

# follow the leader



## Week 1

### USING SOAP

Find a time and place where you can focus on spending time with God. Get your Bible, a pen, and a journal to write in.

- SCRIPTURE:** *A passage has been provided for you. God wants to give you encouragement, direction, and discipline as you read.*
- OBSERVATION:** *Write down what is happening in the passage, who the key people are, and what God is doing in their lives.*
- APPLICATION:** *Write down how you will be different today because of what you've read.*
- PRAYER:** *Take a moment to pray. You'll find a prayer prompt on each day's study to focus your prayer.*

### JOURNAL DAY ONE :: Matthew 7:15-20

**BACKGROUND:** Jesus reminds His hearers of a concept from the Old Testament that helps evaluate whether a prophet is true or false.

**OBSERVATION:**

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**APPLICATION:**

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**PRAYER:** Dear God, help me to evaluate the fruit that comes out of my own life, and show me places where I need to change to reflect Your truth. Please continue to transform me and give me a desire to please You.

### JOURNAL DAY TWO :: Matthew 7:21-23

**BACKGROUND:** Jesus makes it clear that a person shows he is saved through his actions, not by words or using His name.

**OBSERVATION:**

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**APPLICATION:**

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**PRAYER:** Jesus, I want to be someone who does the will of the Father, not just someone who says His name. Through my relationship with You, transform my actions and attitudes so that they would reflect a true follower.

### JOURNAL DAY THREE :: John 14:21-24

**BACKGROUND:** Jesus teaches that someone who loves God knows His commands and follows them, and God is a

**OBSERVATION:**

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**APPLICATION:**

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**PRAYER:** Lord, show me that You are dwelling inside me. Please continue to make me aware of Your commands. You enable me to follow them. I am following You. Please transform me from the inside so that my actions show that I love You.

## JOURNAL DAY FOUR :: Luke 6:46-49

*BACKGROUND:* Jesus teaches that it's not enough to just know His words; we must put them into practice. In the end, it will be clear if faith was backed up with action.

*OBSERVATION:*

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*APPLICATION:*

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*PRAYER:*

Jesus, I call You Lord, and I must show that by obeying what You say. I understand that my faith and knowledge are worthless unless it comes with action. Please continue to enable me to live in obedience.

## JOURNAL DAY FIVE :: 1 John 3:21-24

*BACKGROUND:* John reminds his readers of an Old Testament concept (Jeremiah 29:23) that teaches us that we are evaluated by what's inside, not what we say.

*OBSERVATION:*

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*APPLICATION:*

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*PRAYER:*

Lord, You know my heart. Show me the places where I am pleasing You and places where I am not. Thank You for the Holy Spirit inside me that is a guarantee of my salvation.

## JOURNAL DAY SIX :: James 1:22-25

*BACKGROUND:* James, the half-brother of Jesus, teaches his readers that we are to follow Jesus' teaching, not just know it.

*OBSERVATION:*

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*APPLICATION:*

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*PRAYER:*

Lord, help me not just know Your word but to live it. You have given us Your commands so that our lives will change. Please continue to use these words as a mirror to my life so that I can see what needs transformation.

## SOAP VERSE :: Matthew 16:24

"Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.'"



# follow the leader



## Week 2

### USING SOAP

Find a time and place where you can focus on spending time with God. Get your Bible, a pen, and a journal to write in.

- SCRIPTURE:** *A passage has been provided for you. God wants to give you encouragement, direction, and discipline as you read.*
- OBSERVATION:** *Write down what is happening in the passage, who the key people are, and what God is doing in their lives.*
- APPLICATION:** *Write down how you will be different today because of what you've read.*
- PRAYER:** *Take a moment to pray. You'll find a prayer prompt on each day's study to focus your prayer.*

### JOURNAL DAY ONE :: Matthew 18:1-4

**BACKGROUND:** Jesus challenges His disciples' understanding of status as He teaches the kind of attitudes they should have.

**OBSERVATION:**

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**APPLICATION:**

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**PRAYER:** Dear Jesus, it's hard to grasp that the humble are considered great in the kingdom of God. I pray that You would continue to build my character to be childlike, to be helpless and humble.

### JOURNAL DAY TWO :: Philippians 2:1-4

**BACKGROUND:** Paul urges the churchgoers in Philippi to have unity and to put those around them above themselves.

**OBSERVATION:**

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**APPLICATION:**

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**PRAYER:** Lord, I know it brings You joy when believers live in harmony. Please build in me the humility that Paul writes about in Philippians 2:3, and give me opportunities to serve others sacrificially.

### JOURNAL DAY THREE :: Philippians 2:5-11

**BACKGROUND:** Paul quotes a hymn or creed of the early church as he teaches churchgoers the kind of humility we should have.

**OBSERVATION:**

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**APPLICATION:**

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**PRAYER:** Jesus, in becoming a servant You placed the needs of others above Your own. In dying on the cross, You took on all the shame and pain for me and the rest of the world. Continue to transform me to have this kind of humility.

## JOURNAL DAY FOUR :: John 13:1-17

*BACKGROUND:* Jesus violates the cultural concept of status as He takes on the job of a lowly slave, or what disciples usually did for their masters.

*OBSERVATION:*

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*APPLICATION:*

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*PRAYER:*

Jesus, You set an example for the believers when You humbled Yourself to wash Your disciples' feet. You are my Lord, and You are greater than I am, yet You have this attitude. Please give me opportunities to serve others, even if they do not understand.

## JOURNAL DAY FIVE :: 1 Corinthians 3:10-15

*BACKGROUND:* Paul writes that the future judgment will reveal the eternal value of one's actions. If what someone has built is shown to last, there will be rewards.

*OBSERVATION:*

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*APPLICATION:*

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*PRAYER:*

Lord, teach me to build my lifestyle on a foundation that will last into eternity. Enable me to live for Your kingdom and not for myself. I know that You will reward me in the end.

## JOURNAL DAY SIX :: James 4:4-6

*BACKGROUND:* James teaches his persecuted Jewish Christian readers that they are to serve God alone, and not live as the world lives.

