



I AM

A 40-DAY STUDENT DISCIPLESHIP JOURNAL

NEW

LeaderTrekks
YOUTH MINISTRY®



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A 40-DAY STUDENT DISCIPLESHIP JOURNAL

NEW

THIS BOOK BELONGS TO:

LeaderTrekks
YOUTH MINISTRY®



I Am New: A 40-Day Student Discipleship Journal

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INTRO

Congratulations! You accepted Jesus and are beginning a life-long journey of knowing and living for Christ!

You might be thinking, "So, now what do I do?"

Once you become a follower of Jesus, you immediately know exactly how to live in this new way, right? Wrong. Anytime we start something new, we're not immediately going to be experts. It's no different with our faith—following Jesus and living for him isn't always easy. It takes practice and patience to learn how to live as a Christ-follower.

You don't have to try to figure it out on your own. Throughout this journal, you'll be guided through eight essential habits of believers. These are ways of living that will help you mature in your faith, make you more like Jesus, and grow a deeper relationship with God. Consistently practicing these habits is the key to seeking Christ and living for him. Following Jesus is full of constant learning and growing, and the good news is that he is always there with you, helping you. As you embark on this incredible journey, remember that you have Jesus, the best Guide and Friend, along with you!

DIGGING DEEPER

Once you become a believer, you've entered into a life of continuing to grow in Christ. This journal is a great place to start! As you go through this journal, you may have questions or want to know more about how to live as a Christ-follower. A great way to dig deeper is through the rest of the *I Am* series of journals. Learning how to worship God throughout all of life is the theme of *I Am A Worshiper*. *I Am A Disciple* walks you through eight core lessons of following Jesus. And once you've gone through those two journals, *I Am A Leader* helps you use your influence to point people to Jesus. As you continue growing in Christ, check out the *I Am* journals at www.leadertreks.org/i-am-series-bundle.

HOW IT WORKS

This book is designed to help you as you embark on the journey of following Jesus. It will take you through eight weeks of journal pages that uncover the heart and characteristics of a Christ-follower. Each week contains a different essential habit of a believer and will equip you to continue growing as a disciple of Christ.

In this journal, you'll encounter challenges, hard questions, and Bible studies, all of which focus on a new essential habit to practice as you grow in your faith in God. At the end of each chapter, you'll find a MENTOR PAGE. This page is designed for you to use in relationship with an adult who is farther down the road than you. While this book doesn't have to be done with a mentor, it's best when it is! (If you don't have a mentor, ask your youth pastor or some other trusted adult the best way to go about finding one.) Each day is different than the last and no two days are the same; no matter how you're wired, there will be something for you!



Throughout this journal, you'll also find the **MARKS OF A DISCIPLE**. These are things that Christ-followers are committed to and have in common, like connecting with God through prayer, applying his Word to our lives, serving without personal agendas, managing God's gifts, and many other things.



FIRST THINGS FIRST

HAVE YOU RECEIVED GOD'S GIFT YET?

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

JOHN 3:16 (ESV)

Did you know this is one of the most well-known verses in the world?

Here's why: it's the entire Gospel in one verse.

Here's what it means: God loves the world he created and everyone in it. But we messed up and sin entered our lives. So, God sent his son Jesus to save us from our sin. Anyone who puts their faith in Jesus receives the gifts of God's salvation immediately, God's steadfast love and endless mercy to help us follow Jesus while on earth, and God's eternal life to enjoy in Heaven. These gifts are freely available to everyone. All you have to do is ask him, and you'll be saved.

If you've never accepted Jesus as your Savior, now is the perfect time to receive the gifts God has for you. Talk to a Christian friend, one of the pastors at a local church, or any of us at LeaderTreks Youth Ministry if you want to find out more about following Jesus.



INTRO TO THE 8 ESSENTIAL HABITS

Throughout this journal, you'll be looking at eight essential habits of a believer. These are characteristics and actions that every true follower of Jesus should be seeking to live out. But remember—growth is a process and none of us are going to be perfect. So use this journal as a chance to practice these habits and start growing in them, knowing that you will mess up sometimes, but that God offers abundant grace and forgiveness!

BONUS: *Don't miss the **Essential Habits Assessment** we've included at the back of the book (pp. 126–130). It's a great way to measure your growth as you learn to follow Jesus. Think of it as a quick check-in between you and God. You can use it after finishing each chapter or after finishing this entire journal. You can even use it a year from now—in fact, we recommend that!*

ESSENTIAL HABIT #1

RECEIVING GRACE | Accepting God's Good Gifts

Believers must receive God's gift of grace. Since we are sinners, we don't deserve to have a relationship with God, but he graciously sent Jesus to make a way for that to happen. Accepting God's grace means you stop trying to earn salvation and you show that same grace to those around you.

