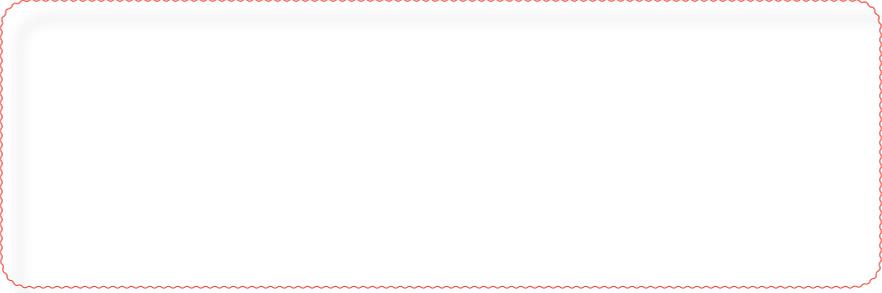
If the bad people are the people outside the church, then why do you think of most Jesus’ teaching was directed towards the “religious” people of that day?

Jesus recognized that many of the people who attended church & were very religious still needed to be cleansed by Him. This is true of believers today. Everyone is sinful. Everyone needs help. Even those who have been walking with Christ for years.

SUNDAY

Act

What area of your life do you need God to come in with a whip and clean out?



The Bible says that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. He hates for sin to live in that temple.

He is very willing to cleanse you of the evil if you will just ask Him.

Pray

Pray for God's cleansing spirit today. Confess your sins to Him and ask Him to replace them with righteousness.

Go Deeper

Memorize these verses about evil:

Proverbs 8:13

Proverbs 29:23

The Beat

Everyone is sinful and needs God's cleansing - even those in church every week.

What stood **OUT?**

This is some space for you write down what God taught you this week and what Bible verses you want to memorize...

Sunday Element

NOTES

Date:

Speaker:

Notes:

MONDAY

**day
EIGHT**

Read
John 3:1-21

Reflect

Have you ever had to solve a *really long* math equation? The kind you have to take step by step in a specific order—first parenthesis, then multiplication, then division, then addition, and exponents, too? If you do the steps out of order or get one section wrong, the whole thing gets messed up! In this passage, Nicodemus asked Jesus about the “steps” to becoming “born again”.

What did Nicodemus think it meant to be born again?

Nicodemus was confused. He was making something really simple, really complicated...

Jesus' answer was amazingly simple. Just BELIEVE. Believe Jesus was God's Son. *That was the only step!* Believe in Jesus. Nicodemus could have a relationship with God and eventually enter the kingdom of heaven by simply believing.

The same is true for you!

MONDAY

Act

What steps have you thought were required for salvation?

Possibly you think you have to act a certain way or do certain things to earn salvation. Maybe you think you have to get it all together before you can come to Him. Read verse 16 again. What does it say you have to do?

Write it down here: _____

That's it! It's not complicated. Don't make it harder than it is. Just believe! When you truly believe that Jesus is God's son, and that He died to pay for your sins, you will be saved and live forever with Him! Tell Him you believe!

Pray

Thank Jesus for making it so easy for you to have a relationship with Him. Tell Him again that you believe with ALL your heart that He is who He says He is - God's son. Trust Him with your life and commit to follow Him in everything you do!

Go Deeper

Read the following verses. Then say it again: I believe!

John 11:25
Acts 16:31
Romans 10:9

The Beat

Salvation is simple - just believe.

TUESDAY

**day
NINE**

Read
John 4:5-42

Reflect

Have you ever been dying of thirst, but couldn't find anything to drink? Recall a time when you were so thirsty you thought you were going to die...

Maybe you tried to quench your thirst with something you had on hand—possibly a piece of gum or a mint. When you finally reached water, you probably drank....

....and drank...

...and drank...

until you felt like your eyeballs were floating! You couldn't drink any more. But then, just a few hours later, you were thirsty again! That's the way your body is made—it needs continual replenishment.

Your favorite drink when you're thirsty: _____

Jesus told the Samaritan woman He had water that would last forever; water that would quench her thirst completely. He wasn't talking about H₂O, but "spiritual water" that would fill her deepest needs and satisfy her continually. Accepting His living water—Jesus himself—would fill her life completely and forever!

TUESDAY

Act

Every person has a gigantic hole in their life that only Jesus can fill. He created you that way. Often, people try to fill this void with stuff-relationships, sports, parties, money - the list goes on and on. But these will never satisfy.

What are some things you've tried to fill your void with?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

When you realize that God is the only who that can fill you completely, then real life begins! Let Him fill you and you'll never run on empty again!

Pray

Ask God to fill you up with his spirit. Pray that you can depend on him and him alone today.

Go Deeper

Other places where people found thirst in God:

Psalm 63:1
John 6:35
John 7:37

The Beat

Only Jesus can fill the void in your life - there is no substitute!

WEDNESDAY

day **TEN**

Read
Matthew 4:18-22
Mark 1:16-20

Reflect

For Simon, Andrew, James and John it was just a normal day. They were doing what they did every day, all day - just fishing. It was their job. But Jesus had other plans for them.

What did he ask them to do?

Jesus called them to do something extraordinary. He wanted them to be His apostles—the ones who would be with Him no matter what. He chose them out of thousands of people.

But Jesus didn't call them to DO anything; rather, He called them to BE something. He called them to be followers of Him.

And what was their response?

They took a big risk, leaving their families, their business - everything they had - to go on the road with Jesus. That took a lot of faith. But they knew Jesus, and they knew they could trust Him. And their decision paid off - their faith grew, and the gospel spread.

What if they hadn't followed Him...?

Act

What does a normal day look like for you? Jot down your schedule:

- | | |
|------------|----|
| 1. Wake Up | 5. |
| 2. | 6. |
| 3. | 7. |
| 4. | 8. |

Right now, you probably spend most of your time in school. You may feel like you don't have much going on...that you're hardly noticed... that you don't make a difference. But the reality is that the Lord wants to use you to do so something extraordinary- just like He did the fishermen in today's passage!

No matter what happens in your day today, just follow Him.

Trust Him for what the day will hold. Know He's right there with you. He'll see you through whatever happens and lead you to where He wants you to be!

Pray

Thank Jesus for using ordinary people to do extraordinary things. Ask Him to show you where he is working around you today, and give you the opportunity to join Him. Thank Him for being trustworthy and trust Him with whatever happens today.

Go Deeper

Learn more about how to follow him:

Mark 8:34-38
John 10:27-30

The Beat

God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things! They just have to be available.

It's Journaling TIME!

Take a few minutes to journal your thoughts. What's going on in your life? Where do you need God right now?

Wednesday Element **NOTES**

Date:

Speaker:

Notes:

THURSDAY

day **ELEVEN**

Read
Matthew 4:23-35
Mark 1:35-39

Reflect

Did you have time for this devotion today? In the back of your mind are thinking, 'I really need to study or practice or eat or check facebook or...something!' Everyone is busy. Everyone packs their lives full of stuff. And everyone is running on empty.

What things in your life make you busy?

Jesus was a busy man, too! It was His job to change the world (and all the people in it) and He only had three short years to do it. He was on a mission. He had places to go and people to see.

People were seeking Him out in masses - coming to hear Him, to see Him, and to be healed by Him.

With his busy schedule though, what did Jesus take time to do in Mark 1:35?

He was intentional. He got up early. He got alone. He removed his distractions. He had a lot to do, but He never tried to do it without seeking God first.

If Jesus spent time with God, shouldn't you?

Act

How are you doing spending time with God? Are you making it your first priority? Are you totally focusing on Him?

What distractions do you need to remove so you can really spend time with God?

-
-
-

When and where will you commit to spend time with God this week? Mark it on your calendar...and don't stand Him up!

Write it down here: _____

Get quiet, get still and focus on Him. Then he'll give you direction and purpose - and you'll have peace. Put the most important thing first and everything else will fall into place.

Pray

Ask the Lord to help you slow down and get quiet. Let him clear your mind of all the stuff that's going on in your life. Once your mind is cleared, tell Him you're ready to hear from Him. Ask him for guidance. Listen to His voice...you have to be quiet to hear it.

Go Deeper

Read **Matthew 6:5-14**. Note how you should pray and what you should pray for.

The Beat

Spending quality time with Jesus means removing distractions and focusing on Him.

FRIDAY

day **TWELVE**

Read
Matthew 9:9-13
Luke 5:27-32

Reflect

They were scum-balls and everyone knew it. They had tons of money, but only because they cheated poor people out of their last dollar. Everyone hated them. They lied, cheated, and stole from the poor.

And Jesus wanted to spend time with one of them...named Matthew.

He was a lying, cheating, and ruthless tax collector. It made absolutely no sense!

How do you think people reacted when they saw Jesus eating with the tax collectors?

