DISCIPLE

Becoming a Devoted Follower

A disciple is “a learner; a follower of Christ who learns the doctrines of Scripture and the lifestyle they require; someone catechized with proper instruction from the Bible with its necessary follow-through (life-applications).” – Strong’s Concordance

Jesus’ last commandment was to “GO and make disciples…” This is called the Great Commission. Many aspire to be a disciple and want go to make disciples, but they are unsure how to do this. Jesus promised to go with us. (Matthew 28:18-20)

How to use this devotional:

- Use it as an everyday tool to develop the habit of spending time with God and in His Word.
- Set aside time each day to work through each page.
- Find a place to spend time alone reading this devotional.
- Start by asking God to be with you and to stretch you during this time of discovery.
- Read a devotion each day, looking up the scriptures, completing the exercises, and meditating on its content.
- Get a translation of the Bible you can understand.
- Observe the different styles of Bibles and determine what helps you best understand and retain what you read. This will help you continue on once you complete this devotional.
- As you work through each day’s devotion, observe what sticks out to you. Make a point to share it with others.
- Pause occasionally to reflect, and even pray, over areas that the Lord brings as a “word” meant for you.
- Finish your devotional time with prayer.

Bible study is not easy to do. You have to invest time in your growth, and some days will be easier than others. The key is developing the discipline to push through the days that aren’t easy. God really wants to spend time with you, and you should want to spend time with Him! The Bible is full of truth, and the more you know and learn, the better equipped you will be to make wise decisions. Once you finish this devotional, take time to go back through it and see how much you have grown in the process! By starting with this simple devotional you can establish some life changing habits that will bear much fruit.

Sharing with others

It is important you talk and share what you are learning in your daily time with God. The inspiration and hope you will bring to others will be immeasurable. The basis for writing this material is to help people grow in their walk with the Lord and equip them with the foundational tools to help lead others.

Finally

You must go and make disciples, just like you have become. You do not have a choice if you truly want to be a devoted follower of Jesus. Matthew 28:19-20 tells us, “19 Therefore go

and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (NIV)

SOAP

S.O.A.P. is a method of Bible reading and journaling. It can be used with any daily Bible reading plan. We will also be using it as part of this devotional booklet as well. After reading each devotion and answering questions, choose one Scripture from the devotion and complete the S.O.A.P. process.

S for Scripture

Open your Bible to today's reading (according to whatever plan you are following). Take time reading and allow God to speak to you. When you are done, look for a verse that particularly spoke to you that day, and write it in your journal.

O for Observation

What struck you and caught your attention in what you read? What do you think God is saying to you in this scripture? Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you and reveal Jesus to you. Paraphrase and write this scripture down in your own words.

A for Application

Personalize what you have read, by asking yourself how it applies to your life right now. Perhaps it is instruction, encouragement, revelation of a new promise, or corrections for a particular area of your life. Write how this scripture can apply to you today.

P for Prayer

This can be as simple as asking God to help you use this scripture, or it may be a greater insight on what He may be revealing to you. Remember, prayer is a two way conversation, so be sure to listen to what God has to say! Now, write it.

ACTS

A.C.T.S. is an easy way to remember key elements of prayer. It's simply prayer in four parts:

A-Adoration – "Praise be to God!" -Psalms 68:35

Tell God how much you appreciate Him. Express your love for Him. Praise His power and majesty. This is a great way to begin your prayer time. You should never run out of praise. "How awesome are your deeds!" -Psalms 66:3

C-Confession – "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just, and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." -1 John 1:9

Tell Him where you have fallen short. Be specific. Thank Him for the forgiveness you have in Christ, and ask for help and strength to turn away from future temptations.

T-Thanksgiving – Always "glorify him with thanksgiving" -Psalms 69:30

You have plenty of reasons to be thankful. Thank God for His love, His faithfulness, His patience and a million other things. Express gratitude for what He's doing in your life. Thank Jesus for dying on the cross for you. Thank the Holy Spirit for indwelling you, and never leaving. Thank Him for being your conscience, your counselor and that "still small voice."

S-Supplication – "Make your requests known to God." -Philippians 4:6

Tell God what you want, no matter how small it seems to you. Do you really think any of your requests are big, or too small, for God the Creator? You should have lots of intercessory prayer here.

DAY ONE

Disciple

When we choose to follow Christ, we come a disciple—a follower, a student. Just like when we follow people on social media because we want to know about them, when we follow Christ we do it because we want to learn and know about Him.

There are two main aspects of being a disciple:

1. Becoming a follower of Christ and

2. Telling others about Christ.

First, becoming a disciple means we learn God's ways. We become like Him. We learn to think with the mind of Christ, talk like Him, act like Him. Romans 12:2 tells us we have to be transformed into a new person by changing the way we think. It begins with allowing God to change our thinking. Then our actions will follow. Following Him is a simple decision, but it goes beyond just a decision. We must also grow in our faith and in our spiritual walk. That requires spending time reading the Bible and communicating with God.

Second, we share Christ with others. A good way to do that is by telling our story through normal daily conversation about what He did in us. People respond when they see the way someone once was and then see the change into what they are now. Our actions are the biggest storyteller, but we also need to use words telling that it was Christ who made the change.

1. Read Matthew 4:18-20 and Mark 1:16-20. Who did Jesus call to be his disciples and what experience was required?

2. Do you follow others on social media or in life? What kind of things do you do to follow them? What habits could you transfer to your walk with Christ?

3. Write down three steps you will take to grow as a disciple. Place it in a visible place as a reminder.

4. Think of someone with whom you could grow and learn by walking side by side through your journey. Write that name down and then ask him/her.

5. Read Matthew 28:18-20. This is known as "The Great Commission." It's Jesus' last words telling us what we are to do. What was it? Was it a suggestion or command?

