

C.O.R.E. JOURNAL



A PRODUCTIVE APPROACH TO
ENGAGING SCRIPTURE

CORE Journal / Volume One

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What is a C.O.R.E. Journal?

The CORE Journal is a biblical engagement method designed to help you consistently interact with Scripture in a way that allows you to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18).

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Growing in the grace and knowledge of Christ will provide the foundation by which you will be able to stand firm in your faith in the age of skepticism and self-fulfillment that define our culture. *A strong faith produced by consistent biblical engagement will:*

- allow you to more strongly *embrace* your identity in Christ
- help you *equip* your heart and mind for the cultural battle we face
- cause you to be more courageous and obedient in *engaging* the culture with the gospel

The CORE Journal is designed to:

1. Help you engage Scripture in a way that is meaningful
2. Help you easily follow a method for consistent biblical engagement
3. Provide specific themes that address vital issues to spiritual growth and maturity
4. Give quality information that puts the verses in the proper context (this makes it more meaningful and easier to understand)

How to Use the C.O.R.E. Journal

There are four steps in this biblical engagement method:

CONNECT | OBSERVE | RELATE | ENGAGE

Each step should take you 3-5 minutes, so you can expect to spend 15-20 minutes doing a CORE Journal entry each day.

The CORE Journal Method is designed to help strengthen your spiritual walk by providing passages of Scripture, a passage guide, and journaling topics for you to interact with for spiritual growth.

These topics are designed to last for six weeks, and you will complete five journal entries each week. This specific journal has twelve weeks worth of biblical engagement — that is a three month plan for you! The topics in this journal are:

Renewing the Mind:

The Transforming Power of the Word of God

Learning to Pray:

A Journey to Meaningful and Lasting Prayer

.....

We recommend that you find the right time and place to engage Scripture using this journaling method. Place your phone on "Do not Disturb," and remove any distractions from both your surroundings and your mind. Make an appointment, and keep it. It is the most important appointment you will have all day!

The C.O.R.E. Journal Method

CONNECT

- It is important to be in the right frame of mind when reading Scripture. You are not approaching just any book...this is the message of God to us.
- Before opening the Bible, spend some time doing two things: 1) write down what you are thankful for; and 2) pray and ask for guidance and understanding from the Holy Spirit.
- If you are having trouble focusing on God in prayer, listen to music that focuses your mind, attitude, and worship on our loving Savior.

OBSERVE

- Read the passage of Scripture in its context. This is difficult for most Bible students, so we provide a *passage guide* that will help you better understand what you are reading in its context.
- Write out what God is saying in the passage. You may even want to write out, in your own words, what the passage is saying.
- This could be two or three sentences.

RELATE

- Write down what the passage is specifically saying to you in your current situation and/or context.
- You are answering the questions: How does this apply to me? How does this apply to our culture? Why is this important to being a follower of Christ?
- This could be two or three sentences.

ENGAGE

- This is your response to what you have studied.
- Concerning personal engagement: you are answering a very significant question: If I obeyed this passage of Scripture, what would I have to do?
- Concerning cultural engagement: you are answering another very significant question: Who do I know that needs this truth of Scripture?
- Write out your responses (one to two sentences each).
- In lieu of answering these two questions, you may also simply write out a prayer to God asking you to be obedient to these truths.

RENEWING THE MIND

The Transforming Power of the Word of God

You are beginning a process today that will help you fulfill one of the most powerful statements made by Jesus Christ in Matthew 22:37: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." He calls this "the greatest and most important commandment" (22:38). The second commandment, "Love your neighbor as yourself" is an amazing commandment, as well (something we will address in another journal topic). Jesus finishes his answer by declaring that all of the law and the prophets are built upon these two commandments. Jesus, in two very short statements, presented the foundation by which our lives can be lived in a way that is pleasing to God.

Have you ever really thought about what this means? Why would Jesus make this command? *All of humanity is broken, sinful, and in need of forgiveness and redemption.* This is the whole reason Jesus came: to redeem mankind and the world. This was his first advent (coming), and he accomplished the redemption of man through his death and resurrection. In other words, he paid for the sins of mankind and provided a way for man to be redeemed (made right) with a holy, loving God. When he comes again (the second advent/coming), he will redeem the world bringing about a "new heaven and new earth" free of destruction, evil, and suffering. Until that time, those who follow him are to take his message of salvation to the world. This requires the believer to be transformed by the "renewing of the mind" so he/she can live a life that is pleasing to the Lord for the sake of the gospel reaching the nations.

How is the “renewing of the mind” accomplished? Through the regular engagement of Scripture as the Holy Spirit molds and shapes our thinking to be driven by biblical wisdom. *This is a process, and it will take time.* Our minds are so powerful, and what we consistently engage will impact how we think and live. Imagine standing in the middle of Central Park in Manhattan. I have personally been there many times. It is 843 acres right in the middle of one of the busiest cities in the world. Standing in the middle represents your conscious thinking, and the rest of Central Park represents your subconscious thinking. At any given time, you can access about four feet in any direction. Everything else is in your subconscious, and it is made up of memories, experiences, education, etc. This all being said, neurologists mostly agree that our subconscious is accessed more quickly by the things we have immediately put into our brains. So...the victorious faith journey requires a renewal of the mind (Romans 12:2), and this takes time.

This CORE Journal topic is designed to help you build a foundation where biblical wisdom can grow and thrive in your heart and mind. We want to help you truly recognize who God is and love him passionately with "all your mind." Once you truly learn and practice this in your life, it will transform you from a mediocre follower of Christ that is inconsistent, scared, and carnal to a victorious Christian dominated by biblical wisdom. What an amazing thought!

WEEK ONE | RENEWING THE MIND

Starting the Process

A strong faith will produce obedience, love, action, courage, and a desire to please Christ more than anything. In other words, your relationship with Christ will be at the front and center of your thoughts. This is why we must be "transformed by the renewing of our minds." Before we become a follower of Jesus, our main goal is to please ourselves. So, to have the consistent victory you crave, the courage to share the gospel, and the peace of God in your life, you must have your mind renewed...and *this renewal process takes place as you faithfully engage Scripture*. This week's reading is designed to help you start this process and put yourself in a position to faithfully serve Christ with a mind that is being daily renewed through the power of the Spirit. You will be journaling five days a week for the next six weeks. Once you have finished this topic, take a week to evaluate where you are and begin the next topic, "Learning to Pray."

Week One Reading Schedule

Day One: Romans 12:1-3

Day Two: Philippians 4:4-9

Day Three: Colossians 3:1-4

Day Four: Colossians 3:5-10

Day Five: Colossians 3:12-15

WEEK ONE | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY ONE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Romans 12:1-3

Passage Guide: The book of Romans is a powerful book written by Paul with theological teaching and practical advice for how followers of Christ should live out their faith. When we get to chapter twelve, he is transitioning from all of the theological training to the practical side of Christian living. It is amazing to think that he starts off talking about the renewing of the mind for spiritual growth and consistent living. Think about this as you begin your CORE Journal for the week.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK ONE | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY TWO —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Philippians 4:4-9

Passage Guide: Philippians 4:4-9 is expressly written to help the believers of Christ overcome anxiety and emotional distress that can take place in the life of the believer (caused by personal conflicts in this passage, but it could be many things). There are four basic concepts that help remove our anxiety and bring about consistent victory: 1) ask God for help; 2) be thankful and full of praise; 3) think on things that edify (strengthen) your faith; and 4) practice "these things" (be obedient).