How would your friends react if you started hanging out with someone like this?

Why would Jesus want to hang out with one of these people? Wouldn't he rather hang out with the good people, like the Pharisees?

Well, that's just who Jesus is. He loves those who are totally unlovable - at least by the world's standards. He wants to spend a whole bunch of time with them, invest in them, and transform them.

And that's how he want's you to live, too!

FRIDAY

eAct

Is there someone in your world that is absolutely unlovable, unbelievable annoying, or just plain mean? Maybe you know someone who has so many “issues” that you just don’t want to be around them?

Write their name(s) in the space below:

Think about how Jesus would treat these people. Would you consider treating them the same way? What is something you can do to make a difference in this person’s life today? Go out of your way to talk to them? Tell them about Jesus? Do something nice for them?

Write down how you can make a difference:

Pray

Admit to Jesus that you’re no better than the worst person you know. Thank Him for loving you, despite your sin. Ask Him to help you love the person (or people) you’ve identified above. Ask Him to open your eyes to other Matthews in your world today.

Go Deeper

Read **1 Corinthians 6:8-11** for more perspective about the unlovable.

The Beat

You can be Jesus to the unlovable by obediently doing what he asks you to do.

SATURDAY

day **THIRTEEN**

Read
Mark 3:13-19
Luke 6:12-15

Reflect

One of the most important decisions Jesus made during His time on earth was the calling of His apostles. He had many followers, but He knew He needed a select few that He could really count on. So, He hand-picked twelve to be his closest disciples - His apostles.

These men would see Him at His high times and his low times. Together, they would change the world.

How do you think Jesus went about deciding who would make the list?

This was a serious decision for Jesus. Look back at Luke 6:12 to see how He prepared himself for the process of naming His apostles. What does the Bible say He did, to whom, and for how long?

He _____ to _____ all _____ !

Wow! Again, Jesus gets alone with God.

He literally spent all night praying about the decision at hand. Jesus was around thousands of people every day. Surely He had some wise people He could ask advice from, but did He? No. He removed all the distractions and opinions. And His Father revealed the twelve to Him.

SATURDAY

Act

During the course of your lifetime, you will make many decisions - some bigger than others. How you make those decisions is up to you.

What does your current decision-making process look like?

Do you seek advice from friends, research options on the internet, go with what “feels right” or make a list of pros and cons? If you learn to follow Jesus’ example, you will find that your decisions lead to healthier results.

So do what Jesus did. Go to God first. Ask for wisdom and direction. Just listen, read his Word, and He will speak to you.

Pray

Ask for God’s direction in every decision you face. Listen and follow His leading. Thank Him for guiding you and be confident in following the direction he gives you.

Go Deeper

Check out these Scriptures about how God will lead when you ask him:

Isaiah 30:21
Philippians 2:13

The Beat

God wants you to seek Him at all times, especially in the decisions you make.

SUNDAY

day FOURTEEN

Read
Matthew 6:19-34

Reflect

Today's passage is from one of Jesus' most famous sermons recorded in Scripture - the Sermon on the Mount. What He said in this sermon absolutely turned the crowd's world upside down. It was a radical shift in the way that they thought - a new way of living.

It all boils down to one principle that is repeated again and again in Scripture. Look towards the end of the passage and see if you can find it.

Write the principle below:

It's something Jesus modeled over and over again for his followers. It was the first thing Jesus told the disciples to do - it was what He did every day as a part of His life?

Got it?

It is to follow Him...to make Him top priority and to be with Him.

Can it be any clearer than that? He wants to be first.

In verse 33, what does it say?

Seek _____ .

SUNDAY

Act

Are there some things in your life that you are prioritizing ahead of Christ? If you are constantly worrying about something (maybe what you wear, what you drive, who you're with, etc), then you may need to take a closer look at your priorities.

List some things you may need to shift down in your priorities:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Following Christ is really simple. Just put Him first. Maybe you've always thought the Christian life was more complicated than that. There's no need to worry about anything else but your relationship with Him. Start practicing that today and you will see that He will take care of the rest. Don't worry - He's got you covered!

Pray

Tell God that you want Him to be your first thought no matter what happens. Commit to follow Him and only Him. Thank Him for taking care of all the details in your life.

Go Deeper

Read the entire Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 5-7

The Beat

Being a God follower means putting him first in everything.

What stood **OUT?**

This is some space for you write down what God taught you this week and what Bible verses you want to memorize...

Sunday Element

NOTES

Date:

Speaker:

Notes:

MONDAY

**day
FIFTEEN**

Read
Luke 7:36-50

Reflect

Think of the worst person you know - someone everybody considers “bad news”. This person may have done some really awful things in their past or they may just continually make poor choices.

Their life could be characterized by gossiping, drinking, sleeping around, rebellion, partying, cheating or stealing.

**Who do you think of and what do
people say about them?**

How would you feel if that person walked into church Sunday, went straight up to the pastor, cried uncontrollably and said “**I’m so sorry for all I have done! Help me! I need Jesus!**”

How would you react? Would you say they don’t deserve forgiveness? You might question their motives.

In today’s passage, the Pharisees judged the sinful lady based on her previous actions - she was bad and everyone knew it. But the Pharisees couldn’t see her heart.

Jesus, however, saw beyond her poor choices and looked through to her heart. He saw her love for Him and her remorse for the things she had done.

MONDAY

Act

God loves people, despite the bad things they say, do, or think. He doesn't like the sin, but he loves the sinner.

Think about some people in your classes, neighborhoods, or on your teams who are labeled "bad news".

Write their names below...

Today, spend some time thanking Jesus for His forgiveness and then practice forgiving others. Realize you are no different from these people - everyone is a sinner.

Don't be a Pharisee and judge them. Be like Jesus and love them!

Pray

Thank God for His forgiveness and spend some time confessing your sins. Ask God to show you people today who need His forgiveness. Seek courage from Him to reach out to them.

Go Deeper

Check out these verses about God's forgiving heart:

1 John 1:9
Psalms 19:12-14

The Beat
God loves and forgives sinners, so you should too!

TUESDAY

**day
SIXTEEN**

Read
Matthew 8:23-27

Reflect

Have you ever been in a boat during a storm? If not, go to YouTube and search “Two Fishing Boats get caught in a massive current.” Now imagine you are in that boat.

Waves crashing on all sides.

Thunder roaring in the sky.

The boat rocking violently from side to side.

Now imagine Jesus is asleep in the cabin. What would your reaction be when the waves start rising over the boat?



Like the disciples on the boat in Matthew, would you scream...

“WE’RE GOING TO DIE!”

When you are in the midst of a storm (literal or not), it’s easy to forget how big and awesome God is. He not only controls the wind, waves, and the sea but He controls every little detail of your life.

God is all powerful. He’s all knowing. He’s never surprised. There is nothing stronger than God.

So why worry? Why doubt? How big is your faith?

TUESDAY

Act

Think about a storm in your life right now. Write it below and acknowledge that Jesus is in control of it.

Once Jesus calmed the storm, the disciples were amazed at Him. Won't you be marveled at God in your own storm? Stand back and watch Him calm your storm.

As you go through your day, remember that God is in control of it all.

Believe with all faith that He still has the power to calm your storm today!

Pray

Release all your storms to Him today. Spend time telling God how amazing He is. Thank Him that He is in control so you don't have to be. Pray that you can focus on his power and strength.

Go Deeper

Watch the "Indescribable" video series by Louie Giglio on Youtube. Check it out!

The Beat

God owns and controls everything!

WEDNESDAY

day
SEVENTEEN

Read
Matthew 9:18-26

Reflect

Have you ever watched *Fear Factor*?

Would you go on the show? It would require a lot of faith to be a contestant: faith in the equipment (when you are catapulted off a 10-story building), faith in your partner (who eats snakes off of your body), and faith in the producers (that they won't kill you).

Faith is a crazy word.

Think about it for a minute. What is faith to you?

To me, faith is _____

The Bible defines faith as "being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see" (Hebrews 11:1). In this passage, who were the two people who sought Jesus, even though they couldn't see?

1.

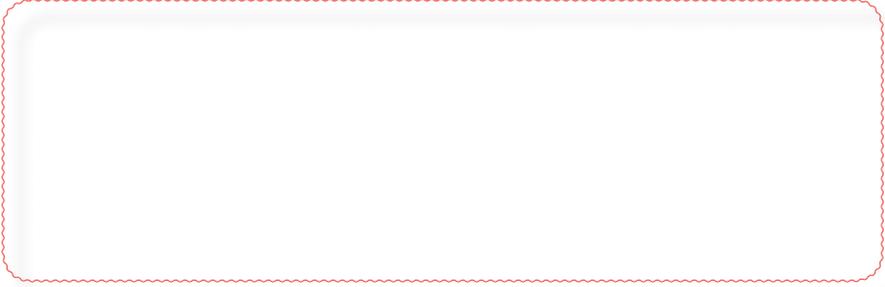
2.