*OBSERVATION:*

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*APPLICATION:*

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*PRAYER:*

Lord, I know that You give grace to the humble. Continue to change my heart so that I will be singly devoted to You. I know that I cannot serve both You and the world. Teach me not be proud but to put others before myself.

## SOAP VERSE :: Mark 10:43b-44

“Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all.”





This weekend Todd talked to us about serving like Jesus. We learned that service runs deeper than just showing up and doing a job. Instead, we serve because we love Jesus and want His kingdom to be realized on earth. God wants to use every experience you've had, both good and bad, to further His work here on earth. Every one of us has something special that God has prepared us to do...your role is not insignificant.

All of us were made for more than just walking blindly through life! There is more to us than our jobs, education, houses, cars, marriage, kids, and favorite TV shows. God has given us a mission that can only be accomplished through love. We invite you to serve with us at Sagebrush during Second Saturdays, Pit Stop, short-term mission trips, with our children's programs, or helping us greet people at the doors. Your service is important and could be the difference between heaven and hell for someone.

DAY

1

## SCRIPTURE

1 Peter 4:1-11

## BACKGROUND

Peter reminds his readers that each person has received a spiritual gift from God, and these gifts should be used for God's glory.

## QUESTIONS

1. What does Peter say about the person who has suffered (v.2)?
2. What benefit can there be in suffering (v.3)?
3. What did Peter's readers do in the past (v.3)?
4. What did Peter urge his readers to do above all (v.8)?
5. What gift has God given you that you can use to serve others?

## PRAYER

Father, help me to turn my life experience, both good and bad, into serving others and honoring You.

## JOURNAL

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DAY  
**2**

## SCRIPTURE

Romans 12

## BACKGROUND

Paul urges his readers to view their bodies as members of a sacrifice—a living one that has to renew the decision every day.

## QUESTIONS

1. How do people properly worship God (v.1)?
2. What is the most reasonable response to God's mercy (vv.1-2)?
3. What must happen in order for a person to discern and agree with the will of God (v.2)?
4. How should Christians think about themselves (v.3)?
5. What facts should keep a person from feeling superior or inferior to other Christians (vv.3-6)?

6. What are the gifts of God (vv.6-8)?
7. How can the gifts given to you be used to help others and Sagebrush?

## **P R A Y E R**

God, help me to renew my mind to Your way of thinking. I long to know Your will for my life and not fall into my old patterns.

## **J O U R N A L**

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DAY  
**3**

## **S C R I P T U R E**

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

## **B A C K G R O U N D**

The Apostle Paul sheds light on the way we should serve and live our lives now that we follow Christ.

## **Q U E S T I O N S**

1. Why do you think the author gives the Corinthians advice about spiritual gifts (v.1)?
2. What was the condition of the Corinthians' hearts when they were following other gods (v.2)?
3. What common element exists in the diversity of gifts, service, and working (vv. 4-6)?
4. What spiritual gifts did the Apostle Paul describe (vv.8-10)?
5. Why are we given these spiritual gifts (v.7)?
6. Where do spiritual gifts come from (v.11)?
7. How does it encourage you, that God loves you so much that He gave you a specific gift?

## **P R A Y E R**

Lord, thank You for giving me “good” gifts to honor You. Help me use my gifts to give You glory and leave this world better than I found it.

## **J O U R N A L**

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DAY  
**4**

## **S C R I P T U R E**

Matthew 25:31-36

## **B A C K G R O U N D**

Jesus, in the Gospel of Matthew, tells His disciples that they will be held accountable for the opportunities and gifts given to them.

## **Q U E S T I O N S**

1. According to Jesus, how will people be divided during the final judgment (vv.32-33)?
2. Why will the groups on Jesus' right be blessed (v.35)?
3. How will those who followed Jesus (the sheep) respond (vv.37-39)?
4. What criteria will Jesus use when judging how we used our gifts (v.40)?
5. How do people usually determine if they will be nice to someone?
6. What resources do you have to serve the needs of others?

## **P R A Y E R**

Jesus, on that day when You hold us accountable I want to be on Your right. Help me to use my time and resources to honor You. Please, Lord help me to be “ALL IN” today and every day!



# JOURNAL

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DAY  
**5**

## SCRIPTURE

1 Corinthians 1:1-9

## BACKGROUND

Paul reminds the Corinthian church that their gifts come from God and are meant for the common good.

## QUESTIONS

1. When was the last time you were thankful for someone and why?
2. What themes did Paul repeat several times (vv. 1-9)?
3. What words of affirmation did Paul give for his readers (v.2)?
4. How did the Corinthians cause Paul to thank God for them (vv.4-9)?
5. What did the readers of this passage have (v.7)?
6. Why did the Corinthians not lack for any spiritual gift (v.7)?
7. In what ways is God faithful to you?

## PRAYER

In Your faithfulness, 'O Great and Mighty God, You show Your love to me. Today, help me to show my love for You by using what You have given me to honor You.

# JOURNAL

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DAY  
**6**

**S C R I P T U R E**

Ephesians 4:1-16

**B A C K G R O U N D**

The Church at Ephesus is instructed to live a life worthy of the calling to follow Jesus.

**Q U E S T I O N S**

1. What one quality would you like to master in your character?
2. What did Paul urge the Ephesians to do (v. 1)?
3. Who gives grace to each believer (v.7)?
4. What kind of people does God fill in the church (v.11)?
5. What is the purpose of spiritual gifts (v.12-13)?
6. How have you benefited from the Christian leadership at Sagebrush?

**P R A Y E R**

Mighty God, help me to live a life worthy of Your awesome gift of grace. Thank You for not letting me settle for what I deserve, but giving me the opportunity to live a life that points to You.

**J O U R N A L**

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How much is a life worth? Everyday at Sagebrush we ask ourselves this question. God has given us so much, but we must do our part and leverage it for the Kingdom.

This weekend Todd talked about how so many people in our lives are held captive by the enemy. We have an opportunity to leverage our resources to rescue them.