Meditate on this today as you journal.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK ONE | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY THREE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Colossians 3:1-4

Passage Guide: Colossians is built upon the idea that Christ is the supreme and sufficient One. Colossians 3:1-4 speaks clearly to the concept of "loving God with all of your mind." How do we do this? Paul makes it clear that our focus has to change. We must be more concerned about things that "are above." He is not talking about the ceiling, trees, clouds, or the stars. He is talking about eternal things. In other words, Paul is saying that we must value eternal matters more than we do earthly things. Why? If we are following Christ, we are dead to ourselves, and our "lives are hidden with Christ in God." This is amazing to think about! Our purpose and identity is "in Christ." Meditate on this as you read/engage this passage today!

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK ONE | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY FOUR —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Colossians 3:5-10

Passage Guide: Colossians 3:5-10 instructs us to "put to death" things that will hinder our ability to grow in our faith and be obedient to Christ. Read this list, and think about what this means for you. We cannot always control our temptations, but we can choose our actions. We can say "no" to our flesh and our desires. Paul also says "put away" some things. These are all internal things that will destroy our ability to have a renewed mind. Notice what Paul says in verse 10: "You are being renewed in knowledge according to the image of your Creator." This is awesome! Paul is clearly saying that this is a process. You don't have to be perfect. You just need to be faithful to the process and allow your mind to be renewed.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK ONE | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY FIVE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Colossians 3:12-15

Passage Guide: Colossians 3:12-15 instructs us to "put on" some things as the followers of Christ. These are very clear in the text, and it shows us that these things are a choice we make. While this is true, we must understand that choosing to live this way requires a "renewed mind." You will not be able to do this outside of the power of the Holy Spirit, and this will come from being transformed through consistent biblical engagement, proper worship/obedience, and praise. Notice verse 14: the most important thing to "put on" is love. This is the love of God, and it is a supernatural work in your heart. So...we cannot put on these things without consistently engaging Scripture and growing in grace.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK TWO | RENEWING THE MIND

Building a Foundation of Wisdom

A transformed life that is produced by "the renewing of the mind" requires a foundation built upon the wisdom of God. The passages chosen for this week are so important for this process to continue and flourish in your life. As followers of Christ, we must be driven by a desire for our actions to bring glory to God through Christ. How is this possible? *Our motives have to change.* Think about this: "God is much more concerned about our motives than our actions." This sounds kind of crazy, doesn't it? But it is definitely true. If our motives are correct, our actions will be pleasing to the Lord. Is this even possible? Yes, emphatically yes! But it comes at a price: consistent biblical engagement and the renewing of the mind. The reading for this week will help this become a reality in your life.

Week Two Reading Schedule

Day One: Colossians 3:16-17

Day Two: Proverbs 3:1-4

Day Three: Proverbs 3:5-8

Day Four: Proverbs 4:1-5

Day Five: Proverbs 4:6-9

WEEK TWO | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY ONE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Colossians 3:16-17

Passage Guide: Colossians 3:16-17 are powerful verses that instruct us to have two things in our lives as followers of Christ: 1) let the Word of Christ dwell richly in us in all wisdom; and 2) do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. This passage is teaching that the driving motive of your life must be to please Christ in all you do, and the way to make this happen is to allow the Word of God to dwell richly in you in all wisdom! Think about this as you read and meditate on these verses.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK TWO | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY TWO —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Proverbs 3:1-4

Passage Guide: Proverbs 3:1-4 begins with a direct statement from Solomon to his son concerning the importance of "the heart" and how important it is to be obedient to the truths of Scripture ("wisdom" in these verses). We have to go back to Proverbs 1:20 to fully grasp this verse. Why? "Wisdom" begins to speak in this verse, and the "my son" comments in all of Proverbs relate directly to this "Wisdom" — and it is the voice and character of God. So...when Solomon is telling his son not to "forget my teaching" or "keep my commandments" in Proverbs 3:1, it is a reference to the teaching of God and not just what Solomon thinks. In other words, this is an authoritative message from God, and not just "good advice" from a dad to his son.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK TWO | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY THREE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Proverbs 3:5-8

Passage Guide: Proverbs 3:5-8 contains one of the most famous passages in all of the Old Testament: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight" (3:5-6). The wisdom in this entire passage is so important for you to have a strong mind to love God with as a believer. God is telling us here: trust me in all you do — don't try and do this in your own wisdom — I will keep you on track — run from evil. All of these actions bring "strength" or "healing" to your life! Think about this as you journal today.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK TWO | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY FOUR —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Proverbs 4:1-5

Passage Guide: Proverbs 4:1-5 is dealing with the importance of having wisdom and the results of embracing/guarding it. It uses the parent/child relationship to emphasize the importance of biblical wisdom and the safety we have in being obedient to the truths of Scripture. This requires an attitude of submission and a desire to live with biblical wisdom. It also comes at a price: you must not forsake the teaching of Scripture. In other words, you must allow your mind to be continually renewed by biblical engagement and obedience to its truths. When you do, the power of God will be evident in your life, and it will produce consistency and clarity for your journey.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK TWO | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY FIVE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Proverbs 4:6-9

Passage Guide: Proverbs 4:6-9 builds upon the command of yesterday's reading/engagement: "Get wisdom, get understanding." Remember this wisdom is not your wisdom but the thought processes that are produced by biblical wisdom. Notice the promises in the verses today. They are amazing! If you want to have a strong and vibrant faith that will produce courage, victory, love, and compassion, you will want to truly digest what God is teaching us in this passage. Focus particularly on the very first command in verse six: "Do not forsake/abandon wisdom."

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK THREE | RENEWING THE MIND

The Importance of Biblical Wisdom

"Loving God with all of our minds" is commanded by Christ because it is necessary for spiritual growth and consistent obedience. The reading for this week is going to help you focus on the knowledge of God and its importance to your every day Christian walk. The average Christian spends very little time engaging Scripture and very little time in prayer. When we think about the vast number of young people who are leaving the faith, it is a staggering and alarming number. Why is it so important to consistently engage Scripture? *When you love the Lord with all your mind, it is impossible to find yourself in a position where the wisdom of man is more compelling than the wisdom of God.* Your faith will be strong, and your life will be used for the glory of God in Christ. Renewing the mind is a process. It must be engaged consistently. It is the way in which we grow and mature and thrive as a believer. This week will help you realize the significance of it from a biblical perspective.