The father of the dead girl and the lady who had been bleeding for 12 years were desperate people. They were seeking Jesus because they knew he could heal their situations. They knew one touch from the master could heal.

The truth is that nothing can heal completely except for Jesus. Do you have faith in him to make you well?

Act

Identify the things/ people you run to when you need healing...



Realize that nothing in this world can heal you!

Determine to make God your immediate “go to” when you are in need. Talk to a Christian friend or youth leader about what God has shown you through these verses.

Pray

Tell God you are sorry for not coming to Him first. Talk to Him about all of the things you need that require faith. Ask Him to increase your faith in Him and heal specific areas of your life.

Go Deeper

Read **Hebrews 11**. List the people who had faith and why such strong faith was required.

The Beat

Seeking Jesus in genuine faith produces complete healing.

It's Journaling **TIME!**

Take a few minutes to journal your thoughts. What's going on in your life? Where do you need God right now?

Wednesday Element **NOTES**

Date:

Speaker:

Notes:

THURSDAY

day EIGHTEEN

Read
Mark 6:31-44

Reflect

You have probably heard about this miracle before. Have you ever noticed what Jesus told the disciples to do at the very beginning of the passage? Take a look back at verse 31.

What does he say?

Jesus was preparing them to do something huge! So, he tells his disciples to take a break - to come away and spend some time with Him. And they did.

You may not realize it, but Jesus was a rock star. Everywhere he went, the crowds followed Him. The paparazzi pursued Him. They wanted to see him, touch him, and hear him speak.

What celebrities are like that nowadays?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

But he didn't do this miracle. He let his disciples have a role in this one. When they were obedient and did what He said, they witnessed a miracle. And their faith must have grown tremendously! Can you imagine being one of them?

THURSDAY

Act

Are you finding time to rest so that God can use you? Take a few minutes to rest.

Turn off your phone. Turn off your computer and your iPod. Just lay in the quiet for a few minutes.

Go...

Are you making yourself available to participate in his miraculous activity? When you are available and obedient, He will use you in a miraculous way! What is he asking you to do today?

Pray

Spend some time away from all of your stuff being silent before God. Tell Him your needs and trust Him to provide. Ask Him to show you how you can be part of His miracles.

Go Deeper

Search the book of Acts for other miracles done by the apostles.

The Beat

By resting and listening to Him, you can be a part of His miraculous activity.

FRIDAY

day
NINETEEN

Read
Mark 6:45-52

Reflect

The disciples had just witnessed Jesus feeding over 5,000 people. Now, Jesus sends them out on the lake so they can get some rest while He seeks his Father.

Jesus decides to take a stroll on the water; the disciples see Him and they freak out. Can you imagine what they felt like? They're in total darkness, the wind is whipping up around them, they're working to move the boat and...

JESUS IS WALKING ON WATER!

Why didn't they immediately recognize Jesus? They'd spent so much time with him. They'd eaten food that he'd produced out of nowhere! Yet they don't realize who he is until he speaks. And even then they were surprised.

After all they'd witnessed, how could they be surprised by this?

Look at verse 52. What does it say about their hearts?

THEIR HEARTS WERE _____ .

What about you? Is your heart so negative that you don't recognize God even though He's approached you over and over again? When God does something amazing in your life, do you acknowledge that it is Him or is your heart too hard to realize?

FRIDAY

Act

Today it's time for a heart check. God is at work around you. Write about the last time you witnessed His work in your life:

If you're not seeing Him in your life, then ask yourself the following:

1. Has something happened that has caused my heart to be hard towards God?
2. Am I too self-absorbed to acknowledge His presence in my circumstances?
3. Am I too busy to notice where he is working around me?
4. Do I need to evaluate whether or not I really know him?

If your heart is hard, cynical, or angry at God, think about why. In Ezekiel 36:26 God says "And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you." Claim this promise. Then look for God and recognize Him - He's walking beside you, too!

Pray

Talk to God about your heart condition. Ask Him to change your heart. If something has caused your heart to be negative, talk to God about it. Trust that He is there for you.

Go Deeper

Do a study on the heart. Read any of the following:

Psalms 139:23-24

Jeremiah 17:9

Ezekiel 12:34

The Beat

If you will ask Him, God will give you a soft heart that can see him.

SATURDAY

**day
TWENTY**

Read
Matthew 16:13-20

Reflect

If someone walked up to you today and asked, “Who do you say Jesus is?” how would you respond?

Write your honest answer...

(Not “Who is Jesus?” but “Jesus is...”)

Who is Jesus to you? Everyone should answer that question a little differently because they’ve had different experiences with Jesus and learned varying things about Him. It’s a very personal question.

In today’s passage, Jesus asks Peter that question. And Peter replies: “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

He finally got it. Unlike what others were saying (‘John the Baptist’, ‘Elijah’, ‘a prophet...’), Peter knew who Jesus was. Peter knew Jesus personally.

Peter had a authentic relationship with Christ, so he would spend eternity with Jesus. What about you? Who is Jesus to you? What does your personal relationship with Jesus look like?

SATURDAY

Act

If you can say that Jesus is your personal Savior, then take a survey at **your school** or in **your neighborhood** today.

Ask everyone you see...

**WHO DO YOU SAY JESUS IS?
CAN I TELL YOU WHO JESUS IS TO ME?**

If you can only tell *about* Jesus, but not speak of who He is to you, then talk to your LifeGroup teacher or one of the student pastors about getting to know Him.

He might be looking straight into your heart today asking, "Can I be the Lord and ruler of your life?"

Will you let him?

Pray

Thank Jesus for who He is to you. When you are struggling, tell Him about it and seek his comfort. Let His knowledge and wisdom help you make sense out of this crazy world. Acknowledge that He is the Christ, the Son of the Living God!

Go Deeper

Verse 14 describes who others thought Jesus was: Elijah, John the Baptist, & Jeremiah. Find out who these three men were and what how they resembled Jesus.

The Beat

Jesus can be your Savior - just acknowledge who He is!

SUNDAY

day
TWENTY
ONE

Read
Matthew 16:21-26
Luke 9:22-25

Reflect

Have you ever thought about your thoughts? **Huh?** Seriously... have you ever considered what you think about all the time? The human brain averages **70,000 thoughts** per day!

That's a lot of thinking. So the question is...

What are you thinking about all day long?

For 1 minute...turn off your music, TV, computer, silence your phone and sit in the quiet.

What's on your mind right now?

List it here...

What does your mind start thinking about? Why?

What is Jesus' mind set on in this passage? And what about Peter's? What does Jesus say our minds *should* be set on? Do you see a common thread in each of their thoughts? Jesus was focused on his death. Peter was criticizing Jesus for even thinking about dying for us, and then Jesus tells us that's what the Christian walk is all about...denying ourselves and losing our lives for Him.

SUNDAY

Act

Think about your thoughts....

What are the top 3 things you think about?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Set your phone alarm to go off in an hour. When you hear the alarm, think about how you are reflecting Christ wherever you are at that moment.

Look around you. Ask God how He wants you to lose your life for Him just in that moment. Is it praying for someone? Talking to a nearby person? Spending time with your family?

Pray

Thank God for your mind! Tell God about thoughts you are struggling with. Ask God to take control of your mind and refocus your thoughts on Him and to teach you how to lose your life for Him.

Go Deeper

Read **Philippians 4:8**. What should our minds be set on, according to this verse?

The Beat

Jesus gave his life for us. We can lose our lives for him.

What stood **OUT?**

This is some space for you write down what God taught you this week and what Bible verses you want to memorize...

Sunday Element

NOTES

Date:

Speaker:

Notes:

MONDAY

day
TWENTY
TWO

Read
Mark 9:2-13

Reflect

Have you ever thought you knew someone really well, but then found out something that totally changed the way you thought about them?

Who was it and what happened?

That's what happened to Peter, James, and John. They were Jesus' closest friends - they thought they knew Him very well.

Jesus picked them - and only them - to go up on the mountain with Him. He wanted them to catch a glimpse of what God, His Father, was really up to in His life. But they were confused. What he told them was different than what they previously believed.

They thought Jesus was going to establish his kingdom here on earth, during their lifetimes - but they were wrong...

Since the time of Moses and Elijah, God has been working on a plan for Messiah to come and save people from their sins. Jesus was that Messiah. Jesus was prepared to live out God's perfect plan, even if the disciples didn't fully understand.

MONDAY

Act

As you get to know Jesus better, He will reveal things to you just like He did to Peter, James, and John.

What has He shown you about Himself lately?

When you begin to mature in your spiritual walk, you will probably be convicted of habits or choices that He wants to change so you can become more like Him. What might He be convicting you of right now?