ESSENTIAL HABIT #2

RELYING ON THE BIBLE | Trusting in God's Word

Believers must trust fully in the truth of God's Word. The Bible is the clearest way God communicates with his people today. Relying on the Bible means you spend time reading and studying it; you allow it to guide, encourage, and show you your sin; and you actually change the way you live because of what it says.



ESSENTIAL HABIT #3

OBEYING GOD | Following What God Says

Believers must obediently follow what God says. God has certain standards for the lives of his followers because he loves and cares about us. His commands are for our good! Obeying God requires you to identify and get rid of sin and prioritize doing what God says above what you want.

ESSENTIAL HABIT #4

PRAYING WITH FAITH | Communicating with God

Believers must communicate with God boldly and honestly. God has allowed us to talk with and listen to him through prayer. Prayer is not just a wish list of things we want, but it's an opportunity to grow us to be more like Jesus. Praying with faith means you approach God in humility and confidence that he hears, he cares, and he answers you.

ESSENTIAL HABIT #5

WORSHIPING WHOLEHEARTEDLY | Putting God in His Proper Place

Believers must worship God, putting him in his proper place as Holy God. Worship is more than just singing songs once a week but is a lifestyle of glorifying and praising God. Worshiping wholeheartedly means you find ways to worship in everyday activities and humbly acknowledge that God is God and you are not.



ESSENTIAL HABIT #6

CONNECTING WITH OTHER BELIEVERS | Recognizing the Importance of Community

Believers must be an active part of the family of Christ. God gave us other believers so that we can help each other grow, encourage one another, and point each other to Jesus. Connecting with other believers means that you regularly attend and are actively engaged in a local church, as well as intentionally building relationships with those in your Christian community.

ESSENTIAL HABIT #7


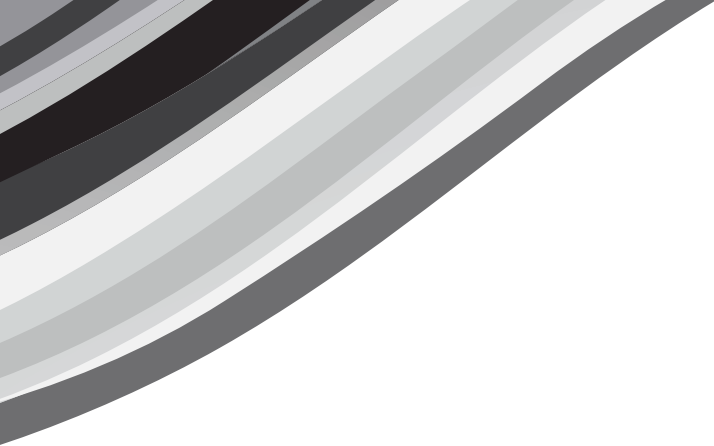
SERVING GOD & OTHERS | Humbling Ourselves in Service

Believers must follow Jesus' example and humbly serve. When we serve other people, we are also serving God. Serving God and others means that you put other people's needs above your own, spend time helping others, and sacrifice yourself and your wants for the good of those around you.


ESSENTIAL HABIT #8

SHARING ABOUT GOD | Telling Others About the Gospel

Believers must tell other people about the Gospel. Spreading the Gospel is one of God's clearest and most important commands. Sharing about God means that you boldly tell people about who God is and what he's done, as well as using your personal testimony to point people to Jesus.



*"We experience grace as **gratitude**: it gives us
a sense for the gift of life, a sense of wonder and
sometimes elation at the lavish generosity of God."*



– Lewis B. Smedes¹

CHAPTER ONE

RECEIVING GRACE

ESSENTIAL HABIT

#1

*BELIEVERS RECEIVE
& GIVE GRACE*

DAY 1

GRACE RECEIVED, GRACE GIVEN

As believers in Christ, we have received God's grace: the love and mercy he shows us even though we don't deserve it. Not only have we been saved from God's wrath because of his mercy, but we've also been given gifts of forgiveness, eternal life, and a relationship with the Lord.

Grace defines the lives of us who believe in Jesus as our Lord and Savior. We experienced God's grace when he softened our hearts and we first had faith in him. We continue to receive grace as we grow in spiritual maturity. As we recognize the immense grace we were—and are!—given by God, we grow in the ability to extend grace to those around us. Our faith journey starts with and depends on God's grace. That's why we're focusing on this essential habit first.

*DISCIPLES OF CHRIST RECEIVE AND RELY ON
GOD'S GRACE TO BECOME MORE CHRISTLIKE (ROM. 6:4)
AND SHARE GOD'S GRACE WITH THE WORLD (ACTS 20:24).*



As we begin the week, take some time to reflect on these questions:

How would you explain God's grace in your own words?

Can you pinpoint the moment you understood the grace of God displayed through Jesus' sacrifice? If not, what were some highlights in your journey of understanding?