Week Three Reading Schedule

Day One: Proverbs 3:19-26

Day Two: 1 Corinthians 2:1-9

Day Three: 1 Corinthians 2:10-16

Day Four: Matthew 22:23-33

Day Five: Proverbs 19:20-21

WEEK THREE | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY ONE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Proverbs 3:19-26

Passage Guide: Proverbs 3:19-26 speaks to the infinite knowledge of God in creating the world. It also speaks to the importance of the believer having access to this wisdom as the way in which a life of obedience and safety can be lived. Do you want to have consistent victory? Do you want to have the direction of God for your life? Do you desire to have the courage to share the gospel? A renewed mind through consistent biblical engagement will help you accomplish all of these things. Think on this as you read and meditate today.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK THREE | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY TWO —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

1 Corinthians 2:1-9

Passage Guide: The reading for today shows the source of biblical wisdom: the knowledge and character of God. This kind of wisdom is not something we can gain on our own. This church was filled with division, and Paul is making it clear that the division is because of human wisdom. Notice what our faith must rest in: "the power of God" and not our own wisdom (2:5). He ends this passage with a promise from the Old Testament prophet, Isaiah (Isaiah 64:4). Read this promise, and think about it as you journal today.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK THREE | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY THREE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

1 Corinthians 2:10-16

Passage Guide: 1 Corinthians 2:10-16 makes it clear that we have the Holy Spirit to guide and direct us in the renewing of our minds through Scripture. Those who do not know Christ cannot fully understand what is being revealed to us in the written text. Thus, as a follower of Christ, loving God with "all our mind" will bring about a supernatural phenomenon: the mind of Christ (biblical wisdom). This is why consistently engaging Scripture is so important, and it is also why you must be in the right frame of mind to receive it. Notice the first step in the CORE Journal Method: CONNECT. You need to be in the right frame of mind when reading Scripture. Don't skip this important step!

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK THREE | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY FOUR —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Matthew 22:23-33

Passage Guide: Matthew 22:23-33 takes place toward the end of the earthly ministry of Christ. It is the passage we referenced in the introduction section of this topic. Jesus is being questioned by the Sadducees concerning the resurrection of man in the end of days (a common belief of the Jews). They obviously do not believe this teaching, and Jesus makes it clear that they do not understand because they don't know the Scriptures. The emphasis in this passage is upon "knowing" through the Scriptures. In other words, it is beyond important that we allow the Word of God to shape how we think and produce what we "know" so we can live obediently for Christ. This is part of the process of "loving God with all your mind." Think about this as you read and journal this week!

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK THREE | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY FIVE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Proverbs 19:20-21

Passage Guide: Proverbs 19:20-21 is only two verses, but it speaks very clearly to the importance of instruction (Bible engagement/wisdom) and the importance of God's wisdom over your own. What is the key to wisdom in the future? What will stand for ever? We have choices to make about who we listen to, what we will decide to do, and how we will live our lives. Solomon is reminding us that biblical wisdom comes at a price, and it brings everlasting results. Think on these things as you engage the text today.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK FOUR | RENEWING THE MIND

The Role of Obedience

The role of obedience in the life of the believer is so important. The problem with most of us: we do not put ourselves in a position to be consistently obedient to the Lord. We usually do well for a while, but then lapse back into a life that is not pleasing to the Lord. When this happens, we continually live in guilt and bondage and not in peace and freedom. It does not have to be this way! God has provided the means by which we can live in consistent obedience. We must realize that *consistent obedience comes from a process and not an event*. What does this mean? Most of us do well after an event: a powerful church service, a youth conference/camp, a retreat, a revival service, etc. These events are wonderful, and they can be life-changing, but if we do not engage a process to renew the mind, we will soon find ourselves back where we began. This week's reading will help you understand how the process works and what you can do to be more faithful to engage Scripture and be obedient to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Week Four Reading Schedule

Day One: John 14:15-24

Day Two: John 14:25-31

Day Three: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Day Four: Ephesians 5:6-11

Day Five: Ephesians 5:15-20

WEEK FOUR | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY ONE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

John 14:15-24

Passage Guide: When we get to John 14:15-24, Jesus is already in Jerusalem for the final week of his life. So, this chapter has some of the last words of Christ to the disciples on how to live out their faith in a world that would persecute them for preaching the gospel. The emphasis in this passage is in relation to obedience. If we love God, we will keep his commandments. But what does this really mean? When we think about the command of Christ to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind, it gives clarity to what Jesus is saying in this passage. Keeping the commands of God requires the proper kind of love for him. If we greatly lack in any of these three areas (heart, soul, or mind), it will be difficult to live in obedience. Biblical engagement strengthens all three!

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK FOUR | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY TWO —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

John 14:25-31

Passage Guide: John 14:25-31 is an amazing message from Christ to us! We are not following Jesus alone. He has sent the Holy Spirit to help us, to grow us, to strengthen us, and encourage us. If we are going to live in consistent obedience, victory, and power, it will be accomplished through the leading and power of the Holy Spirit. This comes at a price, and this price is the process of consistent submission to God. How do we accomplish this in our lives? Consistent biblical engagement and prayer. Think on this as you journal today.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK FOUR | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY THREE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Passage Guide: 1 Corinthians was written to a group of believers in the ancient city of Corinth. It was a booming city that had many different religions with its main attraction being the temple of Aphrodite (goddess of sexuality). Paul is making it clear that biblical wisdom is the key to continued victory over temptation. 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 shows the significance of the power of God that is available to you and the importance of fleeing sexual temptation. To give in to the desires of the flesh by stirring up sexual passions (in person, internet, printed, etc.), will weaken your faith and make it difficult to be obedient to the Lord. Think about this as you engage this passage today.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK FOUR | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY FOUR —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Ephesians 5:6-11

Passage Guide: Ephesians was written to believers in the ancient city of Ephesus. It was a robust city with many different religions, philosophers, and access to sensual entertainment. Paul wrote this letter to emphasize that we are the masterpiece of God designed to do good works for the purpose of the gospel. Ephesians 5:6-11 is an important part of being faithful to the Lord and having consistent victory over temptation and sin. We are to be the imitators of God, and this passage helps us understand what this means. We cannot do it if we are "deceived by empty words" or "become partners with the sons of disobedience." We must have the right focus and the right choices. You must renew your mind to you grow in your faith. Think about this as you engage the text today!

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK FOUR | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY FIVE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Ephesians 5:15-20

Passage Guide: Ephesians 5:15-20 is powerful instruction from Paul about the importance of what we have available to us: *time*. We only have today, and Paul is reminding us to leverage it for the Kingdom. Why does he condemn getting drunk with wine (alcohol) in this verse? It is not only because it is "debauchery." The main reason is: it keeps us from being obedient to the leading of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We need to remove anything that hinders our walk with Christ and desire to be led by the Holy Spirit. What is keeping you from doing this today? Think on this as you journal.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK FIVE | RENEWING THE MIND

Overcoming Strongholds & Temptation

Renewing the mind involves tearing down strongholds and bringing our thoughts into the obedience of Christ. This produces so much victory and freedom. *Temptation dies a violent death at the power of the Word of God.* This is so powerful and encouraging to think about! There is no doubt that we all face temptation, and we will all struggle with the sinful nature that dominated us before Christ. But this does not mean that we have to live in bondage to sin and temptation. Actually, the opposite is true: we have complete victory and freedom in Christ. As we grow in our faith, our ability to overcome temptation will strengthen, and we will enjoy the freedom in Christ to serve him with our lives. One of the biggest enemies to this is the strongholds Satan can have in our lives. This week's journaling schedule is designed to help you identify and overcome these strongholds and develop a more robust resistance to temptation.