Write it down here: _____

Your Heavenly Father is a Faithful God. He wants to declare Jesus Christ to your friends. Be real and honest with them about your faith.

Pray

Ask Jesus to forgive you for any way you may hide your relationship with Him from your friends. Pray each and every day for Him to remind you of the courage and confidence you have in his son, Jesus Christ.

Go Deeper

Read **1 John 1 & 4** and see how others can know if your faith is real.

The Beat

God is faithful. Choose to be real and honest about your faith.

TUESDAY

day
TWENTY
THREE

Read
Matthew 17:24-27

Reflect

Have you ever had to do something that you thought was beneath you?

Maybe you were assigned a nasty chore or suffered a group punishment for an offense you had nothing to do with. Recall something that comes to mind. How did you feel about it?

Explain your feelings below:



In today's passage, Jesus - God's only Son - was asked to pay taxes. That would be like having to pay a tax for living in your parent's home, right?

But Jesus looked beyond the tax collector's ignorance and chose instead to pay them. He didn't argue, complain or defend Himself. Rather, He humbled Himself and produced the money.

He did what He wasn't required to do.

By doing so, He gained entrance into their world and an opportunity to share God's love.

TUESDAY

Act

How can you humble yourself, do something beneath you, and gain an opportunity to share God's love? Maybe you can clean up somebody else's mess, be a peacemaker with arguing friends, or wear no-name clothing around those who can't afford it.

Think about something you can do **TODAY** and write it below:

Humility makes you approachable, where pride makes you untouchable. Jesus had a heart for people and showed it in His humility.

What are you willing to do for someone else to know God's love?

Pray

Ask God to break you of your pride. Seek humility in Him and you will find it. Pray for the hearts of those within your circle of influence. They need Jesus, and they need you to be Jesus to them. Pray for boldness!

Go Deeper

To see more of how Jesus walked with humility, read:

Philippians 2:1-11

The Beat

God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

WEDNESDAY

day
TWENTY
FOUR

Read
John 9:1-16

Reflect

Have you ever thought life was unfair?

Why do bad things happen to good people? Why are babies born unhealthy? Why are some born rich and others poor?

What is going on in your life now that seems unfair?



There are so many questions why and Jesus has the answer in today's passage...

“BUT THAT THE WORKS OF GOD MIGHT BE DISPLAYED...”

The man in John 9 was born blind, not because of something bad he or his parents had done, but so the works of God could be seen in him. Because of his blindness, many people were given the chance to know Jesus and see His works displayed.

It may feel like God is absent in your current situation, but He is actually working right in the midst of it. He actually uses things that may seem awful to draw people closer to Him. You can trust His heart, even when life seems difficult to understand.

Act

Difficult circumstances in life often open the door for real conversations about Jesus...

What opportunity might your current situation provide for you to talk to someone about Jesus?



When you are in a different place, try to see Him at work in it. Make sure you are allowing God to use both your strengths and weaknesses for His glory and the good of others.

Pray

Ask God to open your eyes, so you might see His mighty hand at work both in your life and the lives of others. Pray for wisdom and the right words to share with your friends and family members when they face difficult circumstances.

Go Deeper

Read **Isaiah 29:18** and see why the Pharisees and high priests were upset when Jesus healed a blind man...

The Beat

All things, fair and unfair, can be used for the glory of God.

It's Journaling **TIME!**

Take a few minutes to journal your thoughts. What's going on in your life? Where do you need God right now?

Wednesday Element **NOTES**

Date:

Speaker:

Notes:

THURSDAY

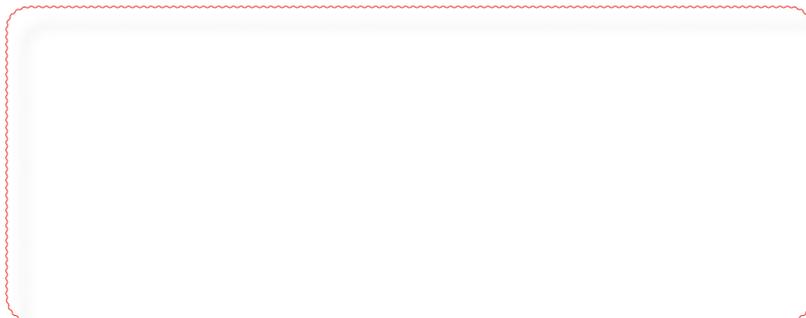
day
TWENTY
FIVE

Read
Luke 10:38-42

Reflect

Do you realize by taking time to read this devotion you are being a “Mary”? You have chosen to press pause on everything that’s going on in your life, set it all aside for a moment, and spend some intentional time with Jesus.

What has He been teaching you?



Like Martha in today’s Scripture, your friends or family may not understand your need to be still and reflect on the truth of God’s Word. But, just like Jesus was pleased with Mary’s choice to sit and listen to Him, He is pleased when you take time for Him.

He wants to teach you and to spend time with you.

That means you have to be still and listen - and remove the things that distract you. He wants your full attention. He is jealous for your time. He cherishes every moment with you.

Won’t you give him your best?

THURSDAY

Act

Are you being intentional about spending time with Jesus?

What distractions keep you from Him? List below:

Give these things to the Lord and tell Him that you want Him over all of them. Choose to make your relationship with Him a priority.

Invite a friend to join in this commitment, so that you can be accountable and share what you're learning. Call them today.

Name that person here: _____

Pray

Praise Jesus for Who He is and the truth of His Word. Thank Him for loving you first and choosing a relationship with you. Humbly seek to know Him more and bask in the wonder that He already knows you completely!

Go Deeper

Read **James 1:19-25** and be challenged to not only be a hearer of God's Word, but a doer as well.

The Beat

Jesus, your loving Savior, is approachable.
Make him a priority.

FRIDAY

day
TWENTY
SIX

Read
John 11:1-44

Reflect

Isn't it awesome to know that you have a Savior who understands what it feels like to lose someone close to you?

Sometimes it's easy to forget that Jesus, who was fully God, was also fully man. Just like you, He experienced hurt, pain, and loss. Lazarus was one of Jesus' best friends and he was dead. Verse 35 shows Jesus' humanity when it says...

"JESUS WEPT."

He was sad for Lazarus' death, for Mary and Martha's pain, and for their lack of faith. They thought Jesus could heal Lazarus from sickness, but not from death.

DIDN'T THEY KNOW WHO HE WAS?!

Jesus understands your pain. He knows how you feel. He has experienced this life. But, because He is God, He can take the most hopeless situation and reveal His glory and goodness in it.

Martha, Mary, and the other Jews didn't understand why Jesus didn't come running when they called; why He chose to wait.

JESUS HAD A BETTER PLAN.

But they had to trust Him and roll away the stone. There will be times in your life when it will be difficult for you to understand too, but trust God's time and plan!

FRIDAY

Act

Are there places in your life where you are hurting?

If so, jot them down...

Roll away the stone and reveal these hurts; trust Jesus to heal them. Be encouraged and know that He loves you and is working... even if you can't feel his presence.

Seek a trusted, Christian friend to share with and ask your friend to pray with you. Believe and know that there is a time to mourn, but a time is coming to dance with joy once again.

Pray

Thank Jesus for being a compassionate and loving Savior. Praise Him for being there in both the good and difficult times in your life. Talk to Him about how you're really doing and feeling right now. Seek to understand His ways and timing.

Go Deeper

Read **Ecclesiastes 3:1-8** and **2 Timothy 2:13** and see God's promised faithfulness for every season of your life.

The Beat

Jesus wants to be glorified in your life, even in the hard times.

SATURDAY

day
TWENTY
SEVEN

Read
Luke 18:18-30

Reflect

List below what you think you have given up to follow Jesus:

-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-

Saying “yes” to Jesus and choosing to follow him means walking away from others who make poor choices. It also means leaving behind bad habits that may not be pleasing to Him.

In today’s Scripture, a rich man asked Jesus how he could gain eternal life. He had followed all of God’s laws since birth. He was a “good person”...

But Jesus cut straight to the young man’s heart. Jesus knew the man was wealthy and that his possessions were the most important thing to him. The man couldn’t fathom leaving his “things” to follow Jesus. He couldn’t give Jesus everything.

It doesn’t matter to Jesus whether you are rich or poor...what matters to Him is **your heart**. And He wants all of it. If you are focused on stuff, then you can’t completely follow Him. Jesus gave up everything He had for you - to the point of sacrificing His own life.

Doesn’t He deserve everything you have?

SATURDAY

Act

Are there things in your life that you are holding back from the Lord? If He asked you today to leave everything behind and follow Him...

...what would you have trouble letting go of?

