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A Journal for Imitating Jesus

How to Begin a Relationship with God

The Bible makes it clear that each person can have a close relationship with God and forgiveness for what is not right in their own life and strength to deal with what is not right in the world.

There is a simple message about gaining relationship with God and gaining resources for dealing with this difficult world. If God had only five minutes to speak to you He would say:

The Bad News is this:

- **Every person has a sin problem.** We have violated the standards of God and harmed others in many ways. Romans 3:23.
- **The penalty for sin is death.** Because of our sin we are spiritually dead, separated from the holy God of the universe, and we cannot fix this problem ourselves. Romans 6:23.

The Good News is this:

- **Jesus paid for our sin on the cross.** Jesus died in our place when we should have died—He was our Substitute and paid for our sins when we could not. Romans 5:8.
- **We can be forgiven through trust in Jesus Christ.** God invites us to be forgiven and come into relationship with Him through a simple decision to trust Jesus and Him only. God gives us forgiveness and eternal life when we simply trust Christ. Ephesians 2:8, 9.

This decision to trust Christ can be made at any time and in any place. You can make it right now. If you have questions about this message and gift from God please ask us!

Life of a Champion—Week 7: April 18-24, 2010

Passion for the Cause

Hebrews 1:3; John 14:1-3; Hebrews 7:25

The “600 Second Challenge.” Each day please reflect on the passages above and on the great work of Jesus and the great work before us right now. Then ask God the intimate Leader of your life—for His message and His guidance. Record your key spiritual insights and applications below.

Bottom Line until Jesus comes for us: The great work of Jesus and the great work before us dovetail together to advance the Kingdom of God and enhance the glory of God.

The short list of Jesus’ great work right now: reigning, interceding, preparing a place for us, bringing good from evil, sustaining everything by His word, and waiting for the Father’s timing to come back for us.

The short list of the great work before us right now: trusting Jesus for salvation, proclaiming repentance and the forgiveness of sins in His name to all the nations, sojourning, praying and depending on His resources to thrive, living holy and godly lives, living with love and courage and hope and joy, striving to serve so we can hear, “Well done good and faithful servant!”, persevering, hastening the coming of the Day of the Lord, and loving His appearing.

Sunday (4/18):

Monday (4/19):

Tuesday (4/20):

Wednesday (4/21):

Thursday (4/22):

Friday (4/23):

Saturday (4/24):

Life of a Champion

Cypress Bible Church March 7 thru April 18, 2010

Jesus is the One perfectly compelling Figure in human history.

Many lives have been and are being well lived—but no life is in the same league with Jesus. In His heart, relationships, thoughts, actions, miracles, parables, courage, integrity, and words He is perfect and compelling—utterly unique.

This does not mean that everyone is attracted to Him or bows before Him. Some, out of personal pride and willfulness, violently reject Him.

But to those who embrace Him Jesus truly is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He is the one Way to the Father, to have forgiveness, and to have eternal joy in the presence of God.

This journal is both an invitation and a tool for imitating Him.

Why are we doing this?

First: Christianity is centrally about a Person and relationship with Him.

Second: Jesus’ life on earth was well lived.

Third: Our lives are well lived if we learn from, follow, and imitate Jesus.

Fourth: God’s Kingdom is advanced by teaching about Jesus.
Acts 28:30, 31

Therefore: It is imperative for us to examine and imitate Jesus’ life.

We occasionally use a figure of speech in which we say, “That boy is the spittin’ image of his dad.” “Spittin’ image” is a corruption of the original wording which was: “the spirit and image.” It means that the boy is just like his father in personality, character, mannerisms, and physical appearance.

Our goal over the next seven weeks, through the use of this reflection journal, is to move closer to being in **“the spirit and image” of our Savior.**

If this happens in your life you will enjoy greater fellowship with Him, have greater impact for Him, and reap the benefits of living like Him.

Welcome to the journey—please, please see it through!

Life of a Champion—Week 1: March 7-13, 2010

Laser-Focused Dedication

Matthew 3:3-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-23; John 4:34

The “600 Second Challenge.” Each day please reflect on the passages above and on the “personal dedication focus audit” below. Then ask God the intimate Leader of your life—for His message and direction. Record your key spiritual applications below.

Core Idea for Week 1: Spiritually a well-lived life begins with a laser-focused dedication on the will of God and the work of God.

Everyone is dedicated to some thing or some things—dedication is not the problem. The problem is the focus or object of that dedication.

Key questions for your “personal dedication focus audit.”

1. How do I use my time?
2. Do I have a sense of mission and, if so, what is it?
3. How do I use my money and material things?
4. What do I think about when I have discretionary time?
5. What do I talk about when I have discretionary conversations?
6. Is there evidence in my life of a serious pursuit of God—prayer, Bible study, devotional reading, fasting, service, silence, solitude, worship?
7. For what do I make sacrifices?
8. What do I do with my energy?
9. What makes me angry?
10. What am I known for?

Sunday (3/7):

Monday (3/8):

Tuesday (3/9):

Wednesday (3/10):

Thursday (3/11):

Friday (3/12):

Saturday (3/13):

Life of a Champion—Week 6: April 11-17, 2010

Dedication to the Program

Luke 24:44-53

The “600 Second Challenge.” Each day please reflect on the passage above and on the commission that Jesus gave to us. Then ask God the intimate Leader of your life—for His message and His guidance. Record your key spiritual insights and applications below.