Week Five Reading Schedule

Day One: 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

Day Two: Proverbs 15:2-3, 6-7, 14

Day Three: Proverbs 19:23-27

Day Four: James 1:12-18

Day Five: James 1:19-25

WEEK FIVE | RENEWING THE MIND
— DAY ONE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

Passage Guide: The book of 2 Corinthians is another letter written by Paul to the church in Corinth. He wrote this letter to inform the believers in Corinth about false teachers and the danger they bring to the understanding and living out of the gospel. In 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, Paul is instructing them about the importance of the power of God to destroy strongholds that weaken the faith. He also emphasizes how important it is for every single thought you have to actually lead you into the obedience of Christ. Consistent biblical engagement is important to both of these! Think about this as you begin this week's CORE Journal.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK FIVE | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY TWO —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Proverbs 15:2-3, 6-7, 14

Passage Guide: As we stated earlier, Proverbs was written by King Solomon to his son. It is also a very different kind of book in Scripture. Many times, the verses do not connect to all of the other verses around them. This is the case for the Proverbs 15 reading for this week. All of these verses speak to the power of the tongue (what we say) and how important it is to be influenced by those who have biblical wisdom. They also reveal the danger of those who do not respect the teaching of Scripture and the person of God. If we are going to renew our minds, we must do so from the right perspective. We must also equip ourselves to be able to withstand the false teaching we will most definitely experience in our culture today. Think on this as you journal today.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK FIVE | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY THREE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Proverbs 19:23-27

Passage Guide: Proverbs 19:23-27 speaks so clearly to how important biblical wisdom is for overcoming strongholds and bringing our thoughts into the obedience of Christ. Notice what verse twenty-seven clearly states: *if you cease to hear instruction, you will stray from biblical wisdom*. In other words, if you do not allow the truths of Scripture to continually renew your mind, you will not live a life of consistent victory, freedom, and obedience. Think about the things that keep you from "hearing instruction" as you read and journal today.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK FIVE | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY FOUR —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

James 1:12-18

Passage Guide: James has been labeled as the the "Proverbs of the New Testament." It is a very practical book meant to help with the building of your faith. James 1:12-18 discusses how temptation works, where it comes from, and the end result of our sin if we let it continue. It also tells us that we are blessed when we go through "trials" — a certain reference to temptation. This does not mean that temptation is from God, but it does mean two things: 1) it is evidence of our faith; and 2) we will grow when we overcome it. The main teaching of this passage is the great harm that comes from letting sin reign in our lives. It may start off small, and it may even seem insignificant. But James is very clear in this verse: when sin is fully grown in our lives, it brings destruction/death. The renewing of the mind helps us overcome sin so strongholds cannot have this kind of power over us. Think on this as you engage this text today!

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK FIVE | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY FIVE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

James 1:19-25

Passage Guide: James 1:19-25 is the remedy to strongholds and temptation and sin! We are to be "doers" of the Word and not just "hearers." I love the illustration that James uses here: a mirror. He says our lack of "doing" is like looking in a mirror and just walking away, even though we noticed a major flaw in our appearance that we could change to be more presentable. We should not be this way spiritually. When we look into the mirror of God's Word, we should act on what we learn and understand. When we do, God will bless us for it. One of those blessings: victory over strongholds!

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK SIX | RENEWING THE MIND

Conditioning the Mind

Let me ask you a question, and it's a really important one: "What do you do when you come to a yellow light at an intersection?" I think the answer to this says a lot about your personality. We all understand that the red light means to stop (whether we do it or not). We also all understand that the green light means to go (and some do this much more quickly than others). However, the yellow light is still up for debate. I have ridden in a vehicle with many people. Some of them *slow down and stop* when the light goes from green to yellow. Some of them *speed up* when the light goes from green to yellow. What in the world is going on? Can't we just all agree?!? The answer to this is a resounding "NO!" The bottom line: there is a little gray area here. So, let me ask you another question. If red means to stop and green means to go, what color is a yield sign? Most people who answer this question answer, "yellow." Why do they do this? Because we have been conditioned by our traffic laws to understand the color yellow to mean "caution" or "slow down" (even if we don't do it). You want to know something crazy? The last time a yield sign was made in the color yellow as 1971! It has been red for decades. So why do we answer "yellow" when the real color is red? We have been conditioned to think a certain way. The same is true concerning the renewing of our minds. *A faithful, consistent walk with Christ that brings about victory requires our minds to be conditioned by Scripture and informed by the Holy Spirit.* This week's journal schedule is designed to help your understand and implement this in a better way.

Week Six Reading Schedule

Day One: Romans 8:1-5

Day Two: Romans 8:6-11

Day Three: Romans 8:12-18

Day Four: Galatians 5:19-26

Day Five: Ephesians 4:17-24

WEEK SIX | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY ONE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Romans 8:1-5

Passage Guide: You were introduced to the book of Romans in your first week of this CORE Journal topic. If you remember, the verses you read (Romans 12:1-3) discussed the "renewing of the mind." What you have been doing for the past five weeks is the process by which the mind is transformed. Romans 8:1-5 is a reminder that our relationship with Christ brings no condemnation over us. What does this mean? We are free from the power of sin through our relationship with Christ. As we dedicate our lives to his teaching and purpose, our faith grows strong, and our ability to consistently overcome temptation is strengthened. These verses speak about living according to the flesh or the Spirit...and one of these will dominate us based upon what we put in our minds. Think about this as you begin to journal this week!

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK SIX | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY TWO —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Romans 8:6-11

Passage Guide: Romans 8:6-11 builds upon yesterday's reading and engagement. As you are reading, pay attention to the amazing power of God that is available to those who truly follow Christ: it is the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead! This is wonderful to think about, and it helps us understand the importance of being transformed by the renewing of our minds: to have the power of God available to us for consistent obedience, victory over temptation, and courage to share the gospel. Meditate on this today!

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK SIX | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY THREE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Romans 8:12-18

Passage Guide: Romans 8:12-18 finishes up the theme started in the first verse. Paul reminds us that we are not held under the bondage of sin and the flesh because we have victory through Jesus Christ. When we allow ourselves to be led by the Spirit of God, we are strengthened as his children...even to the point of suffering for his name and glory! What an amazing thought to consider as you journal today.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK SIX | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY FOUR —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Galatians 5:19-26

Passage Guide: We chose Galatians 5:19-26 for this spot in your CORE Journal because of the emphasis upon the works of the flesh and the works of the Spirit. This passage helps you evaluate where you are in your walk with Christ and your reliance upon the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Evaluate yourself today as you engage this passage. Journal your results and respond well to what the Lord is speaking to you about through this passage.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK SIX | RENEWING THE MIND

— DAY FIVE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Ephesians 4:17-24

Passage Guide: Ephesians 4:17-24 is a strong message from Paul to this ancient church in Ephesus. His command to "no longer walk as the Gentiles" (4:17) is a reference to those who do not know Christ as Savior, not a specific ethnic group. Paul is reminding us to not become callous to the leading of the Lord. This happens when we are not being renewed in the spirit of our minds (4:23). Think about this as you finish your CORE Journal for this topic. Growth isn't easy, but it is powerful and rewarding and amazing!