6. Think of a few people who do not follow Christ and ask God for opportunities to share your story with them.

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DAY TWO

The Bible

God wrote a love letter to you, and it's called the Bible. In the Bible you'll find 66 books, divided into the Old Testament and New Testament. This love letter tells you what God is like, what His plans are for you, and what happened to some people who obeyed or disobeyed Him in the past. Reading God's word will help you get to know Him more personally, and it will show you how to live a victorious life.

As a new believer, you need God's word like a baby needs milk – you can't understand it all at once, so you need to take it in small doses that you can easily "digest" or understand. As you grow in the Word, you will be able to take bigger bites of the "meat of the word" and it will cause you to grow stronger. If the Bible is new to you, start reading about the life of Jesus in the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and take a look at Psalms and Proverbs, for insight on who

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God is and what it takes to please Him (Open your Bible to the middle and you'll find Psalms; Proverbs comes right after it).

Here's an approach to your daily meal in God's Word:

- Pray for God's guidance;
- Read some verses;
- Ask: What do these verses say? What do these verses mean? What do these verses mean to me?; and
- Talk with God about what you just read and let Him talk with you.

For some extra help with Bible terms, geography, etc., try these web sites:
www.biblestudytools.com or www.biblegateway.com

1. Read II Timothy 3:16, 17. Where does Scripture come from? What are four purposes of God's Word?

2. Read Matthew 4:4. What confidence did Jesus Christ have in God's Word?

3. Read Hebrews 4:12: How is God's Word described? What effects does it have on us?

4. Read Psalm 119:11-16: Where is the best place to put God's Word? What effect occurs when we "hide it away"?

5. Read Psalm 119:105: How is God's Word described? Why do we need a lamp and a light?
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DAY THREE

The ABC Plan of Salvation

(What you may not have fully understood)

Salvation is as easy as ABC. You have to Admit you are a sinner, Believe that Jesus died for you, and Confess Jesus as your Lord and Savior. But before you can do all that, you need to know a little more about God's plan of Salvation.

A. Admit you are a sinner. All men and women have sinned and therefore deserve the punishment of having sinned, which is both a natural and a spiritual death (Romans 6:23). The Punishment or curse for having sinned or disobeyed God's laws is three fold. You can read about them in Deuteronomy 28:15-60. They can be summed up in three categories: spiritual death, poverty, and sickness. Look around you. Can see that the curse is rampant on the earth?

B. Believe that Jesus paid the price for your sins. We either have to pay this penalty ourselves or find someone to pay it in our place. In the Old Testament, a sacrificed lamb paid the penalty for an individual's sins but this was short term and had to be done over and over. God Himself came to our rescue in the form of a man named Jesus, who being God and man, became our replacement to pay the punishment for our sin instead of us. John the Baptist exclaimed, "Look, there is the lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."(John 1:29). Galatians 3:13 says "Christ purchased our freedom redeeming us from the curse of the Law and its condemnation by Himself becoming a curse for us."

C. Confess Jesus as Lord and Savior of your life. Salvation is a free gift; it is not the result of our being good and doing right. It is not the result of obeying the Law. The purpose of the Old Testament was to show us that no one could obey the law fully and that we needed a savior. Animal sacrifices were instituted as a temporary solution and were a shadow of the

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permanent solution which we find in Jesus. (Romans 3:23-24) "…But the bountiful free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ephesians 2:8). You must confess to the world who Jesus is and how He has saved you.

1. What are some areas of sin in your lie that you have been saved from?
2. How did Jesus take the punishment for your sins?
3. What does it mean that salvation is a free gift?
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DAY FOUR

Salvation
(Saved from What?)

When Jesus saved you, He redeemed you. The word redeemed means "to buy or pay off; to purchase back." That is what Jesus did when He saved you from the penalty of your sin, which was the curse of death, but He saved you for so much more. Galatians 3:13 says, "Christ purchased our freedom redeeming us from the curse of the Law and its condemnation by Himself becoming a curse for us, for it is written in the Scriptures, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree (is crucified).'"

So what is the curse of the Law? In Deuteronomy 28:15-60 we find it is a very complex curse, but it can be summed up in three parts: spiritual death (eternity in hell), physical sickness, and poverty in every area of life not just finances. Jesus redeemed us from more than an eternity in hell, and although that would have been enough, our God, who revealed Himself to Abraham as "the God who is more than enough" or El Shaddai in Hebrew, saved us not only from death but also from a hopeless, meaningless life.

Jesus said," I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). Prior to making this statement, Jesus revealed that the devil is a thief and he

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comes to steal, kill and to destroy. This clear line of demarcation reveals what the devil does and what God does through Jesus. God is not the author of our problems but the solution. He not only saved us from an eternal hell, but He also paid the price for our healing and for our needs to be met abundantly.

When you are saved, you gain so much - the ability to live a righteous life, healing for your sicknesses, and freedom from a poverty mentality. You will sin sometimes after you are saved, but you will no longer be under the control (or curse) of that sin.

1. Read 1Peter 2:24. What did Jesus do to pay the price of your sin? Why did He do it?

2. Read Matthew 8:17. What does this scripture say Jesus took on Himself for us?

3. Read 2 Corinthians 8:9. How did Jesus become poor? How has He made you rich?
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DAY FIVE

Salvation Means Eternal Life
(Dealing with Doubt and Uncertainty)

Now that you've made Jesus Lord of your life, you are a new creature (2 Corinthians 5:17), and this change has taken place inside you. Your spirit has become a new creation and is born of God. Paul, who wrote two thirds of the New Testament, teaches us that man has three parts: spirit, soul and body. We are a spirit, we have a soul (our mind, will, and emotions), and we live in a body. This body allows us to live on this earth, but when our body dies, we will also be present with the Lord in heaven.

The difficulty for us now is that only one third of who we are is presently saved. Our spirits are saved, but something must be done about our souls and bodies. The Bible gives us direction on how to do this.

