

LEADERTREKS

BRAVE

COURAGE IN THE FACE OF FEAR

A FOUR-WEEK STUDENT DISCIPLESHIP JOURNAL

THIS BOOK BELONGS TO:

Brave: A Four-Week Student Discipleship Journal
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STARTING NOW

What's your biggest fear?

There are a lot of scary things in this world, whether you like to admit that or not. Spiders, heights, public speaking, snakes, death, public humiliation, rejection, being alone, sharks, losing your phone—the list of fears could go on and on. So in a world where it's easy to worry and give in to fear, how can you live courageously for Christ?

When you choose bravery, you humbly admit your need for Christ, confess your sin, boldly obey Jesus even when it seems risky, and tell others how Jesus offers salvation to everyone. There will be times when you'll want to give in to fear. But Jesus calls us to be brave!

HOW IT WORKS

This book has four weeks of journal pages to help you learn more about how Jesus strengthens us to be brave and gives us courage in the face of fear. Each week takes you through seven days of questions to get you thinking, Bible studies to shift your perspective, and challenges to stretch you out of your comfort zone. Then, on the seventh day of the week, you'll get a break to recharge for the next week. It'll help you get into a rhythm of learning, growing, and putting that knowledge into action.

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.



Remember, you'll get out of this book what you put into it. The challenges you'll encounter won't always be easy—they're designed to stretch you! Take a risk and use this journal to run hard toward God. When we make ourselves available to him, he'll transform us and use us in ways that will blow our minds!


WEEK ONE
DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES?

INTRO

Have you ever been asked, "Do you want the good news or the bad news first?" People usually want the bad news first because they can end by focusing on the good news. That's how the Bible is set up.

The bad news is that when Adam and Eve chose to disobey God, they introduced sin into the world; everyone and everything is affected by sin. But even before God spoke with Adam and Eve about humanity's consequences for their sin, he addressed the Devil who was disguised as a snake and told him a descendant of Eve (Jesus) would someday "bruise his head" (see Gen. 3:15). That is, Jesus would defeat Satan once and for all in the final judgment. There will be a day when Satan will be punished for his evil for all eternity (see Rev. 20:10).[1]

God's plan from the beginning was to send Jesus to die as our replacement and rise again to save us from permanent death!

DAY ONE: ENTROPY

There is a scientific word that describes the fact that everything goes from order to disorder. It's called entropy. In order to maintain our bodies, our homes, our belongings, our minds—and anything else you can think of—it requires energy. If left to themselves, things would waste away and become more disorderly rather than naturally becoming orderly.[2] The world and all of us are obviously a part of this reality, and it's all the result of sin. If there were no sin, the world, including us and our relationships, would be perfect! Wouldn't it be nice if we could experience that perfection? Because of God's grace, we can, if we repent and believe Jesus, as Savior, is the only way to be right again with God.

"The birth of Jesus made possible not just a new way of understanding life but a new way of living in it."

– Frederick Buechner[3]

As we jump into the week, reflect on these journal questions:

Where in your life do you see entropy happening?

What do you do to keep these things in working order?

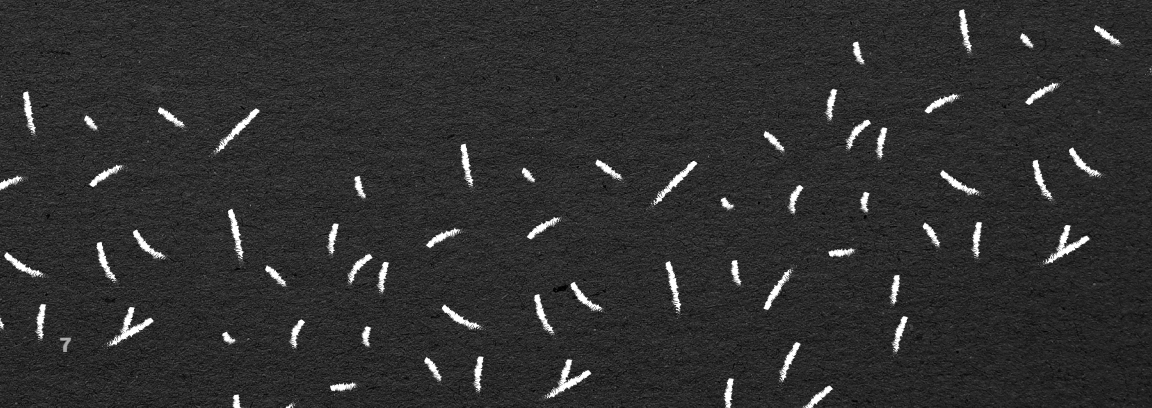
What is the state of your spiritual life—more toward disorder or order? How can you tell?

How does it make you feel to know that Jesus will defeat Satan once and for all, and the world and all those who trust in Jesus as their personal Savior will one day be perfect again?

DAY TWO: LIFE IN CHRIST

The bad news is that Adam introduced sin and death into the world, but the good news is that Christ brings righteousness and eternal life. Right now, those who believe in Jesus as their Savior no longer are dying in sin but are benefiting from God's grace by receiving Christ's righteousness. Not only that, but those who believe also have a future hope of eternal life with Christ. Everyone who puts their faith in Jesus—the one who will ultimately defeat death at the final judgment—will be raised from the dead and spend eternity with their Savior in heaven. Because of Jesus, we're not defeated by sin and death!

Study the verses in **1 Corinthians 15:20–26** carefully using the **OPA method** for Bible Study: Observation, Principles, and Application. *Helpful tip: the more effort you put into making observations, the easier the principles and application will be to see.*



OBSERVATION

Compile all the facts found in these passages. Try to make 10–15 observations about what you read.