What is the eternal life of people we know and love worth? Jesus answered this question when he gave his life on the cross. The challenge comes, for us, when we ask ourselves this question: "What is my part?"

DAY

1

## SCRIPTURE

Acts 20: 13-38

## BACKGROUND

Paul explains to the elders in the church in Ephesus that his ministry is about giving, not receiving.

## QUESTIONS

1. Why did the group pass by Ephesus? (20:16)
2. What was the gist of Paul's talk to the Ephesian Elders? (20:18-25)
3. How did Paul describe his present situation? (20:24)
4. What were the future responsibilities of the Ephesian Elders? (20:28-35)
5. How can we remain "blameless" in the way we support ourselves and Sagebrush?
6. Who is one other believer you can help this week?

## PRAYER

Mighty God, help me to become more like Paul's example and grow more from giving than receiving.

## JOURNAL

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DAY  
**2**

## SCRIPTURE

2 Corinthians 9:6-15

## BACKGROUND

Paul gives the Corinthian readers timeless truths about generosity. Including one of the most well know passages in scripture, "one reaps what he sows."

## QUESTIONS

1. Who is the most generous person you know? Why do you think so?
2. How should we give? Why? (9:7)
3. What promise does God give to believers who give generously? (9:8)
4. What results from the generosity of Christians? (9:11)
5. What did God give the Corinthians? (9:14)
6. What does this passage tell us about accountability? Who keeps you accountable?
7. How can you remind yourself about God's generosity the next time you want to hold back from giving?

## **P** R A Y E R

God help me to see my resources like You see them. Give me a heart that finds joy in giving honor to You.

## **J** O U R N A L

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DAY  
**3**

## **S** C R I P T U R E

Mark 12:41-44

## **B** A C K G R O U N D

Jesus shows us that it is not the amount we give, but the heart we have when we give.

## **Q** U E S T I O N S

1. In what ways are outward appearances misleading?
2. When was the last time someone turned out to be an imposter in your life? How did that make you feel?
3. What did the “rich people” do when they gave? (12:41)
4. How do you know the motivation of the “rich people?” (12:41)
5. What is different about the widow's gift? (12:42)
6. What is the one thing Jesus wants us to know from this story?
7. Think about ways you can give of either your time or treasure this week.

## **P** R A Y E R

Lord, give me a heart that seeks to give with the heart of the widow. I may not have as much as many people, but it is Yours.

## **J** O U R N A L

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DAY  
**4**

## **S** C R I P T U R E

Luke 6:37-42

## **B** A C K G R O U N D

Jesus gives us a glimpse of how he will balance the creation in the end and how we will be held accountable for how we lived our lives.

## **Q** U E S T I O N S

1. How does the saying, "what comes around goes around" apply to your relationships?
2. What specific promise did Jesus make? (6:37-38)
3. How much did Jesus want his disciples to give? Why? (6:38)
4. How did Jesus explain the importance of extending grace, mercy, and helping others? (6:38)
5. What is a person who fails to see their own failures?
6. What shortcomings do you overlook in your life?

## **P R A Y E R**

Jesus, help me by building my confidence in Your ways. Help me to give more of myself, because I am confident in what You have taught me.

## **J O U R N A L**

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DAY  
**5**

## **S C R I P T U R E**

Matthew 6:19-24

## **B A C K G R O U N D**

Jesus tells us that where we put our treasure that is where our hearts will be.

## **Q U E S T I O N S**

1. If you were stranded on a desert island and could only take three things what would they be?

2. What valuable possession do you have that can never be replaced?
3. Where did Jesus tell us to invest? Why? (6:19)
4. Why is heaven a better place to invest than earth? (6:20)
5. Why do you think Jesus refers to the eyes as a “lamp of the body?” (6:22)
6. What resources do you have to help you evaluate your use of money?

## **P** R A Y E R

Lord, help me to see what is more valuable than gold...living a life devoted fully to You!

## **J** O U R N A L

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# DAY **6**

## **S** C R I P T U R E

Malachi 2:17-3:12

## **B** A C K G R O U N D

This is the beginning of the fifth conversation between God and his people who have strayed from him. God continues the theme: return to me and I'll return to you.

## **Q** U E S T I O N S

1. What do you hold back from God?
2. Write down five ways you can better focus on God and his work.
3. What ways will being faithful to God look in your life?



4. How would others view you if you live solely for Jesus?

## **P** R A Y E R

Lord, help me to return everything to You. Take my life and let it be an offering to You!

## **J** O U R N A L

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Keeping your head down does not work in Christianity! Every day God shows us where we can jump in and make a difference. The single mom whose water heater has stopped working; our elderly next-door neighbor who doesn't have food; or children in Nicaragua. We just need to be available.

Over two thousand years ago a man died on a cross; some people thought that would be the last we ever heard of Jesus of Nazareth. However, a world-changing movement started with a few people who spread the message of the Savior. They were keenly aware of what had happen that third day and took action.

Can you imagine what would happen in your life if you lived out your faith? Your life is significant. You are not where you are by accident. Go and make a difference where you live!

DAY

1

**S** C R I P T U R E

Deuteronomy 10:12-22

**B** A C K G R O U N D

The children of Israel had sinned against God by creating a golden calf to worship while Moses was on the mountain receiving the Ten Commandments. The first set was broken by Moses, and now God exercises His mercy by giving the nation another chance.

## Q U E S T I O N S

1. Have you ever been shown mercy in your life?
2. What does God ask of us? (vv.12-13)
3. Why did God give us the Ten Commandments? (v.13)
4. What do you think it means when it says “circumcise your hearts”? (v. 16)
5. Who does God fight for? (V.17-19) What does this mean for you?
6. What does it mean to fear God? (v. 20)

## P R A Y E R

God, You are the Lord of lords and King of kings. I want to worship You and obey You with my whole heart. Today, give me the heart to love You and others.

## J O U R N A L

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DAY  
**2**

## S C R I P T U R E

Matthew 23:1-35

## B A C K G R O U N D

In this passage Jesus redefines greatness as giving not receiving.