1. We must subdue our bodies and keep them in subjection to our spirits that desire to do God's will (1 Corinthians 9:27).

2. Our minds need to be transformed (or saved) by the renewing them with the Word of God (Romans 12:2). This is why it is important to read your Bible daily and to come to church regularly, where the word of God is preached. Only then can our spirit and soul dominate our flesh.

When we are saved, our spirit is saved instantly, our soul (mind, will and emotions) is in the process of being saved as we renew our minds with the word of God, and our bodies will be saved when Jesus returns to receive His church in the Rapture. Then we will receive glorified bodies.

Because these spiritual changes are not something we can "see" in a physical sense, we tend to doubt if we really are saved. Satan wants you to get discouraged and doubt you are now a child of God, and this is where our mind, will, and emotions become a problem. Our hearts tell us we are changed, but our mind tells we are not. When this battle happens in your life, you just need to remind Satan of the actual day you were born again and of the Scriptures that back up your experience.

1. Write down the date you were saved.

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2. Why is it important to read your Bible?
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DAY SIX

Salvation Confirmed
(Through a Changed Heart, His Word, by the Holy Spirit)

When we are born again there are some signs that confirm that we belong to God and that our hearts have been changed.

1. We love others. “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death” (1 John 3:4 NIV). Our heart changes and we find it filled with love we never

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knew we could experience, especially toward those who have hurt us.

2. We love God's Word. When we are born again, we will have a new love for God's Word. "He who is of God hears God's Words… (John 8:47a). "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" (John 10:27).

3. We listen to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and we cry out to God as our Abba Father. Abba is the Aramaic for Daddy. "And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" (Galatians 4:6).

When we are saved, God confirms it to us so that we will not be filled with doubt regarding it. There will be changes in our lives that show the change in our relationship with God. We will act in ways we never would have before, and we will desire a closer, more personal relationship with the Creator of the universe. Because of this relationship, the Bible says "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16 NKJV). God is there to help you, and when you are confused or discouraged, He will confirm your salvation and your relationship with Him by answering you when you ask Him.

1. Name some people you need to show love to in a greater way?

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2. If you love God's word – the Bible – what will you do?

3. What do you know about the Holy Spirit?
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DAY SEVEN

Identity

Salvation means you're in for some great news! Not only are your sins forgiven, but you receive a brand new identity in Christ. When you give your life to Christ, His Spirit comes to live inside of you. And His identity becomes YOUR identity!

Here's what the Apostle Paul said about taking on a new identity in Christ:

"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" Galatians 2:20 NIV.

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1. Where does Paul find his new identity?

2. What has happened to his old identity?

3. What inspires Paul to give up his old life?

Understand that when Apostle Paul speaks about being "crucified," he's not talking about the death of his physical body. He's talking about a spiritual death. With God's Spirit inside him, he is, in a sense, reborn. He has become spiritually alive with Christ as the central focus of his life.

Your salvation is just the start of your new identity. The Bible says that as you follow Christ, you must continue to die to your old sinful nature (Luke 9:23). As you do, God will miraculously change you to look more and more like Him.

Colossians 3:1-3 says, "Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God." Can you imagine living a life so connected with your Heavenly Father that your life is "hidden" in Him? That means when other's look at you, they will be able to see God through you! Believe this: The same power that raised Christ from the dead is within you . . . and has given you a whole new identity! (Romans 8:11).
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DAY EIGHT

The New You

God has given you a fresh start! When you allowed Christ into your life, you became a "new creation" in Him. God did not just clean you up or fix the old you. He made you into something completely new.

The Bible says the old you does not exist anymore: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:17). You might wonder what exactly "old" refers to here. Your old self is the sinful nature into which you were born. Because of it, you were doomed. But Christ paid the price for your sins when He died on the cross for you. As a "new creation," you are no longer a slave to sin (Romans 6:8).

Ephesians 4:22 says, "You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness." This taking off the old and putting on the new is an act of our wills. God won't force us to do this, but He gives us the power to do it. We cannot become new without the power of the Holy Spirit, and that power only comes once we are saved and have given Jesus lordship and control of our lives.

Answer the following questions regarding Ephesians 4:22-24:

1. How did your old self get in the way of you becoming more like God?

2. What type of life are you capable of living as God's "new creation?"

Be encouraged today . . . Through Christ, you are free to live a Godly life. Your past is over. And your fresh start as a "new creation" is here!

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DAY NINE

The Great Exchange

The new life you received through salvation came with a heavy price tag. But Christ paid the price in full when He sacrificed His life for you (I John 2:2). This great exchange happened, not because you were worthy of it, but because God loved you and He wanted a relationship with you. Without exchanging the life of His Son, Jesus, for your life, you would be forever lost in sin and separated from Him. That was never God's plan, but sin entered the world and caused this separation.

The Bible tells us that God made a precious exchange on your behalf: "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

You are a child of God, and He wants to give you the best of the best. That's why He took away your sin and replaced it with His righteousness. Righteousness means you have right standing with God and can come boldly before Him and have relationship with Him. Because of that relationship there's more you gain. Through Christ, you are strong. Through His sacrifice, you are healthy. And because of His great love for you, you are free!

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Look up the following verses to see what else God gives you:

Strength for Weakness - 2 Corinthians 12:9

Healing for Sickness - I Peter 2:24

Freedom from Bondage - Galatians 5:7

1. Based on these verses, what types of qualities does God want to replace in His children?
2. What types of gifts does God make available to those who believe in Him? _____ _____

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DAY TEN

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the third person in the Holy Trinity. The Bible tells us the Trinity consists of three persons: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus) and God the Holy Spirit. So when we say "Jesus" or the "Holy Spirit," we are really talking about God the Father as well. It may help to think about the Trinity as three roles, or personalities, but you must remember that each person in the Trinity is actually a separate person making up one God.