Jesus already knows what you are keeping from Him. Commit to give Him everything you have and who heartedly follow Him. Do a spiritual check up and make sure your relationship with Him is serious and not just a social encounter.

There is a promised blessing for those who choose a relationship with Jesus over the things of the world. You can't have both. You must choose.

Pray

Ask God to forgive you for the ways you have chosen this world over your relationship with Him. Talk to Him about the distractions in your life and ask Him to show you how to submit every area of your life to Him.

Go Deeper

To fully grasp the way God wants you to love, check these verses out:

Matthew 22:37-40
Exodus 20:5-6

The Beat

God is a jealous God. You must follow Him with your whole heart.

SUNDAY

day
TWENTY
EIGHT

Read
Mark 10:46-52

Reflect

Did you notice that Bartimaeus was not always blind? In verse 51, what does he say to Jesus?

“Let me _____ my sight.”

Interesting, isn't it? He didn't ask for Jesus to give him sight. He asked Jesus to “recover” his sight. That means he used to have it, but he lost it somehow...

Have you ever become blind to something you could once see?

Perhaps when you were younger, or maybe just a few months ago, your eyes were opened to Jesus Christ and His great love for you. You learned about how He died on the cross for your sins and rose again so might choose to accept his forgiveness and live for His glory, rather than your own.

Have you lost sight of God's promises and the importance of your relationship with Him? Maybe you've made some poor choices, become lazy about your time with Him, or you've just lost your excitement. Well, just like Bartimaeus....

You can abandon your pride and rush to Jesus for fresh clear perspective.

He is ready to grant you mercy, forgiveness and healing! Just ask Him to restore your zest for Him today. He will heal you!

SUNDAY

Act

If you have become blind to God, try to identify what has blinded you:

Don't let Satan keep you from crying out to God. Your sin, no matter what it is, will never be greater than God's love and forgiveness for you.

Allow Jesus to open your eyes once again to His saving grace and healing hand.

If you will just ask, He promises to create in you a new heart and restore in you a new joy.

Pray

Thank God for His healing grace. Ask forgiveness for your unbelief, poor choices, and selfish pride. Ask Him to help your unbelief and guide your steps of obedience to His Word.

Go Deeper

Read these passages below and know that God is always there:

Genesis 17:1-2
Psalm 51:10-17
1 Chronicles 28:9

The Beat

God gives sight to the blind if they will just seek Him.

What stood **OUT?**

This is some space for you write down what God taught you this week and what Bible verses you want to memorize...

Sunday Element

NOTES

Date:

Speaker:

Notes:

MONDAY

day
TWENTY
NINE

Read
Luke 19:1-10

Reflect

Have you ever fought your way through a crowd to get something?

Perhaps you were trying to get a good seat in a sold-out theater or grab a must-have bargain off a sale rack. When you push through a crowd, it's because you really want something.

Zacchaeus really wanted to see Jesus. So, he made an extra effort. Instead of just standing there, waiting and hoping he would get a glimpse, he took action. Look at the verbs in this passage. He was **SEEKING**, he **RAN**, he **CLIMBED**. He was not passive—he was active!

He was determined. He pushed through the crowd, climbed up a tree and he finally saw Jesus. And the best part—Jesus saw him. Immediately, Jesus recognized Him, called him out, and went and stayed with him.

So, how about you? Are you pushing past your distractions to spend time with Jesus? Rate yourself below (5 is best)...

My Hunger for God's Presence: 1 2 3 4 5

Spending Daily Time with God: 1 2 3 4 5

My Confidence in God's Voice: 1 2 3 4 5

MONDAY

Act

Look at the chart above and think about your answers. Based on this information, where do you need to make some adjustments?

Write what you need to change below:

Maybe you need a consistent place to be alone with God, or you need to remove certain distractions (like phones or computers).

Make an effort to spend time with God, and cast down doubt-filled thoughts such as, “God doesn’t hear my prayers,” “God is too busy to listen to me,” or “I’m wasting my time.” Be confident that when the Holy Spirit draws you to God, God is thrilled to be with you.

Pray

Ask Him to create a hunger in your heart for His presence. Seek His help in recognizing and pushing past distractions that come between the two of you. Ask Him to increase your faith and give you confidence that when you draw near to Him, He will draw near to you.

Go Deeper

Want to learn how to discern God’s voice? Read **Hearing God** by Peter Lord.

The Beat

When you draw near to God, he will draw near to you.

day THIRTY

TUESDAY

Read
Mark 11:2-6

Reflect

Do you ever worry about your future? Do you get anxious about big decisions like what you will do after you graduate?

What's something in your future you find yourself thinking about a lot?

Do you know that God already knows everything that is going to happen in your life? One of His many amazing attributes is that he is omnipotent (a big word for **all-knowing**). He knows what will happen to you 20 minutes from now and 20 years from now!

When Jesus gave His disciples instructions to go untie a colt and bring it to Him, He told them what to say if someone asked them why they were taking it. As it turned out, someone did ask and the disciples responded just like Jesus told them—and they were granted permission to take the colt.

Just like God knew exactly where the colt was and what the owner needed to hear, He knows what's in store for your life. And, He knows the best way for you to face every moment. Nothing takes Him off guard or surprises Him. You don't have to lie in bed at night worrying and stressing about the unknown.

Just like Jesus prepared his disciples for what He knew was about to happen, God will prepare you. Release your life and future to God, and obey Him—He knows the way.

Act

Think about what is worrying you. Is there a decision or situation you are anxious about?

In the space below, write a short letter to God about how you're feeling. Express your trust in Him and then release your concerns to His hands. You can trust Him because He cares for you and knows everything...

Pray

Ask Him to forgive you for worrying. Thank Him for allowing you to cast all your anxiety on Him. Acknowledge that He is all-knowing and ask Him to faithfully direct your steps today and prepare you for tomorrow.

Go Deeper

Do a word search in your Bible (or go to biblegateway.com) for the word "**worry**". Summarize what the Bible says about worrying...

The Beat

Cast all your worries on God and He will direct you.

WEDNESDAY

day
THIRTY
ONE

Read
Matthew 21:28-31

Reflect

Who's the last person in the world that you would ever think could follow Christ?

Guess what? Christ's salvation is available to them too!

In today's reading, Jesus tells a parable to help Christians understand that sometimes in life, people who seem to be obedient to God may not have an obedient heart at all.

IN FACT, THEY MAY NOT BE SAVED AT ALL.

But then some of the rebellious kids, who haven't been raised in church, may eventually come to recognize and repent of their sins and serve God completely.

The reality is, whether you've grown up in church or don't know the first thing about the Bible, EVERYONE has sinned and needs a Savior (Romans 3:23). But sometimes those who've heard the Gospel over and over can miss the point completely; while someone who is a rebellious mess may hear it once and respond with genuine gratitude and obedience.

God is moved by a **repentant heart**—not religious head knowledge!

Act

What about you? Answer these questions honestly:

Do you sometimes think you are better than non-church kids? ____
Do you find yourself labeling people as “good” or “bad”? ____
Have you heard the Gospel so many times that you take it for granted? ____

Don't fall into the trap of labeling certain people as “good” or “bad”.

Everyone is a sinner. If you're guilty of this, repent and ask God to forgive you.

If you've grown tired of hearing about how Christ died for your sins, think about how *your* sin put Christ on the cross. Take a moment to repent for your pride and “religious” attitude.

Let God restore the reality of how awesome salvation really is!

Pray

Ask the Lord to forgive you for the times you've looked down on someone. Acknowledge that your sin put Jesus on the cross just as much as anyone else's. Seek His help in treasuring the Gospel message.

Go Deeper

Think about the unchurched students around you every day. Pray that God will invade their lives. Pray for them each by name.

The Beat

The Gospel message is available to everyone.

It's Journaling **TIME!**

Take a few minutes to journal your thoughts. What's going on in your life? Where do you need God right now?

Wednesday Element **NOTES**

Date:

Speaker:

Notes:

THURSDAY

day
THIRTY
TWO

Read
Matthew 26:14-16

Reflect

The fallen, sinful nature of mankind continually asks...

“WHAT’S IN IT FOR ME?”

That’s what Judas wanted to know.

He was one of Jesus’ closest companions, and for just 30 pieces of silver, he sold Jesus out to the men who wanted Him dead.

Jesus never asked, “What’s in it for me?” His life was a model of selflessness. Everything He did was to serve others, not to gratify or please himself. Even as He hung on the cross in excruciating pain and agony, His focus was on the well being of others—He said...

“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

Luke 23:43

Who do you think your attitude is more like—Judas or Jesus?

Do you approach life looking for what benefits you or do you look for opportunities to serve others?

Are you friendly to *everyone*, or do show preferences? What about your parents or caregivers? Do you appreciate them and show gratitude for all they do for you, or do you just continue to take, take and take some more?