## Q U E S T I O N S

1. What topics or situations really get you upset?
2. What is the worst label or name someone could call you?
3. To whom is Jesus speaking? (v.1)
4. What did Jesus accuse the religious leaders of doing? (v.3)
5. What are some of the names Jesus used to describe the powerful national leaders of Israel—the Pharisees? (vv. 13, 15-16, 27, 33)
6. What is the evidence of twisted priorities among the religious elite? (vv.23-26)
7. In what ways do you fake the Christian life?

## P R A Y E R

Lord, Your ways are different from the ways of the world. Help me to trust that greatness is giving more than receiving.

## J O U R N A L

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DAY  
**3**

## S C R I P T U R E

Luke 22:7-38

## B A C K G R O U N D

During the Last Supper Jesus gives us a powerful picture of remembrance

and service connected with being His follower.

## Q U E S T I O N S

1. How do you celebrate past important events in your life?
2. Why is it important to remember the past?
3. What was the significance of the unleavened bread? (v. 7)
4. What instructions did Jesus give to Peter and John? (vv. 8-13)
5. Why did Jesus want to eat Passover with His disciples? (vv. 15-16)
6. How did Jesus exemplify service through his death on the cross?
7. How have your own selfish ways interfered with your relationship with Jesus and others?

## P R A Y E R

Jesus, I remember! I remember that You gave it all so I could have You. Thank You for being the ultimate servant and coming down to earth to die for my sins. You were perfect in every way, yet You took on my imperfections.

## J O U R N A L

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DAY  
**4**

## S C R I P T U R E

1 Peter 5:1-14

## B A C K G R O U N D

The Apostle Peter gives us helpful instruction about serving and humility.

## Q U E S T I O N S

1. What people might consider you a leader?
2. What motivates people to be a leader in the church?
3. What did Peter instruct elders to do? (v.2)
4. How can you clothe yourself with humility? (v. 5)
5. How is the devil described? Why is this a sobering thought? (v.8)
6. Why are we tempted to act like we are better than others?
7. What worries tend to keep you up at night? How should you handle them? (v.7)

## P R A Y E R

Lord, show me how I am a leader. Give me the heart to put others before myself and the wisdom to be humble.

## J O U R N A L

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DAY  
**5**

## S C R I P T U R E

1 Peter 2:13-25

## B A C K G R O U N D

Peter explains that our attitude toward our leader reflects our hearts.

## Q U E S T I O N S

1. Who are some people, famous or ordinary, who suffered for what they believed?
2. What is your general attitude toward those who are in charge?
3. Whom did Peter encourage us to submit? (vv.13-14)
4. Why does God allow the government? (v.14)
5. What does our level of respect for bosses, leaders, police officers, and anyone in a position of authority say about us? (v. 17)
6. What did Christ leave us? Why? (v.21)
7. Why is it so difficult to submit to those with authority?

## **P R A Y E R**

How I treat others shows how much I value You, Lord. Help me to be a shining light in a dark world.

## **J O U R N A L**

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DAY  
**6**

## **S C R I P T U R E**

Revelation 2:18-29

## **B A C K G R O U N D**

In the Revelation of John, Jesus' observation, the believers in the Church at Thyatira have increased their service and witness for Christ throughout the world.

## **Q U E S T I O N S**

1. What are the three best habits you practice?
2. Who was telling John to write down this vision? (v.18)
3. How did the speaker in the passage identify himself? (v.18)
4. What did Christ know about the Church at Thyatira? (v.19)
5. What are some things you put before God?
6. What dangers do we face when we fail to deal with our sins?
7. What have you been tolerating in your life that needs to change?

## **P** R A Y E R

Help me, Lord, to increase my influence so I can bring others to know You.

## **J** O U R N A L

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You and I were made to have strong relationships. We need people to laugh, celebrate, pray, and cry with. However, many of us fill the need for loving relationships with other people and replace them with hollow achievements, acquaintances, busyness, and other addictions. Some seek God, but many don't.

We need both Jesus and each other. God's plan for your life was not to live alone. Todd talked about Adam's need for relationship in the Garden of Eden. From the beginning we needed other people. A computer can't hug you when life goes south. You can't call on your trophies when you get a call at two in the morning that changes your world. However, you can call your close friends. Your band of brothers and sisters.

Here at Sagebrush we encourage you to find a group. A group of people you can serve and cry with. A group of people who get your jokes and hug you when you're down. Don't settle for imitations...we need each other, to get through life.

DAY

1

**S** C R I P T U R E

Acts 2:42-47

**B** A C K G R O U N D

As the early church came together, they met daily and shared their possessions and experiences.

## Q U E S T I O N S

1. How would you describe your lifestyle: self centered, family centered, or others-centered?
2. What were the activities of the early church? (v. 42)
3. How did the new believers approach what they did? (v.42)
4. What unusual deed did the apostles do? (v.43)
5. What were the early believers doing when they broke bread?
6. What can you do to help your church be like the early church?

## P R A Y E R

Father God, help me to serve You without reservations like the early church. I long to be a follower who builds deep relationships within my church.

## J O U R N A L

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DAY  
**2**

## S C R I P T U R E

Acts 4:32-37

## B A C K G R O U N D

As the church grew, the needs grew. The early believers gave what they had to help those in need.

DAY  
**3**

**S C R I P T U R E**

Galatians 6:1-10

**B A C K G R O U N D**

Paul gives the believers at Galatia some principles to follow in community.

**Q U E S T I O N S**

1. How easily do you share your time and skills with others?
2. How do you feel when you aren't thanked for going out of your way to help someone?
3. What did Paul say about helping a Christian overtaken by sin? (v.1)
4. What warning about sin do strong Christians need to take to heart? (v.1)
5. What is the Law of Christ? (v.2)
6. How did Paul encourage Christians to endure service? (v.9)
7. How is your view of yourself in line with God's?

**P R A Y E R**

Jesus, help me to learn to live with others and help me to run from those things that separate us.