God the Father is the creator and ruler of everything. He is the ultimate authority in all things, even Jesus and the Holy Spirit. So, God the Father has all power and dominion.

God the Son, or Jesus Christ, is the Savior and Redeemer of a fallen mankind. It is through Jesus that we are able to be bought back from sin (or "redeemed") and restored to relationship with God the Father. This is necessary as a Holy God cannot bear sin to be in His presence.

God the Holy Spirit was sent by God the Father, and His coming to us was made possible by the death and sacrifice of Jesus. We're told in the Gospels that when Jesus prepared to return to heaven, He knew that we could not accomplish the tasks set out for us without power and relationship with God (Acts 1:8). So, the Holy Spirit was sent to live not only with us, but in us! He is the source of God's power in our lives (Acts 2). He is also sent to comfort and guide us as we follow God. The Holy Spirit brings us gifts to enrich and empower us in our daily lives (1 Corinthians 12), and because of the Holy Spirit working in us, we also have godly

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characteristics that show up in our lives. The Bible calls these the “fruit” of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). Ask God the Father, in the name of God the Son, to cause these gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit to begin to come alive in you today!

1. Read Corinthians 12:8. List out the spiritual gifts. Which gift(s) do you feel you have?

2. Read Galatians 5:22-23. List out the fruit the Holy Spirit produces in us. Which do you need to cultivate more in your life?
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DAY ELEVEN

Fruit

(The Outward Sign of a New Man)

For a Christian, "fruit" is what others see in their life that reflects the image of Christ. It is

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pretty easy to tell an apple tree from an orange tree, the fruit is a dead giveaway. All you have to do is look at the outside. In the same way, a Christian is distinguished by the visible fruit in their life.

Jesus said, "For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush. By their fruit you shall know them" (Luke 6:44).

Fruit is the natural outcome of God's gift of life. We will naturally produce fruit because of the new life that Christ has given us. But to produce the right fruit, fruit that reflects who God is, we have to study His word so we know what that fruit should look like. Then we have to obey His word for the good fruit to grow in our lives.

If you crush a leaf from a fruit tree, the fragrance will tell you what kind of tree it is. What "fragrance" comes from you when you go through the crushing moments of life? It should be one of the fruits of the Spirit which are the result of the Spirit of God dwelling in our lives. These fruits are given in Galatians 5:22-23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

1. What "fruit" have you seen in others that reflects Christ and let you know that they were a Christian?

2. When others see you, what fruit do you want them to see?

Prayer: Dear God, When others look at my life, it is my desire that they will see the fruit of the Your Spirit in my life. May I decrease and Jesus Christ increase as I do my best to reflect Him. Amen

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DAY TWELVE

Prayer

The Bible tells us in Matthew 6:7-9 that Jesus said to His disciples, “When you pray don’t babble on and on as people of other religions do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. Don’t be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him! Pray like this….” He goes on to give the example of what is referred to as The Lord’s Prayer. Jesus said to His disciples: “When you pray...” not “If you pray,” and as believers in Jesus we must follow His teachings. For us prayer is not an option, it is an expectation; we must pray; we need to pray! It is our life line to the Father.

So what exactly is prayer? Prayer is communicating with God. It is talking to our heavenly Father, knowing He hears our prayers and will answer. It is how we submit requests (1 Timothy 2:13), intercession (James 5:14-15), and thanksgiving (Philippians 4:6) to a holy God. Prayer is a privilege that we have been given as God’s children; it is how we come to know Him personally through our times of conversation/prayer with Him.

There are some requirements for prayer we must keep in mind. We must believe in Jesus Christ (John 14:12-14) and we must pray according to God’s will (1 John 5:14), but there is no specific physical way to pray. We can pray standing (Nehemiah 9:5), kneeling (Ezra 9:5), sitting (1 Chronicles 17:16-27), bowing (Exodus 34:8), and with lifted hands (1 Tim. 2:8).

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Prayer is our greatest weapon against our enemy - Satan. It strengthens us in our spirit and it is where we gain wisdom and direction for our life.

1. Read 1 John 5:14. How do you know when you are praying God's will?

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2. Read 1 Timothy 2:1-3, James 5:14-15, and Philippians 4:6. What is the difference between requests, intercession, and thanksgiving?

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DAY THIRTEEN

Promises

A promise is a declaration or assurance that someone will do a particular thing or that a particular thing will happen. The Bible is filled with promises God has made to His people. It is filled with promises for you!

Supplication

In 2 Peter 1:4 we are told, “And because of His glory and excellence, He has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world’s corruption caused by human desires.” (NLT)

Does this sound too good to be true? It’s not! This is your heavenly Father we are talking about, not your earthly father, your mother, or your spouse who may have broken promises to you. Unfortunately, in our world today promises do not mean much. In fact, it seems promises are just meant to be broken. But in God’s world, a promise is binding. It is His word, and His word never changes. His word is the Bible, and any promise made there is truth; it will not be broken by Him.
There are 3573 promises in the Bible. All you have to do is accept them by faith.

Some of His promises to you are:

1 John 2:25 – Eternal Life
Ezekiel 36:26 – New Heart
John 1:9 – Forgiveness
Luke 11:13 – The Holy Spirit
Philippians 4:19 – To Supply All Your Need
Luke 18:27 – God Can Do All Things
Psalm 103:12 – Removes Your Sins/Transgressions

1. Read through the promises listed above. Which one means the most to you? Why?

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2. Pray and ask God to help you accept the promises He has made to you. Don’t let the people who have hurt you cause you not to trust God.

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DAY FOURTEEN

Saturated in God's Word

Knowing God's Word is absolutely essential to our growth as a Christian, and the only way to know it, is to immerse and saturate ourselves wholeheartedly in it. This involves more than a fiveminute devotion as we head out the door or before we lay down at night. Here are a few tips to get you started in the right direction.