THURSDAY

Act

Get quiet before the Lord and ask, "Is my attitude like Judas or Jesus?" Rate how you are treating the people in your life (1=Judas, selfish; 5= Jesus, selfless). Be honest with yourself:

	Judas				Jesus
Friends	1	2	3	4	5
Parents	1	2	3	4	5
Siblings	1	2	3	4	5
Teachers	1	2	3	4	5
Strangers	1	2	3	4	5
Acquaintances	1	2	3	4	5
Others	1	2	3	4	5

Look at how you're treating people, and evaluate where you need to make some changes.

Moving forward, be mindful of how you treat all people. Be a Jesus, not a Judas.

Pray

Approach the Lord with a repentant heart and ask His forgiveness for being self-focused. Ask Him to help you love everyone the way He does - selflessly. Tell Him to open your eyes to the opportunities around you to love others.

Go Deeper

Read **1 Corinthians 13**. Make a list of the things love "is" and love "is not".

The Beat

Jesus wants you to love like he did - equally and selflessly. *B*

day
THIRTY
THREE

FRIDAY

Read
Matthew 17:26-29

Reflect

Do you live in a neighborhood where all the houses display flags on Memorial Day?

By displaying the flag, the residents are showing how proud they are to be citizens of the great USA—and how much they appreciate all the men and women who sacrificed their own lives for their freedom.

That's kind of how it is with the Lord's Supper. It is a very special act, created by the Lord Jesus Himself, whereby believers can remember the great sacrifice Christ made for them, show their appreciation for His grace, and identify with His body. Just like the American Flag is to be handled with great care, so is the Lord's Supper.

It is a sacred event, meant only for believers.

Although you may think of it as just drinking some juice and eating some bread, it is much, much more than that...

The bread: His body, broken for you

The juice: His blood, spilled for you

By consuming these elements, you are proclaiming with other believers that you have received the gift of His sacrifice by following Him as your Lord and Savior. Through Him, you are one body with Christ and with other believers.

FRIDAY

Act

Think about the last time you took the Lord's Supper. What did it mean to you? Write your experience below:

If you think you have just been going through the motions of the Lord's Supper, without understanding what it really means, then take a few minutes and confess that to the Lord.

The next time you participate, make sure your heart is in the right place. Understand the privilege of being able to share this sacred event with your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

Pray

Express to Him your deep gratitude for painfully sacrificing His life for you. Thank Him for this special way He allows you to reflect on His sacrifice. Ask Him to help you be constantly aware of His grace.

Go Deeper

Read more about the body of Christ, coming together as one (just as we do in the Lord's Supper):

1 Cor.12:12-20

The Beat

The Lord's Supper is a time to remember the great sacrifice he made for us.

SATURDAY

day
THIRTY
FOUR

Read
John 14:15-17

Reflect

Do you ever feel like much of what you get in life is based on your performance?

List some things below that you have to perform or work for:

-
-
-
-
-
-

Sometimes, no matter how hard you try, you just can't be good enough. And you feel like you don't measure up.

Well, here's some good news for you!

God does not use the world's performance-based system to value your worth! He doesn't measure how hard you try to love Him, how good you are every day, or how much you show Him you love Him. He loves you because you're you!

"By grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works..."

Ephesians 2:8-9

His love is free! So what does He want from you? He wants you to accept His gift, be with Him, and to thank Him for His Grace!

SATURDAY

Act

What kind of things do you find yourself doing to earn God's favor?

God's love is a gift that you accept through faith in Him...

ACCEPT THIS GIFT!

Then turn your focus toward loving Him, spending time with Him in prayer, and reading his Word.

Pray

Thank the Lord for His gift of salvation, and for the fact that you don't have to work to earn it. Seek His forgiveness for not resting in His completeness. Thank Him for giving you a helper to live inside you and guide you all the time - the Holy Spirit.

Go Deeper

Start acknowledging the Spirit's presence today. Take a few minutes to write down ways he is at work around you.

The Beat

God loves you because you are you, not because of what you have done.

day THIRTY FIVE

SUNDAY

Read
Matthew 14:32-36

Reflect

In the hours leading up to His crucifixion, Jesus was in agony over what was approaching.

He knew that His Heavenly Father despised sin. In His distress, Jesus asked His Father to spare Him from the suffering if at all possible...

But God didn't spare Him. He sacrificed Him.

Some may conclude that God did not answer Jesus' prayer. But God did answer; and His answer was *no*. More specifically, God's answer was, "Jesus, there is *no other way*."

Jesus had to die—so that you could live!

And there you have it. Many people today insist there is more than one way to a relationship with God. There are numerous religions and belief systems practiced today, all of which have one thing in common—people have to *earn* their acceptance from God by trying to be good or keeping a certain set of rules.

It's not about being good; it's about admitting that you're *not* good, that you need a Savior, and accepting that Jesus *is* that Savior.

Don't be ashamed or afraid to boldly proclaim that Christ is the *only way* to a right relationship with God (John 14:6). A heavy price was paid to make that way possible.

SUNDAY

Act

What would you say to someone who says Christianity is one of many ways to God?



Practice explaining that Christ is the only way.

Be ready to lovingly yet boldly speak up when someone challenges this stance.

Pray

Thank God for sending Jesus to make a way for you to be forgiven and acceptable to Him. Ask Him for boldness to tell others the truth about Christ and salvation through His name alone!

Go Deeper

Do some research on other religions (Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism) and be prepared to explain how Jesus is the only way to salvation.

The Beat

No one comes into relationship with God except through Jesus.

What stood **OUT?**

This is some space for you write down what God taught you this week and what Bible verses you want to memorize...

Sunday Element

NOTES

Date:

Speaker:

Notes:

day
THIRTY
SIX

MONDAY

Read
Matthew 26:47-54

Reflect

Have you ever wondered why Jesus was arrested? Isn't He the all-powerful, all-knowing God? Couldn't He have stopped it?

Jesus certainly had the power to prevent His arrest...

He could have easily commanded armies of Angels to defeat His pursuers, or He could have made himself disappear and reappeared in another country, safe from harm's way. But He allowed Himself to be arrested...

...WHY?

Because He knew that was part of God's plan. He would be arrested, punished (although innocent) and die to pay the price for your sins.

These verses are the beginning of a very important time in Jesus' life, and will ultimately lead to His death on the cross.

As you read through these Scriptures, remember that Jesus didn't have to do this.

He could have prevented it. But He CHOSE to be obedient every step of the way.

He allowed Himself to suffer so that you don't have to. It was His Father's plan to save people and He followed it whole-heartedly.

MONDAY

Act

Obedience means doing what you're told to do, when you're told to do it. It also means doing what you know you're supposed to do, without being told to. True obedience is cheerful—not resentful.

List some areas below where you need to be more obedient:

Jesus was obedient 100% of the time.

Can you say that about yourself? Probably not, because you're not perfect like Him. But, if you have a relationship with Jesus, that should be your goal.

Pray

Ask the Lord to help you be obedient to the authority in your life. Ask Him to show you areas where you are not being completely obedient. Pray for His help in being 100% obedient all the time with cheerful attitude.

Go Deeper

Want to see how obedient Jesus really was? Read:

Matthew 26-27
Philippians 2

The Beat

Be obedient...even when it hurts.

day THIRTY SEVEN

TUESDAY

Read
Mark 15:22-27
Mark 15:37-39

Reflect

Can you imagine seeing all the miracles Jesus performed and then watching Him painfully die on the cross? Many of His followers, disciples, and others must have been so confused...

...Wasn't He the Messiah?
...The one who would rule the world?
...Couldn't He stop it?

When He died, the Bible says that the curtain in the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

Some may read over this and not realize the significance of it. In that day, the temple was where people came to worship. Behind the curtain was a special place called the Holy of Holies—where the presence of God dwelt.

HOLY OF HOLIES FACTS...

- ...Only the Chief Priests could go behind the curtain
- ...The curtain was very thick & tall (approx 60 ft high!)
- ...There, they offered sacrifices for the people's sin
- ...It separated man from God

When Jesus died on the cross, He offered His life as a once-and-for-all sacrifice for man's sin. Because of this sacrifice, God tore the curtain in two, granting open access to Him.

There was no longer separation between us and God.

TUESDAY

Act

How has Jesus' death on the cross changed your life? If you have a relationship with Christ, thank Him for dying on the cross for your sins.

Take a minute & write down when and where you accepted Christ:



If it hasn't changed your life yet, let today be the day!

Pray and ask Jesus to forgive your sins and to come into your life. If you're not sure exactly what to pray or how to do it, ask your life group teacher or one of the student pastors.

Pray

Thank Jesus for paying the price for your sins with His life. Express your gratitude to Him for wanting a relationship with you. Ask Him to help you remember the sacrifice He made for you.