PRINCIPLES

Draw a few principles from the observations you made. What is God trying to teach you in this passage?

APPLICATION

How will you apply these principles to your life? Be specific—a good application will tell who, what, and when.

DAY THREE: CHRIST CAME!

In the famous Christmas movie *It's a Wonderful Life*,[4] the main character George hits rock bottom. An angel appears, and George gets to experience what life would have been like for everyone if he had not been born. He realizes that his life did indeed affect and change people, and it would have been much worse for everyone if he had not been born. George's experience makes him thankful for the gifts he has instead of despairing over his unfortunate life circumstances.

Now, imagine what our world would be like if *Christ* had not been born. The world and everything in it would certainly look and be different. What if God didn't have a plan to redeem us and the world? What if Christ never died and rose again? Fill in the comparison chart below: on the left, list all the things you can think of that changed because Christ *did* come, willingly died for us, and rose again. On the right, list the opposite effects that would have happened if Christ had *not* come. Then spend some time in prayer thanking God for Jesus.

BECAUSE CHRIST CAME

IF CHRIST HAD NOT COME

"To regain paradise for His people, Jesus had to become the second Adam. That is, He had to come in our likeness so that He could obey God perfectly and succeed where Adam failed as our representative."[5]

No one except Jesus could have died and risen again in our place. No one except Jesus could live a perfect life and fulfill God's requirements of a sinless life. Why? Because Jesus is fully God and fully man. Therefore, he is a perfect, sinless being who took on flesh and became a human. No random person could be our representative because they, just like us, are under the curse of sin and do not have a spotless record. Jesus does! An animal or angel couldn't be our representative because they're not human. Jesus is! He ascended bodily into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father (see Acts 1:9–11). He is still 100% God and 100% man with nail holes through his hands and feet and a gash in his side (see John 20:24–29).

CONSIDER THE QUOTE ABOVE AS YOU ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:

In your own words, explain why Jesus is humanity's perfect representative.



What does it mean to you that Jesus became human, died, and rose again for you?



How does the reality of Christ being your new representative change the way you think and act?

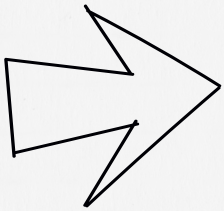


What about this topic is still confusing? Who can you ask about it?



Knowing that Christ died in our place and rose again should change us. We are offered forgiveness of sin and eternal life for free because of Christ's death and resurrection—what an amazing gift! Today is an opportunity to prayerfully evaluate yourself. Are you walking in the Spirit or still walking in your sinful desires (or "flesh")? Today's passage will help clarify what patterns show up in your life. These patterns are either fruit of knowing God personally or the fruit of not knowing him personally. Ask the Lord to show you if you are his child yet or not. And don't be discouraged if you're not perfect—that's impossible here on earth. Instead, look for patterns in your life: Do you want to please God or yourself? Do others see the fruit of the Spirit in you?

Read **Galatians 5:16–25** and use the **SPECK method** of Bible study to dig deeper into this passage. *The acronym SPECK is simply a way to help you remember this Bible study technique so you can use it to learn from other passages later.*



SINS TO AVOID

Make a list of any sins—wrong actions, attitudes, or thoughts—mentioned in the passage.

PROMISES TO CLAIM

Make a list of the promises in this passage. Promises give us confidence when we doubt God or face difficult times.

EXAMPLES TO FOLLOW

What examples do you find in the passage? Is there a right way of thinking or acting described in the passage that you should take as an example for your life?

COMMANDS TO OBEY

Write out all the commands you find. If a passage encourages you to take a certain action, take it as a command and write it down.

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD TO APPLY

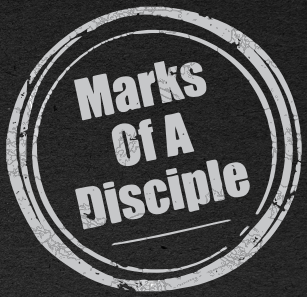
What does the passage tell you about God that you can apply to your daily life? God's character shines throughout Scripture.

DAY SIX: GOD'S GRACE

Genesis 3:23–24 describes God banishing Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden to prevent them eating from the Tree of Life. This was actually an act of grace! If Adam and Eve had eaten from the Tree of Life while being separated from God, they would have lived forever in a sinful state, unable to be right with God again. But in his grace, God banished Adam and Eve so that his plan for the Redeemer Jesus—the one who would make a way for each person to be right with God again—could take effect first. Then once a person is right with God (by repentance of sin and belief that Jesus is the only way to God), they will have eternal life.

Find someone in your life who is a Christ-follower, preferably someone you respect and who is older than you, and set up a time to ask them how God has shown his grace to them throughout their lives. This should be a personal conversation in person or via video call, not over text or email.

Disciples of Christ recognize their need for God's saving grace. (Eph. 2:4-5)



Write down what sticks out to you from the conversation below:

After talking with the person you chose, take some time to write down the ways God has shown you his grace:

DAY SEVEN: SABBATH

Have you ever heard of someone refer to Sunday as the Sabbath? That means it's our day of rest. So today that's your challenge. Rest! Reflect on what you've learned so far, the challenges you did, or Bible verses that stuck out to you. Spend some time praying and talking with God. Recharge your batteries and refresh your mind. Then come back tomorrow ready to go deeper.



"AND ON THE SEVENTH DAY GOD FINISHED HIS WORK THAT HE HAD DONE, AND HE RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORK THAT HE HAD DONE."
- GENESIS 2:2

WHAT'S YOUR BIGGEST FEAR?

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BRAVE CONTAINS 4 WEEKS OF:

- Bible studies
- Challenges
- Thought-Provoking Experiences
- Hard Questions
- Marks of a Disciple

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NOW STUDIES

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