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

REFLECT AND RESPOND

Evaluating Your Journey through "Renewing the Mind"

Use the following questions to evaluate where you are today in relation to where you were when you started this topic in the CORE Journal. You are using a scale to guide you with 1 being the most accurate and 5 being the least accurate.

*I completed my CORE Journal entries at least four times a week.

1 2 3 4 5

*This evaluation is based on the process of continual biblical engagement. If you did not consistently engage Scripture, you will see limited results.

When I started this CORE Journal topic:

1. My thoughts about pleasing Christ were consistent throughout the day.

1 2 3 4 5

2. I prayed on a regular basis.

1 2 3 4 5

3. I had a sin that "easily ensnared me."

1 2 3 4 5

4. I lived according to the flesh and not the Spirit (I was consumed with pleasing myself).

1 2 3 4 5

When I ended this CORE Journal topic:

1. My thoughts about pleasing Christ were consistent throughout the day.

1 2 3 4 5

2. I prayed on a regular basis.

1 2 3 4 5

3. I had a sin that "easily ensnared me."

1 2 3 4 5

4. I lived according to the flesh and not the Spirit (I was consumed with pleasing myself).

1 2 3 4 5

What did God reveal about your life that you need to immediately change? _____

What can you do to be more pleasing to the Lord? _____

What action/s can you take that will help you be obedient to the leading of the Holy Spirit? _____

How have you been encouraged by God through this process of biblical engagement? _____

How have you felt the leading and presence of God during this journey? _____

LEARNING TO PRAY

A Journey to Meaningful and Lasting Prayer

You have decided to engage one of the most important topics needed for a strong and vibrant faith. Prayer is such a significant part of our spiritual formation, and most Christians spend very little time in prayer. In my experience, this is usually because of a lack of understanding about how to have a meaningful and consistent prayer life. We want to teach you how to do this over the next six weeks of biblical engagement, and we want to do it based upon the teaching of Jesus.

In the gospel of Matthew, he records the very first sermon of Jesus called, "The Sermon on the Mount." This sermon is filled with so many amazing truths, and one of the most important ones is about prayer in Matthew 6:5-18. This prayer is also given in Luke 11 (I encourage you to read this account by Luke - it is amazing!). The teaching in both passages is directly related to the "how to" of prayer, but not just any prayer...it is referencing a *specific prayer*. This prayer is directly related to how Jesus prayed when he met alone with the Father. This is so awesome to think about! Why? Jesus relied upon the power of the Holy Spirit as the Incarnate Son of God (as both God and man - Philippians 2:4-11). Christ, by his own choice and power, limited his divine attributes requiring a need to get alone to pray and talk with the Father. We see this all throughout the gospels. If Jesus needed to meet regularly with the Father, we desperately need to get alone with God and pray. *The bottom line: if you are going to have a fruitful, consistent and powerful prayer life, you must plan to do so.* The best way to accomplish this is by having a regular

time and place to pray. You will be more consistent if you adopt this mentality and bring structure to your walk with the Lord.

In the Matthew teaching, Jesus gives six clear steps/ sections that should be in every prayer of this nature (when you meet alone with God), and we want to take the next six weeks and focus on each step so you will be better equipped for meaningful and lasting prayer.

Here are the six steps, and they are in a specific order:

1. Step One: an attitude of praise to God
2. Step Two: recognizing the power & leading of God
3. Step Three: asking for the provision of God
4. Step Four: asking for forgiveness
5. Step Five: overcoming evil
6. Step Six: the role of fasting

WEEK ONE | LEARNING TO PRAY

An Attitude of Praise to God

Notice the very first step in this prayer method given by Christ is to have an attitude of praise. This is such an important concept to understand for a meaningful prayer life. Matthew 6:9 states, "Our Father in heaven hallowed be your name." The word "hallow" means "to revere and to honor greatly." Some translations even render this as, "your name be honored as holy." How do we honor him as great and holy? *We do this by praising him for who he is.* The big question is, "How do we truly praise?" The reading for the rest of this week is to help you understand what it means to praise God for who he is and what he has done for us.

*Before you begin this week, ask yourself this question: when am I going to *regularly* meet with God in prayer? This is the key to a vibrant and meaningful prayer life. Look at your schedule. Pick a good time. Put a reminder in your phone. *And don't miss this appointment with God!*

Week One Reading Schedule

Day One: Matthew 6:5-18

Day Two: Psalm 100:1-5

Day Three: Psalm 101:1-4

Day Four: Psalm 103:1-5; 150:1-6

Day Five: Psalm 106:1-3, 47-48

WEEK ONE | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY ONE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Matthew 6:5-18

Passage Guide: The Matthew 6:5-18 passage is where we find the six steps to the model prayer given by Christ. It is in this inaugural sermon that Jesus is making clear what it means to be a part of his Kingdom. As you are reading this passage, notice the emphasis upon private communication with God. Also notice what Jesus is emphasizing in these six steps: how much we need God in our lives! Think about this as you engage this text on the first day of our journaling week.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK ONE | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY TWO —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Psalm 100:1-5

Passage Guide: Psalm 100 is a powerful expression of praise to the Lord, and it helps us understand his steadfast love. Have you wondered why Jesus gave "an attitude of praise to God" as the very first step of the prayer method? Notice Psalm 100:4...it gives the answer! We enter the presence of God through thanksgiving and praise! Think about this as you read, and write down the ways this psalm instructs us to praise God.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK ONE | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY THREE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Psalm 101:1-4

Passage Guide: Psalm 101:1-4 is a psalm of David, and it gives clear instruction on what is required for a true heart and life of praise. Notice the focus of David upon what he is singing and what he is thinking/pondering on. Also notice his response in 101:3-4. An attitude of praise will always bring about a right focus: pleasing God with our lives. Take some time and really think about this as you journal through this text.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK ONE | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY FOUR —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Psalm 103:1-5; 150:1-6

Passage Guide: Psalm 103:1-5; 150:1-6 are both powerful expressions of praise to God. As you engage these passages of Scripture, really think about how you praise right now and what your praise should actually become. As you are probably noticing, when we truly understand who God is, we have a much better focus upon pleasing him. The result? A life that is more consumed with obedience and praise than it is with sinful pleasure and worldly success. Evaluate where your focus is as you engage these amazing psalms!

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK ONE | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY FIVE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Psalm 106:1-3, 47-48

Passage Guide: Psalm 106:1-3, 47-48 is one of the most powerful passages in Scripture concerning the goodness of God and our praise response to his interaction with us. What I have instructed you to engage in Scripture today is the introduction and conclusion of a praise response to how God has interacted with Israel. I encourage you to read the rest of Psalm 106 at some point and really reflect on how God works in our lives as evidenced by his working in Israel. It will be impossible for you to not praise the Lord when you fully grasp what this entire psalm is teaching!