Find a good study Bible. Research online, read reviews, visit Christian bookstores, ask questions, thumb through a variety of Bibles. Don't be afraid or intimidated to ask questions and have the various aspects each one offers explained to you.

Once you purchase a Bible, familiar yourself with it. Find what's included in it, how it's divided, what the symbols and abbreviations mean, where maps, cross-references, and the concordance are located, look for the history of each book and the side notes, etc. Then decide

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how to study the Bible, and read it every day! Maybe begin with the four gospels, starting with Matthew, and include a Psalm and Proverb each day. Or read something from the Old Testament and New Testament, with a Psalm and Proverb added. This gives a good balance and brings knowledge, encouragement and practical life lessons.

Write out a plan and grow into it. Start small and increase as you go. As you read, your desire and hunger for His Word will grow in you as you grow in Him. There is no substitute for God's Word.

1. Read 1 John 2:3-4. How can we obey the Lord without knowing His commands?

2. Read Romans 10:17. How do faith and the Word work together?

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3. Read Joshua 1:8. How often should we meditate on the Word of God? _____

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DAY FIFTEEN

Emergency Numbers

Always remember you're just a quick search away from the Bible's answer for your life. Below are some key Scriptures you can read in times of need.

Afraid - Matthew 10:28
You belong to God. How does that help you with fear?
What are you to do instead of being anxious or worrying?

Anxious or Worried - Matthew 6:19-34
You, are cared for by, God. How does that calm you down?
What are you to do instead of being anxious or worry?

Backsliding - Psalm 51
What verses can you pray?

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What verses can you accept?

Bitter or Critical - 1 Corinthians 13
List some ways God's Love can change you?
How can God's love conquer the bitterness or criticalness in you?

Depressed or Discouraged - Psalm 34
What things can you do to be encouraged?
What things can you remember to be encouraged?

Disaster - Psalm 91
What can you expect?
What can you do?

Faith Fails - Hebrews 11
What can you know for sure?
What can you profess?

Need Guidance - Psalm32:8-11
Where do you look for advice?
Describe how to receive guidance from God?

Rules to live - Romans 12
List things to do? List things to think?
List what you are a part of and what part you play?

Your position and confidence in Prayer - John 17 Who did Jesus say you are?
How does it feel to be one with Christ?

Tempted - 1 Corinthians 10:12-14
What are we to know about temptation?
Where does our help come from in temptation?
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DAY SIXTEEN

The Enemy

We are told in 1 Peter 5:8 to “Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour” (NLT). We need to pay attention and be aware of who are enemy is.

We all know what an enemy is. It’s a person or entity who feels hatred for or engages in antagonistic activities against another person; an adversary or an opponent. And yes, you do have an enemy! And he hates you and your decision to follow Jesus. He is a thief (John 10:10), a liar (John 8:44), a tempter (Matthew 4:1), and an accuser (Revelation 12:10), and He intends to destroy you and keep you from staying committed to God.

Many people today do not believe there is a devil, but they are deceived. God’s word tells us there is a devil, who is also called Satan, and he is the enemy we must fight against daily. Satan was not always evil, in fact he was created by God as a cherub, a beautiful and powerful angel. He gave in to pride and rebelled against God because he wanted the worship that belonged only to God. He was thrown out of heaven, and he has been causing problems for God’s people ever since. Satan’s deepest desire is to cause us, God’s most cherished creations, to turn against Him and die in our sin.

Yes, there are satanic forces at work that want to cause us to reject God and live in sin, and it is only through knowing God’s word (the Bible) that we are able to resist the devil (James 4:7) and live victorious lives. We are told to “put on all of God’s armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil” (Ephesians

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6:11). So take time to find out what that armor is and put it on.

1. Read John 8:44, Matthew 4:1 and Revelation 12:10. When the Enemy works in your life in these ways, how can you defeat him?

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2. Read Ephesians 6:10-18. How can you put on the armor of God?

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DAY SEVENTEEN

Armed and Dangerous – Part 1

You've Been Drafted!

While you may not have realized it, when Jesus came into your life and your relationship with the Father was restored, and when the Holy Spirit filled you, giving you fruits and gifts, you also joined an eternal and universal army. That army is made up of believers like you and I, in every nation on the earth. And every last one of us faces battles (which the Bible also calls "trials" or "afflictions") and we're told we must be fighters (1 Timothy 6:12).

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There will be Battles

Read Psalm 144:1-2. You will from time to time, without looking for them, without wanting them, without deserving them, walk smack dab into full-on battles. One minute, the sun shining, birds are singing, and all is right in your world...then…BAM! The enemy launches a sneak attack and you find yourself in the middle of a spiritual battle as our enemy, the devil, tries to defeat you. The devil knows that if you live in defeat, you will not be effective for God nor happy in Christ Jesus.

The Battle has been Fixed!

As a Christian, when you approach these battles in life, you have an unfair advantage. Did you know that? God doesn't have to fight fair. He already knows who is going to win! And, even better, he's shared that information with us. He tells us that He will deliver us out of ALL of our battles and afflictions (Psalms 34:19). Our enemy is already defeated; the outcome was settled thousands of years ago through Jesus' sacrifice.

You are Armed!

Knowing that we would face daily spiritual battles, God provided us with the means to fight them. He gave us spiritual armor and spiritual weapons so that we can win. Read now through Ephesians 6:10-17. Here the Apostle Paul describes the "armor of God". We're to daily put this armor on so that we will be ready when spiritual battles come our way.

You have His Strength and Power

Ephesians 6:10 tells us to be strong "in the Lord" and in the power of His might. We are not to fight these battles with our own physical or even spiritual strength, but are to use the Lord's power and His might as it rests in us through the Holy Spirit.

1. What kind of battles do you face each day?

2. What is the difference between a spiritual battle and a physical battle?

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DAY EIGHTEEN

Armed and Dangerous – Part 2

Today we continue reading in Ephesians 6:13-17. In these scriptures, Paul describes how we must put on armor every day to face the enemy. Read each verse, then consider these questions.