Go Deeper

Want to see all that Jesus endured on the cross? Read **Mark 15** and write down everything that happened to Jesus, leading up to his death.

The Beat

Because Jesus died on the cross, you have direct access to God.

WEDNESDAY

day
THIRTY
EIGHT

Read
John 19:31-37

Reflect

Jesus died a very painful death—the most hideous execution of the time.

Many of His followers were shocked at how He was arrested and killed. But God was not surprised!

In fact, it was His plan all along...

God's perfect plan was to send His Son Jesus to die on the cross so that people could have a relationship with Him. All they have to do is place their trust in Jesus and ask Him to forgive their sins. He is the only way to gain access to God.

Because God wants people to know Jesus is His Son, He talked about Him a lot in the Old Testament, thousands of years before Jesus stepped foot on earth. And, everything He said came true.

Read the following Scriptures and find the prophecies that were fulfilled in today's reading:

Exodus 12:46	1.
Psalms 34:20	2.
Zechariah 12:10	3.

Act

God wants you to believe confidently that Jesus really is who He says He is! Jesus is the Son of God, and He died for the sins of the world.

Write down who you think Jesus is:

Pray

*Thank God for giving you Jesus.
Thank Him for His Word that verifies
who He is. Ask God for restored
confidence in Him.*

Go Deeper

Make a list of all the Old Testament prophecies you can find about Jesus.

The Beat

Be confident that Jesus is the Son of God.
He fulfilled hundreds of O.T. prophecies!

It's Journaling TIME!

Take a few minutes to journal your thoughts. What's going on in your life? Where do you need God right now?

Wednesday Element

NOTES

Date:

Speaker:

Notes:

THURSDAY

day
THIRTY
NINE

Read
Luke 24:1-9
Luke 24:12

Reflect

Can you imagine how they must have felt?

They were on their way to Jesus' tomb to finish preparing His dead body. They will still be shocked by all they had witnessed...

...His trial

...His beating

...His brutal death on the cross

...and the removal of His dead, lifeless body. They got to His tomb, and what a surprise! The giant stone was rolled away, two angels were waiting on them and Jesus was gone! The angels told them the good news:

JESUS IS ALIVE!

This was the first group of people to celebrate Easter!

If you were one of the disciples, and your mind had just been blown away by these events, what would you have done?

Write down the first three things that come to your mind:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Act

You do realize that Jesus is alive, right? He did die. He was dead and buried. And He came back to life!

What did the people in today's passage do when they heard this good news? They went and told EVERYONE!

Who do you need to tell the amazing story of Jesus to?

Make a list of people that need to hear:

-
-
-
-
-
-

Now go and tell them!

Pray

Thank Jesus today for raising from the dead. Praise Him because He is ALIVE! Ask Him to give you the boldness to share His story with others.

Go Deeper

Read **Luke 24 & 24**. Make a timeline of Jesus' death and resurrection.

The Beat

Jesus is ALIVE!

FRIDAY

day
FORTY!

Read
Luke 24:13-35

Reflect

Have you ever been around someone you knew but, for some reason, you didn't recognize them? Or even worse...have you ever had that awkward moment when someone recognized you, but you had no idea who they were?

Jesus was walking along right beside these guys, listening to them talk about Him. They thought He was just a visitor in Jerusalem—they didn't recognize Him.

Why do you think they didn't know who He was?

Look back at the verses and answer the following questions:

What were the people saying about Jesus?

When did they finally recognize Him?
What did they do when they realized it was Jesus?

FRIDAY

Act

Many, many people saw Jesus after His resurrection. And when they saw Him, they went and told others the good news—He's alive!!!!

Yesterday you made a list of people to share Jesus with.

Today, write down when and how you plan to do this:



Pray

Praise God because He is ALIVE! Ask Him to give you the boldness to share His story with others. Pray that God will give you the opportunity to share his story today!

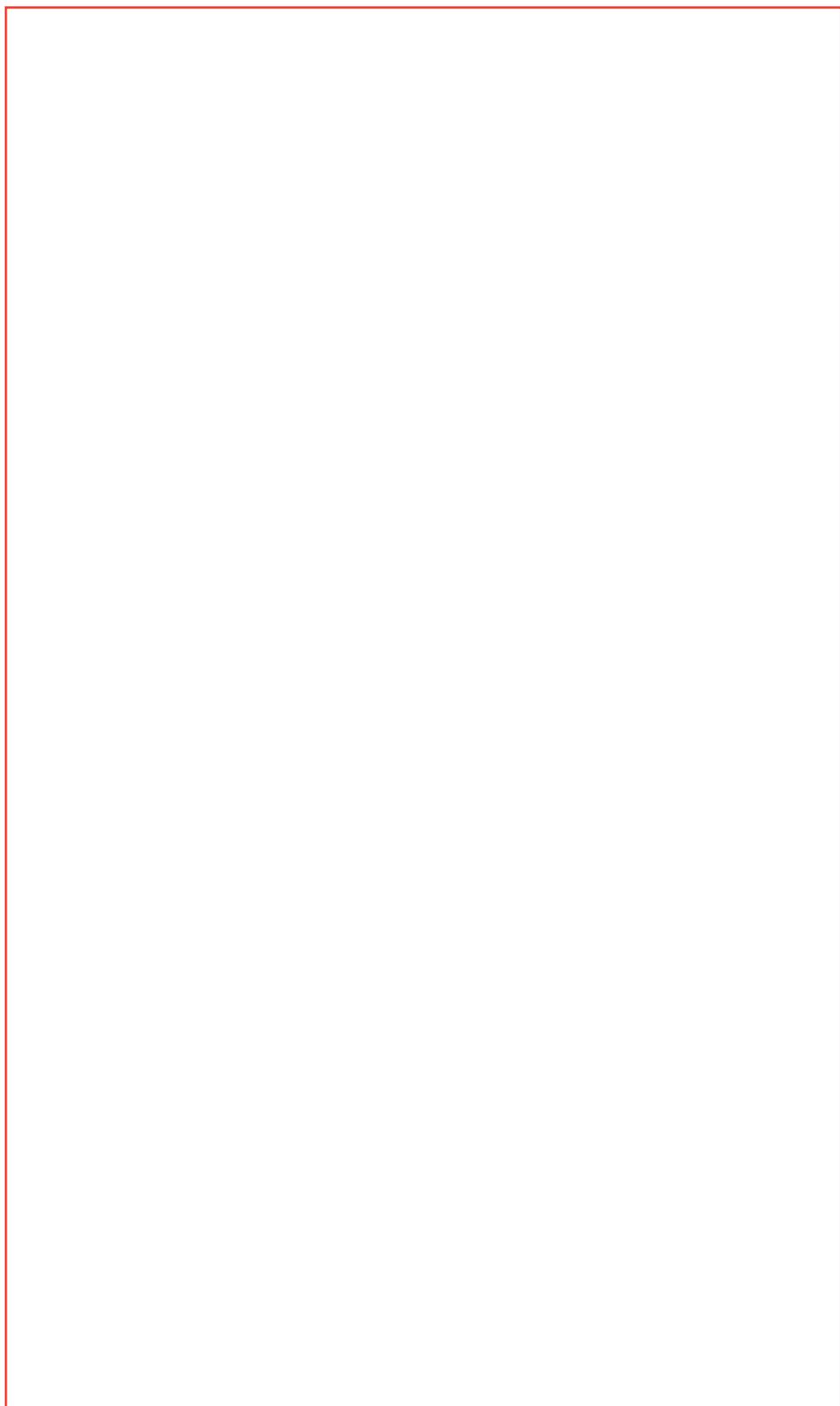
Go Deeper

Share the story of Jesus to one of your friends today.