**J O U R N A L**

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# 4

## SCRIPTURE

Romans 12:9-21

## BACKGROUND

Paul encourages us earlier in the text to choose to live for Christ. Even more difficult, he tells us to put our community above ourselves.

## QUESTIONS

1. What has a friend done to you that you would have trouble forgiving?
2. What advice would you give to someone who wanted some practical wisdom on how to get along with others?
3. What should we hate? (v.9)
4. What is genuine love? (vv. 9, 13, 18-21)
5. What attitude should we strive to have? (vv. 9-16)
6. Whom does God want us to live at peace with? (v.18)
7. What can we do to learn to hate evil?
8. In what ways is Christian love more than emotions?
9. In what ways can you honor someone above yourself? Who?

## PRAYER

God, continue to grow and transform Sagebrush into a community that honors you. Help me to put others above myself, so I can live at peace with them.

## JOURNAL

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DAY  
**5**

**S C R I P T U R E**

Psalm 133

**B A C K G R O U N D**

King David draws two powerful word pictures of how amazing it is to live in community.

**Q U E S T I O N S**

1. What is the most refreshing experience you have ever had?
2. Why would you want to live at peace with people around you?
3. How is a Christian supposed to be different when dealing with other people?
4. In what ways would your life feel “more blessed” if God’s people lived together in unity?

**P R A Y E R**

Lord, show me how to live in community, so I can experience your blessing.

**J O U R N A L**

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DAY

**S C R I P T U R E**

John 17: 20-26

# 6

## **B A C K G R O U N D**

Jesus prays for the people who would become believers, that they would have unity, so that others would believe and be part of the community as well.

## **Q U E S T I O N S**

1. When have you longed for unity in your family, church, or community?
2. Why are religious beliefs divisive?
3. Who was Jesus praying for? (v.20)
4. How did Jesus want us to be unified? (v.22)
5. Why did the Father give glory to Jesus? (v.24)
6. What did Jesus say the world did and did not know? (v. 25)
7. In what ways are Christians one?
8. What can you do to promote unity among other believers?

## **P R A Y E R**

Jesus, I echo Your prayer, for my church, family, and workplace. Help me to be a unifying person and not to cause division.

## **J O U R N A L**

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You can't fake worship. The word "worship" means to attribute worth or bow down to. When you truly worship you don't just bring the best of you, but the worst of you as well. Your strengths and weaknesses are laid at the feet of the object of your worship.

Here is the question that was asked this weekend: Are you desperate for God? Are you desperate enough for God to be like the fishermen who dropped their nets to follow him, a prostitute who washed Jesus' feet with oil and her tears, or four friends who dug a hole in the roof of a house just to meet him?

How much do we want Jesus to be our King? If we are not desperate for God, what does it matter what we accomplish? Our achievements don't impress Him. Our Savior wants our hearts. Without our total surrender all of our stuff is just stuff. Bring all of yourself to the foot of the cross and say, "I'm all Yours, Lord."

DAY

1

## SCRIPTURE

Matthew 4:18-22

## BACKGROUND

Jesus calls some unlikely men to be His followers, and they drop everything to be His disciples.

## Q U E S T I O N S

1. What kind of leader do you prefer to follow?
2. Where did this event take place? (v. 18)
3. What were Simon and Andrew doing when Jesus approached them? (v.18)
4. How long did Simon and Andrew deliberate over Jesus' offer? (v.20)
5. What does it mean to be a "fisher of men"?
6. What do you think Jesus saw in these men?
7. In what areas of your life will you follow Jesus more consciously this week?

## P R A Y E R

Dear Jesus, the disciples considered You worth dropping everything to follow. Lord, You are worth my worship and my loyalty. I pledge my life to You, and I invite You to lead me where You want me to go.

## J O U R N A L

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DAY  
**2**

## S C R I P T U R E

Luke 7:36-50

## B A C K G R O U N D



A woman who has lived a sinful life pours out expensive perfume on Jesus' feet in an act of gratitude and worship.

## Q U E S T I O N S

1. In what ways have you been thanked recently?
2. What is the most shocking thing you have seen anyone do?
3. Who invited Jesus to dinner? (v.36)
4. How did Jesus respond to the harsh criticism? (vv. 40-43)
5. What is the result of the woman's kindness? (vv. 47, 48)
6. Why, according to Jesus, was the woman saved? (v. 50)
7. What people do you have to view more with the eyes of Jesus?

## P R A Y E R

Jesus, I have been forgiven much because of Your work on the cross and the empty tomb. I consider You worth all my worship. Thank You for canceling my debt like You did for the woman.

## J O U R N A L

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DAY  
**3**

## S C R I P T U R E

Romans 12: 1-8

## B A C K G R O U N D

After Paul explains how big God's grace is and how Christ's death on the

cross covers all of our sins, he urges his readers to worship God by being a living sacrifice.

## Q U E S T I O N S

1. What people or actions have influenced your life?
2. How do people properly worship God? (v.1)
3. How should our minds change? (v. 2)
4. How should we think about ourselves? (v. 3)
5. How can we hate evil and not the person?
6. What does it mean to you to honor a person?
7. Whom do you need to honor and bless this week even though they have hurt you?

## P R A Y E R

Lord, You are worthy of all my worship. Together with the entire body of believers, I pledge to be a living sacrifice as my act of worship. You are my God, and I worship You instead of the things of the world.

## J O U R N A L

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DAY  
**4**

## S C R I P T U R E

John 4:1-26

## B A C K G R O U N D

Jesus seeks out an outcast to show her that God has not given up on her. He

teaches her that worship is less about tradition and more about giving our whole selves.

## Q U E S T I O N S

1. How do people satisfy their hunger and thirst for life?
2. Why are the messages in TV commercials so appealing?
3. What had the religious leaders (Pharisees) heard about Jesus? (v.3)
4. What did Jesus say to the woman? (v. 7)
5. What did Jesus say would be the result of drinking the water He offered? (vv. 13,14)
6. What is something you need to trust God with today?
7. Who is someone you can encourage to enjoy their relationship with Jesus this week?