Read Ephesians 6:13. What is Paul's warning about the armor? Why is this warning important?

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Ephesians 6:14 tells us to use truth to secure the armor to us ("gird" or tie down). What truth are we to use?

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Verse 14 also tells us to wear the breastplate of righteousness. Why is it so vital to protect your heart?

Ephesians 6:15 says that our feet are covered. What is it we are asked to share?

Ephesians 6:16 tells us to ("above all") take shelter behind faith! How can we use faith as our shield every day?

Supplication

Verse 17 instructs us to protect our heads (our minds and thoughts) What can you do to keep your mind focused on Jesus and His salvation?

Ephesians 6:17 tells us about the weapon that we've been given to defeat the enemy in spiritual battles. What is "the sword"? How can we use it every day?

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DAY NINETEEN

Fellowship

1 John 1:7 says, “But if we are living in the light of God’s presence, just as Christ is, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from every sin.” Fellowship implies the sharing of common interests, desires, and motivations. It requires time be spent with others communicating, sharing and caring. As Christians, we need to spend time fellowshipping with other Christians. This means you may have to change some of your friends.

We have fellowship with God and because of that relationship we have fellowship with other “brothers and sisters in Christ.” The purpose of this fellowship is to encourage and build each other up and help one another along the way. It’s not a time to tear down, criticize, or become a social group. Nor does it mean we fellowship with only those who look like us, walk like us and have the same opinion as us, but we fellowship with ALL of God’s people.

We are one body of Christ, and we are to treat others with honor and respect and show love in our fellowship. Sometimes we can allow our old nature to creep in and treat others with disrespect, which dishonors God. Remember everyone is created by God, and we all are on the same path. We must show love in our fellowship, just as God shows love to us when we spend time with Him. 1. Read 1 John 3:24. What does it say we do if we live in fellowship with God?

2. Read Hebrews 10:25 Why is it important not to neglect meeting with other believers? Can’t we just stay home and watch it on TV?

3. Read Ephesians 4:1-4. What are we to do to keep ourselves together and united as one?

4. Read 1 Timothy 5:1-2. How are we to speak and treat others when we are with them?

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5. Read 1 John 3:14. What is the real proof that we have passed from death to eternal life?
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DAY TWENTY

Witness
(Telling Others)

A witness is a person who gives their testimony, as in a court of law. You have probably heard the phrase, “I would like to call to the witness stand…,” and that person is asked to give testimony or evidence of something they have personally seen or heard. One of the privileges we have as a Christian is to testify to others about the goodness of God in our lives.

1 Peter 3:15 says, “Quietly trust yourself to Christ your Lord, and if anybody asks why you believe as you do, be ready to tell him, and do it in a gentle and respectful way” (TLB).

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Being "ready" means we need to be prepared, and preparing takes work. You need to think about what you believe and why you believe it, so you can share it clearly from your firsthand experience.

1 Peter 3:15 also tells us "how" to witness. We are told if anyone asks, let them know in a "gentle and respectful way" what God has done for us. You are an eye witness with firsthand knowledge of the difference God has made in your life. Share it respectfully.

Our witness helps us overcome Satan. Revelation 12:11 says, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death." Our witness also shows the world the goodness of God and what He has done for us. In Job 1:8, God called on the witness (example) of Job's life and said to Satan: "Have you considered my servant Job?" (Job 1:8). Obviously people, including Satan, are watching how you live and serve God.

Be ready:

1. In your own words tell how God forgave your sins.

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Supplication

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2. What are some things that are different about you since you have been forgiven? (2 Corinthians 5:17)

3. What has God done for you personally? (Healing, answered prayer etc.)

Prayer: Lord, help me to be able to let others know, in a way that they can understand, the difference you have made in my life, so that they too can know the job of having you as a friend and Savior. Amen

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DAY TWENTY-ONE

The Great Commission

Have you ever had such great news that you just couldn't keep it a secret? Salvation through Christ is exactly that type of news. It's just too good to keep to yourself. In fact, God commands His children to tell others about Him and the work that Jesus completed on the cross. The Bible says, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20).

These words of Jesus tell us that as a follower of Christ, we have a responsibility to go and tell others about Him. The world needs the hope we have, and we need to share that hope with others. God wants you to be a representative of His love and power to your neighbors, friends, family, and even strangers. Don't be intimidated by the "teaching them to obey" command in the above Scripture. That can be demonstrated through you obeying and others observing you. Other times it may be answering questions a non-believer may have. Whatever form this "teaching" takes, just remember you are representing Jesus.

As a new Christian, you might be nervous about sharing Christ with others. Maybe you are afraid what others might think of you. Or maybe you are nervous that you won't have the right words to say. Know that God has given you everything you could never need for the job. Acts 1: 8 says, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Rely on the Holy Spirit and you will never fail.

Based on Matthew 28:19-20 and Acts 1:8, answer the following questions:

1. List out instructions the Bible gives on sharing Christ with others.

2. Where does the good news of salvation through Christ need to go?

3. How do you know you're not alone when it comes to the work of sharing Christ with others?
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DAY TWENTY-TWO

My Testimony

As you read the Bible, you will notice examples of people who told others what God had done for them. That is an important part of God's plan for you, too. Don't worry about being a fancy speaker with big theological words. Let God use your story to affect others.

Do you have to be a trained minister? No. God's Word tells us He wants us to simply tell our story. Think about what God has done for you in the past. What has He done for you lately? How has He changed your life? This is all a part of your testimony. It is sharing your experience(s) about how God showed up and changed your life or circumstances. The good thing about a testimony is it is yours, and no one can tell you it didn't happen. You know it did. You just have to be willing to share it openly with others.

1. Read Acts 1:8. What instructions did Jesus give His disciples before He left them to return to heaven? How far geographically did He want them to go as they obeyed His final instructions?