How does God show you grace in everyday life? (These examples might not be specific to only believers.)

What prevents you from showing grace to those around you?

What specific ways can you show grace to your family or friends today?

DAY 2

SAVED BY GRACE

Before Christ changed our lives, we were a mess. Maybe your life was marked by lying, cheating, or idolizing yourself. Maybe you felt hopeless in your depression or anxiety. But God stepped in and saved you because of his grace. You did not do anything to earn it. You weren't somehow better than others. Purely out of his love and mercy, God gave you the gift of grace. What a generous gift! When we receive God's grace, we have accepted his forgiveness and his promise to make us more like Christ day by day. When we have received God's gift of grace, we can then extend grace to others by doing the good works God has prepared for us to do.

Read **Ephesians 2:1–10** and use the **5P method** of Bible study to dig deeper into this passage. *This title, 5P method, is simply a way to help you remember this Bible study technique so you can use it to learn from other passages later.*

Need help finding today's passage in your Bible?

First, let's talk about the parts that make up a Scripture reference:



Now you know what you're looking for! If you're using a physical Bible, the Table of Contents can help you find the book (Ephesians). Next look for the chapter (2)—they're usually the taller numbers. Then look for the smaller numbers to find the verses (1–10). If you're using a Bible app, you can do a search for the entire Scripture reference, or just scroll and click the book, chapter, then verses. If you're new to reading the Bible and want a bit more help, check out ***The Bible 101 Bible Reading Plan*** in the back of this book (pp. 134–139).

PURPOSE

Why do you think the author wrote this? Why is it important enough to be in the Bible? In a sentence or two, write what you think the overall theme or topic is.

PRIMARY VERSE

Which verse seems to contain the most important thought in the passage? Which one stands out most to you? Write it out.

PROMISES

Make a list of any promises you find in this passage.

PROBLEMS

If you find anything you don't understand—even if it's just a word—write it down as a question. Then ask someone for the answer or look it up yourself.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

What do you need to change or work on so that what you have read is real in your life? Be specific—your application should tell who, what, and when.



DAY 3

DISPLAYS OF GRACE

Not only do Christ-followers receive God's saving grace the moment we first believe, but God continues to show us grace each day. We experience grace as:²

FORGIVENESS FROM SIN HOPE (EXPECTATION)
OF ETERNITY WITH GOD

GRATITUDE OF THE
GENEROSITY OF GOD **PEACE FROM GOD**

LOVE FROM GOD ACCEPTANCE & ADOPTION
BY GOD INTO HIS FAMILY

POWER GIVEN
TO US BY GOD **JOY FROM KNOWING
AND SERVING GOD**

THANK GOD FOR THE GRACE YOU'VE RECEIVED

We are blessed with God's abundant grace! In the list on the previous page, pick one display of grace that you've experienced this week and circle it. Then use the space below to write a prayer thanking God for showing you his grace in this way. You can incorporate this habit of recognizing God's grace and thanking him into your everyday routine—thank God for one display of grace as you eat breakfast, commute to school, or walk to your next class.

DISPLAY GOD'S GRACE MORE

Because we are recipients of God's abundant grace, we have everything we need to display his grace to others around us. Take a moment to ask God what ways you have failed to display his grace. Have you forgiven others as you've been forgiven by God (Matt. 6:12)? Do you show love to your family, friends, and even enemies (James 2:8; Matt. 5:44; Luke 6:27)? How often do you tell others about what God has graciously done for you (Matt. 5:16)?

Look back at the list on the previous page and underline one way you need to display God's grace more. Spend some time talking to God about how you might be failing to show his grace to others, and write down your confession in the space below. It could be your lack of forgiveness, failure to love others, or something else. Thankfully, God has already forgiven you for every failure! Ask God to help you see opportunities to display his grace to others and give you the strength to do it well. In God's grace, he meets us when we fail and leads us on right paths (Ps. 23:3).

PRACTICE CONFESSING

God, here's one way I have failed to show your grace to others this week:

DISPLAY GOD'S GRACE MORE

Help me, God, to display your grace more to these people/in these situations:



DAY 4

AMAZING GRACE

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now I'm found
Was blind, but now I see

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
And grace my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed

The Lord has promised good to me
His word my hope secures
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures

The Earth shall soon dissolve like snow
The sun forbear to shine
But God, Who called me here below
Will be forever mine.³

This famous hymn highlights many ways God shows grace to his children. Take a moment to underline all the displays of God's grace in the lyrics above. God's grace is incredible. No other god could accomplish all that the Lord does for us! God's grace isn't for getting saved multiple times—it's to help us become more like Christ each day. That lifelong process is called *sanctification*, and in God's grace, he enables us to change and will complete the process in us (1 Thess. 5:23–25). Then, out of the overflow of grace shown to us, we have the ability to show grace to others.