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK TWO | LEARNING TO PRAY

Recognizing the Power and Leading of God

Recognizing the power and leading of God is the focus of this week, and it is a vital part of a meaningful prayer life. Jesus stated it this way in Matthew 6:10, "Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." What does this mean? Jesus is saying, "The Kingdom of God is present now." Jesus did not come to establish a political kingdom but a spiritual one. This Kingdom is already here but not yet fully realized. One day, at the Second Coming of Christ, it will be fully established on earth and in the hearts of men. For now, Jesus is saying, God is sovereign and has so acted to redeem mankind and the world. As followers of Christ, we are to pray for the Kingdom of God to be realized in our lives every day. In other words, we should submit to his authority and leading and rely upon the power of the Holy Spirit for courage and obedience.

Week Two Reading Schedule

Day One: Luke 11:14-20

Day Two: Colossians 1:11-17

Day Three: Psalms 24:1-5

Day Four: Romans 5:12-17

Day Five: Romans 14:17-19

WEEK TWO | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY ONE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Luke 11:14-20

Passage Guide: Luke 11:14-20 is written by the follower of Christ who bears the name of the book, Luke. At this point in his gospel, Luke is describing a situation where Jesus is being accused of healing people in the power of Satan. Jesus makes it clear: if he is driving out demons in the power of God, the Kingdom of God has come upon them. And, of course, *he was doing these things*, and he is making a clear statement that the Kingdom of God is here. This means that Kingdom of God is here for us, as well! We need to recognize it and allow it to be real in our lives by submitting to God and relying on his power.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK TWO | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY TWO —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Colossians 1:11-17

Passage Guide: Colossians 1:11-17 was written by Paul to an ancient church in the city of Colossae. They were facing persecution, sensuality, and false teaching about Christ. These verses focus the reader on the fact that our identity is in Christ. He has delivered us from darkness and controls all things. *Paul is reminding us that we have victory in Christ because we are a part of his Kingdom.* Think about this as you journal.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK TWO | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY THREE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Psalm 24:1-5

Passage Guide: Psalm 24:1-5 is written by David, and it is a clear expression of the Kingdom of God being present today. It is a reminder of the power and authority of God and the blessings that come to those who are a part of this Kingdom. *It does not mean that we will live absent of trials, but it does mean that we will have the blessing and power of God to go through them.* It also means that we will one day be free from trials and in a place of eternal glory when the broken world we live in has been redeemed. This is the full expression of the coming Kingdom of God!

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK TWO | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY FOUR —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Romans 5:12-17

Passage Guide: Romans is written by Paul to Christians in the first century. The gospel has spread so rapidly that the impact of this wonderful news of the Kingdom of God has radically changed the landscape of the ancient Roman world. Paul uses the first eleven chapters to clarify who God is, who we are (created in the image of God), what happened to bring about the brokenness of the world, and what God has done to remedy it. It is a wonderful presentation of theology and is so significant to us "loving God with all of our minds." Chapters twelve through sixteen focus on the practical living out of our faith in this world. Romans 5:12-17 explains what happened to bring about the fallen world and what Jesus did to bring redemption to man and make a way for the future perfect Kingdom of God.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK TWO | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY FIVE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Romans 14:17-19

Passage Guide: Romans 14:17-19 gives much clarity on what this Kingdom is now: righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Remember, Jesus did not come to bring a political kingdom that would free Israel from the bondage of Rome. He came to bring a spiritual Kingdom that would free mankind from the bondage of sin. When we are a part of his Kingdom, and living according to his teachings/demands, the righteousness, peace, and joy of God abound in our lives. Think on these things as you journal!

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK THREE | LEARNING TO PRAY

Asking for the Provision of God

Jesus is making it clear that we should ask for the provision of God in our lives when he states, "Give us this day our daily bread" (Matthew 6:11). In the ancient world, and particularly the Israeli culture, bread represented the very necessities of life, as well as, the spiritual and emotional needs of the individual. This is an amazing thought! Jesus is telling us to petition God for our daily needs...all of our needs: food, clothing, peace, joy, courage, health, etc. *We are a part of his Kingdom, and we must recognize that it is God who provides for us and not ourselves.* We must recognize that it is God who provides for us. We may have a part in working and laboring to bring about abundance and provision, but it is ultimately God who provides it all: our health, our minds, our bodies, water, nutrients, etc.

Week Three Reading Schedule

Day One: Matthew 6:25-33

Day Two: Matthew 7:7-11

Day Three: Philippians 4:10-20

Day Four: Psalm 139:1-6

Day Five: Psalm 37:23-28

WEEK THREE | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY ONE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Matthew 6:25-33

Passage Guide: Matthew 6:25-33 is part of the first sermon of Jesus that we discussed in week one of this topic. In the passage you are engaging today, Jesus is making it clear that God will provide for those in his Kingdom. It is our responsibility to seek this Kingdom first and to trust him with our circumstances, even when they are not good by our standards. *There is no need to be anxious, the God of the Kingdom is in control of your life, and he will orchestrate it for his glory.* And we are beyond privileged to experience what he has in store for us, even if it is difficult! Think on these things as you journal today.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK THREE | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY TWO —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Matthew 7:7-11

Passage Guide: Matthew 7:7-11 is also a part of this inaugural/first sermon. This passage focuses on two things: 1) our responsibility to ask ; and 2) the desire of our heavenly Father to answer these requests. Not only does he desire to do so, he has the power and authority to bring it to pass. The word "ask" is a little different in the original Greek language. It is a continual verb. In other words, *Jesus is saying that we should ask and ask and ask*. This shows our trust in God and our desire to have our prayers answered according to his will. What have you been asking for lately? Do you struggle with a continual sin? Do you have needs he could meet? Meditate on what this means for you as you engage the text today.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK THREE | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY THREE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Philippians 4:10-20

Passage Guide: Philippians 4:10-20 was written by Paul while he was in prison. This wonderful book shows the amazing trust and faith of Paul. He is in prison, and he is emphasizing the ability of God to "supply all of your needs according to his riches in glory in Jesus Christ" (4:20). Paul makes it clear that he understands what it is to have nothing and also to have much more than he needs, but in either case, he has learned to be content. And he has done so through Christ "who strengthens me." *Having contentment is a huge part of understanding how God meets our needs and what we should actually ask for in this world.* Only Christ can give us the strength to fully understand and live this out.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK THREE | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY FOUR —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Psalm 139:1-6

Passage Guide: Psalm 139:1-6 is a psalm of David, and it is a powerful reminder of how God knows us and loves us. He understands us better than we do ourselves, and he truly knows what we need to be best used by him. We must learn to trust him in this way and ask him to provide our needs to so fulfill his will in our lives. Think on these things as you journal today.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK THREE | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY FIVE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Psalm 37:23-38

Passage Guide: Psalm 37:23-38 is another psalm written by David. The entire psalm is meant to emphasize the fact that God will not forsake his saints/people. David wrote this toward the end of his life, and he is reflecting on the power and provision of God. *The passage for today makes it clear: these things are available to those who delight in the way of the Lord.* What does this mean? God blessings and power rest upon those who delight in his plan for their lives instead of their own desires and plans. Meditate on this today!