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2. Read Luke 1:2. What does Luke have to say about “eyewitnesses”? Why are they important in God’s plan?

3. Read John 4:7-30. What does the Samaritan woman at well tell her local neighbors about her encounter with Jesus Christ? How did they respond to her story?

4. Read Acts 3:15-16. What credentials did Peter have for telling others about Jesus Christ? What caused the lame beggar to receive healing?

5. Read Acts 4:20: Peter was told by local authorities to stop preaching. What was his answer?

6. Read Acts 22:15. Paul is telling a crowd about his past history. What does he have to say?

7. Read Romans 1:16. How does Paul explain to Roman Christians his attitude toward sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ?
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DAY TWENTY-THREE

Temptation

"Get you behind me Satan and don't you dare push!" It can be very frustrating dealing with Satan and his tempting ways, but you now have the power to resist and stand firm against him. A temptation is a strong urge or desire to do something, especially something bad, wrong, or unwise. Being a Christian does not free you from temptation, but it does help you to not give in to it. Here are some key concepts about temptation you should know.

- To be tempted is NOT a sin. Jesus was tempted and yet never sinned. Hebrews 4:15 says, "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses; but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin." We sin when we give in to the temptation.

- Temptation is a common experience. James 1:14 says, "But each one is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own desires, and enticed." Every day and in many ways, we are tempted to do wrong. Tell a small lie or stretch the truth, do something when "no one" is looking, be mean to someone, give someone a piece of our mind, or not do what we know we should do, etc. All of us deal with these types of temptations.

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- God will help you overcome temptation. 1 Corinthians 10:13 says, “No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it.” Hebrews 2:18 says, “Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.” Jesus taught us to pray in Luke 11:4, “And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.”

- There is a great reward for those who withstand temptation. James 1:12 says, “Blessed is the man that endures temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.” James 4:7 says, “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

1. List some areas where you are tempted to sin the most.

2. What can you do to keep from “giving in” to a temptation? _____

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DAY TWENTY-FOUR

Obedience

1 Peter 1:13-14 tells says, “So prepare your minds for action and exercise self-control. Put all your hope in the gracious salvation that will come to you when Jesus Christ is revealed to the world. So you must live as God’s obedient children. Don’t slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy you own desires. You didn’t know any better then.”

Being obedient does not come naturally to us. It’s something we must learn, and learning to obey is hard. Just as we have to learn to obey our earthly parents and the laws of this world (sometimes through being disciplined), we must also learn to obey our heavenly Father and the commands in His word (the Bible). Breaking the laws in our natural world will bring consequences to our lives and sometimes to the lives of those around us. Breaking God’s laws does the same. Laws are not set up to hurt us, but rather to help us grow and mature and to keep us from getting hurt.

As a new believer, you must read God’s word, so you know what He expects of you. Your life is brand new now, and there are principles and commands that you must follow if you want to grow as a believer and learn to exercise self-control. God will never ask you to do something that is against His word. You don’t want to slip back into your old life, and the only way to keep that from happening is to obey God, even when you really don’t want to obey Him. Your mind and heart need to be renewed daily through reading the Bible if you want to be willing to do all that God asks of you.

1. Why does God ask us to obey Him?

2. Where do we find the principles and commands God wants us to follow?

3. Read Hebrews 5:8. What does this tell us about the importance of obedience? _____

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DAY TWENTY-FIVE

Worship
(Beyond Singing)

Worship is the feeling or expression of reverence, honor, and adoration to a deity. As Christians we worship God, our heavenly Father, for who He is and what He has done for us. Here are some key aspects of worship to keep in mind.

We were created to worship.

- Worship is automatic.
- It is not a matter of when or if you will worship but what you will worship.
- We worship what we value most.
- To see what you are worshipping follow the trail of your time, your affection, your energy, your money, and your allegiance.

Worship belongs only to God.

- God forbids worship of anyone or anything else.
- “You shall have no other gods before me.” Exodus 20:3

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- “Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.” Revelation 14:7
- “But the LORD …. is the one you must worship. To him you shall bow down and to him offer sacrifices.” 2 Kings 17:36

Ways to worship God vary.

- Singing – We use the words we say or sing to exalt and make the greatness of God known through worship
- Giving /offering sacrifice - Psalm 96:8 says, “Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering and come into his courts.”
- Bowing before or giving homage. 2 Kings 17:36 tells us, “But the LORD...is the one you must worship. To him you shall bow down and to him offer sacrifices.”
- Worship is ascribing worth to God.
- Worship is beyond our words or actions. It is our inner response to God’s greatness that causes him to rise above all else in our hearts and minds.

1. What is consuming your life/time so much that you have begun to worship?

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2. How have you worshipped God today?
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DAY TWENTY-SIX

God's Sovereignty

Sovereign or Sovereignty are two big words that mean, to most of us, "being the boss, or being in charge." The dictionary tells us that a sovereign is "one exercising supreme authority," and sovereignty means "freedom from external control; supreme excellence; controlling influence."

When we apply those two words to God, sometimes we feel some inner resistance. We want to be our own bosses. But when we come into a relationship with God, sooner or later, we need to accept the inevitable truth that God comes first in the pecking order. In other words, to experience life as God meant it for us, we must acknowledge, "God is in charge."

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The Bible tells us that when the nation of Israel obeyed God, they were blessed. When they disobeyed, God did things to get their attention. That does not mean God is sitting in heaven just waiting to "zap" you if you do something wrong. He loves you and He knows what is best for you. He set up laws not to control you, but to keep you from being hurt.

When we let God have the Driver's Seat, things go better. When we have choices or major decisions to make, it's best to ask first: "God, what do You think about this? What do You want to happen in my life?" He knows everything about you, and He knows the future – you can trust Him.