Find a version of this hymn that you like online. Pay attention to the lyrics about grace as you listen and sing along.

When you're done listening to the hymn, answer the following questions:

In what ways were you lost and spiritually blind before you became a follower of Jesus?

The hymn writer poetically says that God has saved us—even though we don't deserve it—from punishment and secured for you eternity with him. What does this tell you about God?

Which, if any, displays of God's grace from yesterday or from the hymn are new concepts for you?

How does that new concept change the way you live, view the world around you, or view yourself?

What specific way can you practice showing someone grace today?

DAY 5

EVERY DAY, GRACE

Grace is a theme that runs throughout the Bible. God's grace is seen in the lives of all the people he has chosen—from Abraham to King David to the Apostle Paul. If we look for it, we will easily see not only his saving grace in our lives but also the common grace he pours out to everyone on earth. God's grace is displayed when we wake up each morning, breathe, use our talents, earn money, and eat dinner.

As we gratefully recognize and receive God's continued grace each day, let's practice giving thanks for those ways and showing grace to our family, friends, and even enemies. God's grace has the power to transform us, and it has the power to transform the people around us too.

**"BUT HE GIVES MORE GRACE. THEREFORE IT SAYS, 'GOD
OPPOSES THE PROUD BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.'"**

JAMES 4:6 (ESV)

Take a look at the passages below to see what else the Bible has to say about grace:

Bible Passages	<i>Use your own words to summarize the main point.</i>	<i>What does this passage say about God & the world?</i>	<i>Now that I know this, what should I think/do differently?</i>
Romans 6:1-4			
Romans 3:23-24			
Psalms 103:2-5			
2 Corinthians 8:7			
Ephesians 4:32			
Hebrews 4:16			

MENTOR PAGE

RECEIVING GRACE

This page is designed for you to use in relationship with a mentor or with your parent(s) or guardian(s). If you don't have a mentor, seriously consider finding one. Start by praying, and then ask someone (like a youth worker or parent) to recommend a person who would be a good fit. Or if you know someone with a deep faith and the kind of character traits and faith you want to develop, ask them to mentor you. Most people will be more than thrilled and truly honored to mentor someone.

Questions to go through with your mentor:

1. Why is grace so important? How have you experienced God's grace in your life? Ask your mentor how they have experienced God's grace in their life.
2. On Days 2 and 5, you made some very specific life applications in your Bible study. What were they? Did you follow through on them? Do you need someone to keep you accountable?
3. On Day 3, you were challenged to look for displays of God's grace, as well as confess how you've sinned. Share how that went with your mentor. Was it easy or difficult? Spend some time praying together, confessing sin and asking God to help you as you seek to receive his grace and show that grace to others.

Until your next meeting:

Take a minute to figure out when you and your mentor will get together next.

My mentor and I will meet: _____ (when) at _____ (where).

Are there any specific ways your mentor can pray for you until then?

MENTORS & PARENTS

Get your own copy of these questions at
www.leadertreks.org/i-am-new-mentors



**“IN HIM WE HAVE
REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS BLOOD,
THE FORGIVENESS OF OUR TRESPASSES,
ACCORDING TO THE RICHES
OF HIS GRACE.”**

EPHESIANS 1:7 (ESV)



"BELIEVE IN THE LORD JESUS, AND YOU WILL BE SAVED..."

ACTS 16:31 (ESV)

All it takes to start following Jesus is simple faith. And once you become a follower of Jesus, you immediately know exactly how to live in this new way, right?

Wrong. Following Jesus and living for him isn't always easy. It takes practice and patience to learn how to live as a Christ-follower. Every believer learns to develop ways of living that will help you mature in your faith, make you more like Jesus, and grow a deeper relationship with God.

You don't have to try to figure all this out on your own. Following Jesus is full of constant learning and growing. The good news is that Jesus is the best Guide and Friend, who is always right there with you, helping you as you grow more like him.

I Am New focuses on eight essential habits of believers. Each week has several days of *Bible Studies* (and Bible study methods), *challenges*, *thought-provoking experiences*, *hard questions*, and the *Marks of a Disciple*.

- *Receiving Grace*: Accepting God's good gifts
- *Relying on the Bible*: Trusting in God's Word
- *Obedying God*: Following what God says
- *Praying with Faith*: Communicating with God
- *Worshiping Wholeheartedly*: Putting God in his proper place
- *Connecting with Other Believers*: Recognizing the importance of community
- *Serving God and Others*: Humbling ourselves in service
- *Sharing about God*: Telling others about the Gospel

ALSO INCLUDED

Essential Habits Assessment
Prayer Methods to Practice
The Bible 101 Bible Reading Plan
Pages for your Mentor
Marks of a Disciple

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