## P R A Y E R

Dear Jesus, You are worthy of my worship. I know that there is nothing to hide from You, and I can come to You as I am. Thank You for seeking me out and inviting me into a relationship with You.

## J O U R N A L

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DAY  
**5**

## S C R I P T U R E

Revelation 5:1-14

## B A C K G R O U N D

John's vision of the end shows that Jesus is worth all the worship, because as the Lamb, He was slain and He conquered death for mankind.

## Q U E S T I O N S

1. What kind of books do you like to read? Why?
2. What was in the hand of the one sitting on the throne in heaven? (v.1)
3. What loud proclamation did a mighty angel make? (v.2)
4. What did the Lamb that John saw look like? (v. 6)
5. Why was the lamb worshiped? (vv. 9,10)
6. What did Christ do for you?
7. How can you develop an attitude of worship to God as you go through your day?

## P R A Y E R

Jesus, You are the Lamb that was slain. You died for me and everyone I know! Thank You for everything You endured, so I can live with You forever in heaven! You are worthy of all my worship.

## J O U R N A L

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DAY  
**6**

## S C R I P T U R E

Psalm 95

## B A C K G R O U N D

The psalmist calls people to worship—to show God His worth because He is the Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth.

## **Q U E S T I O N S**

1. Why do we sing worship songs at Sagebrush?
2. When was the last time you thanked God for the little things? What was it?
3. How is God referred to in this passage? (v.1)
4. Why should we listen when God speaks to us? (vv. 8-11)
5. Would you rather be God's enemy or His child?
6. How can you let God know you love Him today?

## **P R A Y E R**

God, You are my Creator, my King. I sing to You because You are worthy of all my worship. You created all things, and You are the King of kings.

## **J O U R N A L**

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What are we willing to give up for one person to be rescued from hell? Most of us would say, “*Anything!*” but our actions tell a different story. Hell is far off, and our everyday problems are drowning out the urgency we should feel. When it comes to following Jesus in this area, if we are honest, we have a long way to go.

Jesus has a conversation with a Samaritan woman that should challenge us. Samaritans were half-breeds, and most Jews would not even give them the time of day. However, Jesus made time in His hectic schedule to have a life-changing conversation with her. At the core of their conversation, Jesus lets her know that God still loves her. He has not given up on her, and He still has great plans for her life. It's a simple truth.

Your next conversation with someone could have an eternal impact. Will you make the most of it?

DAY

1

**S** C R I P T U R E

John 4:1-26

**B** A C K G R O U N D

Jesus crosses many social barriers to reach a woman thirsting for God's love. She has been trying to fill that void, but Jesus offers her what will truly quench her thirst.

## Q U E S T I O N S

1. How do people satisfy their hunger and thirst for life outside of Jesus?
2. What had the Pharisees heard about Jesus? (v.1)
3. Why did Jesus sit down at Jacob's Well? (v.6)
4. Why was the Samaritan woman surprised that Jesus spoke to her? (v.9)
5. What did Jesus say would happen if she drank the living water He offered? (vv. 13,14)
6. How far would you go out of your comfort zone to talk to someone about Jesus?
7. When was the last time you shared Jesus with someone?

## P R A Y E R

Dearest Jesus, please continue to show me that a relationship with You is more satisfying than anything this world can offer. Give me a heart to go to those who are "looked down on," so I can share Your message of hope.

## J O U R N A L

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DAY  
**2**

## S C R I P T U R E

Luke 15: 11-32



## **B** A C K G R O U N D

In a powerful illustration, Jesus shows us how passionate God is about those who have run from Him.

## **Q** U E S T I O N S

1. How do you feel when someone gets recognized more than you do?
2. What did the younger son ask his father to do? (v.12,13)
3. How did the younger son live once he was on his own? (vv. 13-20)
4. Why did the younger son have to hire himself out to work? (vv.14,15)
5. How did the father respond to the son's return? (v. 20)
6. What complaints did the older brother bring to the father? (vv. 29,30)
7. What does the forgiving love of the father in the story represent?

## **P** R A Y E R

Dear God, I am amazed that You seek me out even when I'm rebellious like the younger brother, or self-righteous like the older brother. Help me to forgive, forget, and win others to You.

## **J** O U R N A L

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DAY  
**3**

## **S** C R I P T U R E

Romans 9:30-10:21

## **B** A C K G R O U N D

The Apostle Paul makes it clear to his readers that not just the Jews are included in receiving the message, but also the Gentiles (non-Jewish), and that the message needs messengers.

## QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever known someone who would not listen to good advice?
2. How carefully do you follow the instructions on a ready-to-assemble product?
3. What were the simple instructions Paul gave about salvation? (vv. 9-10)
4. What promise is given to anyone who puts their faith in Christ? (v. 11)
5. What does it take to get the message of God to someone? (vv.14-15)
6. How had the Gentiles' (non-Jew) response to the message of God differ from the Jews' response? (vv. 18-21)
7. Why is both believing with the heart and confessing with the mouth important for salvation?

## PRAYER

Lord, thank You for dying on the cross so that everyone has the choice to live with You for eternity. I know that people need to hear the message of God; please help me bring the message to those who don't know.

## JOURNAL

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DAY

## SCRIPTURE

Matthew 5:13-16

# 4

## BACKGROUND

Jesus gives His followers a new identity: salt and light to the world. We are to be a transforming and illuminating presence to those around us.

## QUESTIONS

1. What is your favorite spice?
2. What is it about the dark that scares people?
3. To what valuable substance did Jesus compare His disciples? (v. 13)
4. How did Jesus imply that a Christian's positive influence can wane or disappear? (v. 13)
5. How are we like light? (v. 14)
6. If we Christians live like we are supposed to live, how will others respond toward God? (v.16)
7. What behaviors mark the life of a salty, shining Christian?

## PRAYER

Father, help me add Your flavor to this hurting world. Help me shine Your light so those who are terrorized by the dark may see hope.

## JOURNAL

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# DAY 5

## SCRIPTURE

Matthew 9:35-38

## **B** A C K G R O U N D

Jesus shows His compassion for others when He meets their physical needs, then shares the gospel message to quench their spiritual thirst. He also lays out a challenge to believers to follow His example.