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK FOUR | LEARNING TO PRAY

Asking for Forgiveness

The order of these steps in the prayer method of Christ is important. This fourth step is stated by Jesus in this way, "and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Matthew 6:12). It is very interesting that the *fourth* step is "asking for forgiveness." This is not how most people pray to the Lord. Most ask for forgiveness *first* and then move on to other concepts and petitions to God. Why would Jesus put this so far down in the prayer method he has given for us? Remember, this is a method for the time when you set yourself apart to meet with God. It is not a method to be used in a church service, altar experience, etc. It is your *continual and consistent* time of prayer. I have personally used this prayer method for years, and from my own experience, I believe Christ put it here for one reason: if we are truly following the prayer method he has given for us, we are in a much better mental and spiritual condition to truly ask for forgiveness and mercy.

Week Four Reading Schedule

Day One: 1 John 1:5-9

Day Two: Psalm 51:1-4, 7-12

Day Three: Psalm 51:13-17

Day Four: Matthew 18:15-20

Day Five: Matthew 18:21-35

WEEK FOUR | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY ONE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

1 John 1:5-9

Passage Guide: 1 John 1:5-9 is written by John the apostle. He was an eyewitness to the words and works of Jesus Christ, and he writes this book to remind us that Jesus is the Son of God. John makes it clear: we should walk in his light; understand that Christ is our advocate; the world is our enemy; and that the love of God will help us overcome the world and shine the light of the gospel brightly. The passage for today focuses on the need for us to repent and ask for forgiveness when we disobey. God is faithful and just to forgive us and cleanse us for his work in this world. *This is amazing to think about! God doesn't expect perfection, as a matter of fact, he expects us to fail him — to sin.* As broken vessels, we can be forgiven and used for the Kingdom of God. But this comes at a price: asking for forgiveness, i.e., agreeing with God about our sin and understanding how harmful it is to our walk with Christ.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK FOUR | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY TWO —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Psalm 51:1-4, 7-12

Passage Guide: Psalm 51 is a powerful expression of the sorrow of David when he finally admits his sinfulness in the events surrounding Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11-12). This prayer in Psalm 51 is full of passion and guilt and the desire to be forgiven and restored. Psalm 51:1-4, 7-12 shows the proper attitude toward sin and our need of forgiveness and cleansing from God.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK FOUR | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY THREE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Psalm 51:13-17

Passage Guide: Psalm 51 is a powerful expression of the sorrow of David when he finally admits his sinfulness.

Psalm 51:13-17 is David asking for mercy and also expressing the need of a truly broken and contrite heart/spirit. *These are the sacrifices God expects when we have sinned...the sacrifices of the heart (dying to ourselves and our wills).* Are you truly broken over your sinfulness and failures before the Lord? Think on this as you journal through these two passages.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK FOUR | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY FOUR —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Matthew 18:15-20

Passage Guide: Matthew 18 is important to understanding how forgiveness works in the life of the believer. Remember, Jesus states that our forgiveness is dependent upon us forgiving those who have hurt us, as well. How do we interact with those who have sinned against us so we can forgive them? Jesus makes this clear in this passage and gives an amazing parable to help us understand the significance of being a person with a forgiving spirit. Matthew 18:15-20 focuses on the process of forgiving someone who has hurt you. Notice the first thing you are to do: go directly to that person. Do you do this? Read and think about this process and what it means for you as you follow Christ.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK FOUR | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY FIVE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Matthew 18:21-35

Passage Guide: Matthew 18:21-35 is a powerful story of a man who is forgiven a debt that he can *never repay*. This debt is 10,000 talents — translated from the original Greek. In this language, it carries the idea of "an almost infinite amount." This man who has just been forgiven this almost infinite debt finds someone who owes him 100 denarii. In the Greek language, this would be 100 days wages. Think about it: *this is a real debt. It is a lot of money, i.e., this is a major offense, not a little one.* But in comparison to what he was forgiven, he should easily forgive this man the 100 denarii. How does this relate to how we have been forgiven by God and how we should forgive others? Think on this as you journal today.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK FIVE | LEARNING TO PRAY

Overcoming Evil

This prayer method of Jesus is so amazing! He knows we live in an evil world. He knows we will struggle with temptation. The fifth step of this prayer deals directly with temptation and evil. He states, "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" (Matthew 6:13). Did you get that? Jesus is making it clear that we need to ask God to help us not be led into temptation and to also deliver us from evil when we are in temptation. *Think about it: we can't really ask God to deliver us from temptation if we are readily putting ourselves in a situation to be tempted.* In other words, God wants to help us avoid situations where temptation is real, but he also wants us to impact this world with the gospel. What does this mean? *If our desire is to avoid temptation, when we find ourselves in a situation where evil and temptation abound, God will give us the strength and courage to overcome it for the sake of the gospel.* We cannot isolate ourselves from the world because people need Jesus as their Savior. But we can have the desire to please him in our lives and actions, and this requires the power of God to live obediently in our world.

Week Five Reading Schedule

Day One: Romans 6:1-7

Day Two: Romans 6:8-14

Day Three: Romans 12:11-14

Day Four: 1 Corinthians 10:11-13

Day Five: Matthew 4:1-11

WEEK FIVE | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY ONE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Romans 6:1-7

Passage Guide: As we saw earlier, Paul wrote the book of Romans to strengthen the faith of first century Christians. It is a rich book designed to transform the mind, encourage the heart, and guide us into practical Christian living that brings about a greater gospel impact. The passages this week really focus on how we can overcome evil in this world while engaging the culture with the gospel. Romans 6:1-7 focuses on how grace and sin operate in the life of the believer. As believers, we can sin and grace will abound, but we should not let this happen! Our old self was crucified with Christ so we could have victory over our sinful flesh (6:6). We are set free from sin so we can serve Christ in liberty and freedom!.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK FIVE | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY TWO —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Romans 6:8-14

Passage Guide: Romans 6:8-14 continues the discussion from yesterday. This amazing passage clearly focuses on the victory we have over sin through our relationship with Christ. The only power sin can have over us is what we give it. This is why he commands us to not let sin reign in our bodies but, rather, present ourselves as members of righteousness. We have victory and freedom in Christ! Think about how you allow sin to reign in your life and what you can do to overcome it.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK FIVE | LEARNING TO PRAY
— DAY THREE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Romans 12:11-14

Passage Guide: Romans 12:11-14 is the practical application of the previous two passages you engaged this week. Make a list in your journal of all the ways you can practically have victory over evil.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK FIVE | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY FOUR —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

1 Corinthians 10:11-13

Passage Guide: 1 Corinthians 10:11-13 was written by Paul to show the power of sin over us when we don't live according to the power of the Holy Spirit in the freedom of Christ. He is reminding us that we all have a sinful flesh that can cause major problems. How do we overcome it? We do so through our relationship with Christ — he is our identity now! Understanding and embracing this is accomplished through consistent biblical engagement, prayer, and obedience to God. When we live this way, there is a promise to us in verse thirteen. Write out this promise and what it means to you as you journal through this passage.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK FIVE | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY FIVE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Matthew 4:1-11

Passage Guide: Matthew 4:1-11 is the story of Jesus being tempted by Satan. He has been in the wilderness fasting for forty days. He is at the weakest possible moment as a human being. These temptations were real and difficult, but Christ overcame them through the power of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. Notice how he answers the temptation every single time. How should we deal with temptation? Maybe we should do as Christ did. Meditate on this as you read this passage.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK SIX | LEARNING TO PRAY

The Role of Fasting

We have been learning about the different elements of prayer that build a lasting and meaning communication with the Lord. When discussing the steps that formulate the method that Christ taught his disciples, the final step is often not discussed: fasting. Notice how Jesus discusses fasting at the end of what "what we should say in our prayer." He states: "And when you fast..." in verse sixteen. Did you catch what is being said here? Jesus is not saying "if," he is saying "when." In other words, fasting is a significant part of the prayer method being taught by Christ. Why is it so important? Ronnie Floyd mentions three reasons that fasting is so important: 1) it helps us focus on the Lord; 2) it exposes sin in our lives; and 3) it revives us spiritually. The big questions about this element: what is fasting, when do we fast, what do we fast from, and how long do we fast? I want to briefly answer these questions before you begin reading about fasting in the Bible.