The Message: Now that Jesus has gone back to heaven The Program for us as His followers is to declare His Message of repentance and forgiveness to all the nations in the power of the Spirit.

Note well: Jesus is not physically here but He still has serious expectations of us because we His Body are here.

Note well: The Plan of God is exactly on track with Jesus’ suffering, death, resurrection, commission and ascension. Moses and the prophets and the Psalmists all pointed to Jesus and the progress of the Plan. (vv 44, 46)

Note well: You do not need to move to Uganda in order to “get with the Program” of Jesus. You can spend time with your neighbor and pray and give and take short-term trips and help mobilize God’s people. What is God leading you to?

Sunday (4/11):

Monday (4/12):

Tuesday (4/13):

Wednesday (4/14):

Thursday (4/15):

Friday (4/16):

Saturday (4/17):

Resurrection Day!
Life of a Champion—Week 5: April 4-10, 2010
A Plan on Track

Easter Afternoon: Luke 24:13-35

The “600 Second Challenge.” Each day please reflect on the passage above and on the Plan of God for His Son to suffer and then to enter into glory. Then ask God the intimate Leader of your life—for His message and His guidance. Record your key spiritual insights and applications below.

Core Idea for Week 5: God’s plan is right on track...it is up to us to understand it and then align with it.

When, in 1910, explorer Roald Amundsen told his men that they were heading for the South Pole instead of the North Pole everything made sense—the 100 dogs, the living hut, the skis, all of it.

When Jesus showed the two disciples on the Emmaus Road that the Messiah had to first suffer (on the cross for our sins) and then enter His glory (on the throne for our ruling) everything made sense.

Before they understood that the Plan of God was on track everything was confusing and distressing.

Please understand that the Plan of God is on track for your salvation and your maturity and your provision and your eternity. Do not despair, only believe.

Sunday (4/4):

Monday (4/5):

Tuesday (4/6):

Wednesday (4/7):

Thursday (4/8):

Friday (4/9):

Saturday (4/10):

Life of a Champion—Week 2: March 14-20, 2010
Victory Through Submission

Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12, 13; Luke 4:1-14; Hebrews 4:15

The “600 Second Challenge.” Each day please reflect on the passages above and on the temptations that Jesus overcame—the pride of the flesh, the pride of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life. Then ask God the intimate Leader of your life—for His message and His guidance. Record your key spiritual insights and applications below.

Core Idea for Week 2: Spiritually a well-lived life submits to the will of God and resists self-will by obeying the Word of God—I must be saturated by God’s Word.

God gives me a road of escape in every temptation. (1 Cor 10:13) I am not required to give in to anything. My part is intense saturation in the Word of God before the temptation ever arrives. As writer Dallas Willard says, “The key to spiritual victory is not ‘trying’ but “training.””

What are your most powerful temptations and what does the Word say about each one? Join the Psalmist and say, “Your Word have I treasured in my heart that I might not sin against You.” (Psalm 119:11)

Sunday (3/14):

Monday (3/15):

Tuesday (3/16):

Wednesday (3/17):

Thursday (3/18):

Friday (3/19):

Saturday (3/20):

Life of a Champion—Week 3: March 21-27, 2010

Understanding True Glory

Matthew 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36

The “600 Second Challenge.” Each day please reflect on the passages above and on the Transfiguration revelation that Jesus Christ is the glorious Son of God. Then ask God the intimate Leader of your life—for His message and His guidance. Record your key spiritual insights and applications below.

The Message: Jesus is the glorious Son of God...sane people bow before Him and listen to Him.

At the time of His transfiguration Jesus was revealed as the glorious Son of God, the culmination of the Law and the Prophets, the completely pleasing Son of the Father and the One Who must be heard.

Please see this: “The voice” said to listen to Jesus! Listen to what the voice says about the Son! Then listen to the Son!

For starters: What did Jesus say to the three disciples in this incident and why did He say it? How does His message here apply to you?

Sunday (3/21):

Monday (3/22):

Tuesday (3/23):

Wednesday (3/24):

Thursday (3/25):

Friday (3/26):

Saturday (3/27):

Life of a Champion—Week 4: March 28-April 3, 2010

Life-Shaping Decisions

Matthew 21:1-11, 14-17; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:29-44; John 12:12-19

The “600 Second Challenge.” Each day please reflect on the passages above and on the Triumphal Entry revelation that Jesus Christ is the King of Israel—and of us. Then ask God the intimate Leader of your life—for His message and His guidance. Record your key spiritual insights and applications below.

The Message of Week 4: Spiritually a well-lived life...involves submission to Jesus as King.

God calls each one of us to put our faith in Christ based on the evidence about Him—His Words, His works, His birth, His lineage, His geography, His timing, and those Who testified about Him—the Father and the Spirit both affirm His deity.

Faith is not opposed to evidence. Faith is opposed to sight. The Triumphal Entry gives prolific evidence of the kingship of Jesus.

If you decide to submit to Jesus as King then your life must be lived in alignment with that submission. A major focus of this week should be on finding the Lord’s input on how you can live in greater and more consistent submission to Him.

Sunday (3/28):

Monday (3/29):

Tuesday (3/30):

Wednesday (3/31):

Thursday (4/1):

Friday (4/2):

Saturday (4/3):