## **Q** U E S T I O N S

1. In what situations do you feel compassion?
2. What do you pray about on a regular basis?
3. Where did Jesus go? To do what? (v. 35)
4. What emotion did Jesus feel when He saw the crowds of people around Him? (v. 36)
5. How did Jesus describe the number of people helping others come to Him? (v. 37)
6. For whom did Jesus tell us to pray? (v. 37)
7. What non-Christians will you pray for regularly?

## **P** R A Y E R

Dear Jesus, please change my heart and give me compassion for those who do not know You. Help me get in the game and not sit on the bench!

## **J** O U R N A L

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DAY  
**6**

## **S** C R I P T U R E

Romans 1:8-17

## **B** A C K G R O U N D

Paul shares his motivation: The gospel is powerful to save those who believe, both Jews and Gentiles (non-Jews).

## **Q** U E S T I O N S

1. What was the church at Rome known for? (v. 8)
2. To whom was Paul called to communicate the message of God? (vv. 14-15)
3. How did Paul feel about what others thought about him and his message? (v. 16)
4. To whom does God grant salvation? (v. 16)
5. How does a person become right with God? (v. 17)
6. What does a person's faith accomplish? (v. 17)
7. What can you do this week to help a person that has been on your heart?

## **P** R A Y E R

Lord, the gospel is for everyone, not just for those who are in the inner circle. Please give me opportunities to share this powerful message and courage to seize those moments.

## **J** O U R N A L

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God wants to use you and me where we are, where we work, where we live, where we shop. He wants to use us to alter eternal destinies, and we can't afford to look for someone else to do and say what needs to be done and said. Heaven and hell are in the balance. We believe that, don't we? How do we stop looking for someone else to do what we need to be doing?

When it comes to eternity there is no place on the team for people to watch from the stands. Todd challenged us this last weekend to make every conversation count. As you journal and read this week, ask God, "Who can I share my story with this week?"

DAY

1

## SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 6:10-24

## BACKGROUND

After exhorting his readers to be ready for spiritual battle with the armor of God, Paul asks for prayer to be ready to proclaim the gospel without fear.

## Q U E S T I O N S

1. How do you protect your home from danger?
2. What did Paul say to encourage his audience? (v.10)
3. Why do Christians need to put on God's armor? (vv.11-12)
4. What can Christians dressed in the full armor of God expect? (v.13)
5. What mandate does God give all Christians? (v.14)
6. Why do you think Paul used a detailed description of a Roman soldier's armor to describe spiritual warfare?
7. How can you lean into the Holy Spirit to help you share your story this week?

## P R A Y E R

Dear God, I know that I am part of a spiritual battle. As I equip myself with Your Word, I pray that You would prepare me to make the gospel known. Give me the words to say and the wisdom to use them without fear.

## J O U R N A L

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DAY  
**2**

## S C R I P T U R E

Colossians 4:2-18

## B A C K G R O U N D

Paul urges his readers to be ready to share the good news with others and encourages them to treat those outside the faith with wisdom.

## QUESTIONS

1. How does food without spices taste to you?
2. What did Paul prescribe for all believers? (v.2)
3. How should believers speak to each other? (v.6)
4. Why is prayer important?
5. In what ways are your conversations seasoned with salt?
6. How can you season your conversations with non-believers to draw them to Jesus?

## PRAYER

Lord, give me wisdom in interacting with those who are outside the faith. I pray for doors to open for the gospel as I have conversations with others. Please prepare me to answer people about this hope that I have.

## JOURNAL

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DAY  
**3**

## SCRIPTURE

1 Corinthians 9: 1-27

## BACKGROUND

Paul shares about his strategy of building bridges and looking for common ground with people so that he can win them for Christ in verses 19-23.

## QUESTIONS



1. How easily do you share your time and skills with others?
2. How do you feel when you aren't thanked for going out of your way to help someone?
3. What did Paul say about helping a Christian overtaken by sin? (v.1)
4. What warning about sin do strong Christians need to take to heart? (v.1)
5. What is the Law of Christ? (v.2)
6. How did Paul encourage Christians to endure service? (v.9)
7. How is your view of yourself in line with God's?

## **P R A Y E R**

Lord, I pray that You would give me opportunities to win people for Your kingdom. Enable me to have the wisdom necessary for each unique situation so that I can have the privilege of leading people to You.

## **J O U R N A L**

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DAY  
**4**

## **S C R I P T U R E**

Philippians 1:12-30

## **B A C K G R O U N D**

Paul knows that departing from this world means that he gets to be with Christ, but he is willing to postpone leaving for the good of others.

## **Q U E S T I O N S**

1. How often do you watch TV shows or read articles about celebrities?
2. How was Paul's ministry affected by being in prison? (v.13)
3. Why did some share Jesus out of envy or rivalry? (vv. 15-17)
4. What did Paul want believers to do? (vv. 27-30)
5. How did Paul's notoriety work to his disadvantage?
6. What are you willing to sacrifice to have a reputation as a fearless Christian?

## **P** R A Y E R

Lord, please open my eyes to see my purpose in life. As I look forward to being with You in eternity, I pray that You will show me my place in Your kingdom now as You are bringing others into relationship with You.

## **J** O U R N A L

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DAY  
**5**

## **S** C R I P T U R E

John 9: 1-19

## **B** A C K G R O U N D

Jesus heals a man blind from birth so that God's work could be made known in his life. The man's story begins to impact others.

## **Q** U E S T I O N S

1. How are words different from pictures?

2. Who is the Word? (v.1)
3. What is the relationship between the Word and God? (vv.1-2)
4. What is the benefit of receiving or believing in the Word? (v.12)
5. Whose glory did the Word reveal? (v.14)
6. Why did the Word become flesh and live among us?
7. How should the reality that God became man affect your life today?

## **P** R A Y E R

Lord, please continue to transform my life so that others may know You too. Enable me to have the right words to say as I share my story with those who don't know You.