The Beat

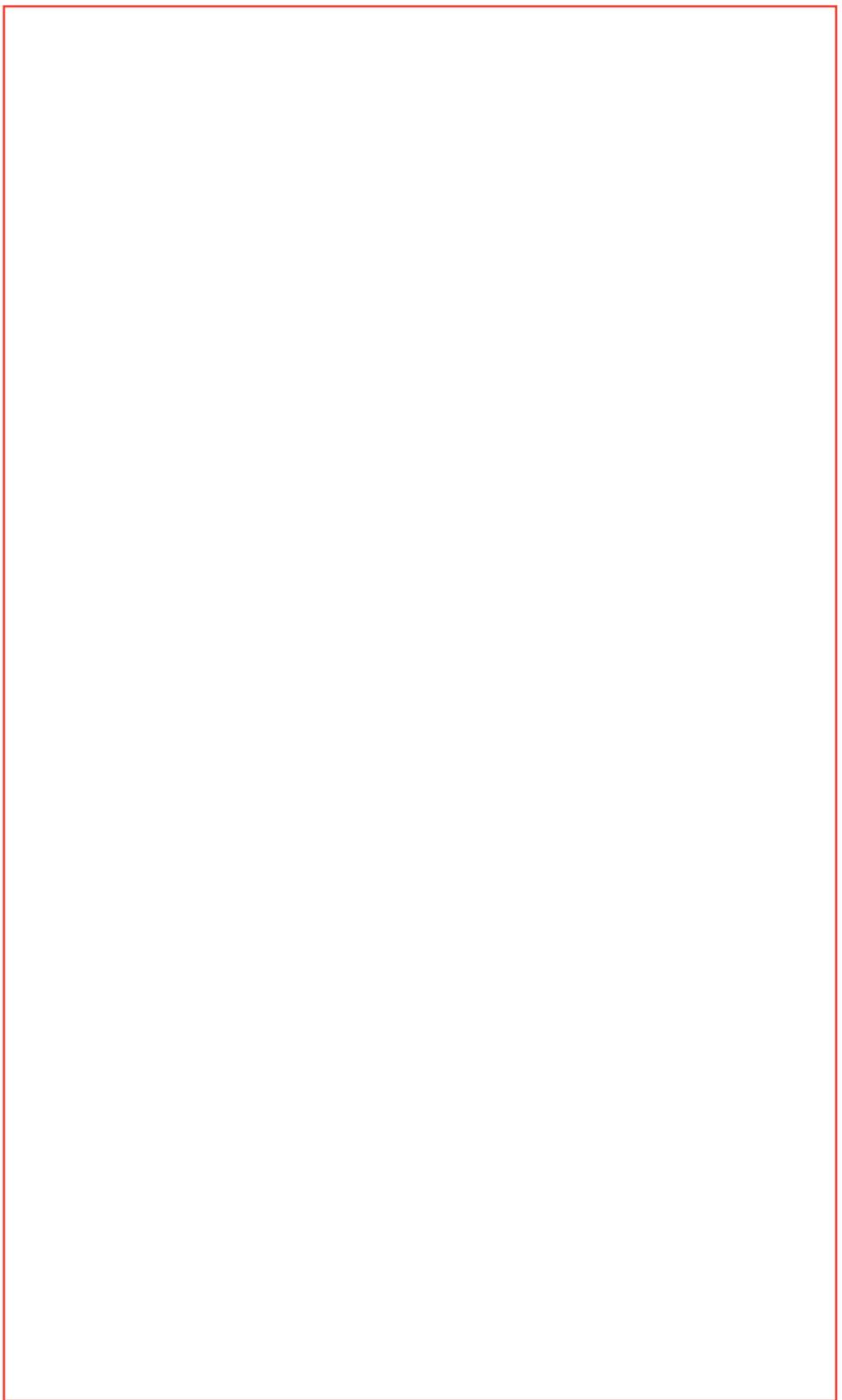
Jesus is ALIVE and He wants you to tell people about Him!

Bible Memory **VERSES**

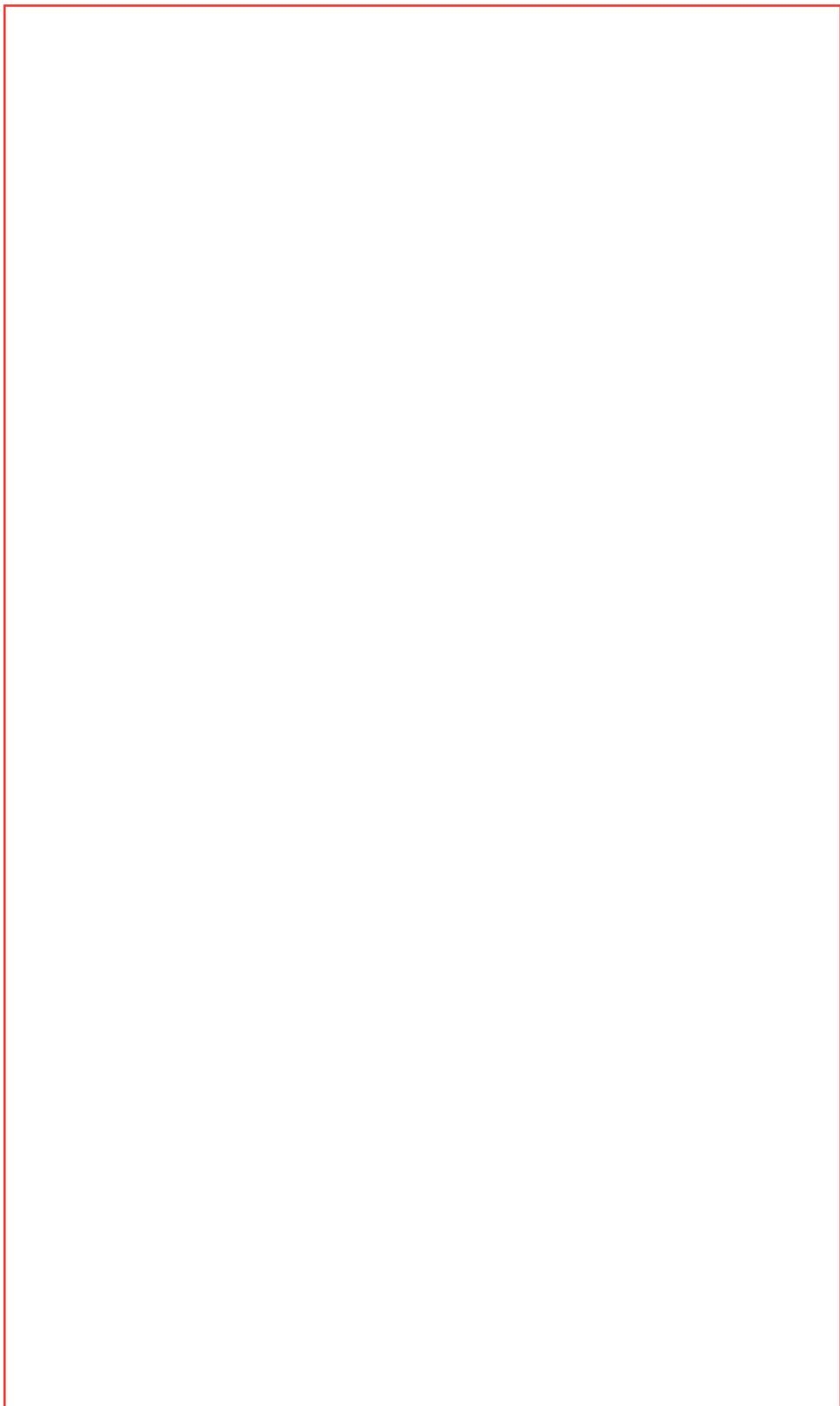


Additional

NOTES



Additional NOTES



Champion Forest STUDENTS

STUDENT STAFF

Student Pastor: Jeff Skipper (jskipper@cfbc.org)

High School Pastor: Steven Morris (smorris@cfbc.org)

Middle School Pastor: Stephen Sargent (ssargent@cfbc.org)

Bilingual Student Pastor: Julian Pizarro (jpizarro@cfbc.org)

Girls Minister: Stephanie Chase (schase@cfbc.org)

Ministry Assistant: Toni Peeler (tpeeler@cfbc.org)

Ministry Assistant: Nancy Cook (ncook@cfbc.org)

WEEKLY STUFF

LIFE GROUPS (*Sundays at 9:30 am and 11:00 am*)

Connect in this small-group setting as you dive into the Word of God with other students in your grade and discuss how to apply God's truths to your life.

ELEMENT (*Sundays at 11:00 am & Wednesdays at 6:45 pm*)

All 6th-12th graders will gather in our main Element room in the Lodge for a time of powerful worship, dynamic teaching, and hilarious games and videos!

UPCOMING STUFF

MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMP *(June 18-22)*

The Lowdown: 4 awesome days on the LAKE with all of your friends as you learn about EPIC God's plan for your life!

Cost: \$365

Contact: Stephen Sargent for more info

HIGH SCHOOL CAMP *(July 15-20)*

The Lowdown: 5 awesome days on the BEACH with all of your friends as you learn about EPIC God's plan for your life!

Cost: \$449

Contact: Steven Morris for more info

KING OF THE BEACH *(July 29-August 1)*

The Lowdown: Simply put...the best volleyball tournament in the beautiful state of Texas! All 6th-12th graders welcome! Cash prizes!

Cost: \$15 (includes wednesday night luau)

Contact: Nancy Cook for more info

championforest.org/students

twitter.com/cfbc_student

This first edition of the Beat is the product of prayer, hard work, & vision. This would not have been possible without the leading of the Holy Spirit & the efforts of Champion Forest student staff, Laura Gallier, Cheryl Spafford, & Lori Kinkeade.

May you walk to the Beat of Jesus every day.