- 1. What is fasting?** Fasting is the decision to deny ourselves from the most basic necessities of life with a spiritual goal in mind, i.e., we deny ourselves something so God can do a supernatural work in us.
- 2. When do we fast?** Fasting is not an arbitrary event that you just pick out the air. As you engage the prayer method, you will be continually shaping your will and desires to that of the Holy Spirit's for your life. Therefore, as you are praying, you should be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit about when you should fast.

3. **What do we fast from?** In biblical days, food was the most common object of fasting. It is a basic necessity of life, and it should be the object from which we most regularly fast. You could also do a juice fast where you do not eat food but drink something with nutrients. You could fast from social media, your phone, YouTube, etc.
4. **How long do I fast?** The length of the fast is also dependent upon the leading of the Holy Spirit. If you are fasting from food (the most effective means of fasting), you should start off with a single day and increase as you experience the process of fasting. If you are fasting from your phone or social media, you could start with a longer period of time.

Week Six Reading Schedule

Day One: Matthew 6:16-18

Day Two: Acts 13:1-4, 14:19-23

Day Three: Romans 14:1-4

Day Four: Nehemiah 1:1-11

Day Five: Daniel 9:1-4

WEEK SIX | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY ONE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Matthew 6:16-18

Passage Guide: Matthew 6:16-18 is the final step in the prayer method given by our Lord. The private/secret nature of fasting is mentioned both in the promise given and the description of fasting. In other words, this is a private matter between you and the Lord. And the promise is amazing: he will reward you! Think about the possibility of fasting within the next week. Whatever your special need is: encouragement from the Lord, peace from God, victory over sin, a lost loved one or friend...fast and pray over it. God will reward you.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK SIX | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY TWO —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Acts 13:1-4; 14:19-23

Passage Guide: The book of Acts is the history of the early church. Acts 13:1-4 and Acts 14:19-23 are the two passages you are engaging this week. *Notice that fasting and prayer are a normal part of what is done when a major need arises.* This is a powerful example for us, and it is evidence of the early church understanding the element of fasting being the sixth step in the prayer method of Christ. Are you willing to engage it?

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK SIX | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY THREE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Romans 14:1-4

Passage Guide: As we learned earlier in this study of prayer, Romans is written by Paul, and chapters 12-16 are practical chapters meant to guide and direct us to live for God in this world. Romans 14:1-4 is written to help us understand how to interact with those we disagree with. Many see this as a passage that relates to those who abstain from meat and also those who fast. In other words, our decisions about preferential food choices, and fasting for spiritual things, are private decisions to be respected and even kept to ourselves, if possible.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK SIX | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY FOUR —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Nehemiah 1:1-11

Passage Guide: Nehemiah 1:1-11 is the beginning of the story of Nehemiah, the man who rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem during the exile years of Israel. Nehemiah gets a report back from Jerusalem and is burdened over this important city. He desires for Jerusalem to be rebuilt for the glory of God. In his desire, he begins to fast and pray to God. It is an example to us of how important this sixth step is in learning to pray. Think about this as you engage this passage today.

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

WEEK SIX | LEARNING TO PRAY

— DAY FIVE —

CONNECT

Today, I am thankful for... _____

Before reading...pray for guidance and understanding

OBSERVE

Daniel 9:1-4

Passage Guide: Daniel 9:1-4 tells how one of the most significant prayers in the Bible took place. Daniel has been reading the book of Jeremiah, and he feels compelled to fast and pray to the Lord for direction. Verses 5-19 is the actual prayer, and the end of the prayer, the angel Gabriel brings an answer from God. This answer is one of the most important passages in all of Scripture concerning the Second Coming of Christ. *Think about this, fasting along with prayer is a powerful way to truly connect with the Lord.* Will you listen to the leading of the Holy Spirit in this area of your life?

What is God saying in this passage? _____

RELATE

How does this apply to me and/or our culture? _____

Why is this important to being a follower of Christ? _____

ENGAGE

My response to this passage (personal and/or cultural)

REFLECT AND RESPOND

Evaluating Your Journey through "Learning to Pray"

Use the following questions to evaluate where you are today in relation to where you were when you started this topic in the CORE Journal. You are using a scale to guide you with 1 being the most accurate and 5 being the least accurate.

*I completed my CORE Journal entries at least four times a week.

1 2 3 4 5

*This evaluation is based on the process of continual biblical engagement. If you did not consistently engage Scripture, you will see limited results.

When I started this CORE Journal topic:

1. My thoughts about pleasing Christ were consistent throughout the day.

1 2 3 4 5

2. I prayed on a regular basis.

1 2 3 4 5

3. I had a sin that "easily ensnared me."

1 2 3 4 5

4. I lived according to the flesh and not the Spirit (I was consumed with pleasing myself).

1 2 3 4 5

When I ended this CORE Journal topic:

1. My thoughts about pleasing Christ were consistent throughout the day.

1 2 3 4 5

2. I prayed on a regular basis.

1 2 3 4 5

3. I had a sin that "easily ensnared me."

1 2 3 4 5

4. I lived according to the flesh and not the Spirit (I was consumed with pleasing myself).

1 2 3 4 5

What did God reveal about your life that you need to immediately change? _____

What can you do to be more pleasing to the Lord? _____

What action/s can you take that will help you be obedient to the leading of the Holy Spirit? _____

How have you been encouraged by God through this process of biblical engagement? _____

How have you felt the leading and presence of God during this journey? _____

PRAYER JOURNAL

Recording Your Prayers and How God Answered

Use the following pages to record specific prayer requests you have made to God and how he answered them. Remember, sometimes his answer is not clear, or it is a “no.” This does not mean that he is not working, but it does mean that we trust him through our life’s journey.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

[illegible]

This image shows a full page of a document template designed for handwritten notes or essays. It features a series of evenly spaced, light gray horizontal lines running across the width of the page. The lines are thin and consistent in color and thickness throughout. There are no vertical margin lines, headers, footers, or other markings present on the page. The background is a solid, clean white, providing a clear space for writing. The overall appearance is that of a standard, minimalist notebook or a digital writing template.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

This image shows a full page of blank white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a template for writing or drawing. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

This image shows a full page of blank white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for writing. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.