## **J** O U R N A L

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DAY  
**6**

## **S** C R I P T U R E

Luke 12: 1-12

## **B** A C K G R O U N D

Jesus assures His disciples that the Holy Spirit will give them the right words to say in the right situations.

## **Q** U E S T I O N S

1. What individuals or groups are most feared in our town?
2. In what situations have you had to stand before someone with considerable authority over you?

3. What was the crowd like? (v.1)
4. What did Jesus say His disciples should not fear? (vv. 4-5)
5. Why are we important to God?
6. What sin could not be forgiven?
7. How can you remind yourself of your importance to God this week?

## **P** R A Y E R

Dear Holy Spirit, I know You will give me the words to say when I am given the opportunity to speak about You. Please give me boldness and peace that You are guiding me when I proclaim the gospel.

## **J** O U R N A L

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Have you ever blown it? Like missing out on an opportunity that turned out to be a career maker? Most of us have. Most of us can imagine the jitters of the early church to follow Jesus Christ. They were on the cusp of something big, but they didn't know the future. They had walked with Jesus and had seen His miracles and were challenged to do what He did. Those who accepted changed the world!

DAY

**1****S C R I P T U R E**

Matthew 13:31-35

**B A C K G R O U N D**

Matthew, a former tax collector, writes how something great can come from something very small.

**Q U E S T I O N S**

1. What small or seemingly insignificant possession is worth a great deal to you?
2. What did Jesus tell the crowd? (v.31)
3. How does the mustard seed compare to others in size? (v.32)
4. Besides bearing fruit, how is the mustard plant useful? (v. 32)
5. In the parable of the yeast, what did Jesus say that the kingdom of heaven was like?
6. In what small or seemingly insignificant ways has God worked in your life?
7. What is one way you could quietly help the gospel permeate your family, workplace, or circle of friends?

**P R A Y E R**

Lord, help me see the little things You are doing and embrace Your movement in my life.

## JOURNAL

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DAY  
**2**

## SCRIPTURE

Matthew 25:14-30

## BACKGROUND

In this parable, Matthew recounts Jesus' telling the listeners that they all have something to contribute. It doesn't matter the size—it's what you do with your talents that counts.

## QUESTIONS

1. What are some typical images people have of God?
2. What would you do for God if you knew you couldn't fail?
3. What did Jesus say the kingdom of God was like (v. 14)?
4. What did the servant who received the five talents do with his money (v.16)?
5. What judgment was handed down to the wicked servant (v.30)?
6. How can you be a good and faithful servant?

7. What reminder can you use to hold yourself accountable for the way you manage your God-given resources?

## **P R A Y E R**

Father, You have given me more than I realize. Help me to realize my gifts for Your glory!

## **J O U R N A L**

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DAY  
**3**

## **S C R I P T U R E**

Matthew 28:1-10

## **B A C K G R O U N D**

Matthew gives an account of the most significant event in human history. What started with twelve men following Jesus was about to take the world by storm.

## **Q U E S T I O N S**

1. In your opinion, what is the most significant event in history?
2. What is the most awesome display of power you have ever seen?
3. When did the events in this passage occur (v.1)?

4. Where did the angle go, and what did he do (v.2)?
5. What command did the angel give Mary Magdalene and “the other Mary” (v.7)?
6. If you can, place yourself at the tomb of Jesus on that first Easter morning. What emotions would you be feeling?
7. Why should we be interested and motivated to tell others about this amazing historical account?

## P R A Y E R

Jesus, You overcame death. You became a man—something small—so you could dwell among us. I want to thank You for the love you showed by making Yourself small, so we could worship a big personal God.

## J O U R N A L

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DAY  
**4**

## S C R I P T U R E

John 20:1-9

## B A C K G R O U N D

The Apostle John tells the world about the most important event in human history.



# Q U E S T I O N S

1. What is one dark moment of your life that ended happily?
2. Why do people visit the gravesites of close friends and family members?
3. What did Mary Magdalene discover when she went to Jesus' tomb (v.1)?
4. What did Mary Magdalene tell Peter (v.2)?
5. Who examined Jesus' tomb (vv. 4, 5)?
6. What did Peter and John not understand even after they visited Jesus' empty tomb (v.9)?
7. Why do you think Mary went to the tomb?
8. What truths of the gospel do you want to explore in the next few weeks?

# P R A Y E R

Jesus, show me the purpose for my life. I know that You did not die on the cross and rise from the dead so I could live a meaningless life.

# J O U R N A L

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DAY

# S C R I P T U R E

Galatians 6:1-10

# 5

## B A C K G R O U N D

In his letter to the Galatians, Paul writes about how to help a fellow believer who has blown it.

## Q U E S T I O N S

1. How easily do you share your time and skills with others?
2. How do you feel when you aren't thanked for going out of your way for someone?
3. What did Paul say about helping believers overtaken by sin (v.1)?
4. What is the antidote to self-deception (vv. 3, 4)?
5. What is the best approach to helping a friend caught in sin?
6. What keeps you following Jesus even when you feel like giving up?
7. How can you help a member of our church this week with a particular burden they are carrying?

## P R A Y E R

Holy Spirit, help me to be sensitive to the opportunities to help those around me this week. I long to be a help to anyone who is in need.

## J O U R N A L

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DAY  
**6**

## **S C R I P T U R E**

James 3:13-18

## **B A C K G R O U N D**

James, Jesus' half brother, talks about two types of wisdom.

## **Q U E S T I O N S**

1. What types of jobs require a lot of knowledge or training?
2. Where do people often go to get wisdom?
3. How can a person demonstrate wisdom and understanding (v.13)?
4. What is wrong with the wisdom of a selfish, bitter person (vv. 14, 15)?
5. What do envy and selfish ambition lead to (v.16)?
6. How does a wise person act (vv. 17, 18)?
7. What is the best way to make a lasting positive impression on others?

## **P R A Y E R**

Father, help me to seek wisdom like it is gold, to gather it and use it to point others to Jesus.

## **J O U R N A L**