1. Read Psalm 115:3 and Psalm 135:6. What do we learn here about God's sovereignty?
2. Read Psalm 147:5. What are the limits to God's understanding?
3. Read Malachi 3:6 (the last book of the Old Testament). How changeable is God?
4. Read Ephesians 1:11. What do you see about God's plan for your life?
5. Read Matthew 5:18. What quality of God is mentioned here?
6. Read Hebrews 4:13. How much does God know about you and your life? _____ _____

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DAY TWENTY-SEVEN

Omniscience
(All knowing God)

God knows everything about us. He knows our thoughts even if we don't speak them; He knows all about our past; and He knows exactly what we are going through today, and what is going to happen to us tomorrow or even 50 years from now. This can be scary to us at first, but the more we come to know God personally, the more we can trust His love, mercy, and grace in our lives.

Learning that God knows everything will become your greatest comfort.

1. Read 1 John 3:20-22. List some uncomfortable things God knows about you.

2. Read Psalm 44:21. What does He know about you that no one else does?

3. Read Psalm 103:14. He knows your inheritance in Him. What do you think that is?

4. Read Psalm 139:1-6. Describe how He knows you.

Examples that Jesus is all-knowing

1. Read John 18:4. How can that help you trust and obey Christ?

2. Read Matthew 10:29-31. How does God being all-knowing make you feel?

3. Since you are His priority, what does that mean for your life?

4. Read Matthew 9:4. What kind of control does Jesus have when He knows every thought you have?

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Take some time to pray and meditate on how wonderful it is to be a child of the God who knows all things and uses that knowledge to care for you. Write your thoughts

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DAY TWENTY-EIGHT

Omnipresence of God
(He is Everywhere)

To say God is omnipresent means He is present everywhere with His whole Being at all times. It means nothing is beyond His reach, and there is nowhere that He is not. That is a very challenging concept for our minds to comprehend because everything we see or experience, shows us that nothing can be in more than one place at a time. So can we truly understand the omnipresence of God? We can, when we accept it by faith, believing the truth of God's word, the Bible.

In the midst of a catastrophic event, we may ask, "Where is God?" You can be assured He is there. We may question why, if God is everywhere and nothing escapes His attention, He didn't prevent it. But while everything created exists under the control of a sovereign God, He

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has given us free will, and we must deal with the consequences of that freedom. He is present in the midst of the tragedy and the celebration, hurting or rejoicing with us.

So if God is present everywhere, at all times, and God created time, but is not bound by it, then obviously God created time for us because He knew we needed it to exist in our finite bodies. He knows our needs before we do, and He is present in every aspect of our lives. Now that is a God you can trust with your life.

1. Read Genesis 1:31 – 2:1. In light of God creating everything and viewing it all, what is time to God?

2. Read Revelation 1:8; 21:6; 22:13. How would you explain in your own words that God is and was and is to come, all at the same time?

3. Read Psalms 139:7-18. List some things that comfort and give you confidence about knowing you are never without God.

4. Read the following scriptures. Then write down what makes you love your Omnipresent God even more?

   Jeremiah 23:24
   John 1:3-5
   Colossians 1:17
   Romans 8:38-39

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DAY TWENTY-NINE

Omnipotence of God
(All Powerful)

The word omnipotence means having unlimited or universal power, authority or force, and only God has such awesome power and authority.
The exercise of God's omnipotence is only limited by His wise and holy and loving will. God can do anything, but will do only what infinite wisdom, holiness, and love dictate.

Our human language does not contain words to adequately describe the supernatural characteristics of God. The fact that He is eternal, immortal, triune, hates sin, loves righteousness, gets jealous and angry, is merciful, feels compassion, and is omnipotent, is more than our finite minds can comprehend, but that is what makes God, God.

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When we really understand our place as a child of an All Powerful God, we will possess the power to live the life of an overcomer. He is ever watchful and cares deeply for His children. We are His children and He uses His great power to love His own.

1. What do each of these scriptures tell you about God?
   Job 42:2; Genesis 18:14; Matthew 19:26

2. Read the following scriptures and write down the ways God has all power over nature.
   Genesis 1:3; Psalm 33:6-9; Psalms 107:25-29; Jonah 1:4, 11-13, 15

3. Read the following scriptures and write down the ways God has all power over life and death.
   John 5:28-29; Matthew 28:52-53; 1 Kings 20:1, 4-6

4. Read the following scriptures. Satan is subject to God's will and word. How does that affect you?
   Job 1:12; Job 2:6; Luke 22:31-32; Revelation 20:1-3

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DAY THIRTY

A Look Back

My Discipleship Journey-Look back, reflect, and give thanks to God!

Look back at your notes and thoughts for each of the devotions you read. List one thing that stood out to you the most about each one.

1. Disciple-Becoming a follower
2. Bible-God's Love Letter to Us
3. 3. Salvation- The ABC Plan
4. 4. Salvation-Saved from what?
5. Salvation-Dealing with doubt
6. Salvation-Commitment
7. Identity-The new you
8. The New You-Being born again
9. The Great Exchange-Bondage to freedom
10. The Holy Spirit-Third person in trinity
11. Fruit-Outward sign of new man
12. Prayer-Communicating with God
13. Promises-Declaration of assurance
14. Saturated in God's Word-Knowing His heart
15. Emergency Numbers-Your 911
16. The Enemy-Spiritual Warfare
17. Armed and Dangerous-Spiritual Warfare
18. Armed and Dangerous-Spiritual Warfare 2
19. Fellowship-Becoming one
20. Witness-Telling others
21. Your Mission - The Great Commission
22. My Testimony-What God did for you
23. Temptation-practicing restraint
24. Obedience-Learning self-control
25. Worship-Beyond singing

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26. God's Sovereignty -Supreme Authority
27. Omniscience-All knowing
28. Omnipresence-Everywhere
29. Omnipotent-All powerful

Pray and ask God to bring someone into your life that you might have the opportunity to share what you've learned from this discipleship booklet.

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